

Date submitted to SSCPR: May 23, 2024

Date Self-Study Report approved by SSCPR: September 27, 2023

Date of External Review: February 1 & 2, 2024

Date Quality Assurance Plan approved by SSCPR: June 19, 2024

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM STENGTHS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

STRENGTHS

The Program Review Self-Study Report and External Review Report both clearly show that the Bachelor of Journalism and Minor in Journalism programs at KPU have several key strengths.

Ministry surveys indicate 90% of KPU Journalism graduates were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the education they received.

Surveys of both current students and alumni suggest broad satisfaction with KPU's Journalism program. Some comments from those surveys include:

"I think this program has fantastic instructors. There are also lots of cool journalism courses to take. Overall I feel very well-rounded in journalism from the classes I've taken so far."

"The teachers have real world practical experience and are extremely knowledgeable and helpful. They are easily the highlight of the program."

"Instructors and department staff were very helpful in making sure they were easily accessible for help when it came to course material or even career directions."

"Very communicative, experienced and supportive instructors, a good variety of relevant topics and skills taught, flexible smaller classes, courses change a lot and evolve over time to fit ongoing issues and needs in the profession."

The department has also shown a commitment to ongoing improvement outside of the formal Program Review process. Since the last Program Review, several key initiatives have been undertaken, including:



- Simplifying prerequisites to make it easier for non-journalism students to take upper-level courses as electives and for Bachelor of Journalism students to take the courses they need when they are available.
- Joining KPU's ARTS 4800 Practicum course to give journalism students real-world experience in newsrooms across the region.
- Developing a new course, JRNL 3175 News Reporting, as a direct response to advice from the Program Advisory Committee.
- Offering an upper-level JRNL course in Summer for the first time in Summer 2022 and again in Summer 2023 and Summer 2024, satisfying a common request from students.
- Adopting a statement on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization and developing an action plan to help reach that statement's goals.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The most consistent criticism of the program, which several students mentioned in the surveys, is the range and availability of upper-level JRNL courses. As a small program, many upper-level JRNL courses are only offered every other year, which can make it difficult for students to meet degree requirements or to take a course they are particularly interested in. The program has taken some steps to address this, including offering upper-level JRNL courses in the Summer and adding some upper-level JRNL courses with wider appeal among non-journalism students (such as JRNL 3260 Future of News). The Program Review Self-Study Report made several recommendations that could further boost upper-level enrolment, such as setting up an articulation agreement with BCIT and developing another upper-level JRNL course with wide appeal.



RECOMMENDATIONS THE QUALITY ASSURANCE PLAN DOES NOT ADDRESS

The Recommendations from the Self-Study Report and External Review Report that this Plan does not address as provided below, with a brief rationale for why these Recommendations cannot be addressed.

Recommendations	Indicate Self-Study Report (SSR) or External Review Report (ERR) and page number	Rationale for Not Addressing
"students who do go on to major in journalism say that they feel they do not get introduced to basic concepts of news judgment, story pitching, story production, and editing until quite late in the program."	ERR, p. 3	The department believes that basic concepts in journalism are already taught throughout the program, including in lower-level courses. Only 4 current students shared their views with the External Reviewers. In contrast, 22 current KPU Journalism students participated in the online survey conducted as part of the Program Review process. Of the 22 students surveyed, 88% agreed that "the prerequisites offered prepare[d] me for more advanced courses" and 88% agreed that they "have sufficient opportunities in the program to reinforce [their] learning through practical application of this learning". JRNL 2120 Storytelling: Writing for Journalism, a second-year course, is devoted to teaching these core concepts. As part of this Quality Assurance Plan, the department is taking steps to ensure laddering between courses is as strong as it can be and that core skills are taught throughout the program. But we believe current laddering is already quite good. The survey of 22 current students supports that view.
Students "specifically mentioned wanting more of that newsroom experience for broadcast, so that they are producing something more like actual television- or radio-news stories as opposed to podcasts"	ERR, p. 3	Only 4 current students shared their views with the External Reviewers. In contrast, 22 current KPU Journalism students participated in the online survey conducted as part of the Program Review process. Only one of the 22 students surveyed mentioned that they wanted the program to have a stronger focus on broadcast journalism. A complete reorientation towards broadcast journalism in our multimedia courses would come at the expense of other skills (such as producing video content for websites and



Recommendations	Indicate Self-Study Report (SSR) or External Review Report (ERR) and page number	Rationale for Not Addressing
		producing podcasts). Based on the broader survey of KPU Journalism students, we are not convinced our students want us to change our focus in those courses to broadcast journalism.
"They [students] commented that they worried about their lack of knowledge of writing TV or radio news segments."	ERR, p. 9	See above.
"One idea that came up during the interviews is having The Runner (or a section/off-shoot of The Runner) covering not only KPU campus news, but the broader Surrey-Langley community."	ERR, p. 9	The Runner is an independent student newspaper with its own mandate and no formal affiliation with KPU's Journalism program. While many KPU Journalism students work at The Runner, the Journalism department has no authority to direct The Runner what to cover.
"It might be worth exploring some kind of change to the program, where students who do not complete the ARTS 4800 Practicum course would be required to complete a certain number of hours working with The Runner, in a sort of internship or co-op model, and they earn credit for it."	ERR, p. 9	The Runner is an independent student newspaper with its own mandate and no formal affiliation with KPU's Journalism program. While many KPU Journalism students work at The Runner, the Journalism department cannot direct The Runner who to hire, so it would not be possible to require students to work at The Runner as a requirement for their degree.
The department should consider doing more to address the concepts of what makes a story newsworthy and how news judgment is applied by news organizations into first-year courses to provide better scaffolding for both PLO #4 ("Practice the principles of sound news judgment in developing story ideas, deciding what stories to cover and how to structure information within a story.") and PLO #6 ("Cover newsworthy events and produce stories on deadline.")	SSR, p. 28	After discussion among department faculty, it was determined that the concepts of newsworthiness and news judgment are already thoroughly covered in first-year JRNL courses. In particular, students in JRNL 1160 Introduction to Journalism are required to submit weekly reports identifying a noteworthy news story and to explain what makes the story newsworthy. A separate recommendation, addressed below, suggests that course outlines "should be updated to ensure they reflect any new material that has been added to courses in recent years". When the outline for JRNL 1160 is next updated, care will be taken to ensure the outline properly reflects the course's focus on these concepts.



QUALITY ASSURANCE FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN

The Quality Assurance **Goals** for improving or maintaining program quality over the next five years are:

MONTH/YEAR WHEN THE FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN BEGINS: June 2024

GOAL 1: Update and streamline the course requirements for the Bachelor of Journalism and Bachelor of Journalism (Honours)

Recommendation(s) this Goal Addresses	Indicate Report & Page Number
While the Curriculum Map suggests there is generally good laddering from lower-level to upper- level courses, the department should discuss any gaps they've identified in student preparedness and consider what changes to course prerequisites and program structure should be made.	SSR, p. 28
The department should review all required first- and second-year courses to determine if they are necessary to prepare students for upper-level courses and to achieve the Program Learning Outcomes. Consideration should be given to whether some second-year courses may work better as upper-level electives. This may provide opportunities to reduce the number of discipline-specific lower-level courses Bachelor of Journalism students are required to take, putting the program's requirements more in line with others in the Faculty of Arts.	SSR, p. 28
The department should consider making COMM 2100 Media Ethics and Law a required course for the Bachelor of Journalism degree.	SSR, p. 29
The External Review team concurred with this recommendation.	ERR, p. 5
Consider removing JRNL 4270 Advanced Storytelling as a required course for the degree and making it an upper-level JRNL elective instead.	SSR, p. 45

Actions(s) Required to Achieve this Goal	Led by	Start on (M/YY)	Complete By (M/YY)	Notes
Pursue a series of structural changes to the Bachelor of Journalism and Bachelor of Journalism	Chad	June 2024	February	All curricular and program changes must
(Honours) program requirements through the Faculty of Arts bylaws and Senate governance	Skelton		2025	be approved by Senate in April for
process that will provide students with better laddering and more flexibility. Specifically:				implementation the following September.
Remove JRNL 2360 Photojournalism, JRNL 2370 Podcasting and Audio Storytelling and				
JRNL 4270 Advanced Storytelling from the list of required courses for the degree. JRNL				
2360 and JRNL 2370 will no longer be offered and will be removed from the course				



Actions(s) Required to Achieve this Goal	Led by	Start on (M/YY)	Complete By (M/YY)	Notes
 calendar. A new, upper-level Photojournalism course will replace JRNL 2360. JRNL 4270 Advanced Storytelling, while no longer a required course, will remain as an upper-level JRNL elective. Make COMM 2100 Media Ethics and Law a required course for the degree. Rename JRNL 3370 Audio Documentary to Audio Journalism and change the learning outcomes to include a greater focus on breaking news audio assignments Change the requirement for 6 credits in COMM numbered 1100 to 2999 to 3 credits. Change the requirement for 18 credits in JRNL numbered 3000 to 4999 to 21 credits. 				
These changes have the support of the department. The department hopes to have these changes in place by the 2025-26 academic year, so that students can take advantage of them as soon as possible.				
Pursue a series of changes to course prerequisites through the Faculty of Arts bylaws and Senate governance process to support the program requirement changes mentioned above. Specifically:	Lubna Moosa & Eve	June 2024	February 2025	
 Make JRNL 1160 Introduction to Journalism the lone prerequisite or corequisite for JRNL 2230 Multimedia Storytelling Make JRNL 1220 Citizen Journalism the lone prerequisite or corequisite for JRNL 2120 Writing for Journalism Make JRNL 2240 Beyond the News the lone prerequisite or corequisite for all upper-level writing courses (JRNL 3170, JRNL 3175, JRNL 3180, JRNL 4240, JRNL 4250, JRNL 4900) Make JRNL 2230 Multimedia Storytelling the lone prerequisite or corequisite for all upper-level multimedia courses (JRNL 3370, JRNL 3270 and the new upper-level Photojournalism course). 	Edmonds			
Ensure courses that are no longer being offered are removed from the course calendar through the Faculty of Arts bylaws and Senate governance process.	Lubna Moosa &	June 2024	February 2025	



Actions(s) Required to Achieve this Goal	Led by	Start on (M/YY)	Complete By (M/YY)	Notes
	Eve Edmonds			
Renumber JRNL Honours courses to ensure they match with the Faculty of Arts convention for Honours courses through the Faculty of Arts bylaws and Senate governance process.	Tracy Sherlock	June 2024	February 2025	

Resource Requirements (if applicable)

Resources required to achieve this Goal: N/A

When resources will be required: N/A

Faculty and/or Institutional support required: Faculty in the Journalism and Communication Studies department will need to devote time to implementing these actions.



GOAL 2: Review and revise course outlines to ensure key entry-level journalism skills are being taught and there is sufficient laddering between courses.

Recommendation(s) this Goal Addresses	Indicate Report & Page Number
The department should consider introducing peer feedback — both giving it and receiving it —in first-year courses to better prepare students for peer editing each other's work in later JRNL courses. This will ensure better scaffolding for PLO #2 ("2. Edit works of journalism produced by others, providing helpful and constructive feedback, and incorporate feedback from others.")	SSR, p. 28
Course outlines should be updated to ensure they reflect any new material that has been added to courses in recent years. In particular, new	SSR, p. 28
material involving peer feedback and peer editing that has been added to JRNL 1160 Introduction to Journalism and JRNL 2120 Writing for Journalism should be reflected in those courses' updated CLOs.	ERR, p. 5
The External Review team concurred with this recommendation "in order to eliminate any duplications and to demonstrate a clear path of steps towards advanced skills".	
As course outlines come up for review and revision, they should be revised to ensure more consistency across courses, both in the number of CLOs per course and in how those CLOs are worded.	SSR, p. 28
Courses that are no longer offered by the program, such as JRNL 4260 Computer Coding for Journalists, should be removed from the course calendar.	SSR, p. 29
With the assistance of the Program Advisory Committee, identify the key entry-level job skills required for those entering the fields of Journalism and Communications/Public Relations. Ensure those skills are being sufficiently taught throughout the program.	SSR, p. 47
"they [students] seem to consistently say they feel they don't get enough 'real newsroom-type' experience in covering breaking news stories."	ERR, p. 3
"One student commented that the 'strict deadlines' in the news reporting class initially seemed 'daunting,' but they quickly recognized their value, and they felt that more KPU journalism classes should be structured in this way to give students something more similar to a 'real-world' experience. This does seem like a valuable skill for a KPU journalism major to sharpen, regardless of whether they pursue work in media, communications, government, the private sector, or any other work environment."	ERR, p. 9
Consider developing a Special Topics course for COMM, as already exists for JRNL.	SSR, p. 45



Action(s) Required to Achieve this Goal	Led by	Start on (M/YY)	Complete By (M/YY)	Notes
Ask the Program Advisory Committee for its input on the key entry-level job skills required for entering the fields of Journalism and Communications/Public Relations. This input will be brought back to the department for a further discussion among faculty on the key entry-level job skills required in industry and whether those skills are being sufficiently taught throughout the program.	Tracy Sherlock	June 2024	December 2024	
Create a series of department working groups for all current instructors who regularly teach courses that are prerequisites or corequisites for other courses. These working groups will discuss what skills students need before they enter their next course.	Chad Skelton	June 2024	May 2025	
For example, all JRNL 1160 Introduction to Journalism instructors will meet with all instructors of JRNL 2230 Multimedia Storytelling. And, in a separate working group, all instructors of JRNL 2230 Multimedia Storytelling will meet with all instructors of JRNL 3270 Video Journalism, JRNL 3370 Audio Journalism and the new upper-level Photojournalism course.				
 As course outlines come up for review and revision, changes will be made through the Faculty of Arts bylaws and Senate governance process, keeping the following in mind: Entry-level skills identified by the Program Advisory Committee should be added to course outlines where appropriate Skills identified by the working groups as essential for progression through the program should be added to course outlines Peer feedback and news judgment should be explicitly added as Course Learning Outcomes to first-year courses, where appropriate Special consideration should be given to whether course outlines focus enough on deadline-driven, newsroom-type experiences. Course outlines should better reflect what is actually being taught in courses Course outlines should be more consistent, both in the number of Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) listed and in how they are worded 	Lubna Moosa & Eve Edmonds	June 2024	May 2029	



Action(s) Required to Achieve this Goal	Led by	Start on (M/YY)	Complete By (M/YY)	Notes
Consider developing a Special Topics course for COMM, as already exists for JRNL.	Lubna Moosa, Eve Edmonds & Tracy Sherlock	June 2024	May 2026	

Resource Requirements (if applicable)

Resources required to achieve this Goal: N/A

When resources will be required: N/A

Faculty and/or Institutional support required: Faculty in the Journalism and Communication Studies department will need to devote time to implementing these actions.



GOAL 3: Increase enrolment in upper-level Journalism (JRNL) courses

Recommendation(s) this Goal Addresses	Indicate Report & Page Number
As a department, work on additional initiatives to promote the Journalism program, both among current KPU students and others.	SSR, p. 41
Investigate the possibility of offering a Certificate, perhaps in Multimedia Storytelling, which might attract mature learners to the program.	SSR, p. 41
Investigate the possibility of setting up articulation agreements with BCIT's Journalism program similar to those that already exist with Langara, so graduates of its certificate and diploma programs could continue their studies and receive a Bachelor of Journalism at KPU.	SSR, p. 41
Consider opportunities for developing another upper-level JRNL course that would have limited prerequisites and appeal to non-journalism students as an elective.	SSR, p. 45
"It could be worth exploring international field studies for the KPU journalism program, if the university could partner with journalism schools or organizations in other countries, not unlike the field studies undertaken by some other KPU programs including Art History. Among other benefits, this international experience might help make the KPU Bachelor of Journalism program more appealing for graduates of Langara College's two-year Journalism diploma."	ERR, p. 10

Action(s) Required to Achieve this Goal	Led by	Start on (M/YY)	Complete By (M/YY)	Notes
At an upcoming department meeting, discuss idea for additional initiatives to promote the Journalism program, both among current KPU students and others	Chad Skelton	June 2024	December 2024	
Investigate the possibility of offering a Certificate, perhaps in Multimedia Storytelling, which might attract mature learners to the program.	Tracy Sherlock	June 2024	May 2026	
Investigate the possibility of setting up articulation agreements with BCIT's Journalism program, similar to what already exists with Langara, so graduates of its certificate and diploma programs could continue their studies and receive a Bachelor of Journalism at KPU.	Chad Skelton	June 2024	May 2026	



Action(s) Required to Achieve this Goal	Led by	Start on (M/YY)	Complete By (M/YY)	Notes
Consider opportunities for developing another upper-level JRNL course that would have limited prerequisites and appeal to non-journalism students as an elective. Or, alternatively, consider developing a second upper-level Special Topics JRNL course that would not have any JRNL courses as prerequisites. This could allow for courses in areas relevant to journalism but with wide appeal among other KPU students (such as a course on 'fake news' or misinformation).	Tracy Sherlock & Bev Wake	June 2024	May 2026	
Discuss at an upcoming department meeting whether any journalism instructors are interested in participating in international field studies and, if so, have those instructors gather information on what would be involved in offering one.	Tracy Sherlock & Bev Wake	June 2024	May 2026	

Resource Requirements (if applicable)

Resources required to achieve this Goal: N/A

When resources will be required: N/A

Faculty and/or Institutional support required: Faculty in the Journalism and Communication Studies department will need to devote time to implementing these actions.



GOAL 4: Increase engagement with current KPU Journalism students, alumni and industry

Recommendation(s) this Goal Addresses	Indicate Report & Page Number
As a department, discuss initiatives to keep KPU Journalism alumni better connected with the program and current students.	SSR, p. 41
The department should investigate opportunities for more upper-level courses to partner with news organizations on reporting projects.	SSR, p. 43
Consider developing a program where new students in the Journalism program would meet one- on-one with an instructor to discuss what they want to get out of the program and their long- term career goals.	SSR, p. 47
The department should discuss its social media strategy at an upcoming department meeting and develop a plan for how best to communicate news about the department and job postings to students and alumni.	SSR, p. 49
"considering students' desire for newsroom experience and the desire for more contributors in the real newsroom that already exists on KPU's campus, it seems like it could be worth pursuing some kind of partnership with The Runner"	ERR, p. 9
"One thing it mentions is the 'gap in experiential learning.' This seems worth exploring."	ERR, p. 8

Action(s) Required to Achieve this Goal	Led by	Start on (M/YY)	Complete By (M/YY)	Notes
At an upcoming department meeting, discuss initiatives to keep KPU Journalism alumni better connected with the program and current students. One possibility is to host an on-campus event for both alumni and current students.	Chad Skelton	June 2024	December 2024	
The department will discuss its social media strategy at an upcoming department meeting and develop a plan for how best to communicate news about the department and job postings to students and alumni. Given Facebook's recent moves to prevent the sharing of news on its platform, moving to a non-Meta platform may be a good idea. LinkedIn is one possibility.	Chad Skelton	June 2024	December 2024	
The department held one-on-one meetings with second-year Journalism students for the first time in Fall 2023 to discuss what students want to get out of the program and their long-term career goals. These one-on-one meetings will continue for the next two years and then the	Tracy Sherlock	December 2023	May 2026	



Action(s) Required to Achieve this Goal	Led by	Start on (M/YY)	Complete By (M/YY)	Notes
department will assess if the meetings have been successful and if it wants to continue the program or not.				
The department is in early discussions with local news outlets to partner on major reporting projects as part of JRNL 4250 Politics and Journalism in Fall 2024 and JRNL 4270 Advanced Storytelling in Spring 2025. The department will look for other opportunities to partner with local news organizations on journalism projects.	Chad Skelton & Tracy Sherlock	December 2023	May 2026	
The department will investigate at the possibility of partnering with The Runner, KPU's student newspaper, in an upcoming course.	Tracy Sherlock	June 2024	May 2025	

Resource Requirements (if applicable)

Resources required to achieve this Goal: N/A

When resources will be required: N/A

Faculty and/or Institutional support required: Faculty in the Journalism and Communication Studies department will need to devote time to implementing these actions.



GOAL 5: Continue the department's initiatives to encourage Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization (EDID)

Recommendation(s) this Goal Addresses	Indicate Report & Page Number
"One gap in this section is the absence of new efforts to improve racial diversity on the faculty. It's clear the journalism program has seen some changes in this area since its last review but it is an issue that needs additional work. This was brought up by students and another sector as an area where they think there is room for improvement."	ERR, p. 7
"It could be worth exploring opportunities for an 'Indigenous Journalist-in-Residence,' funded by the university. There are some good candidates in the area, as KPU's Journalism faculty members would likely be aware."	ERR, p. 7
"There could also be a more conscious strategy about bringing in guest speakers, with some data-tracking."	ERR, p. 7
"Students and alumni mentioned the value of having INDG 1100 Introduction to Indigenous Studies. But there appears to be a desire for more content about Indigenous issues and Journalism there could be more methodical efforts to make sure that material related to Indigenous or other non-white communities is included in courses. One student mentioned that there is an Indigenous style guide available for media. At least some kind of reference to that in an introductory course that addresses newsroom practices on style, along with discussions about when a student or practicing journalist could or should use that, would be a good addition"	ERR, p. 7

Action(s) Required to Achieve this Goal	Led by	Start on (M/YY)	Complete By (M/YY)	Notes
The Journalism and Communication Studies department adopted a statement on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization (EDID) in early 2023. In early 2024, the department published its first annual action plan and progress report. The statement, action plan and progress report are all published at the bottom of the department's homepage . Those documents directly address several of the concerns raised in the External Review, including:	Chad Skelton	January 2023	May 2029	
 The department had adopted initiatives to specifically identify talented journalists from under-represented groups so they can be encouraged to apply for faculty positions The diversity of guest speakers is being tracked and reported on an annual basis EDID materials have been added to several courses and instructors are working on additional initiatives to add more 				



Action(s) Required to Achieve this Goal	Led by	Start on (M/YY)	Complete By (M/YY)	Notes
The department will continue to track its progress in this area on an annual basis.				
The Indigenous style guide is already discussed in JRNL 4240 Social Issues Journalism. The department will pursue adding this to the course outline for that course when it is up for revision, through the Faculty of Arts bylaws and Senate governance process.	Tracy Sherlock	June 2024	May 2026	
The Faculty of Arts already has an Indigenous Writer in Residence program. The department will reach out to the Dean's office to discuss the possibility of having an Indigenous journalist fulfil that role at some point in the future.	Tracy Sherlock	June 2024	May 2026	

Resource Requirements (if applicable)

Resources required to achieve this Goal: N/A

When resources will be required: N/A

Faculty and/or Institutional support required: Faculty in the Journalism and Communication Studies department will need to devote time to implementing these actions.



GOAL 6: Ensure staff and students have the equipment they need to be successful

Recommendation(s) this Goal Addresses	Indicate Report & Page Number
Investigate the feasibility of purchasing enough digital cameras, lenses, microphones and tripods so there would be 35 cameras on hand, enough for an entire Photojournalism or Video Journalism class to have one without needing to purchase their own.	SSR, p. 48
Discuss the Mac lab at an upcoming department meeting to canvas what, if any, concerns instructors have with the lab and how they could be addressed.	SSR, p. 48

Action(s) Required to Achieve this Goal	Led by	Start on (M/YY)	Complete By (M/YY)	Notes
Investigate the feasibility of purchasing enough digital cameras, lenses, microphones and tripods so there would be 35 cameras on hand, enough for an entire Photojournalism or Video Journalism class to have one without needing to purchase their own. Instructors for Photojournalism and Video Journalism will be consulted on the technical specifications required for the equipment.	Chad Skelton	June 2024	May 2026	
Discuss the Mac lab at an upcoming department meeting to canvas what, if any, concerns instructors have with the lab and how they could be addressed.	Chad Skelton	June 2024	December 2024	

Resource Requirements (if applicable)

Resources required to achieve this Goal: Purchasing 35 digital cameras would be a major capital expense that would require the support of the Dean's office.

When resources will be required: Ideally by May 2026.

Faculty and/or Institutional support required: University administration would need to support the capital investment to purchase 35 digital cameras. Faculty in the Journalism and Communication Studies department will need to devote time to implementing these actions.



PLAN SUPPORTED BY:			
Provost's Name	Provost's Signature	Date	
Dean's Name	 Dean's Signature	 Date	