School of Journalism
Faculty of Communication and Design

1 YEAR FOLLOW-UP REPORT

Last updated: March 8, 2019

Graduate program:	Master of Journalism (MJ)
Peer review team:	Kelly Toughill (University of King's College) Dr. Brian Gabrial (Concordia University) Art Blake (Ryerson University)
PRT report:	February 27, 2017
Program response:	March 28, 2017
YSGS response:	July 12, 2017
PPR approved by Senate:	December 5, 2017
1 Year Follow-Up Report due:	December 5, 2018

As mandated by Ryerson Senate Policy 126: Periodic Program Review of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs[1], within one year of Senate approval of the PPR, a 1 Year Follow-Up Report is to be submitted to the Faculty Dean or Dean of Record and the Vice-Provost and Dean, YSGS, on the progress of the implementation plan and any further recommendations. This follow-up report will also be reviewed by the Programs and Planning Committee, YSGS Council, and finally Senate. The PPR Report to Senate may also include a date(s) for subsequent Follow-up Reports.

What follows are the PRT recommendations, the program responses, YSGS responses, and the implementation plan, including the 1 year follow-up status reports by the program.

The recommendations are divided into two broad categories: academic and administrative/financial and for simplicity, all of this information is presented in the form of tables.

[1] https://www.ryerson.ca/content/dam/senate/policies/pol126.pdf

ACADEMIC RECOMMENDATIONS

PRT Recommendation	MJ Original Program Response	YSGS Original Response	Original MJ Implementation Plan including Lead Proposed Date for Implementation	MJ 1 year Follow-Up/Update – December 2018
1. Begin the immediate process of replacing the current Master of Journalism (MJ) program (see the next five specific recommendations that follow below). 1.a. The School should overhaul the Master of Journalism curriculum.	The School recognizes the enormous challenge of reviewing and revising the curriculum but believes that work is essential for the preservation of the School's reputation as the leading Canadian journalism school.	YSGS supports the program's efforts to review and revise its curriculum, as per Policy 127. YSGS will support the program as needed for any minor or major curriculum modifications, again, as per Policy 127.	The School is currently in the process of replacing its MJ program. Changes will be presented to Senate in Winter 2018 for potential implementation in 2018-2019	**January 2018:** Revised MJ curriculum approved by RSJ School Council **May 2018:** Revised MJ curriculum approved by YSGS Program and Planning Committee and YSGS Council **May 2018:** Revised MJ curriculum approved by University Senate **September 2018:** The new curriculum was implemented with the incoming MJ cohort.
1.b The PRT encourages the curriculum team, as it moves forward, to eliminate any curriculum silos that may inhibit the acquisition of skills in all journalistic delivery platforms.	The 'silos' are the 'platforms' of the news media: broadcast, print, magazine and online. The committee agrees with the PRT that more skills need to be delivered without concern for content that may have been previously placed in a silo and protected. Efforts should be focused toward students gathering as many core multimedia skills as possible during their two-year program.	YSGS supports the program-level response.	The revised curriculum will require students to take courses that focus on different forms of journalism – digital, live coverage and narrative – across all platforms. Changes will be presented to Senate in Winter 2018 for potential implementation in 2018-2019	**January 2019:** Incoming MJ students are now taking courses in digital, multimedia and narrative journalism in the Winter 2019. Instructors have worked together to develop and co-ordinate their course plans to ensure students are learning all of those skills.

1.c The curriculum review should emphasize digital journalism, mobile journalism and include visual thinking (video, data visualization) in the core curriculum.	The PRT's advice to enrich the MJ program with more digital, data and visual journalism is well taken. Emboldened with this recommendation, the MJ committee will move quickly to address these issues.	YSGS supports the program-level response.	Digital journalism will be introduced early and often both through the refocusing of core courses as well as the introduction of new ones. Changes will be presented to Senate in Winter 2018 for potential implementation in 2018-2019.	**September 2018:** First-semester courses on local news reporting and reporting and data methods included revised and robust digital components, including an introductory data journalism module.
1.d Revise the MJ program, but, in the interim, the School might reschedule the digital media course so that it is taken earlier in the program and innovate within existing course designs to make graduate students as multi-media savvy as possible.	The PRT's advice is timely and astute. In fact, the School has already enthusiastically adopted this specific recommendation.	YSGS supports the program-level response.	Two currently-offered, first-semester courses – Research Methods for Journalists and The City: Reporting, Writing – have been refocused to emphasize digital reporting skills including video production, social media reporting and data journalism methods. September 2018	*See above*
1.e. The School should consider the impact on the graduate program if applications continue to decline, and develop a response to that potential threat.	The PRT's suggestion that the School brace itself for a decline in applications to its MJ program has been heeded. The MJ committee has been discussing the goal of revising its recruitment strategy for 2018–19. Support for graduate recruitment at the FCAD level has been	YSGS supports the program-level response. We also urge the program to consider its recruitment and communication strategy as a part of the curriculum review. The new curriculum may provide direction on the most appropriate recruitment and communication strategies.	Reaching out to undergraduate departments at Ryerson for potential candidates. Reviewing strategy at FCAD level. November 2018.	**Winter 2018:** Formalized graduate assistantships as an additional funding source for accepted MJ candidates. In the past, these arrangements were made after the student registered for the program. **Fall 2018:** Participation in FCAD-led initiatives related to graduate recruitment included Grad Night at Ryerson, OCAD Grad Fair, York University Grad Fair **November 2018:** RSJ MJ Info Night drew 20 students interested in the program. Event included panel of current students and

	bolstered by the appointment of a graduate programs development assistant.			instructors offering more insights into the program
2. Consider more creative scheduling options where courses may meet more than once a week.	As the PRT noted, the School has taken a number of initiatives that "improve the quality of the student experience." Providing as much flexibility to students—who juggle many demands such as work, family and commuting—in addition to full-time studies has been a priority. The School has developed e-learning to give students the opportunity to learn in their own environment on their own schedule such as our in-house video tutorials to teach technology and some journalism skills to supplement classroom lectures and workshops.	YSGS supports the program-level response. YSGS notes that any changes with respect to e-learning should be considered as a part of the program's curriculum review. The program should also consider the university's overall e-learning strategies and priorities as a part of the curriculum review.	This recommendation is currently under review.	**May 2019:** Two required MJ courses (Essential Editing and MRP I) will be offered online-only in the Spring/Summer semester. **September 2019:** The Indigenous Reporting elective (offered online) will be cross-listed for MJ students.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

PRT Recommendation	MJ Original Program Response	YSGS Original Response	Original MJ Implementation Plan including Lead Proposed Date for Implementation	MJ 1 year Follow-Up/Update – December 2018
1. Hire at least two new tenure-track faculty members. Further hires should occur after the School develops a hiring plan in conjunction with the graduate program curriculum review.	The School agrees with the PRT that hiring new tenure-stream faculty who are focused on knowledge and experience in media transformation and its implications for innovative curriculum is strategically vital for the School particularly with major curriculum review in the MJ program. The School has been given permission to hire one tenure-track professor to start in 2018-19.	YSGS supports the program-level response. YSGS notes, however, that any additional new faculty appointments need to be considered in the context of university- and faculty-level planning. The appointment of new faculty is outside of the purview of YSGS. The program is urged to work with the Dean of FCAD on a plan for new faculty recruitment.	One tenure-track opening has been posted, specifically looking for a candidate "demonstrating experience in multimedia and digital journalism, an understanding of entrepreneurialism, audience engagement and a track record of innovation and experimentation in the transforming journalism ecosystem." October 2017.	**July 2018:** Tenure-track position filled **October 2018:** Search process begins for second tenure-track position (in progress)
2. Extend the current eight-month contracts of the technical staff and seek ways to bolster their professional development opportunities.	The School agrees that technical staff play a crucial role in delivering the curriculum and supporting faculty. We will address this recommendation by examining a) extending the contracts and, b) bolstering professional development opportunities.	YSGS supports the program-level response.	One technical staff member has had their contract extended for the full year. Other positions are currently under review. May 2017.	**Spring/Summer 2018:** An additional technical staff member worked part-time for the School of Journalism and was also seconded part-time to FCAD projects for this period, with the expectation that this arrangement will continue.

3. Continue important collaborative work with ThriveRU, a program dedicated to ensuring the mental health of students.	The School is proud of its commitment to address student wellbeing and appreciates the PRT enthusiasm for our innovative initiatives. However, it should be clarified that Thrive RU is only one facet, and a recent one, of our commitment to the whole student and a number of other initiatives are ongoing in this area.	YSGS supports the program's ongoing efforts devoted to ensuring student well-being. We also note that the program should draw on the resources and support services available within FCAD and Ryerson University.	The ThriveRU program continues to be an important intra-university initiative at the School of Journalism. Ongoing.	**September 2018:** RSJ professors Ann Rauhala and Lisa Taylor led a 12-week workshop on mindfulness and meditation for journalism students, as part of a research project.
4. Review equipment check out policies to make sure they are adequately meeting the needs of the students.	The School agrees that this is critical—students cannot participate in courses and complete assignments without access to the appropriate equipment. To improve efficiency, the School entered into an equipment-sharing arrangement with the RTA School of Media a few years ago, and the School's technical and administrative staff is examining the policies and practices to ensure there is fair and equitable sharing between students in both schools.	YSGS supports the program-level response. We agree that specific attention must be given to the needs of graduate students in any equipment-sharing agreements.	This recommendation is currently under review. Currently (10/2017) under review.	Under review by the School of Journalism, with changes to graduate-student access expected for Fall 2019.

5. Consider giving students greater access to Mac labs and the TV and radio studios.	The School recognizes that it needs to better communicate to students that they have access to many of the radio suites located in the Rogers Communications Centre and they need only to request card/key access. The School will examine how to best communicate this information to students. This will become more urgent as a significant renovation is planned for the School's radio studio.	YSGS supports the program-level response.	This recommendation is currently under review. Currently (10/2017) under review.	Under review by the School of Journalism, with changes expected in Fall 2019.

(If applicable) Additional points that were raised by the reviewers throughout their review, but were not part of the section titled: Recommendations.

These points have all since been addressed.

Summary Statement/Conclusion:

In conclusion, we thank the external reviewers and colleagues in YSGS for a very thorough assessment of the strengths and challenges of the Journalism program. The PRT recommendations and both the YSGS and departmental responses raise important points regarding the program, and the discussion of these will only have a positive development in the evolution of the program.