

DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM PLANNING

The following statement was originally drawn by a Planning Committee of the Department of Journalism which was appointed in April, 1950, by Professor Banner, and consisted of Professors Davis, Schla-bach and Marbut, with the last-named as chairman. It was debated at a series of formal and informal meetings of the whole or part of the department in January and February, 1951, and adopted as amended on February 27.

As presented here, it incorporates amendments inserted at the department meetings.

This report presents the conclusions and opinions of the Department of Journalism Planning Committee as discussed, presented and revised in a series of meetings which started in May, 1950, and continued during the summer and autumn. It is the result of considerable study of other journalism curricula and of the opinions of leaders of education and the press. It is divided as follows:

- A. A statement of Policy. Goals and General Objectives of Journalism Education at the Pennsylvania State College.
- B. Undergraduate Curricular Revisions
- C. Recommendations in Regard to Departmental Administrative Procedures as they Affect Instruction.

Although the committee discussed physical facilities, teaching aids, purchase of new equipment, budget recommendations, a graduate program, relations with the library, etc., they were tabled for the present. It is recommended that they be considered by the committee which is discussed under Section "C."

A. A Statement of Policy

Through much of the recent writing on collegiate education--for instance, in the Harvard Report, the Report of the President's Commission, in an interview with Dr. Milton S. Eisenhower published in the Centre Daily Times soon after he assumed his duties as president of this College--there runs a considerable unanimity of purpose. This purpose is a preparation through education not only for a vocation or profession, but for citizenship. As applied to journalism, a similar strain runs, to mention only a few sources, through the report of the Commission on Freedom of the Press, the statements issued by Harvard University in connection with the establishment of

the Nieman Fellowships, and articles by Dean McConnell of the University of Minnesota College of Arts and Sciences in a recent issue of the "Nieman Reports," an address by Marquis W. Childs at the University of Oregon which was published in the Spring, 1950, issue of the "Journalism Quarterly," the Mellett lecture delivered by Mark Ethridge at Kent State University in November, 1944 and quoted in MacDougall's Interpretative Reporting, and a similar lecture delivered at Penn State by Louis Lyons in May, 1950.

The opinion running through such writing, and supported by this committee, may be summarized as follows:

Education in general--and collegiate education in particular--must be directed far beyond immediate professional and money-making goals and must prepare the citizen to take an enlightened, broad and competent part in the improvement of the political, economic and cultural standards of our free society. For this reason, an A.B. degree contemplates as broad a survey as it is possible to give within the limits of a four year curriculum of all fields of human knowledge. Even such professional schools as law and medicine are limiting their pre-professional requirements to provide time for an increasing study of cultural subjects and of public problems.

In this general trend, study directed toward specialized training such as that in journalism, has not, however, been pushed aside. In the early years in which journalism was being established as a subject for collegiate education, these objectives mentioned above were presented in the writings of university policy-makers. However, pure professional training, offering a program which permitted a very broad leeway in the choice of its electives, dominated.

Depression, war, and forty years of experience, however, have shown the failure of undirected broad training in specialized fields. They have shown, furthermore, that the average college student is too immature to be turned loose even with the assistance of an adviser in broad elective fields outside his professional curriculum. Recent years have seen the tightening of required sequences--in professional curricula, in the purely cultural educational fields, and in the progressive schools and departments of journalism. In view of all the foregoing, we therefore recommend a continuance of the present broad cultural background provided for journalism students at Penn State, but urge a tightened sequence, not only in journalism subjects, but also in related Liberal Arts fields.

We would like to make it clear at this point that we support the statement of the current goals of the department of journalism as set out in the College catalog--that is, the training of students in news, editorial and advertising work as described in the two present majors, News and Editorial, and Advertising. We support the thesis that we are training workers in these capacities in both the publishing and radio fields.

We believe further that the Department has an important service to perform in reaching college students outside its own

curriculum. We are particularly pleased with the recent arrangements made with the School of Agriculture providing for specialization in agricultural journalism and with those already in effect in the School of Home Economics.

Not only would we like to hold the interest of those students planning a professional career in journalism, but also many others who are aware of the definite link between their future vocations and the field of modern communications. We believe also that in the introductory courses of our Department the content is such that a broad understanding of the relationship between press and public in a democratic state is emphasized, that a free press and free enterprise are linked with the concept of an American way of life, and that the courses thus have a definite part to play for all students in their education for citizenship.

We believe that the students specializing in journalism and advertising should receive, first, the best possible study of reporting and copy-reading, or training in advertising practices and techniques; secondly, training in specialized writing fields and specialized periodical literary markets, and in the third place, a thorough study of the nature of communications media -- and by that we include the newspaper press, specialized periodicals, and radio -- in today's America. This third field includes such studies as the publishing industry's business problems and structure, its history and law, its ethics and the writings of its critics, in order to bring out clearly the press's position in the total evolving development of the state and country. Furthermore, we must give each graduate a thorough comprehension of the nature of freedom of the press -- that is, the legal and extra-legal facts and discussions bearing on the free exchange of opinion.

We believe that we can better achieve these ends, and still leave a desirable elective leeway, by setting out strengthened required sequences and adding a few new courses, in a way designed as effectively as possible to provide a balance among the three purposes mentioned above. Furthermore, we believe that we can better assure control of our students' desirable broad background in related fields by taking upon ourselves a more active control and direction of the courses taken by journalists outside of this department. For these purposes, we have prepared the program outlined in the pages which follow.

B. Undergraduate Curricular Revisions

The committee proposes few changes in the present curriculum. It does, however, suggest modifications in some of the present courses and a few additions. A more detailed discussion follows:

Journalism 1 and 2. We propose that this course title be changed to "Introduction to Communications." It should continue to be conducted by visiting speakers, but should have members of our own

staff also on the program, and should be so conducted that, by the end of each academic year, it shall have carried out the following purposes:

1. To introduce students to our curriculum, to acquaint them with the goals of journalism education in general and the curriculum at Penn State in particular.

2. To provide them with a knowledge of: a. The structure, organization, purposes and ethics of the communications field, including the operation of such organizations as the ANPA, the FNPA, the ASNE, the PSNE, the American Newspaper Guild, and various sub-organizations; b. Possible careers, salaries, opportunities in communications fields; c. Structure and ethics of the advertising business, media practices, newspaper advertising operations on both large and small papers, agency structure, and something of manufacturing and retail store advertising procedures; d. Structure and operation of the three telegraphic press associations and of the major newspaper syndicates; e. Such specialized publishing fields as the agricultural press, house organs, industrial employee magazines, the labor press, publicity,, magazines, etc.

Students should be taught the use of the journalism library, be encouraged to read newspapers regularly, and especially to browse among those to which the department subscribes, be apprised of the books on journalism available in the Central Library, and be introduced to the office file on them.

The committee feels that the present system of employing speakers from the field is extremely valuable. We believe, however, that in many cases, the very fact that they talk in technicalities in which their listeners are inadequately trained means that their remarks lose some of their effectiveness. Therefore, while recognizing the fact that these speakers must be scheduled at their own convenience rather than that of the department, we feel that every effort should be made to bring them to the campus to discuss, if possible, a predetermined sequence. Furthermore, members of the department's own faculty may be scheduled the previous week in the case of some speakers, and may be called on to fill the gaps left by the speakers.

Journalism 3. This course might be developed into a very valuable study of current history and current periodicals and their respective policies and approaches for Liberal Arts students who are not journalism majors. It has not, however, drawn from outside the department. As far as our own majors are concerned, its purpose is largely met by the fact that regular news quizzes and required extensive newspaper reading have been introduced into Journalism 13 and 15.

We recommend, therefore, that unless the course can be built up from outside this department, that serious consideration be given to the possibility of dropping it from the catalog.

Journalism 13. This course should continue largely along the line that it now follows. It should be required of all journalism majors, and be offered to home economics, agriculture, English and

education students. The first few weeks of the course, however, may be devoted to a more intensive study than now of newspaper staff organization, reading, news quizzes, and of ethics. Then the course should take up news story structure, the stylebook, and the writing of such simple news story types as fire, accident, weather and obit stories, speeches and interviews. It is very important that the course give advertising majors the ability to write news style publicity stories, and that they learn the conventional copy-reading marks.

Journalism 15. The committee recommends that Journalism 15 be no longer required of advertising majors. We feel that experience has shown that the chief advantage advertising students derive from the present requirement is facility in the use of the conventional copy-reading marks. We emphasize, therefore, that the use of those marks must be included in the instruction in Journalism 13. In place of this requirement, however, as will be pointed out later in this report, we recommend that to further familiarize advertising students with some phase of journalism which is not in the advertising sequence, they be required to schedule a three hour non advertising journalism course.

Journalism 17. A new course, intended to fill what the committee feels is a very serious shortage in the basic reporting instruction now made available. It would not be required of advertising majors.

To be offered for three hours credit, it should be scheduled with one hour recitation and four hours laboratory periods each week. During the semester, students should devote long hours to class or out-of-the-classroom exercises in interviewing, observing, or otherwise reporting and writing newspaper copy. Each class must be scheduled to meet in Room 8, Carnegie Hall, and each class should, as nearly as possible, simulate city room rewrite conditions with the instructor acting as city editor.

If possible, two or more phones should be run into that room, with the work of the semester including exercises in telephoning stories from other points, each call going to the city desk first and then to a rewrite man, and in taking such telephoned stories and writing them. Extensive work with speeches, rewrites of current clippings, press releases selected to emphasize the publicity problem, interviews, news of organizations (including instruction in the nature of the patriotic, social and service clubs which make much of the news in certain areas), conventions (with the new lead problem), the police station and crime (with emphasis on libel), some human interest writing and picture captions could be made the bases of a good deal of copy writing.

The course should demand a minimum of 2,000 words of copy by each student each week, to be done principally during class periods, with each story subjected to the instructor's comments as soon as completed. Grading each would, under these conditions, obviously be impossible. It would, therefore, be necessary to work out periodic exercises which the instructor must grade and record. Examinations might be eliminated, and marks be based entirely on graded written work or the instructor's impression of the quality of all ungraded

work submitted.

In addition to clippings, press releases, campus sports and society events, and collections of mimeographed material which might be used for exercises, students could be ordered to attend and report on campus and town speeches. Personalities on the campus and in the town might be persuaded to attend the class and submit to press-conference type interviews. On the other hand, instructors should use caution in giving students outside assignments which require calls on borough or College officials or certain students. Although such exercises are given successfully at some schools and although the temptation to try them here is great, this community does not lend itself well to this type of practice.

A special departmental committee should work out the course in detail.

We propose, therefore, that this course be submitted with the following catalog description:

"Journalism 17. NEWS WRITING. (3). A continuation of Journalism 13, with emphasis on concentrated writing of more advanced types of news stories. Prerequisite: Journalism 13. Recitation, 1 hour, laboratory, 4 hours."

Journalism 27-28. The committee feels that the Collegian section of Journ. 27-28 has been weak because many of the Collegian staff who have been enrolled have been assigned beats by the news editors on which they prepared little or no copy, while recitations have found the instructors facing class inertia and lack of interest that made instruction difficult. We believe the record of the Centre Daily sections has been much better, but that more students have been enrolled there than could be given adequate work.

The committee feels, however, that a field reporting course is extremely desirable. For one thing, employers expect something of the sort from journalism graduates. Therefore, the only solution is to continue this requirement, but to seek means of making it effective.

We recommend that the instructor of the Collegian sections seek arrangements with the Collegian news editors which would assure a higher volume of work. If that falls down, then the instructor should be empowered, in a way similar to that which Brown and Pockrass have been doing, to give additional assignments which would require the student to write the equivalent of at least 1,000 words per week.

The committee considered with interest newspaper internships similar to those of Kent State University, Michigan State College, or the facilities made available to Texas journalism departments by the Texas Newspaper Association. We have had no opportunity to investigate thoroughly, but it seems that an attempt to apply such an internship here, for college credit would violate Senate regulations. We recommend, however, that the department continue to investigate the possibility of arranging internships on Pennsylvania newspapers and seek

some way of meeting Senate regulations so that such practice work elsewhere can be arranged.

Journalism 441. In order to keep our advertising instruction on the advanced level of some other schools, and to meet a request of the department of commerce and finance, the committee proposes a new course in "Advanced Advertising Copywriting." It should bear a "400" number to make graduate credit possible and be described as follows:

"Journalism 441. ADVANCED ADVERTISING COPYWRITING. (3). Advanced instruction in the preparation of advertisements for both commercial and public service purposes; copy pre-evaluation and testing extensive use of the method of the "copy clinic." Prerequisite: Journalism 41. Recitation, 3 hours."

Journalism 66. A new course to be proposed with the following catalog description:

"Journalism 66. PUBLICITY AND PUBLIC RELATIONS. (3). Public relations practices in industry, government departments, and other institutions; publicity media and means of using them, and preparation of material. Study of industrial house organs. Prerequisite: Journalism 13. Recitation, 3 hours."

Those courses which have not been discussed here, it is to be assumed, are to continue on their present basis. The committee would like to point out, however, that there has been present in our thinking, in relation to Journalism 13, the new Journalism 17, and Journalism 24, recognition of a need for a consistent sequence of reporting study. Journalism 13 should emphasize news staff organization, ethics, and the general rules of news story structure, lead organization, and the writing of simple story types. Journalism 17 should produce intensified study of those fields, with broad exercises in writing and, in addition, should bring in crime and court news, sports, and important speeches and interviews. Journalism 24, which we considered requiring as a part of the News and Editorial Sequence, will continue to emphasize news story approach, but will also study the organization of those facts about a community's political, social, and economic structure with which a reporter most often deals.

We feel, however, that every journalism course should be outlined in greater detail than now, both with regard to its content and teaching methods. We recommend, therefore, that the entire department be asked immediately to prepare or revise detailed outlines of courses and that these outlines be co-ordinated and integrated as they were in 1947.

In view of the fact that certain of the courses now offered by the department are given, in most cases, only to junior and senior students, that the subject matter of such courses is substantial enough to warrant "400" numbers, and that a graduate program is under consideration for the future, the committee proposes at this time to change the present courses in Journalism 16, Advanced Copy Reading; Journalism 24, Advanced Reporting; and Journalism 80, Publishing Problems,

to Journalism 416, 424, and 480 respectively.

One other change to "400" courses would be desirable. In view of the fact that the subject matter of the present Journ. 30, School Publications, is very similar to that of Journ. 430, Supervision and management of School Publications, and in order that the catalog listing might be simplified and regularized, the former course should be dropped, and the latter, which is now authorized only for Summer Sessions, should be authorized for Regular Sessions.

The long description of Journalism 430 should be simplified to read as follows:

"Journ. 430. SUPERVISION AND MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL PUBLICATIONS. (3). Instruction in reporting, make-up of both printed and mimeographed school publications, the graphic arts, and circulation and advertising problems for the supervisor of school newspapers and yearbooks. Prerequisite: 6 hours of journalism or English composition."

With these course changes to effectuate the general principles set out in Section "A" of this report, the committee recommends the following required sequences:

Major in Advertising: Journ. 1, 2, 4, 13, 40, 41, 42 and 480, 9 additional hours in advertising courses within the department of journalism, three additional hours in journalism outside the advertising sequence. As many as six more hours in journalism, in either advertising or non-advertising courses, may be taken. Each advertising major will, in addition, be required to elect six hours of retailing and marketing courses in the department of economics and commerce, and three hours of advanced psychology or commercial art.

Major in Community Journalism: Journ. 1, 2, 4, 13, 15, 27 or 28, 40, 70, and 85, plus six credits selected from Journ. 14, 46, 68 or 480, and from 3 to 9 credits of journalism electives. Each community journalism major will also take 3 credits of rural sociology plus 3 credits in each of the following fields: economics and commerce, history and political science.

Major in News and Editing: Journ. 1, 2, 4, 13, 15, 17, 27 or 28, 68 and 480, plus from nine to fifteen additional hours in journalism courses. Each news and editing major will also be required to schedule at least three hours in addition to the lower division minimum in each of the following departments: economics, history, political science and sociology.

6. Recommendations in Regard to Departmental Administrative Procedures as they Affect Instruction.

The committee recognizes that a continuing program of curricular and instructional improvement involves matters beyond the

mere setting up of catalog changes. To the end that both staff and administrative opinion be properly brought to bear on all important matters pertaining to curricula and instruction, this committee proposes a permanent departmental planning committee.

The permanent committee should consist of the department head, a full professor from the advertising sequence and one from the news and editorial sequence, and one man of lower academic rank from each of those sequences, to be appointed by the department head. Appointments may be for a single academic year or for a longer period, at the department head's discretion.

We propose that this permanent committee confer and plan, not only with reference to future course and curriculum changes, but also, as the occasion may warrant, with reference to other matters closely related to the quality and content of the instructional program recently instituted by the department of economics and commerce.

The "all department" viewpoint as reflected by such a committee might be particularly helpful in such matters as assignment of courses, allocation of funds in proposed budgets, contacts with the PNPA Advisory Committee and other organizational groups, and the employment and promotion of staff members. It is also proposed that this permanent planning committee be given departmental authority to create and appoint such other necessary departmental committees as the committees on standards, library, etc.

This committee recommends that the permanent planning committee meet at any time on call of the department head or at the request of a majority of its members, keep a record of its actions, and submit for the consideration of the full department from time to time such matters as may, in the opinion of the committee, warrant full departmental consideration.
