

August 19, 2022

MEMORANDUM**TO:** M. Katherine Banks, Ph.D.
President**FROM:** Timothy P. Scott, Interim Provost and Chief Academic Officer
Working Group ChairA handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Scott', written over a white background.**SUBJECT:** Implementation Memo – Working Group 11 – Journalism Department

Recommendation to be Implemented: Working Group #11 (WG11) was charged with recommending an administrative structure for the new journalism degree. This charge was then broadened to include issues related to *The Battalion* and Student Media. WG11 also considered items the MGT Report suggested to elevate the existing journalism program (for example, investment in faculty, staff, and technology; possible curricular specializations; and potential public outreach initiatives). The appendix presents in detail the recommendations of WG11, the projected implementation timeline, and potential costs.

Digital communication and information technology have transformed how news is produced and consumed, challenged standards for evaluating and disseminating information, and demanded a fundamental rethinking of news media business models. WG11 supports a multidisciplinary approach to journalism to allow adaptation to rapidly changing communication, media, and information landscapes. It proposes 26 specific recommendations for becoming a national leader in preparing students to thrive in 21st century news and media professions. The recommendations fall into four areas. Highlights follow:

1) **Administrative Structure**

- Designate a newly renamed Department of Communication and Journalism as the administrative home of the new bachelor's degree in journalism.
- Conduct a national search for a director of the new journalism bachelor's degree and hire a mix of six or more tenured/tenure-track faculty and professors of the practice to develop two or more strategic areas.
- Invest in infrastructure by hiring two additional staff members (in part to build an immersive internship program with national reach) and upgrading current student multimedia labs in Bolton Hall.

2) **Curriculum**

- Develop immersive professional experiences leveraging internal opportunities provided by units such as KAMU, Student Media, and 12th Man Productions, as well as create a cutting-edge internship program partnering with local news outlets and national news organizations.

- Create an immersive-experience newsroom located in a state-of-the-art building along with KAMU’s new home and the new journalism degree.
 - Further develop curriculum to enable journalism students to specialize in various subject areas as well as develop expertise in storytelling across textual, visual, and audio platforms; facilitate audience engagement; understand the economics of journalism; and report on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- 3) Public Service
- Launch a news desert initiative to help news outlets in underserved areas in Texas to deliver news and other important community-level information.
- 4) Student Media
- Maintain the status of *The Battalion* as a registered student organization and create an association with the newly renamed Department of Communication and Journalism.
 - Reestablish the Student Media Board to serve as a liaison between the administration and Student Media, protect editorial independence, and help ensure that Student Media pursues high-quality, responsible journalism.
 - Continue producing the weekly print edition at least through spring 2023.
 - Prioritize digital journalism by *The Battalion* by emphasizing and supporting coverage via its website, multimedia, and social media platforms.
 - Have the reestablished Student Media Board explore multiple revenue streams for *The Battalion*, including print and digital advertising, administrative funds, sponsorships, and events and products, as well as creation of an endowment with the A&M Foundation.

Strategic Considerations: Strategic considerations that shaped the discussion and informed WG11’s recommendations included (1) the need to address the digital transformation of journalism, (2) A&M’s commitment to serving the citizens of Texas, (3) A&M’s recognition as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), and (4) existing A&M assets for developing immersive professional experiences for students.

Logistical Issues Addressed: The group discussed at length the best structure in which to build a nationally prominent journalism degree. Intellectually, the disciplines of journalism and communication overlap greatly. The new journalism degree also cross-lists a high percentage of courses with COMM, and the Department of Communication has developed a robust infrastructure to support journalism. The value of maintaining and extending synergies in research and teaching was a compelling rationale for making a newly renamed Department of Communication and Journalism the administrative home of the new journalism degree. WG11 also expressed a strong desire to establish journalism specializations, which will require collaboration across academic and nonacademic units in various parts of the university. If KAMU is incorporated as part of building an immersive newsroom experience for journalism students, additional planning and coordination will be required as KAMU transitions from its temporary to permanent home.

Major Challenges Encountered and Resolutions: Developing the new journalism degree will require ongoing engagement with practicing professionals to ensure that students acquire needed

skills and experiences to excel in a rapidly changing marketplace. It also is important that *The Battalion* remain an independent voice on A&M's campus. WG11 proposes that an alumni advisory board be established to help guide the new journalism degree and that the Student Media Board be reestablished to provide guidance to *The Battalion* and serve as a liaison between *The Battalion* and university administration.

Key Logistical Issues to be Completed and Timeline: A detailed three-year timeline appears in the appendix. Key activities for the first year include the following:

- Reestablish Student Media Board & Develop MOU with Key Partners: September 2022
- Submit a proposal for the new degree early in the fall 2022 semester as opposed to August 2022 as recommended in the attached final report and tentative timeline
- Form interim journalism advisory board: October 1, 2022
- Rename Department of Communication to the Department of Communication and Journalism: September 1, 2022
- Begin search for journalism director and additional faculty: Fall 2022
- Begin admitting students to a new bachelor's degree in journalism: Fall 2023

Approved:



M. Katherine Banks, Ph.D.
President

September 10, 2022

Date

* Approved with the exception of staffing increases, multimedia upgrades, and paid-internship experiences. These initiatives need to be revisited with the Chief Financial Officer, HROE, Vice President for Facilities, Chief Operations Officer, and the Texas A&M Foundation.

* Faculty hiring will occur over time and correlated to growth in enrollment in the new journalism degree.



TEXAS A&M JOURNALISM

Working Group No. 11

Spring 2022

INTRODUCTION

The modern world relies on the exchange of trustworthy information and ideas. Journalism facilitates that exchange by connecting people and providing the information and context to help them understand what's happening in their lives and how they can improve society.

But journalism is suffering through radical upheaval fueled by digital technology that has transformed the way people produce and consume information. Old revenue models are failing, and standards for evaluating and disseminating information have deteriorated. Despite its critical role in democracy, journalism faces an existential crisis.

Texas A&M stands ready to respond boldly by leading the transformation and revitalization of the news industry while preparing generations of student journalists to thrive in a rapidly changing media environment.

The Journalism Working Group recommends the creation of a cutting-edge journalism program that offers students a versatile, innovative, and immersive educational experience in a new, state-of-the-art learning laboratory designed to prepare them for 21st century newsrooms.

Within a decade Texas A&M could become a journalism program of national influence, drawing on the latest technological advances, the university's wide-ranging academic prowess, and the Aggie culture of public service.

The recommended program would ensure that Texas A&M journalism students:

- Are well-grounded in the fundamental ethics and essential role of journalism in a democratic society.
- Learn from an exceptional array of faculty and top industry professionals.
- Master cutting-edge techniques for audience engagement and storytelling on a variety of publication platforms.
- Graduate with an extraordinary abundance of meaningful, practical real-world experience.
- Understand how to navigate their careers amid the dynamic mix of traditional and emerging business models — and embrace the challenges and opportunities they present.
- Have opportunities to develop highly valued subject-matter expertise through partnerships with other University academic fields and programs.

INTRODUCTION, cont.

Additionally, the new journalism program would:

- Initiate a project to extend the university's land-grant mission to Texas journalism, assisting existing news organizations and startups in underserved communities that need help because of industry headwinds.
- Research new business models and new methods of storytelling.
- Develop methods to distinguish truth from misinformation, strengthen news media reliability, and nurture the public trust.
- Deepen relationships with well-respected media companies to identify opportunities for initiatives that help meet critical industry needs.
- Affiliate with independent student media to help strengthen its dual role as a learning lab for future journalists and an independent medium of the student voice.
- Take shape within a newly named Department of Communication and Journalism to benefit from overlapping curriculum and research, as well as to reduce administrative overhead.
- Commit to regular, rigorous self-examination to ensure that priorities, practices, and structures evolve to meet the future needs of students, the profession, and the public it serves.

What follows are 26 specific recommendations for creating and sustaining a 21st century journalism program. They are organized into four categories: **administrative structure, curriculum, public service, and student media.**

The recommendations are the results of more than three months of research, reflection, and discussion. The recommendations draw on the input of industry experts, former and current students, Texas A&M faculty, and educators at other institutions.

The Working Group is confident that these recommendations collectively will ensure that future Texas A&M journalism-degree recipients uphold Aggie core values and the highest ethical tenets of the profession.

Texas A&M would serve the public interest for generations by strengthening the exchange of trustworthy information and ideas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Rationale: The Working Group supports a multidisciplinary version of journalism that can adapt to rapidly changing communication, media, and information landscapes. Many journalism departments are in schools or colleges of communication alongside departments of communication, information science, strategic communication, film, and interactive media. This academic configuration creates and leverages research and curricular synergies. The group proposes that the Department of Communication be renamed and rebranded as the **Department of Communication and Journalism**. Eventually, it may be appropriate to determine whether, while maintaining a multidisciplinary approach, a separate **Department of Journalism** should be established, for example as part of a **School of Communication and Journalism**.

- 1) Make a newly renamed Department of Communication and Journalism the administrative home of the new bachelor's degree program in journalism.
- 2) Conduct a national search for a director of the journalism bachelor's degree program.
- 3) Hire at least six journalism faculty (including both tenured and tenure-track faculty and professors of the practice) to develop the program in two or more strategic areas.
- 4) In coordination with the newly named Department of Communication and Journalism, hire one or two additional departmental staff to provide infrastructure support, including for development of an internship program with national reach and placement.
- 5) Provide short-term funding to upgrade current multimedia labs by increasing space and investing in state-of-the-art hardware and software, including Adobe Creative Cloud and other resources.
- 6) Provide long-term funding and space to create an immersive-experience newsroom with state-of-the-art technology and collaborative workspaces.
- 7) Partner with the Texas A&M Foundation to establish an endowed chair of journalism.
- 8) Develop a journalism advisory board to provide ongoing curricular feedback, develop industry relationships, and engage with professionals and organizations to meet students' learning needs.
- 9) Partner with the Texas A&M Foundation to establish an excellence fund for journalism.
- 10) Provide base funding, or establish an endowment, to fund professional journalism workshops, a journalist-in-residence program, or both.

RECOMMENDATIONS, cont.

CURRICULUM

Rationale: Texas A&M should create an innovative undergraduate experience for journalism majors, who must graduate with the skills and experience to compete in and adapt to a rapidly changing industry. A cutting-edge curriculum would respond to changes in digital information technologies and new economic models and encourage student specialization in existing and emerging journalism areas. The centerpiece of the curricular recommendations is a set of immersive experiences for students.

- 1) Develop immersive professional experiences leveraging internal opportunities provided by units such as KAMU, Student Media, and 12th Man Productions.
- 2) Create an immersive-experience newsroom located in a state-of-the-art building, along with KAMU's new home and the journalism degree program.
- 3) Build a cutting-edge internship program that partners with local news outlets such as The Eagle and KBTX-TV, statewide operations such as The Texas Tribune, and national news organizations such as The Associated Press.
- 4) Provide funding to help upper-level journalism students participate in external internships, and prepare students by requiring a pre-internship experience that equips them to perform in a professional environment.
- 5) Involve industry professionals in teaching by hiring professors of the practice; developing a journalist-in-residence program; and having top-quality, award-winning visiting professors provide in-person or online offerings such as short courses, lectures, and immersive workshops.
- 6) Develop coursework that emphasizes the economics of print, digital, broadcast, apps, and podcasts, as well as commercial and nonprofit business models. Be flexible enough to evolve at the speed at which media are changing.
- 7) Develop coursework that teaches how to report on diversity, inclusion, and equity issues.
- 8) Create a media literacy course—focusing on issues of misinformation, information inequality, and media ethics—that may appeal to a broad range of Texas A&M students. The course would satisfy 1-3 of the 6 student credit hours of communication courses in the University Core Curriculum.
- 9) Create a nimble collaborative framework for establishing partnerships with other Texas A&M units—such as The Bush School of Government & Public Service, the McFerrin Center for Entrepreneurship, and the Department of Visualization—to enable journalism students to specialize in various subject areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS, cont.

PUBLIC SERVICE

Rationale: Texas A&M is land, sea, and space grant university with a strong commitment to serving the citizens of Texas. The state has seen a rapid decline in the number and publication frequency of news publishing entities, resulting in “news deserts” across the state and under-representation of many Texas communities in state and national conversations. As part of our public service mission, we see considerable value in a strategic plan for journalism that is designed to **extend the reach of journalism in Texas** to Texans. Texas A&M is well positioned to create such an initiative given our commitment to service and outreach. Compared with other existing programs in the state of Texas, we have an opportunity to distinguish ourselves in terms of focus and scale.

- 1) Launch a news desert initiative to help news outlets in underserved areas in Texas to deliver news and other important community-level information. This initiative is an example of how Texas A&M can extend the university’s land-grant mission and refresh the way it meets the needs of Texas, a goal contained in The Path Forward. The initiative could take one or more of several forms: training and certification of non-students in reporting and editing and publishing skills; student internships in small community newsrooms; support for print newspapers ready to move to more robust digital platforms; and support for community members who want to start a new news-media business. Other forms of service could emerge in cooperation with other Texas A&M and Texas A&M System programs and outside partners.

STUDENT MEDIA

Rationale: Most institutions in the Association of American Universities (AAU) have a student newspaper (print, online, or both), and many have other associated student media. Supporting student media should be a priority for ensuring that students have a learning laboratory for honing their craft. Preserving the independent voice of student media is vital, and it requires editorial separation between the administration and student media. Re-establishing the Student Media Board will preserve this separation while developing a strategic plan for future funding as outlined in the recommendations.

- 1) *The Battalion* should remain a registered student organization. It should be associated with the newly named Department of Communication and Journalism. This arrangement will increase opportunities for student staffers to interact with professors for critiques, advice, support, and training. It will increase both the quality of *The Battalion* and the quality of hands-on journalism education for student staffers. *The Battalion* will remain editorially independent from the University. This association between *The Battalion* and the University will be formalized through a memorandum of understanding (MOU).

RECOMMENDATIONS, cont.

STUDENT MEDIA, cont.

- 2) The Student Media Board should be re-established, and it should include journalism professors, *The Battalion* and *Aggieland* editors-in-chief and advisers, working journalists, other students, and others. The board should resume its responsibility of selecting *The Battalion* and *Aggieland* editors. Its duties should include making decisions on major items, such as frequency of print editions. The board should explore ways to provide *The Battalion* with guidance, evaluate finances for Student Media, and make recommendations based on priorities. The board should serve as a liaison between the administration and Student Media, protect editorial independence, and help ensure that Student Media pursues responsible journalism.
- 3) Weekly printing of *The Battalion* should continue through at least spring 2023. The re-established Student Media Board should take the lead in determining the frequency of printing after that.
- 4) Representatives of *The Battalion*, the Student Media Board, the Department of Communication and Journalism, and the University should develop an MOU that clarifies student editorial control and the roles and responsibilities of each party. The Working Group will share research that includes analogous agreements between student newspapers and other institutions, such as the University of Texas, the University of Kansas, and Indiana University.
- 5) *The Battalion* should prioritize digital journalism by emphasizing coverage via its website, multimedia, and social media platforms. *The Battalion* also should enhance its video content and leverage social media assets. It should seek additional digital training from multiple sources, including journalism and communication professors who specialize in digital communication, social media and audience engagement experts in the Division of Marketing and Communications and elsewhere in the university, and former students who are now digital journalists.
- 6) *The Battalion* and Student Media should explore multiple revenue streams, including print and digital advertising; administrative funds; sponsorships, events, and products; and an endowment established with the A&M Foundation. The Student Media Board should explore additional funding to provide resources for growth, including the potential to incorporate the adviser's salary and that of an additional adviser, to hire professional sales and marketing staff for Student Media, and to increase the number of paid student staff members. *The Battalion's* digital efforts should be enhanced with additional funds, if necessary, to support the following: additional equipment, new technology, student staff salaries, training of students, increased web hosting capabilities and capacity, and incorporation of new digital formats and features making fuller use of online capacities.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

A tentative timeline is presented below. We have focused attention on the structures that must be in place for the journalism program to grow and thrive. Therefore, we do not propose a timeline for efforts such as fundraising, special curriculum initiatives, establishment of a journalist-in-residence program, and outreach to journalism former students. These will need to be addressed in detail as the program director, faculty, and staff are hired and the base operating budget is set.

Please note that the hiring timeline and the number of proposed hires are subject to change because they will be negotiated between the head of the proposed Department of Communication and Journalism, the interim dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Provost's Office.

TENTATIVE TIMELINE	ACTIVITY
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Summer 2022	
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	CURRICULAR AND ADMINISTRATIVE
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- Submit planning notification for the new journalism program to the Provost's Office.
- Develop a proposal for the transition from the University Studies Liberal Arts degree with an emphasis in journalism to a journalism degree administered by the newly named Department of Communication and Journalism, and submit it to the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee by August 2022.
- Establish an interim journalism advisory board for a 1-to-2-year period to assist during the transition to a director of the journalism program.
- Assess short-term and intermediate needs for improvement of current multimedia labs, and determine needed technology upgrades and support in Bolton Hall (which currently houses the Department of Communication).
- Audit space in Bolton Hall to determine intermediate-term needs for additional journalism program faculty, staff, and students.

	STUDENT MEDIA
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- Convene representatives of *The Battalion*, the Department of Communication and Journalism, the Student Media Board, and the University to develop an MOU that clarifies student editorial control and the roles and responsibilities of each party.
- Re-establish the Student Media Board, which should include journalism professors, *The Battalion* and *Aggieland* editors and advisers, working journalists, other students, and others. **NOTE:** May carry over to Fall 2022.

TENTATIVE TIMELINE	ACTIVITY
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Fall 2022**CURRICULAR AND ADMINISTRATIVE**

- Begin national search for a director of the journalism program.
- Begin national search for two tenured or tenure-track faculty or professors of the practice.

STUDENT MEDIA

- The Student Media Board should lead discussions to determine *The Battalion's* printing frequency beyond the spring 2023 semester. **NOTE:** May carry over into Spring 2023, but the decision should be finalized before selecting the new *Battalion* and *Aggieland* editors-in-chief.

Spring 2023**CURRICULAR AND ADMINISTRATIVE**

- Hire first staff member.
- New journalism degree approved by Board of Regents in February 2023 and submitted to Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Summer 2023**CURRICULAR AND ADMINISTRATIVE**

- New journalism degree approved by Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and available for initial enrollment in Fall 2023.

Fall 2023**CURRICULAR AND ADMINISTRATIVE**

- Begin national search for two additional tenured or tenure-track faculty or professors of the practice.
- Establish a standing journalism advisory board, along with mission statement and bylaws.

Fall 2024**CURRICULAR AND ADMINISTRATIVE**

- Begin national search for two additional tenured or tenure-track faculty or professors of the practice.
- Hire second staff member.

PROPOSED BUDGET

Funding to support the Journalism Working Group recommendations will need to be provided by a combination of: (1) university investment in the annual base budget for the proposed Department of Communication and Journalism to support the salaries for new faculty and staff lines and to cover basic technology improvements as well as core instructional programming by working journalists, and (2) endowment funds to support student programming, initiatives involving on-campus workshops by and residency programs for practicing journalists, and endowed professorships. Please note, these figures are preliminary and are subject to conversations among the Provost's Office, the Dean of Arts and Sciences, and the Head of the Department of Communication and Journalism to establish salary benchmarks, appropriate types and ranks of faculty hires, and appropriate administrative titles and levels.

We are not making itemized budget suggestions for funding *The Battalion*, as decisions in that regard will need to be developed in collaboration with the proposed Student Media Board. However, as there is a staff member currently associated with *The Battalion*, it will be important in the short term to clarify the supervisor and unit to which the staff member will be assigned, so as not to disrupt the production of the student newspaper.

Possible Annual Base Budget Investment: \$680,000 – \$1,300,000 (excluding fringe benefits for faculty and staff and excluding technology-lab investment)

LINE ITEM	PROPOSED COST	EXPLANATION
Director, Journalism Program	\$150,000 – \$200,000	<i>Salary only. Does not include fringe benefits or start-up package.</i>
6 Faculty Lines (mix of tenured/tenure-track faculty and associate professors and professors of the practice)	\$390,000 – \$900,000	<i>Assumes a range of \$65,000 – \$150,000 for each line. Salary only. Does not include fringe benefits or start-up package. Final budget number will depend on faculty line and rank.</i>
2 Staff Members	\$90,000 – \$125,000	<i>Does not include fringe benefits. Final budget number will depend on staff title.</i>
Technology	TBD	<i>Journalism is a technology-intensive enterprise, and an operating budget for software licenses and lab support (including teaching assistants) needs to be established.</i>
Programming	\$50,000 – \$75,000	<i>Funds to bring professional journalists to campus for lectures and residency programs. Seed funding for journalism outreach program. Also could fund start-up package to entice high-quality candidates for the new program director position.</i>

Possible Endowment and Philanthropy

LINE ITEM	PROPOSED COST	EXPLANATION
Endowed Professor of Journalism	\$500,000 – \$1,000,000	<i>Endowment in line with current endowed professorships in College of Liberal Arts.</i>
Excellence Fund for Journalism	\$500,000 minimum	<i>Will provide funding for special initiatives such as specialized professional workshops for students, grants to support student projects, named lecture series, and mentoring program pairing current students with former students.</i>
Scholarships	\$2,500,000	<i>Provide funding for upper-level journalism students to participate in external internships and for mandatory internship preparation. This funding would need to grow over the years as the program grows.</i>
<i>Battalion Support</i>	TBD	<i>Assuming a mix of university support, advertising revenue, and new products, the appropriate level of endowment funding to support The Battalion will need to be determined.</i>

APPENDIX A

JOURNALISM DEPARTMENT Working Group No. 11

CHAIR

Tim Scott, Interim Provost and Executive Vice President

MEMBERS

Kelly Brown (Co-convenor) Associate Vice President Division of Marketing & Communications Former Student	Douglas Pils General Manager, Student Media Staff Advisor to <i>The Battalion</i> Former Student
Karen Butler-Purry (Co-convenor) Associate Provost and Dean of Graduate and Professional School Professor, Electrical & Computer Engineering	Michael Reilly Executive Director of Communications Texas A&M System
Barbara Gastel (Co-convenor) Professor, Veterinary Integrative Biosciences Coordinator, Science & Technology Journalism	Dale Rice Instructional Associate Professor, Communication
Kevin Barge Professor, Communication	Andy Richardson Associate Athletic Director, Athletics Former Student
Myranda Campanella Undergraduate Student, University Studies Liberal Arts Editor-in-Chief of <i>The Battalion</i>	Michaela Rush Undergraduate Student, English News editor of <i>The Battalion</i>
Rob Clark Managing editor, <i>The Bryan-College Station Eagle</i> Former Student	Carol Austin Snowden Founder & Chair, Friends of The Batt Former Student
Kim Dooley Professor, Agriculture Leadership, Education & Communications	Loren Steffy Managing Director, 30 Point Strategies Former Student
Angelique Gammon Associate Professor of Practice, Communication Former Student	Brady Stone Undergraduate Student, University Studies Liberal Arts
Jon Heidtke Professor of the Practice, Sports Management Former Student	Bill Toler Retired CEO, Swift Communications Former Student and Past Chair, A&M Foundation
Holli Leggette Associate Professor, Agriculture Leadership, Education & Communications	Matthew Watkins Managing Editor, <i>The Texas Tribune</i> Former Student
Carol Pauli Instructional Professor, School of Law	

APPENDIX A, cont.

SUBGROUPS

ACADEMIC

Barbara Gastel (lead)
Kevin Barge
Kim Dooley
Holli Leggette
Carol Pauli
Michael Reilly
Dale Rice
Andy Richardson

INDUSTRY

Kelly Brown (lead)
Angelique Gammon
Jon W Heidtke
Douglas Pils
Michael Reilly
Carol Austin Snowden
Loren Steffy
Brady Stone
Bill Toler
Matthew Watkins

THE BATTALION

Rob Clark (lead)
Karen Butler-Purry (co-lead)
Kelly Brown
Myranda Campanella
Angelique Gammon
Barbara Gastel
Douglas Pils
Michael Reilly
Andy Richardson
Michaela Rush
Carol Austin Snowden
Brady Stone
Matthew Watkins

LIAISON GROUP

Kevin Barge	Holli Leggette
Kelly Brown	Michael Reilly
Karen Butler-Purry	Loren Steffy
Rob Clark	Brady Stone
Barbara Gastel	

APPENDIX B

DEVELOPMENT OF THE JOURNALISM WORKING GROUP'S RECOMMENDATIONS

The journalism working group or subgroups thereof met numerous times during February through May 2022. During that period, members devoted considerable time to research, reflection, and deliberation on which to base the working group recommendations.

The working group numbered 22 members, and included faculty, journalists, students, and others with relevant experience and expertise (Appendix A). The group had three co-conveners: Karen Butler-Purry (Associate Provost and Dean, Graduate and Professional School; Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering), Kelly Brown (Associate Vice President, Division of Marketing and Communications; 1989 Texas A&M journalism graduate with 27 years' newspaper experience; past president of the A&M Former Journalism Students Association), and Barbara Gastel (Professor of Veterinary Integrative Biosciences and of Humanities in Medicine; Coordinator, MS Program in Science and Technology Journalism). The full group convened 11 times for meetings of 1 to 2 hours. One meeting included a guest segment by Alicia Dorsey, Associate Vice President for Academic Effectiveness and Planning; another included a guest segment by Hart Blanton, Head, Department of Communication.

To facilitate information-gathering and discussion, three subgroups ("industry," "academic," and "Battalion") were formed. (See Appendix A.) Subgroup composition overlapped, aiding integration. The subgroups gathered information through interviews and online. Among topics researched were industry needs and expectations regarding journalism graduates, content and format of undergraduate journalism degree programs at other universities, criteria for accreditation of journalism programs, current teaching of journalism at Texas A&M University, resources that can aid in journalism education, and status of student newspapers elsewhere. (See Appendix C.) Each subgroup met multiple times, until it felt it had achieved closure. More specifically, the activities of the subgroups were principally as follows:

INDUSTRY SUBGROUP: This subgroup, consisting mainly of current and former journalists, both surveyed the media landscape and gathered information on journalism programs at other universities. After compiling a list of questions, members interviewed journalists working in digital newsrooms, newspapers, television, and radio, as well as leaders of strong academic journalism programs, by phone, Zoom, or email. More than 30 experts working in such settings and at think tanks also were interviewed about the trends, technology, and ideas shaping modern journalism. Initiatives and studies exploring the future of journalism were reviewed.

APPENDIX B, cont.

ACADEMIC SUBGROUP: This group, consisting mainly of faculty, looked largely at chances to build on existing academic activities at Texas A&M. Among items explored were the journalism instruction being offered in the Department of Communication, ties to other activities in the department, potential for collaboration with academic units across campus for developing knowledge and skills in specialized journalism, and potential to partner with entities such as 12th Man Productions and KAMU for practical experience. The group also looked into resources needed to develop an excellent undergraduate degree program in journalism.

BATTALION SUBGROUP: This subgroup—which included faculty, the advisor to The Battalion, and student leaders of The Battalion, among others—looked at operations of student newspapers at Texas A&M and elsewhere. Subgroup members interviewed journalism professors, student media representatives, or both from 20 universities in Texas and elsewhere in the United States about the structure of their student media and the relationship of their student media to the university as a whole. Among aspects explored were finances, print frequency, engagement, digital offerings, and partnerships.

All full-group and subgroup meetings were via Zoom. After some meetings, temporary video recordings were made available for use by members unable to attend.

The subgroups reported regularly to the full working group, sharing findings and bringing proposed recommendations for discussion. A liaison group (see Appendix A) facilitated integration of material from the subgroups. The liaison group sent the working group members online (Qualtrics) surveys in which respondents rated extent of agreement with each proposed recommendation that had emerged from the series of discussions. The numerical responses and comments were used in finalizing the set of recommendations from the working group.

Using the set of recommendations as the core, the liaison group drafted the working group report. The draft report was then circulated to the entire working group and revised based on feedback received. The liaison group also compiled the appendixes, which contain materials from the working group as a whole and the subgroups.

APPENDIX C

INDEX: JOURNALISM WORKING GROUP NO. 11

The following is a [*guide*](#) to research and other information compiled by the Journalism Working Group, which is suggesting 26 recommendations for creating and sustaining a 21st century journalism program at Texas A&M University.

A. Membership List

B. Meeting/Timeline/Charge

- Overall Group Meetings: 1 – 11 (Feb. 23 – May 22)
- Liaison Group Meetings
- Remarks from President Banks and Provost Scott
- Timeline

C. Progress Reports

- Journalism Working Group Update: Feb. 23
- WG #11 Progress Report 1 (Feb. 24)
- WG #11 Progress Report 2 (March 22)

D. Journalism Research/Reading Material

- A Future Without A Front Page, 2019
- The Future Direction of Television News – Phil Kurz
- Robinson Journalism Trust.pdf
- Reed Restoring Trust in Journalism.pdf
- Peer Institutes.pdf
- NORC A New Way of Looking at Trust in the Media1.pdf
- Nieman Foundation report Make J-Schools Matter Again.doc
- Journalism Programs at Peer Institutes & Top 20 Journalism Univ in USA 1-25-22.doc
- Fisher Problem of Trust in Media.pdf
- Copy of WG Readings – 2-8-22
- News clips on business of radio/TV/digital News & TV Sports (*includes Pew Research*)

E. Internal/Academic Degree Subgroup 1

1. Proposed administrative & strategic structure

- *Discussions/recommendations on academic structure & curriculum*
 - Memo from Communications Department Head Hart Blanton Dec. 2021
 - Communications possible strategic directions Feb. 2022
 - COMM/JOURN Timeline/accomplishments
 - Journalism/communications courses
 - Media comm courses
 - Administrative structure J-degree choices
 - Administrative structure J-degree recommendations
 - Journalism curricular and strategic growth opportunities summary
 - Respond for group discussion
- *SAPs for process*
 - Changes to academic administrative structure
 - Curricular processes

APPENDIX C, cont.

2. **Peer Institutions**
3. **Students: Internships, 12th Man Productions, job placement for former students**
 - 12th Man Former Students
 - 12th Man Productions and internships
 - 12th Man Productions memo from Andy Richardson
 - 12th Man Productions student worker summary
 - Proposal memo for high school journalism students
 - Recent Journalism graduates
4. **Memo to JWG from Communications Department Head Hart Blanton**
5. **Potential areas of distinction from Academic Group**
6. **Stakeholders: Agricultural Communications and Journalism**

F. Industry/External Subgroup 2

1. **Suggestions from Industry Group**
2. **Audience on audience development education**
 - Research
 - Pew Research Center findings
 - Table Stakes (major news organizations research business models)
3. **Findings from industry**
 - American Journalism Project, Sarabeth Berman
 - Charts: Survey national and state media, industry, experts
 - Chronology of Newspaper Industry & Business Class Recommendation
 - News Clips on Business of Radio/TV Digital News & Sports TV
 - Industry Feedback: Houston Chronicle, ACEJMC, USA Today
 - Industry Feedback: Peter Bhatia, Detroit Free Press
 - Poynter (*responding to our WG*) polls readers on what would make a good j-program
 - Summary of Suggestions from Industry
 - What makes us different from other programs
 - Future of Journalism Education (Knight Foundation)
 - Sports Program
 - 12th Man Productions: internships, student worker, bio)
 - Commentary/support from ESPN, former students, 2 JWG members, SPJ & PwC
 - Texas peer institutions: UT, Sam Houston, Tech, Houston, Baylor, TCU, SMU & other peer institutions, including Penn State, Florida, Georgia, Auburn, and Syracuse

G. Battalion Subgroup 3

1. **Battalion Staff Proposal, list of requests & salary support request letter**
2. **Status of Student Media under Division of Student Affairs**
 - Budget for *Battalion* (from Stefanie Baker in DSA)
 - List of student organizations at TAMU
 - ODSL Org Chart
 - *The Battalion's* Status under DSA

APPENDIX C, cont.

3. Student Media/*Battalion* Information

- 2018 Student Media Task Force
- *Battalion* Awards
- Messages of support
- 2021 *Battalion* Contract with UT's Moody Student Media to sell advertising
- Student Media History

4. Print Frequency Issue

- Case for print
- Case for printing less frequently
- Digital Future
- Print & digital research

5. Programs at other universities

6. Input from JWG on where Student Media should live/structure

7. Examples of constitutions and MOUs btwn student media and universities

8. Meeting information, agendas, etc.

H. Final Report

- Appendices
- Implementation memo
- Version 1
- Version 2
- Version 3
- Version 4 suggestions
- Version 4 w-appendices
- Methods Section as of 5-23-22
- Version 5 Final Report