

# Standards for Journalism Educators

Provided by the Journalism Education Association and the Scholastic Journalism Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication

Educators who teach secondary school journalism must have a broad range of knowledge and performance abilities. Although their courses are frequently placed in a school's English Department, their teaching responsibilities go beyond what most English or language arts curriculum requires. Therefore, these standards reflect their need to be skilled in teaching writing, listening, speaking, leadership skills, cooperative processes, press law and ethics, fiscal responsibility, and media design and production. The combination of these helps them prepare their students as knowledgeable media producers and consumers who are essential to our democracy.

## **Standard #1A – Knowledge of Curriculum and Content/Classroom**

**Knowledge:** Journalism teachers understand:

1. Key principles of journalism curriculum development, instruction and assessment;
2. A variety of curriculum models to help frame journalism as a unique discipline and profession;
3. A variety of effective instructional strategies to help students become active scholastic journalists;
4. A solid foundation in law and ethics as it applies to scholastic media, including First Amendment-related rights and responsibilities;
5. The history and evolution of media; functions, limitations and influences of media in society;
6. News values for today's media consumers;
7. The writing process as it relates to journalism (brainstorming, questioning, reporting, gathering and synthesizing information, writing, editing, and evaluating the final media product)
8. A variety of forms of journalistic writing (i.e. news, features, opinion, etc.) and their appropriate style (i.e. Associated Press, multiple sources with attribution, punctuation, etc.); additional forms unique to journalism (i.e. headlines, cutlines, plus visual presentations, etc.)
9. Importance of matching language use, angle, and style with intended audience;
10. Value of and skills needed to package media products effectively, using various forms of journalistic design utilizing a range of visual, auditory and interactive methods for a variety of media;
11. Value of photojournalism to tell stories in compelling ways.

**Performance:** Journalism teachers:

1. Select appropriate textbooks and teaching materials for classroom use;
2. design a journalism curriculum that is student-centered and reflects students as continuous learners;
3. Construct lesson plans that cover multiple facets of journalistic writing and visual communication;
4. Utilize appropriate professional and scholastic media legal and ethical policies and practices;
5. Ensure students understand media's role in a democracy and their part in preserving it.

## **Standard #1B – Knowledge of Curriculum and Content/Student Publications**

**Knowledge:** Journalism teachers and media advisers understand:

1. Key principles of journalism and mass media as they function in a product-base curriculum;
2. Organization of such a course so the process is more important than the product, thus allowing for continuous student learning;
3. A variety of effective instructional strategies that help students become active scholastic journalists;
4. The value of technology for today's and tomorrow's media;
5. Law and ethics as it relates to scholastic media and its importance in practice;
6. The role of leadership training, fiscal responsibility, conflict resolution and time management in student publications production.
7. The importance of effective information design for all media.

**Performance:** Journalism teachers and media advisers:

1. Utilize computers as teaching and production tools;
2. Use text, graphics, photography, radio, television, new media as appropriate to emphasize the range of story-telling possibilities;
3. Encourage creative approaches to information design and packaging it for student media;
4. Construct and utilize financial guidelines for scholastic media relating to subscriptions, advertising, activity funds, and fund raising;
5. Construct and utilize staff organizational models that emphasize responsibility, risk-taking and problem-solving;
6. Construct and utilize production schedules that encourage scholastic journalists to mirror that of professional journalists;
7. Ensure students understand their roles as informational gatekeepers in school-based media and their rights and responsibilities as journalists.

### **Standard #2 – Knowledge of Learning Theory**

**Knowledge:** Journalism teachers understand:

1. Theories of human behavior that help nurture journalism students;
2. Principles of effective classroom management and assessment;
3. Rights and responsibilities within a journalism education environment;
4. Conditions that enhance the development of life-long learning;
5. Methods to help students understand and use media;
6. The influence of students' diverse backgrounds, attitude, interests and expectations on their communication skills;
7. Interrelationship and concurrent development of each communication skill (reading, writing, speaking, listening, etc.)
8. Ways the public forms its opinions and the process/interaction involved;
9. Value and effective use of research in a mass media setting.

**Performance:** Journalism teachers:

1. Create a media-rich atmosphere for students to learn both collaboratively and individually;
2. Model and nurture life-long learning;
3. Use knowledge of journalism/media skills to design appropriate learning experiences;
4. Integrate a variety of media within instruction/curriculum;
5. Select and order assignments that support integrated units of instruction;
6. Set meaningful goals as part of short- and long-term planning for journalism instruction.

### **Standard #3 – Knowledge of and adaptation to diverse students**

**Knowledge:** Journalism teachers understand:

1. Learning theories and how they relate to individual students' diverse backgrounds and learning styles;
2. Influence of diversity on the ways students learn and use media and communication skills (Diverse learners reflect multiple ways of knowing);
3. Materials and instructional activities appropriate for helping students to connect to, extend, and enhance their unique media and communications skills development;
4. Necessity of journalistic diversity to allow for greater accuracy in coverage.

**Performance:** Journalism teachers:

1. Base instruction on students' strengths and build upon student differences to further journalism learning;
2. Plan journalism instruction that accommodates the range of learners and different learning needs and experiences;
3. Use a variety of materials (including publications, new media, and computer software, etc.) and instructional activities to empower students to use media and symbol systems effectively;
4. Respect the worth, contributions, abilities, and language of all learners;
5. Create environments that support respectful approaches to individual differences;
6. Encourage staff diversity and use awareness of diversity to enhance understanding of journalistic media.

#### **Standard #4 – Knowledge of Instructional Environment**

**Knowledge:** Journalism teachers understand:

1. Use of discussion for a variety of purposes to suit the needs of students;
2. Use of questioning to show understanding, help students articulate their ideas and thinking processes, promote risk-taking and problem-solving, facilitate recall of information, encourage thinking, stimulate curiosity and help students to question on their own;
3. Value of conferencing to work with individual students;
4. Environments that support learning about various aspects of the media;
5. Atmospheres that addresses the students' needs for a sense of belonging to the school and to the larger community as journalism/media users.

**Performance:** Journalism teachers:

1. Create classrooms that encourage active participation in learning communities;
2. Promote students' appreciation and understanding of audience and the ways to write for different audiences;
3. Help students understand their unique role as disseminators of information and their rights as journalists and media consumers;
4. Employ and model the use of technology as an essential component of learning and production of media;
5. Use various avenues to encourage students to take responsibility for their learning and production of media;
6. Encourage students to consider journalism or mass media as a career possibility.

#### **Standard #5 – Assessment**

**Knowledge:** Journalism teachers understand:

1. Various assessment strategies for reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, designing;
2. Appropriate times to use each type of assessment;
3. Ways to use information from assessments to promote student learning;
4. Interpretation of various data assessing the learners' skills and abilities;
5. Ways to convey those interpretations to students, parents, administrators, etc.

**Performance:** Journalism teachers:

1. Respond effectively and constructively on an ongoing basis to students' work;
2. Recognize students' oral and written errors as a means of making curricular choices for individual and group instruction;
3. Design a variety of assessment tools (e.g. selected and constructed response items, portfolios, objective quizzes and tests, rubrics, projects, publications);

4. Use assessment results to shape or revise instructional design and/or strategies;
5. Interpret and report assessment methods and results to students, administrators, parents and the public;
6. Use the requirements of state and national assessment programs to make informed curricular choices and instructional strategies as appropriate to journalism;
7. Guide students in learning to assess their own growth through creation of career portfolios of their work, publications, photography, new media.

**Standard #6 – Professional Development**

**Knowledge:** Journalism teachers understand:

1. The value of professional organizations/associations, conferences, certification and licensure, advanced course work, and other professional opportunities in the journalism field to enhance professional growth;
2. A variety of ways to evaluate reflectively their own practice and continue their own learning;
3. The importance of teacher collaboration and cross-disciplinary cooperation;
4. The purposes of and ways to generate classroom research;
5. The value of enthusiasm in a dynamic journalism/media program.

**Performance:** Journalism teachers.

1. Attend conferences, workshops, graduate education classes, and other professional development opportunities in the journalism field;
2. Study professional media and research relevant to journalism instruction on a regular basis and conduct classroom research to improve their practice;
3. Participate in continual personal and collegial reflection on practice;
4. Use a variety of ways to monitor the effects of their practices on students, parents, colleagues and community professionals;
5. Collaborate with colleagues in journalism and other disciplines;
6. Investigate their own biases and seek to resolve problems that stem from areas of conflict;
7. Model writing, designing, photographing, and effective journalism/media skills and uses;
8. Create opportunities for professional/scholastic association critiques of programs/publications.