

# Journalism Program

## Program-Level Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)

At the completion of the **Journalism Program**, the student should:

1. Be academically prepared to transfer to a journalism program at a four-year university or to obtain an entry-level job in journalism or a related field.
2. Demonstrate the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary for careers in journalism and related fields.
3. Possess a portfolio of published work suitable for internship/job applications and interviews.

## PSLO Assessment Report Summary, 2011-12

**What we looked at:** Our assessment research focused on PSLO #3. We analyzed the completion of multiple newspaper-related courses on the quality and diversity of the portfolios of 44 students enrolled in Journalism 10, 15ABC, 16ABC, 20 and 30. Students and instructors completed Portfolio Evaluation/Self-Evaluation forms, and instructors rated each portfolio on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the top score and representing a strong portfolio, diverse portfolio. The most diverse portfolios contained work in five major journalistic areas: objective reporting, opinion writing, photojournalism, informational and illustrative graphics, and news presentation.

**What we found:** The results confirmed what we expected: the more publication experience students have during their educational careers, the stronger and more diverse their portfolios. Of the 44 portfolios evaluated in May 2012, 23 scored a 1 or 2, and 21 of those students had completed just one newspaper-related journalism course, and the other two completed two courses. On the other end of the spectrum, of the 14 portfolios scoring a 4 or 5, 11 students had completed 5 or more newspaper-related journalism courses, and the other three completed just two courses.

**What we are planning to work on:** We are planning to tweak the Portfolio Evaluation/Self-Evaluation form tool itself to see if we can add questions that will help us make sense of the exceptions. For example, three portfolios scored a 4 or 5 despite the fact the students had taken just two newspaper-related journalism courses. That may be because students entered the program with high school journalism experience or more advanced journalism skills, but we don't know. We'd like to find out.

**Recommendations for students:** Potential journalism majors should devise an education plan that incorporates journalism courses early in their educational career at LMC so they can take multiple newspaper-related courses during their time here and build a strong portfolio of work to show off their diverse journalistic skills.