

PROPOSAL FOR A  
**MULTIMEDIA JOURNALISM MINOR**  
COMMUNICATION STUDIES DEPARTMENT

**A. SUMMARY**

The Communication Studies Department is proposing a minor in multimedia journalism. It is the second of three minors that the department expects to propose this school year. (Last month, the CLAE Curriculum Committee approved the first, a sports communication minor.) The proposal for a minor in multimedia journalism reflects the changing nature of journalism in the digital age. Journalists are increasingly expected to be able to tell stories in more than one medium. It is now customary for journalists to not only write a story for the print edition of a newspaper, but also to file a package that includes video, audio and/or photography for an online report. The traditional mediums are converging on the web, which is making it essential that journalists be well rounded. This minor would give students a broad base of skill experiences upon which to begin building a journalism career.

The minor would require 18 credit hours, and would include three required courses, two in print and online journalism and one in video production. In addition, students would choose a course from one of three other mediums (audio, photography or web), and an additional two courses from four electives. The minor would be structured to expose students to a minimum of three journalistic mediums. In the future, should we desire to change requirements for the minor, we would follow the same process we use to make changes to the major.

Though it would not be required that students to do an internship or practicum, we would encourage them to take either CST 3450 (Journalism Practicum) or CST 4800 (Communication Internship) to gain field experience. All three of the required courses mandate some involvement in The Varsity News or the campus cable television station, which is broadcast in the dorms.

Versions of all of the courses are currently being offered through the Communication Studies Department. But, in addition to approval for the minor, the department is seeking approval for two changes related to the courses:

- The renumbering of CST 2050 News Writing and Reporting II to CST 3030 News Writing and Reporting II to reflect the true level of difficulty and knowledge required in the course (which builds upon CST 2030) and
- the revision and renumbering of CST 2210 News Editing, which would become CST 4210 News Editing, Design and Management, a significantly more difficult course than one at the 2000 level.

Teaching the minor's core courses would fall primarily to full-time faculty members Tom Stanton and Jason Roche. Both have extensive media experience and industry contacts. The minor would not require new expenditures. It can be offered

with the facilities currently used by the department, including the Briggs 110 lab and the studios in the basement of Briggs Building.

The department would like to launch the minor in fall 2010-11. Department majors, though welcome to take any CST courses, would not be able to minor in sports communication.

## **B. DESCRIPTION OF MINOR**

### **1. Narrative catalog description**

The multimedia journalism minor gives students a solid foundation for succeeding in the field of journalism. The minor produces graduates who are multi-faceted in their skills and prepared for entry-level positions with media outlets. It also offers expertise to students who hope to pursue careers in other disciplines that intersect with the media, such as business, law, English, history, political science, and education. The minor requires 18 credit hours.

### **2. List of all courses**

**These three courses would be required, 9 credits:**

**\* CST 2030, News Writing and Reporting I, 3 credits**

An introduction to the exhilarating world of journalism and to writing for print and online newspapers. Students develop news judgment, learn Associated Press style, practice information-gathering skills, explore trends and issues in journalism, and write stories and blogs on deadline, some of which appear in The Varsity News, the student newspaper.

**\* CST 2100 Video Production, 3 credits**

An exploration of the analog and digital tools (cameras, lights, video-recorders, related audio/video manipulation equipment) and techniques of video production in both controlled and location environments. Students learn production skills in the context of live and pre-produced video projects, and are introduced to editing.

**\* CST 3030 News Writing and Reporting II, 3 credits**

*Currently CST 2050*

Students broaden their journalistic skills, explore multimedia reporting, and practice advanced techniques in print and online journalism. This course emphasizes quality news writing and in-depth reporting, including use of public records. In addition to contributing to The Varsity News, students attempt to place their work in professional print and online publications.

**Students would select at least one course from this list, 3 credits:**

**\* CST 2110 Audio Production, 3 credits**

An exploration of the tools (digital recorders, microphones, mixers, and related processing equipment) and techniques of audio production. Focus is placed on understanding the role of audio production in the contemporary radio station. (Campus Radio CST 91.9 FM is utilized as a learning lab). Pro-tools and Adobe Audition software are used for multi-track editing and recording. Students learn both production and performance skills, although the emphasis is on the former.

\* CST 2150 Multimedia I, 3 credits

Projects and experiments in areas of visual language and communication. Activities include traditional analog, computer-related and multimedia methods of image creation and manipulation.

\* CST 2200 Photography, 3 credits

Introduction to the tools, techniques and theories of analog and digital photography through lectures, demonstrations and practical exercises. Students must provide their own adjustable 35 mm film cameras or APS. Digital equipment will be provided by the department.

**Students would also select two of these courses, 6 credits:**

\* CST 3100 Audio Production – Direction, 3 credits:

Exploration of audio production and performance skills to prepare a wide variety of radio program materials at a professional level. Special emphasis is placed on digital multi-track production (Pro Tools software) and real-world news coverage. Materials produced in this class air on Campus Radio CST 91.9 FM or are distributed beyond the university via the internet.

\* CST 3110 Single Camera Video Production, 3 credits

Exploration of single-camera film and video production techniques using portable digital equipment and computer-based editing systems (Final Cut Pro). Much of the raw video is acquired outside of a video studio. Applications of this style include commercials, documentary, drama, education, experimental, and news/public affairs.

\* CST 3120 Multi-Camera Video Production, 3 credits

A laboratory course in the uses of video studio and portable equipment to produce traditional and experimental program types. Course emphasizes organization, preparation, production and post-productions aspects from script to final product.

\* CST 4120 News Editing, Design and Management, 3 credits

*Evolved from CST 2210*

Students will learn the fundamentals of editing for print and online news publications. The course will cover news judgment, story organization, legal and ethical troubleshooting, grammar, word usage, Associated Press style, headline writing, principles of publication and web design, newsroom management, media

entrepreneurship and other topics. Students will apply their skills and knowledge through a class project, either a publication or a website.

### **3. Delivery format of all new courses**

No new courses are planned for this minor.

### **4. Academic integrity and intellectual merit**

The multimedia journalism minor would be a specialized outgrowth of our journalism program, and it would be consistent with the academic integrity and intellectual merit of the communication studies major.

### **5. Unusual characteristics**

The program reflects the changing nature of journalism, and it is consistent with changes being made at other journalism schools.

### **6. Impact on related departments and concentrations**

We see the impact as universally positive. The minor would complement degrees in other areas. It would also allow students who may be cautious about committing to the rapidly changing field of journalism to develop skills in the field while pursuing a major they view as more marketable.

## **C. MISSION**

According to the mission statement, the University of Detroit Mercy “exists to provide excellent student-centered undergraduate and graduate education in an urban context. A UDM education seeks to integrate the intellectual, spiritual, ethical and social development of our students.”

This minor would complement the mission.

First, the program would be student-centered. Communication studies courses are by their very nature student-centered. Particularly in the skills area, faculty members work directly with students to develop their abilities, often through personal, coaching relationships. The multimedia journalism minor would continue this focus.

Second, it would capitalize on UDM’s urban location. The program would involve students in our urban setting through interaction with professionals at the region’s media outlets.

## **D. OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES, AND ASSESSMENT**

### **1. Program objectives and learning outcomes**

The program would aim to give students a solid foundation for pursuing a career in multimedia journalism. This minor would support the department’s major learning objectives because students who complete the minor would be able to demonstrate entry-level skills in at least three areas of communication; show

understanding of one or more of the theories underlying media communication; and recognize and interpret research methods used in the communication disciplines.

## **2. Assessment**

We would assess student achievement and the success of the program through portfolios that students would submit in their final semester. The portfolios would compile multimedia documents that demonstrate the scope and quality of student knowledge and skill in the sports communication field. This would be a non-course requirement, and the department chair would determine whether the requirement has been met. A committee of alumni would review the portfolios and offer feedback to the student and the department.

## **E. UNIVERSITY RESOURCES**

This section is not applicable because the program does not require any new university resources, faculty members, staff, facilities, courses, or revenue.