

University: University of Arizona

***SPECIAL PROGRAM FEES  
FEE REQUEST***

College/School: College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

Department: Journalism

Program: Master's degrees in Journalism

Is this a graduate or an undergraduate program fee?

GRADUATE PROGRAM  UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

Is this a new fee or an increase to an existing fee?

NEW FEE  Amount requested: \$ 100 per unit

EXISTING FEE  Current Fee: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Requested Fee: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**BACKGROUND:**

Program description: The Department of Journalism offers a professionally oriented master of arts degree, and participates in two dual-degree master's programs that combine professional journalism education with regional studies. One dual-degree program enables graduate students to pursue concurrently master's degrees in Journalism and in Latin American Studies. The other enables students to pursue concurrently master's degrees in Journalism and in Near Eastern Studies.

The department's curriculum focuses on training students to meet the challenges facing journalists in a global information environment, in which mass media technology is changing rapidly. The curriculum includes skills classes in reporting, editing, visual communication, and online news production, which are taught in the department's instructional computer laboratories, and theory classes in media ethics, law, the news media's role in society, and history. The department also offers international journalism classes that enable graduate students to do reporting and digital imaging work in Latin America and the Middle East, under the supervision of faculty members with extensive experience covering those regions. Students may take these classes as part of the department's freestanding master's program, or as part of the dual-degree programs.

All graduate students must take a management course in which they are responsible for supervising work on a news medium that is produced by the department and serves a real community. These news media include *El Independiente*, a bilingual newspaper for residents of the city of South Tucson; *The Tombstone Epitaph* local edition, published for residents of that historic city; *Arizona Cat's Eye*, a news program for KUAT-TV, the PBS affiliate on The University of Arizona campus; *Cat Scan*, an online magazine that serves residents of Southern Arizona; and *Border Beat*, an online magazine whose focus is the international border shared by Arizona and Sonora. All students also must complete either a master's thesis or master's project. The latter involves work such as a series of

long-form articles or a video documentary that has the depth and quality to be published or broadcast by a professional news medium.

Students also are encouraged to obtain internships with news organizations in Arizona, as well as national news media. Alumni have played important roles at publications in the state, such as the *Arizona Republic* and the *Arizona Daily Star*, as well as national news media such as *NBC News* and *The Washington Post*.

The Journalism master's program was established in the mid-1970s. In the late 1990s, the faculty suspended admissions to the program in order to review the curriculum. During the next several years, undergraduate enrollment skyrocketed, while the department lost faculty lines to retirements and departures. New faculty resources were directed initially toward undergraduate instruction. By Fall 2007, through a series of outstanding hires, the department had gained a sufficient number of faculty to resume graduate admissions. The dual master's degree programs also were approved last year.

Eleven master's students started coursework in Fall 2008. Nine are pursuing the freestanding master's degree in Journalism, while two are interested in earning dual degrees in Journalism and Latin American Studies. The department expects the total number of students pursuing master's degrees in both the freestanding and dual-degree programs to increase to thirty within three years. There is great demand in the news media and other information industries for graduate students who have training in advanced research methodologies, and who have taken theoretical and experiential coursework that focuses on the global nature of information and its effects on individuals, institutions, and societies.

The Department of Journalism plans to seek national re-accreditation for its graduate degree programs from The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) within five years. The freestanding program was accredited until admissions were suspended. At that time, the department decided not to seek re-accreditation until the curriculum review had been completed. The dual-degree programs are new, and have not undergone an accreditation review. The department's undergraduate program has been accredited for more than forty years, and was fully re-accredited in Academic Year 2005-06.

Information concerning the establishment of the fee: The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences requests that the Board of Regents establish a program fee of \$100 per unit for all students who initially enroll in Journalism graduate programs in Fall 2009 or later. Graduate students who enrolled in Fall 2008 would be exempt from this fee. (The department admits students only for the fall semester.) Graduate students paying the program fee would not pay course fees.

The fee would apply to all units taken by students pursuing a freestanding master's degree in journalism. The curriculum is designed to enable students to earn this degree with thirty units of credit. Therefore, the total program fees required for this degree

would be \$3,000 per student. If a student chose to take more than thirty units, the \$100-per-unit fee would apply to the extra units.

Students in the dual master's-degree programs in Journalism-Latin American Studies and Journalism-Near Eastern Studies will pay the program fee only during the semesters when Journalism is designated as their primary degree.

Students must start their dual-degree programs by registering for JOUR 505-The Study of News, with 'JOUR' designated as their primary degree with the UA Graduate College. They will be assessed the Journalism program fee of \$100 per unit for all units taken in all departments, through the end of the semester during which they complete 27 units of credit. During the final semester when Journalism is the primary degree, if the total number of units exceeds 27, then the program fee must be assessed for the additional units, because the degree designation cannot be changed in the middle of a semester, and the fee must be applied to all courses taken during any single semester. Thus the students' total Journalism program fee cost for the dual-degree program will be at least \$2,700.

After earning their first 27 units of credit, dual-degree students will change their primary degree designation to Latin American Studies or Near Eastern Studies. Students who have made this change will be charged no further Journalism program fees. LAS and NES do not charge program fees.

Before the start of each semester, the Journalism Department's graduate coordinator and business manager will prepare a list of dual-degree students who will be registering with Journalism as their primary degree, and those who will be registering with Latin American Studies or Near Eastern Studies as their primary degree. This list will be provided to the Graduate College and the Bursar's Office.

Students would be advised about the fee for Journalism graduate programs in all printed and online materials regarding the department's master's program and dual-degree programs. The department's Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Coordinator also would advise students about fees, as well as the financial aid that would be set aside from fee revenues.

The fee will enable the department to stay current with rapidly evolving communication technology and professional standards of practice. The fee will be used to enhance instructional training laboratories, technical equipment, and instructional staffing levels to increase opportunities for students to utilize state-of-the-art multiple media platforms. This will enhance students' opportunities in the information industry marketplace.

This fee is being requested in accordance with ABOR Policy 4-104, which establishes the procedure for graduate professional degree programs to request differential tuition and special program fees. This proposal has been reviewed and approved by appropriate department, College, and University administrators.

## **DISCUSSION:**

Quality of the student experience: The master's program in Journalism and the dual master's programs in Journalism and regional studies at The University of Arizona are professional degree programs that are designed to train graduate students to work at advanced levels in the state, national, and international information marketplace. The dual-degree programs also are designed to provide graduate journalists with advanced language proficiency and knowledge of global regions that are of crucial importance for U.S. national security, foreign relations, and international commerce. The rapid technological changes that the news media continue to undergo require a continual high rate of program expenditure – especially on instructional hardware and software, and instructional support services – in order to offer students a competitive educational experience.

The program offers a technology-intensive curriculum designed to provide learning opportunities that are crucial for employment and advancement to leadership positions in the news media and other information industries.

There are no national rankings of journalism programs. However, several indicators provide evidence of the high-quality education provided by the Journalism Department.

UA Journalism students routinely obtain internships with prestigious U.S. news media companies, including Dow Jones, which publishes *The Wall Street Journal*, and television network news operations. Graduates have obtained employment with top-ranked U.S. news organizations such as *CNN International* and *The New York Times*, as well as other national and global information firms.

The department's International Journalism initiative offers students the opportunity to do journalism research in other countries, and to have their results published. The department's dual-degree programs with Latin American Studies and Near Eastern Studies offer graduate students the opportunity to acquire proficiency in one or more languages of those regions, as well as a deep background in their history, culture, and political and economic systems.

The department is a national leader in recruiting and retaining students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. In recognition of Journalism's diversity initiatives, *The New York Times* selected the department as a site for its national Journalism Student Institute, which is open on a competitive basis to graduate and undergraduate students who are members of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists. The first institute at The University of Arizona was held in the department in January 2008.

Faculty recruitment is another indication of the quality of the student experience. All faculty members worked as journalists before earning advanced degrees and joining the department. Faculty members include a leader of a Pulitzer Prize-winning investigation into health-care issues; a *New York Times*-bestselling author who has covered Latin America for decades; the former Chief International Correspondent for The Associated

Press, who has written more than a dozen books; and a faculty member whose work in Central America won a major award from the Society of Professional Journalists, and helped lay the foundation for a congressional investigation. These faculty members, and others, provide students with cutting-edge instruction.

Access and affordability: To ensure that financial considerations do not deter students from enrolling in its graduate programs, the Department of Journalism will set aside 15% of program-fee revenues for financial aid opportunities for graduate students in the department. In addition, Journalism has many needs-based and merit-based scholarships, funded by endowments, professional organizations, and individual donors. The department actively seeks additional private funding for scholarships to assist students with financial need and those from underrepresented groups. Students will be fully informed about these scholarships and other forms of financial aid in the department's printed and online graduate-program information.

Cost of delivering the college/school instructional program: Maintaining a professionally oriented graduate journalism program involves instructional costs beyond those required for traditional academic departments. National accreditation standards limit enrollment in skills classes to twenty students (the recommended enrollment is fifteen). Because the journalism curriculum emphasizes experiential coursework, this mandate means that the department must maintain sophisticated video and audio equipment and specialized computer hardware and software, and must have an adequate number of faculty members and media technology specialists to teach core courses with small enrollments.

Market pricing: The Department of Journalism conducted a survey of graduate journalism and mass communications programs at peer institutions and Arizona University System institutions during September and October 2008. Results indicate that graduate tuition, plus the \$100-a-unit proposed program fee, will result in a total cost for full-time graduate students in the Department of Journalism that will be significantly below the median cost for comparable programs in the University's peer institutions.

### Comparative Costs of Journalism Graduate Programs at Peer Institutions

Rank by resident tuition and fees	Institution	Resident tuition 2008- 2009***	Fees 2008- 2009**	Total resident tuition and fees*
1	Northwestern University	\$32,322	\$0	\$32,322
2	Columbia University	\$20,727	\$300	\$21,027
3	University of Southern California	\$20,522	\$0	\$20,522
4	University of California, Berkeley	\$10,214	\$0	\$10,214
5	University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill	\$9,276	\$0	\$9,276
6	University of Maryland, College Park	\$9,129	\$0	\$9,129
<b>7</b>	<b>The University of Arizona</b>	<b>\$6,334</b>	<b>\$1,800</b>	<b>\$8,134</b>
8	Arizona State University	\$7,052	\$500	\$7,552
9	University of Missouri, Columbia	\$5,377	\$363	\$5,739
10	University of Texas, Austin	\$3,794	\$0	\$3,794

Source: Survey performed during September - October 2008 by the UA Journalism Department.

\* Calculations based on the minimum units necessary for full-time status. At The University of Arizona, this is eighteen units per year.

\*\*Includes actual or computed fee for other institutions, proposed fee for UA.

\*\*\*2009-10 figures not yet available.

The Arizona Board of Regents in 2007 approved the request for a graduate program fee of \$500 per semester for graduate students at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University. A fee for the graduate program in the Department of Journalism at The University of Arizona is being requested for similar reasons, pursuant to the ABOR policy that states: *“Special program fees are additional amounts charged to students in select undergraduate and graduate professional degree programs within colleges/schools or departments.”*

In regard to elasticity of demand, a number of universities that have higher costs than The University of Arizona support larger journalism graduate programs. Especially in light of the increased availability of needs-based financial support, it is unlikely that the proposed program fee will reduce demand for journalism education at The University of Arizona.

Student consultation and support: The student consultation process has been led by the Journalism Graduate Student Advisory Council, which any Journalism graduate student may join. The Council meets with the Department Head on a regular basis to consult about student-related issues. At two meetings in September 2008, the Council discussed the proposed graduate program fee, including the appropriate amount of the fee, and the appropriate mechanism for applying the fee (i.e., on a per-unit, per-course, or flat-fee basis). On September 10, 2008, nine of eleven graduate students attended the Council

meeting. They voted unanimously by secret ballot to request that the Board of Regents approve a fee of \$100 per unit per semester for graduate students pursuing a master's degree in Journalism, either as a freestanding degree or as a dual degree with Latin American Studies or Near Eastern Studies.

The principal reason that students supported a per-unit fee is that many of them are attending the University part-time. The department expects this trend to continue. A per-unit fee is more equitable than a flat fee for these students, who will need more semesters to complete their graduate work. A per-unit fee ensures that all students pay the same total program fee, whether they attend part-time or full-time.

Number of students impacted: The fee would apply to graduate students who first enroll during or after the Fall 2009 semester. Based on University data regarding Journalism graduate enrollment in previous years, the department estimates that it will admit ten to fifteen students per year, and that these students will require two years to complete the requirements for the freestanding master's degree, or the Journalism requirements for the dual degrees. This means that the fee will affect ten to fifteen students during Academic Year 2009-2010, and twenty to thirty students per academic year by 2011-12.

Increased earnings potential of program graduates: Graduates who receive the most advanced training during their university years will be the most competitive for jobs in established and emerging information industries, and will command the most competitive salaries. This is especially true for graduate students in a program which provides students with theoretical coursework and experiential fieldwork that enables them to understand the complex ways in which the international Information Age affects public opinion and public policy on the local, national, and global levels.

The Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), in conjunction with the Knight Foundation and other journalism-education organizations, conducts an annual survey of journalism students who have earned bachelor's degrees and master's degrees. The latest survey involved more than 9,000 students who received degrees in Academic Year 2005-06, the latest year for which complete data were available. Results were published in *AEJMC News* in November 2007. They showed that recipients of bachelor's degrees in 2006 had a median annual salary of \$30,000, up from \$29,000 in 2005, while recipients of master's degrees in that same year had a median salary of \$38,000, up from \$37,000 in 2005.

Benefits to the university: It is crucial for a democratic society to have journalists who are able to think critically about information; to understand the best methods for acquiring, evaluating, and organizing information about issues and events that are important to the general public and specific audiences; and to present this information clearly and impartially. In this way, journalism instruction helps to fulfill the University's broad mandate to inform and educate the public at large, and to enable citizens to participate as fully as possible in our democratic system of governance.

The international emphasis of the Journalism graduate program enhances the profile of our world-class university. The dual-degree programs create a synergy among the Department of Journalism, the Center for Latin American Studies, and the Department of Near Eastern Studies, which strengthens the research and teaching components of each unit. The reports of journalists, both present and past, also provide much of the raw material for several other academic disciplines, including history and political science. Journalists who have advanced research training will produce reports that will make greater contributions to the work of academics in these fields.

A high-quality, well-regarded journalism graduate program that trains students to be leaders in the information sectors of the economy also builds a base of supportive alumni and creates a workforce that makes important contributions to the political, economic, and social advancement of local communities and the State of Arizona.

Accountability: The department will prepare an annual report of program fee revenues and expenditures for review according to applicable ABOR and university procedures.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

We recommend that the Arizona Board of Regents approve the proposed graduate program fee of \$100 per unit for the Master's Degree in Journalism. The fee would apply to all units taken by students pursuing the freestanding Master's Degree in Journalism. The program fee would also apply to dual degree Master's students in Journalism-Latin American Studies and Journalism-Near Eastern Studies during semesters when Journalism is designated as the primary degree.