Updated January 2026

Ongoing Improvement Progress Report

Instructions and Report Template

As part of the protocols outlined in Western's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), to facilitate the continuous improvement of academic programs between review cycles, in connection with the Final Assessment Report (FAR) and Implementation Plan, a monitoring process will include an Ongoing Improvement Progress Report.

The outcomes of this report will be considered as part of the program's next cyclical review. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the operationalization of the implementation plan following the cyclical program review.

This should include a summary of actions taken by the Program and the Dean's Office since the completion of the review (usually about three years), as well as an update on the stage of implementation for all applicable items. These include:

- whether the action item(s) are in progress, complete or no longer applicable (with a brief explanation);
- the timelines of each item and how they are progressing or expected to progress, particularly if they are diverting from original timelines in the FAR and Implementation Plan, and;
- a short description of any other program developments and improvements that have taken place following the review.

The following report template has been created for the program to report on progress made grading recommendations presented in the Implementation Plan, and any other relevant program developments and enhancements.

- The program will complete the template and submit it to the faculty Dean's Office for sign-off.
- The program will then submit the completed Ongoing Improvement and Progress Report to the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement (OAQE). Reports are due by June 30.
    - The OAQE will present all Ongoing Improvement and Progress Reports to SUPR- U/G. Any follow-up questions/concerns, will be communicated to the program and Dean's Office by the OAQE.

Program / Faculty Information

Program	Master of Media in Journalism and Communication M.M.J.C.	**Faculty / Affiliated University College**	Faculty of Information and Media Studies, Western University
Approval Dates of the Review	SUPR-G: June 26, 2023 ACA: September 6, 2023 Senate: September 15, 2023	**Year of the Next Review**	2030-2031
Link to the Programs Final Assessment Report (FAR)	Master of Media in Journalism and Communication M.M.J.C.		
If applicable, submission of follow-up report(s)	NA		

Updated January 2026

Progress Update on the Implementation Plan

Recommendation #1	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
Differentiate and review balance between Journalism and Communication streams.	• Continue to review Production Week to ensure balance between Journalism and Communication. • Review program objectives, learning outcomes and curriculum with the aim of improving and possibly increasing the program's communications content. • Continue efforts to improve the balance between Journalism and Communications, and to ensure that the students recognize that common competencies are applicable to both streams. • Consideration of a particular expertise in Communications for upcoming hires.	Graduate Chair Associate Dean	By July 2025 By July 2024

Recommendation Implemented

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Partially

If no, or partially, is implementation on schedule with the timeline? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Progress

What specific actions have been taken?

Continue to review Production Week to ensure balance between Journalism and Communication.

The Production Week review is completed and changes have been implemented. We now run parallel simulations of a communications studio-style production, along with a live newsroom production. The management and planning of the communications studio is coordinated by an experienced communications professional who is also a limited duties instructor in the MMJC program. Production Week participation is flexible, allowing students to choose how to split their time between the journalism and communications activities in line with how the program allows students to acquire skills, competencies, and knowledge of both.

Review program objectives, learning outcomes and curriculum with the aim of improving and possibly increasing the program's communications content. Continue efforts to improve the balance between Journalism and Communications, and to ensure that the students recognize that common competencies are applicable to both streams.

A major modification to the program was approved by Senate on October 13, 2023. The new curriculum was delivered for the first time in fall of 2024. The modification included the removal of a capstone project from the summer term and the implementation of both a required course (MJCOM 9702 Business Essentials for Journalism and Communication Professionals) and an elective during the summer term, in addition to completing an internship (minimum of 4 weeks in length). We have ensured a communications centric course is scheduled as a summer elective for the past two years (MJCOM 9603 Mastering Strategic Digital Communications & Initiatives) helping to address the balance between journalism and communications in the program. Course learning outcomes for several existing courses have been updated to better reflect communications work, including the required courses MJCOM 9105 Information and Media Law and MJCOM 9200 Doing Democracy Right or Doing Right by Democracy? Ethics, Critical Theory and the Public Right to Know. Both courses were always intended to be applicable to both journalism and communications, but this has been made more implicit with the recent updates and ensures that students recognize common competencies that are applicable to both journalism and communication. Program learning objectives are reviewed on an annual basis, and currently the program believes that they accurately reflect the unique objectives of a program that is training students to enter either journalism or communications professions.

Consideration of a particular expertise in Communications for upcoming hires.

The program strives to balance the expertise of journalism and communications when making hiring decisions and will continue to do so in the future. An example of this is when re-envisioning Production Week, the program hired an experienced communications professional to lead the new communication centered simulations. The program also hired an experienced communications professional to teach the new summer required course (MJCOM 9702 Business Essentials for Journalism and Communication Professionals). As a non-departmentalized faculty, any future full-time hires will ideally have a varied skill set that can fulfill needs not just in a particular graduate program, but for the interdisciplinary faculty as a whole.

Next Steps (if applicable)

What actions remain? Is there further follow-up?

Production Week actions have been completed, as has the update to the curriculum and learning outcomes of specific courses. We will continue to evaluate the curriculum changes as more cohorts complete the program. Program learning outcomes and consideration of balancing expertise between journalism and communications are evaluated on an ongoing basis.

Additional Comments

Recommendation #2	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
Reconsider the nature and the duration of the capstone project by introducing a fourth-semester internship option.	• Develop and submit proposed changes (as articulated in the response above) for submission to SUPR-G by end of fall 2023.	Graduate Chair Associate Dean	Ideal implementation of changes for 2024-2025

Recommendation Implemented

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Partially

If no, or partially, is implementation on schedule with the timeline? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Progress

What specific actions have been taken?

Develop and submit proposed changes for submission to SUPR-G by end of fall 2023.

As mentioned above, a major modification to the program was approved by Senate on October 13, 2023. The new curriculum was delivered for the first time in fall of 2024. The modification included the removal of a capstone project from the summer term and the implementation of both a required course (MJCOM 9702 Business Essentials for Journalism and Communication Professionals) and an elective during the summer term, in addition to completing an internship (minimum of 4 weeks in length). The reviewers' recommendation in the Final Assessment Report & Implementation was to reconsider the nature of the duration of the capstone by ***either*** eliminating the capstone ***or*** introducing a fourth semester internship option. The program chose to eliminate the capstone and replace the requirement with additional coursework to continue to build necessary skills (e.g. business skills in relation to journalism and communications). A four-term program was not a viable solution for student and program success, given internship timelines, budgeting and the strong desire among students (backed by data from surveys and focus groups) to keep the program at one year in length.

Next Steps (if applicable)

What actions remain? Is there further follow-up?

The program has fully implemented the new curriculum outlined in the major modification. We will continue to evaluate the changes to the curriculum through exit surveys and focus groups completed by each cohort to ensure that students are benefitting from the new curriculum and meeting the intended program learning outcomes.

Additional Comments

Recommendation #3	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline

Address potential barriers to attracting an inclusive pool of applicants when hiring.	• Prioritize the program's commitment to diversifying the pool of full-time and part-time faculty candidates, considering more diverse professional and personal backgrounds, as consistent with the Collective Agreement.	Dean Associate Dean Graduate Chair	Ongoing

Recommendation Implemented

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Partially

If no, or partially, is implementation on schedule with the timeline? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Progress

What specific actions have been taken?

Prioritize the program's commitment to diversifying the pool of full-time and part-time faculty candidates, considering more diverse professional and personal backgrounds, as consistent with the Collective Agreement.

In addition to FIMS' commitment to Western's goals of recruiting and hiring with an EDID focus, the MMJC program has shown a willingness to prioritize a commitment to diversifying the pool of full-time and part-time faculty candidates, considering more diverse professional and personal backgrounds since 2023 as follows:

- On July 1st, 2024 Sally Kewayosh was converted to a tenure track position at FIMS. Kewayosh teaches a documentary filmmaking course (MJCOM 9606 By, For, About: Telling Stories from the Margins) for the MMJC program. The course teaches students about trauma-informed reporting and involves workshops with Indigenous elders and others.
- When hiring for a full-time continuing faculty member in 2024 to specifically support the MMJC program, the hiring ad noted that the successful candidate was not required to hold a PhD, thereby being more inclusive to communications professionals as doctoral degrees are less common in this discipline.
- During the same hiring process, the hiring ad also highlighted that the faculty would be looking for candidates with scholarly, pedagogic and/or professional interest in diverse areas such as Indigenous media, decolonization, questions of race, ethnicity, and intersectional identity in communication and/or journalism.
- The resulting pool of candidates was diverse in both professional and personal backgrounds.

Next Steps (if applicable)

What actions remain? Is there further follow-up?

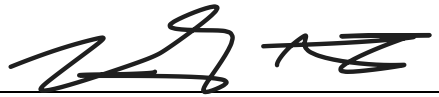
The program will continue to recruit and hire candidates from diverse professional and personal backgrounds for full-time and limited duties positions, as well as the annual Asper Chair.

Additional Comments

Continuous Program Enhancement

Continuous Program Enhancement
What additional initiatives or changes has the program been working on in relation to continuous program improvement? The program continually gathers feedback from students, employers, and faculty members to determine shifts in skills and curriculum necessary for both journalism and communication professionals. For example, we recently updated the learning outcomes for two courses following industry changes and student feedback. The program also endeavours to review program learning outcomes on a regular basis and will map all course learning outcomes to program learning outcomes prior to the next cyclical review. Finally, the program will continue to assess the new curriculum structure to ensure that students are able to meet the learning outcomes of the program and also manage the workload of the newly implemented curriculum.

Approval

	Name	Signature	Date
Program Chair/Director	Chris Arsenault		June 22, 2026
Dean (or delegate)	Anabel Quan-Haase		June 22, 2026