

5-12-2010

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Recommended Citation

Marquez, Melanie, "Press release : 2010 : 05 : 12 : Journalism at USF St. Petersburg Earns Re- Accreditation" (2010). *USFSP News and Press Releases* . 212.

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Journalism at USF St. Petersburg Earns Re-Accreditation

Posted [May 12, 2010](#) at 1:25 pm by [Melanie Marquez](#)

(St. Petersburg, Fla.) May 12, 2010 – The Department of Journalism and Media Studies at USF St. Petersburg, one of six accredited journalism programs in Florida, earned re-accreditation in 19-0 vote from the national agency responsible for evaluating journalism programs.

The department's reaccreditation, confirmed April 30, keeps the program among the approximately one quarter of journalism programs in the United States that have met the standards set by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications, or ACEJMC. Out of the 420 journalism programs in the United States, 113 have earned national accreditation. Journalism and Media Studies is among the even fewer programs in the United States with both undergraduate and graduate programs fully accredited by the council.

The department offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in journalism and media studies. The program currently has 180 undergraduates and 38 graduate students. The seven full-time and two part-time faculty members have expertise in journalism ethics and law; digital media and design; visual communication; science, narrative, sports and other forms of journalism; reporting and writing news; and journalism history.

Robert Dardenne, the department chair, praised contributions of faculty members and students for their enthusiasm, participation and contributions to both the program and the re-accreditation efforts, and their academic and professional performance.

“Our faculty members have worked together to create a program that serves well our students, university, community and the craft of journalism,” Dardenne said. “Our program is rigorous, nurturing, innovative and ahead of many programs in adapting to the media’s digital environment.”

The program's adaptation to the growing uses of technology among media outlets includes integration of digital media into many of the program's courses and specialized courses in various areas of reporting, writing, design, content, development and implications of social and other digital media. At both the accrediting committee meeting in Chicago in March and the Arlington accrediting council meeting in April, Journalism and Media Studies was said to have a “model curriculum” for small programs throughout the country.

The program focuses on reporting and writing, and students create digital portfolios of their work, participate in course blogs and experience hands-on training in digital video, photography, design, web construction and other aspects of the rapidly changing digital media environment.

Both the graduate and undergraduate programs ground students in concepts about the importance of a free press and the implications and influences of the changing news and media environment.