



## DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS

Indiana University  
Indianapolis

To: Vice Chancellor Janice Blum

From: Jonas Bjork

Date: January 28, 2016

Re: Request for a change of prerequisites and the removal of a special-reporting project and electives for the M.A. in Sports Journalism.

The Department of Journalism and Public Relations, previously the School of Journalism, has been offering a Master of Arts degree in Public Relations since the fall of 2010. The program, which does not require a thesis, consists of 30 credit hours. The program was designed both journalists midway through their careers whose opportunities would be advanced by acquiring an advanced degree and to applicants with undergraduate degrees in other areas who wish to make a career change.

The change we are seeking is to make the prerequisites conform to current practice and to have the course plan as outlined in the original degree proposal align with the courses as currently offered.

Thus, we would like the prerequisites JOUR-J200 and JOUR-J210 to be replaced by JOUR-J 345; JOUR-J 700 to be removed as a core requirement; and the program structure of six core courses and four electives to be changed to ten core courses. Those core courses are, taken in sequence starting fall semester:

JOUR-J 510	Media and Society Seminar
JOUR-J 540	Business of Sports Media
JOUR-J 541	Digital Sports Journalism
JOUR-J 620/660	Media Coverage of Sports
JOUR-J 542	Sports Journalism and Society
JOUR-J 545	Sports Writing
JOUR-J 546	Sports Journalism Research
JOUR-J 547	Sports Broadcast Journalism
JOUR-J 501	Public Affairs Reporting
JOUR-J 543	Sports Media Law

The justifications for the change are:

*New Prerequisites:*

1. The original prerequisites have proved to be less well suited to the needs of students in the sports-journalism program who do not have an undergraduate degree in journalism. As the undergraduate and graduate sports-journalism curricula were developed at the same time, some of the courses now available to students were not offered at the time the M.A. was proposed.
2. The introductory writing course (JOUR-J 200) and the visual-communication course (JOUR-J 210) are core course in the undergraduate curriculum that tend to fill up quickly, making it difficult for incoming graduate students to enroll.

*Specialized Reporting Project:*

The role envisioned in the original proposal for the specialized reporting project (JOUR-J 700), serving as a capstone course, has been assumed by other courses in the program, which in most cases require a substantial project at semester's end. As these courses have been developed, JOUR-J 700 has been left off course schedules.

*Ending Electives:*

The original proposal envisioned a program consisting of six core courses (18 credits) and four electives (12 credits). Limited instructional resources as well as student preferences and course enrollment figures have, for all practical purposes, seen the program involve into a curriculum of 10 mandatory courses.

I welcome any questions and can be reached at 278-5325 and [bjork@iupui.edu](mailto:bjork@iupui.edu).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jonas Bjork". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.

Jonas Bjork, Ph.D.  
Professor and Chair