

**Program Changes in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication based on
recommendations of the
Task Force on the Future of Journalism and Mass Communication**

The task force — comprised of faculty, alumni and communication professionals — that in 2006-2007 did an environmental scan of the industry and proposed changes to the SJMC curriculum to better prepare students for the changing media environment. Those proposals focused extensively on the importance of teaching multimedia communication, of cross-disciplinary education and of emphasizing professional ethics.

As a result of that task force, the SJMC:

- Began an “ethics across the curriculum” initiative. The program starts with an academic ethics “workshop” in the beginning journalism class, JMC 30, which includes a student-made video on academic dishonesty, panel discussion with current and former students affected by plagiarism, small-group discussions and an assignment for students to write their own personal “academic code of ethics,” telling how they intend to be an “excellent, ethical” Drake student. (A bookend assignment in their senior Law and Ethics class is the creation of a personal “professional code of ethics,” in which they write how they intend to become excellent, ethical practitioners.) There will be an ethics component in every core class in the SJMC curriculum, plus the major classes will also address ethics in the context of the individual disciplines. The SJMC students are also signing a new expanded Honor Code and Honor Pledge that addresses academic dishonesty and dishonesty in extracurricular journalism activities.
- Created a “multimedia study group” of faculty that is charged with recommending how best to utilize the school’s new interactive media lab and to incorporate multimedia education throughout the curriculum. Even pending the group’s recommendations, faculty in magazine, advertising and electronic media used the media lab to collaborate on an oral storytelling project around the theme of Community in Diversity.
- Created a task force of faculty, alumni and area professionals to examine the electronic media sequence to ensure that it is current and fulfilling the needs of the students and the school.
- Conducted an assessment of the advertising major, the school’s largest sequence, utilizing industry professionals and alumni.
- Crafted a joint, cross-sequence capstone experience in which news-Internet and magazine majors created a news magazine in print and online versions.