

SYNDICATE DISCUSSION
World Journalism Education Congress
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Theme:

The Ultimate Journalism Education, 5 and 6 July 2010

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1. Journalism education needs to define the discipline and encourage people to define it and write about it. We must do that if we are going to survive and become respected as scholars – without becoming mass media scholars.
2. Journalism, on its own, does not constitute enough of substance to make up a full three or four-year degree program. Journalism education needs to draw on, interact with and contribute to other forms of knowledge in the university.
3. Journalism is essentially post-disciplinary. The question of the balance between practical skills and the theoretical foundation in Journalism education needs to be more clearly spelt out. Journalism as *culture* is lacking in Journalism education. Journalism education should incorporate adequate reading and critiquing of the readings to achieve adequate integration between theory and practice.

Journalism education should consider incorporating *journology/journalography* – the study of Journalism as a particular social and cultural practice. That approach must incorporate a study of comparative approaches, of which there is a dearth at the present time.

4. What mechanisms might we use to achieve this integrated theory/practice approach? One question is – *how do we get students to read when they generally don't have a reading tradition?* What do we do beyond bolting *reflexivity* to the course? How do we harness reflexivity to the teaching? Reflective teaching/learning is a pedagogical issue. We can have the interventions occurring in the course of the delivery of the teaching rather than introduce it at the end, as has been done, for instance, in teaching in the nursing, medical and fine arts disciplines.
5. How is the *practice element* in Journalism education delivered? It seems that Journalism has its own notions of *practice*, and doesn't draw on laboratory/studio/field/clinical work. There is an issue about what *practice-oriented work* is.
6. Is what we as Journalism educators do *teaching* or is it *learning*? Journalism education is about teaching *and* learning, and not just teaching. As Journalism educators we need to show that we are focussed on the students and how they develop as practitioners. We have got past the stage when we have a professor saying only that *this is how you write a lead*. The learning imperative must apply not just to students but also to the educators.
7. Journalism technology and curriculum must keep apace of each other. For example, in one university a new and more modern Journalism teaching space is being built but the curriculum does not fit that space. That university is moving away from lectures in the final year and instituting practical activity in place of conventional teaching and this

creates challenges against the present backdrop where course delivery is influenced especially by lectures and timetables.

8. We need to address the tension between industry and the academy. One of the key things is *service learning* so that Journalism education engages with the community in which it is based. We need to think about how we manage that relationship between the Journalism academy, the industrial location of the Journalism practice, and the community aspirations. We must work out the priorities.

We need to be cautious about training journalists solely to meet industry's needs. Are journalism graduates going to go into industry and keep reproducing the flaws in the industry or are they going to be equipped to effect change? Journalism is increasingly not totally defined by employment.

We have the opportunity as educators to define *journalism by practice* rather than leave industry to dictate it. We should seize the opportunity in this regard in this moment of crisis and amidst the digital revolution and reaffirm journalism's usefulness to the community.

9. We must continue to attempt to define 'journalism'. The key difference about the study of Journalism is the important issue of how the cultural aspects create those messages. The ideological formation of Journalists occurs over a lifetime and we need to understand the journalistic formation of ideology. Journalism is not just about production, but about the texts that are produced.

Participatory journalism is becoming more prominent. Journalism is a mode of participatory communication and it draws on a broad sense of practice-based communication. Journalism's objective is to explain to the world what is going on around them. In response to what we do communities can react.

'Journalism' needs to be defined not just for the benefit of the educators but also for the students. Journalism is about:

- being responsible for neighbours;
- being a public intellectual and giving relevant meaning to complex issues;
- empowering communities and individuals;
- performing an educational service to communities by providing knowledge beyond their schooling;
- afflicting the comfortable and comforting the afflicted;
- advocating freedom of expression to deal with abuse of power by all who wield it; and
- correcting the imbalance of power in favour of ordinary people.

10. Journalism is a public and service-oriented profession. The practice involves the application of informed yet sceptical inquiry, in the pursuit of expository, clarifying and useful information. It involves the broad sharing of that information in accessible and participatory forms. Essential to the health of the Journalism profession is the consistent advocacy of freedom of expression and the holding of those wielding power to account.