



Mass Communications Advisory Board

SPECIAL VOTE

Spring '20 | AB Vote by Email; Curriculum Committee vote via Zoom

Notes

1. AB members' Vote by Email

Current Name: Mass Communications (MSCM)

Proposed Name: Journalism and Media Studies (JAMS)

Proposed at AB Meeting: Proposed to AB in Fall '19 (We were unable to meet in Spring '20 because of the shutdown, but the AB had a Special Vote by Email.)

Rationale:

- This request results because of confusion around the name as well as changes to program content to include a focus on media.

- Below is information from the Fall '19 Mass Communications Program Review about the necessity of a name change.

- "[An] underlying cause for the decline in enrollment [in the program] may be confusion about the program's name. With the 2017-18 catalog, the LPC Speech program rebranded as Communication Studies, in part because the state ADT [Associate Degree for Transfer] is called Communications. Since then, the Communication Studies program has generally grown. In addition, during Summer '19, a few students in online Mass Communications classes indicated that they were Communication Studies majors but wanted to be journalists. I pointed out that Mass Communications provided a more direct pathway to that particular major [and career], but it was unclear if the students were willing to switch pathways at that point in their journeys. On September 20, 2019, members of the Journalism Association of Community Colleges listserv for journalism educators were asked if they were noticing a similar trend. Of the eight (8) journalism faculty who participated in the online conversation (including Melissa Korber), most said that this a problem for their program."

Below are excerpts from three of the 9/20/19 responses:

(1) 'We've had the same issues at Cerritos too. After taking over for Rich Cameron here, the Speech Department decided to change its name to Communication Studies to align themselves better with the CSUs. An understandable update -- but you're correct, it's only increased confusion among students and the counselors on campus who often believe Communication Studies is the same as Journalism and Mass Communications. As a result, I've also been thinking that perhaps it's time to update our department name (Mass Communications) so that it differs more from Communication Studies. My sense is that students don't know the difference -- and we'll likely miss out on some possible enrollments and degree achievements.'

(2) 'We are in the same boat here at Cypress. After chatting with our communications studies folks, I have decided to move away from the

LPC Mission Statement

Las Positas College is an inclusive, learning-centered, equity-focused environment that offers educational opportunities and support for completion of students' transfer, degree, and career-technical goals while promoting lifelong learning.

LPC Planning Priorities

- ❖ Implement the integration of all ACCJC standards throughout campus structure and processes.
- ❖ Establish a knowledge base and an appreciation for equity; create a sense of urgency about moving toward equity; institutionalize equity in decision-making, assessment, and accountability; and build capacity to resolve inequities.
- ❖ Increase student success and completion through change in college practices and processes: coordinating needed academic support, removing barriers, and supporting focused professional development across the campus.
- ❖ Coordinate resources and provide professional development for effective online instruction and remote delivery of student support services and college processes to advance equitable student outcomes.

Mass Communications Advisory Board

Members:

Jeff Bennett/Consultant
Gina Channel-Allen/Pleasanton Weekly
Brianna Guillory/Student - SFSU
Sarah Holtzclaw/TriValley Career Center
Deanna Horvath/Las Positas College
Melissa Korber/Las Positas College
Peter Kuo/Las Positas College
Chris Meyer/Tri-Valley ROP, Dublin HS
Mony Nop/Realtor (Mony Nop RE / Compass),
NPO founder (RYL, TVNPA), social media guru
Guisselle Nunez/District Office
Tess Owen/Omni Social Media
Marcus Thompson/Las Positas College
Melissa Tench-Stevens/TV30
Christina Vargas/Student - LPC alumna

Members Present (non-voting):

Elizabeth McWhorter/Las Positas College

communications language for our specific program since many of our students in our communication studies program and those in our communications (journalism) program are getting confused. We'll be focused more on Journalism/Global Media or Journalism/Mass Media as a more specific program. Two of our three feeder CSUs are straight journalism or public relations and one is a school of communications for reference.'

(3) '...I read something lately that was similar to the issue you are having. Changing from Journalism to Mass Communications has resulted in a drop in journalism enrollments in universities. And a lot of them have seen a big increase in public relations majors at the expense of journalism majors. There does seem to be confusion with Communications vs. Mass Communications.'

In addition, of the three most common transfer destinations for Las Positas College journalism students, none is specifically called "Mass Communications." San Francisco State accepts the transfer major in its Journalism program; San Jose State accepts the major in its Journalism and Mass Communications program; and California State East Bay accepts the major in its Communications program. The transfer degree itself is called Journalism. The plan was to schedule a Mass Communications advisory meeting for Fall '19 [done] to discuss changing the name from Mass Communications to either Journalism and Media Studies or some other name that emphasizes 'journalism' and 'media.'

The new name also aligns with the College's new name for Visual Communications, i.e., Graphic Design and Digital Media. From a logistics standpoint, the schedule of classes and college catalog will also be easier to plan because alphabetically, Mass Communications comes before Math, but the acronym MSCM does not come before MATH."

Vote by Email:

Liz McWhorter (Outreach Specialist; Mass Comm AB coordinator) led a Vote by Email and polled the AB members by emailing them in early April. All respondents voted "Yes," with the name change receiving support from an AB majority. Liz shared the tally [and forwarded the emails] to Melissa Korber, who in turn shared with the Curriculum Committee.

2. 4/6/20 Presentation to Curriculum Committee (Zoom)

Mass Communication- Presented by Melissa Korber

Current Name: Mass Communications (MSCM) | Proposed Name: Journalism and Media Studies (JAMS).

An underlying cause for the decline in enrollment in the program may be confusion about the department's name. The speech department program rebranded as Communication Studies, in part because the ADT. Several students in the Mass Communications classes indicated that they were Communication Studies majors but wanted to be journalists. On the Journalism Association of Community Colleges listserv for journalism educators, several other community colleges have seen the same trend and already have made changes. In addition, of the three most common transfer destinations for Las Positas College journalism students, none is specifically called "Mass Communications," instead "Journalism" or "Media Studies." These courses will move forward for voting; name change would be effective Fall '21.

3. 4/20/20 Vote/Approval by Curriculum Committee (Zoom)

Department Name & Descriptor Change:

Curriculum Committee Minutes - April 20th, 2020 | 2:30 PM | Via Zoom

- Mass Communication (MSCM) ◇ Journalism and Media Studies (JAMS)
- Motion to APPROVE Department Name & Descriptor Change: MSC
 - Kutil/Zingg Approved
 - Effective in Fall '21