



## Are our teaching standards sufficient?

The author says universities too often value an academic degree over high-level professional experience. Indeed, standards do influence who is teaching future journalists, and by extension, can affect the level of innovation by future journalists.

Standards also affect how high school journalism is taught. All states require some form of certification. To be licensed, teachers may need to take classes. Classroom experience, including student teaching, can be required. Special rules in some states allow high-quality professionals to take teaching positions.

Only a few states require that journalism teachers be licensed specifically for that subject. [Missouri](#) and [Indiana](#), for example, set special standards for journalism teachers. Most states treat journalism as an extension of English or language arts. That means a person who wants to teach journalism should be able to teach British Literature classes as well.

Standards can change slowly. The Indiana and Missouri standards only vaguely refer to digital media skills, lumped together (as they were when first taught 20 years ago) as a “multimedia” category that includes design and traditional video/photo skills. That doesn’t take into account journalism “coders” and entrepreneurs who are benefitting from [the social and mobile media explosions](#).

Some states see journalism as vocational or technical . That allows for more freedom to hire former top professionals. That also gives some programs federal and state funds specifically earmarked for career and technical education (though some journalism programs nearly [lost this funding](#) because state officials looked at the decline in traditional news hiring and not the many new jobs that require the same skills).

### Student assignments on three levels:

**Flashlight:** The author argues that a “teaching hospital” model of journalism education, because it requires engagement in whatever way the community prefers, forces schools to keep up with technology. Jay Rosen, then-chairman of the Department of Journalism at New York University, wrote of [the balance between the two curricular aims in the modern](#)

[journalism school](#), "One builds the basic skills of reporting and editing. The other enlarges the understanding that future journalists will place behind those skills." Do you think journalism education should be mostly about journalism, technology, business or the topics journalists have to cover? Ask the class what mix it thinks is right.

**Spotlight:** Ask students to write a blog post about whether journalism education is keeping up with technology. Today, this often means using mobile and social media. Start at [PBS' Best Apps for Educators](#). Do teachers use any of these tools in your classes? Which would be helpful? How should teachers in class assignments?

**Searchlight:** The [National Educational Technology Standards](#) (NETS) sets out standards for students, teachers, administrators and coaches. How many of these standards are reflected in the [Journalism Education Association's standards](#) or the [ACEJMC accreditation standards](#)? Do they reflect the skills we need in the professionals teaching tomorrow's journalists? Analyze faculty, resources and curriculum using the NETS standards as a guide. Evaluate the findings in small groups or as a class. Have each group come up with short and long-term recommendations for their journalism department or school.