

Priority Area 4: Extracurricular and Public Facing Activities

Date Submitted: July 15, 2020

A. Summary

This report addresses some of the J-School's institutional challenges pointed out by our Black students and recent alumni. It outlines our recommendations for overhauling the way the J-School brings in speakers and puts on events and for bringing in and elevating Black voices. While we also need to increase programming for other marginalized groups, this report focuses on institutionalizing Black perspectives at the School.

It should be noted that once the COVID-19 pandemic is over, the costs and logistics around bringing in speakers—especially those in greater demand and those outside the Bay Area—will notably increase. After the pandemic, we encourage virtual speaking events as well as in-person events.

NABJ Action Item Addressed

NABJ 7 - More of our conversations around equity in journalism should be public-facing. Recognize that advocating for your students is neither partisan nor controversial. When the school remains silent on issues that negatively impact its students, it speaks volumes. The J-school should be as fierce a proponent as possible for improving the lives of its students. This includes publicly acknowledging unjust events occurring within our industry on all the social media platforms because prospective students, current students, and alumni are watching.

B. Recommendations

B1. The School should **form a committee** that fields and tracks speakers and events, one with representatives from students, faculty, and administration.

- B1a. It should keep an instructor- and student-facing calendar that keeps track of what areas of student and community interest receive speakers and events, and should go out of its way to ensure all areas of interest and importance are represented. Besides Black, Asian, Latinx, Indigenous, and other racial and ethnic minority speakers, the committee should be mindful of gender diversity as well.
- B1b. It should keep an instructor- and student-facing spreadsheet of potential speakers. That spreadsheet should track who has reached out to book a speaker and when, when and where a speaker does speak, what that speaker's reporting or professional specialty is, and what their reporting platform is. This is to prevent the chaos of multiple people reaching out to the same person at the same time.
- B1c. It should also serve to keep track of how many speakers are brought in and how often.
- B1d. It should encourage diversity in race, ethnicity, and gender in sponsored-speaker series, such as those of the Pulitzer Center for Crisis Reporting, Food and Farming, the IRP, and the Reva and David Logan Gallery.

B2. The School should **institute a speaker series on race and journalism** featuring diverse and Black journalists as well as diverse and Black voices in academia, social justice, and the arts. To supplement J200 instruction and Ethics instruction, those courses' teachers should require their first and second years, respectively, to attend three of those speaking events.

- B2a. These speakers can speak to broader themes around race and journalism, racial justice, and white privilege in general.
- B2b. J200 speakers need not only focus on this racial-justice moment but also just on journalism and being a journalist in general.

B3. The School should **institutionalize the practice of each faculty member** who teaches a class to bring in at least one Black journalist as well as other races and ethnicities to speak to their classes each semester.

B4. Equity and transparency in speaker honoraria are important, and each instructor should be given the **same amount in honoraria** for speakers. All speakers deserved to be paid for the work they put into visiting and/or speaking to the School.

B5. For some speaking events and class visits, efforts should be made to encourage the speaker to **address student projects and questions**.

B6. Both in-class and School-wide speakers should, with their permission, **be recorded and made public** in a J-School speaker library or archive.

B7. Every year, the School should **set aside \$2500 for each affinity group** to stage its own speakers and extracurricular events.

B8. The School should **create and fundraise for a new fellowship program** for a Black journalist to visit the School for a week to give talks, participate in events, visit classes, and spend time with students.

B9. School-wide, J200, and Ethics speakers should **represent the range of reporting platforms**. Speaker events should include panels that feature people from different reporting platforms in order to more evenly represent the School's six tracks.

B10. The School should work with the **2021 Esther Wojcicki Visiting Lecturer** donors to be more inclusive of racial and ethnic diversity.

B11. The IRP should make a more concerted effort to **diversify the Logan Symposium's invitation list** and **diversify topics** to include questions of racial justice opening up to as much students as possible.

B12. With the Logan Symposium on hold for now, **sponsors from that event should be courted to sponsor a speaker series**. That way, the School can ensure a source of honoraria and use this as a fundraising tool.

B13. The School—and Career Services in particular—should continue supporting the NABJ career fair, the [first of which](#) was a big success in November 2019.

B14. The School should keep close **tabs on documentary films by BIPOC filmmakers and create a series on social justice issues.** The School should ask for limited-time access for the J-community to view at its convenience, invite the journalists to Zoom Q&As based on viewers' questions and comments, and pay speaking/screening fees. For instance, *And She Could Be Next*, about women of color running for public office by a team entirely made of women of color, just premiered on PBS.

B15. The School should consider **partnering with [City Arts and Lectures](#)**, co-directed by alumna's sister, to co-sponsor events.

B16. The School should announce **upcoming events well ahead of time** for fundraising purposes.

B17. Bearing in mind the sensitivity of this topic and issues around privacy, the School should consider **bringing in a relative** of someone who was brutalized by police in order to speak with students about their interactions with the press following the incident.

B18. The J-Digest should **include upcoming speakers and events.**

B19. The working group also **endorses a number of ideas developed by the Director of Career Services.**

- B19a. prepare students to take on leadership roles in newsrooms with management training in order to get underrepresented students into future leadership positions. This can potentially be through a collaboration with Haas.
- B19b. feature more noteworthy alumni of color on its website and through the halls of the School.
- B19c. establish a quarterly Power Breakfast Series, with opportunities for underrepresented students and their allies to connect with area newsroom leaders and hiring managers. It can be hosted off-campus.
- B19d. form a "J-Team" student group that visits area middle schools, high schools, and community colleges to share their work and decisions to become journalists. The goal is to engage underrepresented communities and appeal to future students.
- B19e. form a blue-ribbon committee and host a series of discussions with journalism school deans, news executives, media critics, diversity advocates, and thinkers to form a plan for how the discipline as whole is to move forward and update its standards, practices, and interpretations. The committee can put out a definitive white paper (à la the Kerner Commission Report).
- B19f. establish an annual trip to New York City to visit the world's leading newsrooms, with time set aside for students to conduct informational interviews. The goal is to expose talented underrepresented students to journalism power centers and to get them on the radar screen of hiring managers.
- B19g. schedule regular tours of local newsrooms to expose talented underrepresented students to power centers closer to home and to get them on the radar screen of hiring managers.
- B19h. Acknowledge School-wide Juneteenth (6/19) with a teach-in or closure of School. The action should be accompanied with an appropriate public statement.
- B19i. Partner with Oakland-based Maynard Institute and BABJA to fine-tune and activate efforts to address School and industry shortcomings vis-à-vis BIPOC.

