



NEW STUDY FROM THE CENTER FOR COMMUNITY NEWS:

Student-Reported Stories Were Published Nearly 12,000 Times Last Year, Reaching Potentially 25 Million Readers

Embargoed until August 6, 2024

Richard Watts | rwatts@uvm.edu

Meg Little Reilly | margaret.little-reilly@uvm.edu

A new study from the Center for Community News at UVM surveyed leaders at 73 news-academic programs across 37 states and Washington D.C. to quantify the extraordinary reach and impact of university-led local news reporting. The study was conducted by CCN researchers Dominic Minadeo and Jocelyn Rockhold, under the guidance of Director Richard Watts.

KEY FINDINGS:

- **2,874** students participated in the **73** surveyed news-academic reporting programs between June 1, 2023 and May 31, 2024.
- Students produced more than **17,228** pieces of journalism during this time that appeared in more than **1,311** professional outlets.
- Student stories were published more than **11,808** times.
- Student work garnered at least **13,654,700** page views and had a potential reach of **23,519,124** readers.

So far, the CCN has identified 120 university-led student reporting programs that provide local news. As programs provide more data and new ones pop up, stories, students and pick-ups will grow. Please contact the Center for Community News to add your data.

METHODOLOGY

CCN contacted 142 programs that appear in the news-academic partnership database, which is available to the public on the CCN website. If a program leader could not be surveyed via interview, they replied via email. Each leader was asked the following questions, referring to the period of June 2023 to the end of May 2024:



- 1) How many students participated in your news-academic program over the last year?
- 2) How many outlets published work created by students in your program over the last year?
- 3) How many pieces of journalism did students publish through the program last academic year?
(This figure only counts work that was published in community-facing outlets.)
- 4) How many times was student work picked up over the last year by community-facing outlets?
(For example, one piece of journalism could be run by 3 separate outlets—this would count as 3 pickups.)
- 5) If you track any, what reader data can you provide to us? (Possible metrics included page views, circulation, subscribers, or any other metric that the program leader could provide.)
- 6) What else do you want to tell us about?

Many programs reported that they could not fully capture the extent of student articles published in other outlets. Many also reported that they do not track reader metrics. Of the program leaders who self-reported reader data, page views and non-unique page views were collected and summed to an aggregate total for all responding programs.

For programs that were unable to provide reader data, we collected circulation figures—either provided by leaders or obtained through publicly available avenues—to estimate the potential reach of student-produced news. Reach in this instance may be understood as the “number of people who have theoretically been exposed to a given piece of content from a particular media organization or exposed to content from that brand.”¹

These figures are conservative estimates because CCN could not reach all producers of student news or capture the breadth of their exposure. The total impact and reach of the student reporting is almost certainly greater.

Survey respondents: American University, Arizona State University, Arkansas State University, Bethel University, Bloomfield College, Boston University, Brandeis University, Chapman University, Claflin University, Colorado College, Colorado State University, Denison University, Drake University, Duke University, Fitchburg State University, Florida International University, Franklin College, Hofstra University, Indiana University, Kent State University, Louisiana State University, Marquette University, Mercer University, Michigan State University, Northeastern University, Northwestern University, Northwestern State University of Louisiana, Point Park University, Rowan University, St. Bonaventure University, Stockton University, Syracuse University, Tarleton State University, University of Alabama, University of Arizona, University of California Berkeley, University of Central Florida, University of Colorado, Boulder, University of Delaware, University of Florida, University of Georgia, University of Hawaii–Manoa, University of Houston, University of Idaho, University of Illinois–Springfield, University of Illinois Urbana Champaign, University of Kansas, University of Maryland, University of Missouri, University of Nebraska, University of Nevada Reno, University of New Mexico, University of North Texas, University of Oklahoma, University of Oregon, University of Richmond, University of South Carolina, University of Southern California, University of Texas–Austin, University of Texas El Paso, University of Utah, University of Vermont, University of Washington, Utah State University, Virginia Commonwealth University, Washington State University, Western Carolina University

¹ Federica Cherubini and Rasmus Kleis Nielsen, “Editorial Analytics: How News Media Are Developing and Using Audience Data and Metrics,” *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2016, 35, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2739328>.