

SPF Colo. urges CU to incorporate basics with J-School transition

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

As officials at the University of Colorado Boulder determine the scope of its new academic program of information, communication and technology, the Society of Professional Journalists, Colorado Pro Chapter is urging a continued emphasis on high standards and ethical behavior in its revamped journalism program.

In an Oct. 20 letter to the committee that will be making recommendations on the restructuring of CU's Department of Journalism, the board of SPJ Colorado underscored the need to recognize the role of journalists as watchdogs of government and industry as integral to a well-informed electorate and a thriving democracy.

"The Society of Professional Journalists shares with higher education the charge to nurture journalistic excellence," reads the letter, in part.

"SPJ exists to protect and advance ethical journalism, which has historically been a keystone of democracy and an important tenet of a free society. SPJ encourages university programs to remain highly committed to teaching the basic tenets of reporting and storytelling. Students still need a basic and thorough grounding in objectivity, fairness, ethics and media law."

Board members discussed the issue during their annual retreat in late September and approved the letter to the CU study committee earlier this month.

"As representatives of the largest professional organization for journalists in Colorado, it is our duty to advocate for quality journalism education," said SPJ chapter president Cara DeGette.

"It is our hope the university will take us up on our offer to provide a professional perspective and assistance as the committee considers its options and makes recommendations for its new academic program during this critical transition."