Report of On-Site Evaluation

ACEJMC
Undergraduate program
2016– 2017

Name of Institution: Middle Tennessee State University

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer:

Name of Unit: School of Journalism

Name and Title of Administrator: Gregory Pitts, director

Date of 2016 - 2017 Accrediting Visit: Nov. 13-16, 2016

If the unit is currently accredited, please provide the following information:

Date of the previous accrediting visit: Oct. 31 – Nov. 3, 2010

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Reaccreditation

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Reaccreditation

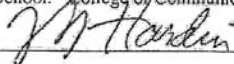**Recommendation by 2016-17 Visiting Team:** Reaccreditation

Prepared and submitted by:

Team Chair
Name and Title: Marie Hardin, Dean
Organization/School: College of Communications, Penn State University
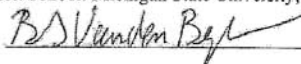
Signature _____

Team Members
Name and Title: Bruce Vanden Bergh, Professor Emeritus
Organization/School: Michigan State University, College of Communication Arts and Sciences

Signature _____

Name and Title: Shirley Staples Carter, Professor
Organization/School: University of South Carolina, School of Journalism and Mass Communications
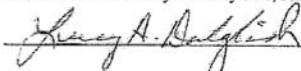
Signature _____

Name and Title: Lucy Dalglish, Dean
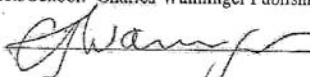Organization/School: University of Maryland, Philip Merrill College of Journalism

Signature _____

Name and Title: Chuck Wanninger, Writer and Editor
Organization/School: Charles Wanninger Publishing

Signature _____

PART I: General information

Name of Institution: Middle Tennessee State University

Name of Unit: School of Journalism

Year of Visit: 2016

1. Check regional association by which the institution now is accredited.

___ Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools
___ New England Association of Schools and Colleges
___ North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
___ Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges
_X_ Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
___ Western Association of Schools and Colleges

If the unit seeking accreditation is located outside the United States, provide the name(s) of the appropriate recognition or accreditation entities:

2. Indicate the institution's type of control; check more than one if necessary.

___ Private
_X_ Public
___ Other (specify)

3. Provide assurance that the institution has legal authorization to provide education beyond the secondary level in your state. It is not necessary to include entire authorizing documents. Public institutions may cite legislative acts; private institutions may cite charters or other authorizing documents.

The University is empowered to provide an education beyond a secondary school by the Tennessee Legislature under law, specifically the *Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-7-101 and 49-8-101*.

History of the University
MTSU opened in 1911 with a two-year program for training teachers and evolved into a four-year Teachers College in 1925. In 1965, the institution was advanced to University status. MTSU houses a wide variety of nationally recognized academic degree programs at the baccalaureate, master's and doctoral levels. The University is composed of eight undergraduate colleges, 40 departments and more than 140 degree programs. The College of Graduate Studies offers more than 100 degree programs.

Since 1911, MTSU has graduated more than 90,000 students. Despite the University's growth from a campus of 100 acres (0.40 km2), 125 students, and a faculty of 19, to an academic city of over 500 acres (2.0 km2), about 24,000 students, and a faculty of over 900, the institution is still essentially a "people's university" with a concern for the diverse needs of the area that it serves.
SOURCE: MTSU Undergraduate Catalog

4. Has the journalism/mass communications unit been evaluated previously by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications?

  X   Yes   ___ No
If yes, give the date of the last accrediting visit: 2010

5. When was the unit or sequences within the unit first accredited by ACEJMC?
1988

6. Attach a copy of the unit's mission statement. Statement should give date of adoption and/or last revision.

<div align="center">

Mission Statement, School of Journalism
Middle Tennessee State University

</div>

The mission of the School of Journalism is to:
- *Provide an undergraduate education combining a liberal arts foundation with contemporary media instruction and hands-on professional experience.*
- *Educate students about the essential role and ethical responsibilities of a free press and media in a democratic and diverse society.*
- *Prepare students for careers in journalism, communication, advanced studies and other professional opportunities in an ever-shifting media environment.*
- *Contribute to the body of knowledge in journalism and communication through research and scholarship as well as creative and professional activity*

Adopted October 20, 2015

Prior to the merging of the news editorial and multimedia journalism programs, the School of Journalism followed the College of Mass Communication mission statement:

The College of Mass Communication provides the entire University community with educational opportunities that foster an appreciation of the role of media in a democracy and nurture better-informed citizens. The College specifically provides professional education for individuals aspiring to careers in the fields of electronic media communication, journalism, and the recording industry, as well as academic preparation for advanced study.

Offerings include theoretical foundations, professional skill sets, research, creative activity, experiential learning, and public service. Graduates of the College acquire broad knowledge from across the University; a global perspective, a professional ethos, and scholarly orientation to life from the College; and an affinity for freedom of expression, critical thinking and diversity of thought."

This mission statement was revised in September 2008.

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Semesters of _13_ weeks
Quarters of _____ weeks
Summer sessions of _4_ weeks
Intersessions of _13_ days

8. Check the programs offered in journalism/mass communications:

_X_ Bachelor's degree
_X_ Master's degree
___ Ph.D. degree

9. List the specific degrees being reviewed by ACEJMC. *Indicate online degrees.

The accredited unit at MTSU is now the School of Journalism—previously it was the College of Mass Communication and the Bachelor of Science in Mass Communication. The School of Journalism now offers the Bachelor of Science in Journalism. The requirements are very similar to the existing Bachelor of Science in Mass Communication.

A university governance change mandated by the Governor of Tennessee necessitated the curriculum change from the Bachelor of Science in Mass Communication to the Bachelor of Science in Journalism, otherwise the changes made would have been viewed as merely updating of the mass communication degree in response to assessment findings.

The Bachelor of Science in Journalism includes a new digital media skills class and a one-credit professional development course. Other required courses were already offered in the unit. Had the degree name not changed, this would have amounted to typical curriculum updates.

Effectively, the name of the degree has changed but the site team will see that the requirements (and changes) came from assessment findings to improve the program. This is a new degree in name but it reflects the previous mass communication degree and a significant effort at closing the loop for the program assessment.

B.S in Mass Communication, the Undergraduate degree in the College of Media and Entertainment and School of Journalism through Summer 2016.

Effective Fall 2016, the degree changed to a Bachelor of Science in Journalism, including a new School of Journalism common class core of 14 hours. The previous journalism and multimedia journalism concentrations were merged into a single journalism program with elective options. Other concentration names have remained the same, though requirements were modified:
- Advertising
- Journalism

- Media Studies
- Public Relations (General)
- Public Relations (RIM)
- Visual Communication

The College of Media and Entertainment offers a Master of Science in Media and Communication. It is not part of the accredited unit.

10. Credit hours required by the university for an undergraduate degree: (Specify semester-hour or quarter-hour credit.)

120 semester hours

11. Give the number of credit hours students may earn for internship experience. Specify semester-hour or quarter-hour credit.

One credit hour of practicum or internship is required for the new Bachelor of Science in Journalism; students may complete up to three hours.

One to three semester hour credits were available under the Bachelor of Science in Mass Communication.

12. List each professional journalism or mass communications sequence or specialty offered and give the name of the person in charge.

Dr. Greg Pitts, Director of the School of Journalism

Name of Sequence or Specialty	Person in Charge
Advertising	Dr. Tricia Farwell
Journalism/Multimedia Journalism	Dr. Ken Blake and Dr. Jennifer Woodard
Media Studies	Dr. Katie Foss
Public Relations—General and Recording Industry	Dr. Jan Quarles
Visual Communication	Mr. Phil Loubere

13. Number of full-time students enrolled in the institution:

16,961 full-time students in Fall 0f 2015 and 15,318 in Spring 2016

14. **Number of undergraduate majors in the accredited unit, by sequence and total (if the unit has pre-major students, list them as a single total):**

Fall 2015

Name of Sequence or Specialty	Undergraduate majors
Advertising	79
Journalism	305
Media Studies	14
Public Relations – General	142
Public Relations—Record. Ind.	42
Visual Communication	53
Total	**635**

Spring 2016

Name of Sequence or Specialty	Undergraduate majors
Advertising	63
Journalism	277
Media Studies	13
Public Relations – General	133
Public Relations—Record. Ind.	46
Visual Communication	50
Total	**582**

15. **Number of students in each section of all skills courses (newswriting, reporting, editing, photography, advertising copy, broadcast news, public relations writing, etc.). List enrollment by section for the term during which the visit will occur and the preceding term. Attach separate pages if necessary. Include a separate list for online skills courses, which also must meet the 20-1 ratio.**
(* The Council has ruled that campaigns courses are exempt from the 20-1 ratio.)

Spring 2016 (term preceding site visit)

SPRING 2016 SKILLS COURSES	
Advertising Copywriting, ADV 3170-001	12
Media Strategy and Buying, ADV 3480-002	9
Advertising Campaigns, ADV 4970-001/cross-listed with PR 4740, PR Campaigns	17
Intro to Video Journalism, JOUR 2132-002	17
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-001	16
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-002	15
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-003	17
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-004	16

Media Writing, JOUR 2710-005`	16
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-007	15
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-008	16
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-009	16
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-010	16
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-011	16
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-012	16
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-013	16
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-014	16
Reporting, JOUR 3090-001 (includes the lab 3091)	16
Reporting, JOUR 3090-002 (includes the lab 3091)	16
Electronic Media News Writing, JOUR 3430-001	14
Electronic Media News Writing, JOUR 3430-002	17
Editing, JOUR 3450-001	18
Electronic Media News Reporting & Producing, JOUR 3500-001	9
Special Topics: "PR Research," JOUR 3520-001 (cross-listed w/PR 3520-001)	9
Special Topics: "Immersion Journalism," JOUR 3520-002	13
Feature Writing, JOUR 3530-004	18
Advanced Electronic Media News Reporting & Producing, JOUR 3740-001	15
Reviewing and Criticism, JOUR 4300-001	16
Advanced Reporting, JOUR 4440-001	9
Public Relations Communications, PR 3360-001	17
Public Relations Communications, PR 3360-002	16
Public Relations Communications, PR 3360-003	16
Public Relations Publications, PR 3380-001	15
Public Relations Publications, PR 3380-002	16
Visual Communication Applications, VCOM 2950-004	16
Visual Communication Applications, VCOM 2950-005	16
Visual Communication Applications, VCOM 2950-008	14
Basic Visual Design, VCOM 3910-002	14
Information Web Design, VCOM 3980-001	6
Advanced Visual Design, VCOM 4180-001	10
Broadcast Announcing & Performance, EMC 3570-001	16
SPRING 2016 ONLINE SKILLS COURSES	
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-D03	16
Public Relations Writing, JOUR 3421-R50 (RODP)	32*
Public Relations Research, JOUR 4410-R50 (RODP)	13

*This is a State of Tennessee online program course where enrollment is set outside the SoJ. Current steps to dissolve the Tennessee Board of Regent's control over MTSU will end this online offering.

FALL 2016 SKILLS COURSES	
Advertising Copywriting, ADV 3170-001	12
Media Strategy and Buying, ADV 3480-002	14

Advertising Campaigns, ADV 4970-001/cross-listed with PR 4740, PR Campaigns	8
Intro to Video Journalism, JOUR 2132-001	18
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-001	12
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-002	17
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-003	17
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-004	17
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-005`	16
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-006	15
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-008	16
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-009	17
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-010	16
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-011	17
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-013	16
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-015	15
Media Writing, JOUR 2710-D01	18
Reporting, JOUR 3090-001 (includes the lab 3091)	17
Reporting, JOUR 3090-002 (includes the lab 3091)	17
Reporting, JOUR 3090-003 (includes the lab 3091)	19
Electronic Media News Writing, JOUR 3430-001	18
Electronic Media News Writing, JOUR 3430-002	19
Editing, JOUR 3450-001	20
Electronic Media News Reporting & Producing, JOUR 3500-001	11
Special Topics: *"News App Design,"* JOUR 3520-002	15
Special Topics: *"Advanced Audio Journalism,"* JOUR 3520-003	11
Feature Writing, JOUR 3530-001	18
Feature Writing, JOUR 3530-002	17
Broadcasting Announcing & Performance, JOUR 3570-001 (cross-listed with EMC 3570)	17
Advanced Electronic Media News Reporting & Producing, JOUR 3740-001	7
Advanced Reporting, JOUR 4440-001	12
Public Relations Communications, PR 3360-002	19
Public Relations Communications, PR 3360-003	20
Public Relations Communications, PR 3360-004	18
Public Relations Publications, PR 3380-001	17
Public Relations Publications, PR 3380-002	18
Public Relations Publications, PR 3380-003	18
Visual Communication Applications, VCOM 2950-001	16
Visual Communication Applications, VCOM 2950-003	16
Visual Communication Applications, VCOM 2950-004	16
Information Web Design, VCOM 3980-001	11
Advanced Visual Design, VCOM 4180-001 (cross-listed with VCOM 3010, Information Design)	14

16. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2016 – 2017 academic year:
$2,312,137.80

Percentage increase or decrease in three years: From 2014 – 2015 to 2015 – 2016, the budget increased by 6.7%. From 2015 – 2016 to 2016 – 2017, the budget declined by 9%.

Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries: $2,145,906.80.

Here is the 2016 – 2017 School of Journalism budget—see next page. This is essentially a flat budget from the previous years. Annually, the budget has fluctuated in the last three years when the salary allocation changes, either due to a faculty raise (most faculty received a 2% raise in Fall 2015) or when a new faculty member is hired and the salary is higher or lower than the individual being replaced or if the person occupies a new faculty line.

The budget decline for 2016 – 2017 reflects a failed search, the retirement of a full professor and the unexpected departure of a tenure-track faculty member. Budget codes shown as unfunded are used during the year to attribute designated expenses into discrete categories. The two budget categories under direct unit control are the 73000 Travel Budget and the 74000 Operating Budget.

Account	Account Title	FY17/PD12 Adopted Budget	FY17/PD12 Budget Adjustment	FY17/PD12 Adjusted Budget
61210	Faculty Salaries	1,521,017.80	0.00	1,521,017.80
61220	Academic Longevity	23,300.00	0.00	23,300.00
61240	Faculty Adjuncts	12,500.00	0.00	12,500.00
61290	Academic Salaries Allowances	3,960.00	0.00	3,960.00
61310	Clerical and Support Salaries	58,480.00	0.00	58,480.00
61315	Classified Overtime	100.00	0.00	100.00
61320	Clerical and Support Longevity	3,800.00	0.00	3,800.00
61410	Student Salaries and Wages	4,275.00	0.00	4,275.00
62000	Employee Benefits Budget Pool	620,929.00	0.00	620,929.00
62050	TCRS Hybrid Defer Compensation	0.00	0.00	0.00
62085	TCRS Hybrid Stabilization	0.00	0.00	0.00
62090	TCRS Hybrid Defined Benefit	0.00	0.00	0.00
62100	TCRS Legacy Contributions	0.00	0.00	0.00
62200	ORP Retirement	0.00	0.00	0.00
62210	401K Match	0.00	0.00	0.00
62250	Contributory ORP Retirement	0.00	0.00	0.00
62300	FICA Employers Share	0.00	0.00	0.00
62400	Medicare FICA	0.00	0.00	0.00
62500	Group Health Insurance	0.00	0.00	0.00
62510	Group Life Insurance	0.00	0.00	0.00
73000	Travel Budget Pool	12,000.00	0.00	12,000.00
73110	Individual Instate Faculty	0.00	0.00	0.00
73210	Individual Out of State Faculty	0.00	0.00	0.00
73250	Individual Out of Country Faculty	0.00	0.00	0.00
74000	Operating Expense Budget Pool	51,776.00	0.00	51,776.00
74110	Printing of Supplies by Institution	0.00	0.00	0.00
74140	Duplicating and Copy Outside Instit	0.00	0.00	0.00
74215	Allocated Telephone Local Charges	0.00	0.00	0.00
74225	Allocated Telephone Long Distance	0.00	0.00	0.00
74250	Cable Television	0.00	0.00	0.00
74510	Supplies	0.00	0.00	0.00
74570	Purchasing Card Supplies	0.00	0.00	0.00
74596	Computer Purchases	0.00	0.00	0.00
Report Total (of all records)		2,312,137.80	0.00	2,312,137.80

17. List name and rank of all full-time faculty. (Full-time faculty refers to those defined as such by the university.) Identify those not teaching because of leaves, sabbaticals, etc.

PROFESSORS
Sanjay Asthana (Ph.D.)
John Bodle (Ph.D.)
Larry Burriss (Ph.D.)
Edward Kimbrell (Ph.D.) Retired May 2016
Jane Marcellus (Ph.D.)
Ken Paulson (J.D.) Dean, College of Media and Entertainment
Greg Pitts (Ph.D.) Director, School of Journalism
Jan Quarles (Ph.D.)
Zeny Sarabia-Panol (Ph.D.) Associate Dean; not teaching, 100% administrative

ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS
Leon Alligood (M.F.A.)
Ken Blake (Ph.D.) -- ASSESSMENT
Tricia Farwell (Ph.D.)
Katie Foss (Ph.D.) -- DIVERSITY
Leslie Haines (M.F.A.)
Phil Loubere (M.F.A.)
Jason Reineke (Ph.D.)
Jennifer Woodard (Ph.D.)

ASSISTANT PROFESSORS
Christine Eschenfelder (Ph.D.)
Cary Greenwood (Ph.D.)
Rob Jasso (M.S.) Resigned July 2016
Hannah Park (Ph.D)
Andrea Phillips (Ph.D.)
Rhyne Piggott (M.F.A) New for Fall 2016

NON-TENURE TRACK
Whitney Matheson (B.A.) Journalist in Residence, three-year appointment
Sharon Fitzgerald (M.A.) Three-year appointment
Daniel Eschenfelder (B.S.) One-year temporary professional hire; new for Fall 2016

AFFILIATED PROFESSIONALS
Pat Embry (B.S.) Director, Seigenthaler Chair Until March 2016
Deborah Fisher (B.A.) Interim Director, Seigenthaler Chair and Executive Director of Tennessee Coalition for Open Government, March 2016 to present
Val Hoeppner (B.A.) Director, Center for Innovation in Media
In 2016 - 2017, the School of Journalism will advertise for and fill a tenure-track assistant or associate professor in advertising and a tenure-track assistant or associate professor in journalism/multimedia-broadcasting. (The advertising faculty member departed to accompany a

spouse to another university. The journalism faculty member departed for undisclosed reasons; he had received an appointment renewal of the 2016 – 2017 school year.)

18. List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in fall 2016. Also list names of part-time faculty teaching spring 2016. (If your school has its accreditation visit in spring 2017, please provide the updated list of faculty at time of visit.)

Fall 2016
Keith Cartwright
Chris Clark/Botsaris
Bobby Dowd
Stephan Foust
Laura Hudgens
Jennifer Justus
Meribah Knight
Andrew Oppmann
Audrey Weddington
Joseph White

Spring 2016
Matthew Binford
Chris Clark/Botsaris
Todd Browning
Stephen Foust
Jim Leonhirth – Online course through TN Board of Regents
Andrew Oppmann
Mike Osborne
Audrey Weddington
Joseph White
Charles Whiting

19. Schools on the semester system:
For each of the last two academic years, please give the number and percentage of graduates who earned 72 or more semester hours outside of journalism and mass communications.

Students completing 72 or more semester hours outside
of journalism and mass communications

Year	Number of Graduates	Graduates Completing 72+ outside hours	Percent
2015-2016	146	146	100
2014-2015	123	123	100

PART II — Standard 1: Mission, Governance and Administration

The policies and practices of the unit ensure that it has an effectively and fairly administered working and learning environment.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(a) The unit has a written mission statement and a written strategic or long-range plan that provides vision and direction for its future, identifies needs and resources for its mission and goals and is supported by university administration outside the unit.

The School of Journalism, formed in 1996 and expanded in 2015 with a merger of its news editorial and multimedia journalism programs, adopted a new mission statement and its latest strategic plan in October 2015. The plan must align with the goals of both the college – renamed the College of Media and Entertainment in 2015 -- and the university. The School has strong support for its goals from the dean and administrators outside the college. The university president described the School as a signature program and described it as a leader at the institution for its "innovative, applied" approach to undergraduate education.

(b) The unit has policies and procedures for substantive faculty governance that ensure faculty oversight of educational policy and curriculum.

The School's policies and procedures for faculty governance are outlined in a document at the college level. The document spells out the establishment of both elected and appointed committees to oversee or provide input to the dean in such areas as promotion and tenure, curriculum, diversity, and internationalization. Faculty meeting minutes indicate that School faculty members contribute to shared governance of the unit.

(c) The unit's administration provides effective leadership within the unit and effectively represents it in dealings with university administration outside the unit and constituencies external to the university.

School Director Gregory Pitts, who arrived in 2015, is seen by many faculty inside the unit and by administrators outside the School as an effective, change-oriented leader. He was praised by the president, provost, dean, and most faculty members for his communication, decision-making, and goal-oriented leadership. He is seen outside the college as someone who works well with the dean, who arrived in 2013 and was also praised by alumni and university leadership for strengthening the college's programming, curriculum, outreach, and national reputation.

(d) The institution and/or the unit defines and uses a process for selecting and evaluating its administrators.

The university's process, used at the college and unit level, is described in a detailed document, "Full-Time Faculty Recruitment Guide," issued by the provost. The Director was recruited

through a national search in 2015. In line with university policy, the dean and faculty in the School evaluated him at the end of the 2015 academic year.

(e)Faculty, staff and students have avenues to express concerns and have them addressed.
Faculty and staff concerns are typically taken to the Director. If they can't be resolved there, a formal grievance process can be initiated, as outlined in university policy. Student concerns may also go to the Director; formal procedures are outlined in the university's Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook.

Summary of findings:

- The School has an updated mission statement and strategic plan that aligns with college and university goals.
- The School's leadership is effective, and faculty members are engaged in committees relevant to the mission of the School.

Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

The unit provides curriculum and instruction, whether on site or online, that enable students to learn the knowledge, competencies and values the Council defines for preparing students to work in a diverse global and domestic society.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(a)The unit requires that students take a minimum of 72 semester credit hours (or 104 quarter credit hours) required for a baccalaureate degree outside of journalism and mass communications and meet the liberal arts and sciences-general education requirements of the institution. ACEJMC expects at least 95 percent of the graduating classes in the two academic years preceding an accreditation visit to meet these requirements.

All students are required to take a minimum of 72 semester credit hours outside of the School and meet the liberal arts and general education requirements of the university. In an examination of registrar records, the site team could find no examples of graduates in the previous two years failing to meet these requirements.

(b)The unit provides a balance between theoretical and conceptual courses and professional skills courses to achieve the range of student competencies listed by the Council. (If the unit has more than one sequence, evaluate each sequence.)

Students enrolled in the School choose to focus in one of five areas: Advertising, Journalism, Media Studies, Public Relations or Visual Communication.

The School made significant changes to its curriculum and structure during the two years prior to the site visit. Prior to the changes, students who aspired to be broadcast journalists were enrolled in the Electronic Media Communication sequence, while news editorial students were enrolled in the Journalism School. The broadcast students have been moved into the Journalism School, which allows them access to news editorial classes and allows multi-media students to take broadcast courses. The effort effectively lowered the silos between broadcast and news editorial students, allowing the students greater flexibility to follow their own interests and career aspirations.

In addition, the School's new Director led the faculty in a review of the curriculum soon after he arrived in Fall 2015. The revamp required each sequence to format its curriculum to include a common 14-credit core that includes the following courses: American Media and Social Institutions, Media Writing, Digital Media Skills, Free Expression, Mass Media and the American Public, Professional Development and a Practicum or Internship of at least one credit. The required courses in digital media and professional development courses were added to the curriculum for 2016-17.
All other courses in the curriculum were "rebundled" categories of electives for each sequence that present a menu of fundamental courses, conceptual courses and professional courses. Students choose several courses from each category.
A review of each sequence follows:

Advertising

The Advertising sequence provides a balance between conceptual courses and professional skills courses by organizing the requirements into three areas: writing and design, conceptual, and professional topics. It also requires a senior topic capstone experience. The sequence requires at least 12 credits in writing and design; two courses are required in each writing area. The Advertising sequence requires two more courses to be selected from four courses that primarily focus on publishing and design. The conceptual-course requirement begins with the principles course, then students choose two additional courses from 17 upper-level course options. There is a six-credit professional topics requirement in Advertising.

Media Studies

This sequence, the smallest-enrolled in the major, shares a core set of required courses with the other sequences that includes an emphasis on principles of free expression, writing, digital proficiency and issues of diversity. Additional required courses include those that focus on history, culture, and critical thinking. All required competencies and values are addressed in the sequence.

Journalism

The Journalism sequence has the largest enrollment in the school. In addition to the fundamentals core, it requires students to take an additional 12 credits in writing courses followed by nine credits from a host of host of conceptual courses. The professional courses allow students to take 12 credits from a list of multi-media, visual, broadcast and video courses. All required competencies and values are addressed in the sequence.

Public Relations

The Public Relations sequence, including a specialty option in public relations for the recording industry, provides a balance between conceptual courses and professional skills courses by organizing the requirements into three areas: writing and design, conceptual, and professional topics. It also requires a senior topic capstone experience.

The Public Relations sequence requires at least 12 credits in writing and design. Two courses are required in each writing area. The Public Relations program requires one more writing course to be selected from four Journalism and one Visual Communication course in addition to a two-course design requirement.

The conceptual-course requirement begins with a principles course. Then, students choose two additional courses from 17 upper-level course options. Principles of Advertising is available for Public Relations students. There is a three-to-four credit professional topics requirement in Public Relations. Students select from Reporting, Case Studies in Public Relations, Crisis Communication in Public Relations, or Basic Visual Design.

Visual Communication

In addition to the common core classes, Visual Communication students choose from a variety of conceptual courses, followed by professional courses largely focused on visual storytelling and design. The coursework covers all required competencies and values.

(c) Instruction, whether onsite or online, is demanding and current; and is responsive to professional expectations of digital, technological and multimedia competencies. Achievements in teaching and learning are recognized and valued. (If the unit has more than one sequence, address the quality of instruction by sequence.)

While the curriculum is robust and current in relation to skills and lab classes, the School does not require stand-alone courses in media law and ethics.

Because MTSU considers teaching to be its priority, teachers are evaluated frequently and often recognized by the university and national organizations for their teaching.

Individual sequences are addressed below:

Advertising

Inspection of syllabi, in-class visits and student input indicate that instruction in the Advertising concentration is at a very high level and the professional skills taught are up-to-date in terms of the digital technology required by the profession.

Media Studies

Because of the small number of students in this sequence, they take a mix of coursework in other sequences, such as Journalism, Advertising, and Visual Communication. Much of their coursework is oriented toward preparation for the professions, and it stays current and is focused appropriately on contemporary issues and competencies.

Journalism

Instruction is demanding and current. Faculty members are encouraged to keep their professional skills fresh and many take advantage of opportunities to update digital, technological and multimedia kills. Students graduate with a strong command of fundamentals, an awareness of global and cultural issues, and current digital and technological skills.

Public Relations

In-class visits and student input demonstrate that the Public Relations faculty provides the current professional skills students will need to compete in the current technological environment. Students offered high praise for the quality of the faculty and instruction they received. One course in particular, Basic Visual Communication (and its advertising design counterpart), was unusually innovative in its application of new applications of InDesign to the development of Public Relations and Advertising campaigns.

Visual Communication

The School's Visual Communication faculty members teach design fundamentals as well as lab courses that use current software and equipment. The relatively small Visual Communication faculty has been recognized regionally and nationally for their teaching and practice accomplishments.

(d) Student-faculty classroom ratios facilitate effective teaching and learning in all courses; the ratio in skills and laboratory sections, whether on-site or online, should not exceed 20-1. (Campaigns classes are exempt from the 20-1 ratio.)

The student-faculty ratio in the unit's skills and lab classes do not exceed 20-1. Most lab and skills classes have significantly fewer students.

(e) The unit advocates and encourages opportunities for internship and other professional experiences outside the classroom and supervises and evaluates them when it awards academic credit. Schools may award academic credit for internships in fields related to journalism and mass communications, but credit should not exceed six semester credits (or nine quarter credit hours). Students may take up to two semester courses (or their quarter equivalent) at an appropriate professional organization where the unit can show ongoing and extensive dual supervision by the unit's faculty and professionals. Students may take up to three semester courses (or their quarter equivalent) at a professional media outlet owned and operated by the institution where full-time faculty are in charge and where the primary function of the media outlet is to instruct students.

As part of the 14-credit core curriculum for all sequences, students are required to take either a practicum (on-campus opportunities) or an internship (off-campus opportunities) for up to three credit hours. One credit hour requires 75 work hours within the semester, two are 150 work hours, and three credit hours equal 225 work hours.

Students find their own internships or practica with the assistance of an internship coordinator. They complete a "learning agreement" that contains a list of learning objectives written by the student and internship supervisor. The internship coordinator and Director of the School of Journalism review and sign off on the learning objectives.

Throughout the semester, the students participating in internships are required to turn in monthly journals and activity logs.

Employers of students from all sequences report that MTSU students are confident, energetic and well prepared for their internships. Many said they prefer MTSU students to those from other regional schools and look forward to hiring them when they graduate.

Summary of findings:

- The unit curriculum provides a balance of conceptual and skills courses to achieve the School's 13 learning objectives, which align with ACEJMC values and competencies.
- Instruction is demanding and current.
- There are no more than 20 students in skills classes.
- Syllabi for courses reflect that all students acquire digital, technological and multimedia competencies.
- Graduates complete 72 or more semester hours outside the School.

Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness

The unit has an inclusive program that values domestic and global diversity, and serves and reflects society.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(a)The unit has a written plan for achieving an inclusive curriculum, a diverse faculty and student population, and a supportive climate for working and learning and for assessing progress toward achievement of the plan. The diversity plan should focus on domestic minority groups and, where applicable, international groups. The written plan must include the unit's definition of diversity and identify the under-represented groups.

Since the last reaccreditation in 2010, the School of Journalism has been designated the ACEJMC accredited unit in the newly renamed College of Media and Entertainment. The School faculty adopted the diversity plan in December 2015. The plan includes goals and strategies for achieving an inclusive curriculum, a diverse faculty and student population, and a supportive climate for working and learning and for assessing progress toward achievement of the plan.

The plan focuses on improving women and domestic minority group representation among its faculty and student populations. According to the plan, during the 2015 fall semester, 13 of the school's 24 full-time faculty were female, five belonged to an ethnic minority group, and two were members of a domestic minority group. The plan notes the progress the unit has made in doubling the number of female faculty since 2010. Currently, the School only has one member of a domestic minority group, a black female associate professor with tenure.

The unit defines diversity as inclusiveness, and the fair treatment of students, faculty, staff, and other people regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religion, socioeconomic class, ability, disability, geographic origin, learning styles, and the intersectionality of these characteristics.

The Diversity Issues Committee is one of the standing committees of the college and is charged to review and make recommendations to the dean on how to enhance diversity in all aspects of functioning of the college. Faculty members from the School have chaired the college committee consistently during the last five years. The current chair has served for three consecutive years and provided leadership for the revision and unanimous approval of the School's diversity plan and other diversity and inclusion efforts in the college.

(b)The unit's curriculum fosters understanding of issues and perspectives that are inclusive in terms of gender, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation. The unit's curriculum includes instruction in issues and perspectives relating to mass communications across diverse cultures in a global society.

Consistent with its definition of diversity to incorporate an array of people and perspectives, the School has strongly encouraged its full-time and part-time faculty to incorporate diversity statements in course syllabi, urging students to be respectful of differences in regard to gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, ability/disability, and other intersections. The School provides the following statement for faculty to consider in constructing their own:

"Diversity: This class celebrates the unique ways that people from varying social intersections have contributed to American media institutions. Please choose your words carefully and be mindful of difference in this classroom."

The School's curricula include several classes that address diversity issues, globalization and cultural commonalities and differences in mass communication content, ownership and reception, and other topics. For example, the self study lists Race, Gender, and Class in Media, an elective diversity course developed since the last accreditation visit, and Freedom of Expression, a core class that reminds students that respect for freedom of expression—fundamental First Amendment rights—is vital to a free society, as stand-out courses that anchor the unit's curricular instruction in diverse and global issues. Other courses that specifically address diverse issues, cultures and perspectives include American Media and Social Institutions, a required course that addresses domestic diversity and changes in media that have led to globalization, and Global News and World Media Cultures, a conceptual required course that examines differences in news, covering conflicts, cultural flow, globalization and the impact of social media, among other topics.

An on-site review of course syllabi and meetings with students indicated that curricular instruction on diversity and globalization in the unit is effective.

(c) The unit demonstrates effective efforts to recruit women and domestic minority faculty and professional staff and, where feasible, recruits international faculty and professional staff.

In an effort to attract and recruit more black faculty, the School Director has developed a resource database of individuals who may be helpful in identifying diverse applicants for faculty openings. Faculty members also make personal contact with women and minority faculty and professional staff to encourage them to apply for open positions. Other efforts include the dean of the college and School Director devoting three days of meetings with underrepresented groups during the 2016 AEJMC convention, and an aggressive current recruitment approach to attract more diverse applicants such as sending position announcements via the Minorities and Communication (MAC) Division of AEJMC.

(d) The unit demonstrates effective efforts to help recruit and retain a student population reflecting the diversity of the population eligible to enroll in institutions of higher education in the region or population it serves, with special attention to recruiting under-represented groups.

In terms of student diversity, the School's student enrollment is 60 percent female, and 44 percent members of a diverse group, including black, Hispanic, Asian, or two or more races. The School's black student enrollment for the 2015-2016 fall and spring semesters is 39.2 percent, higher than the same group at the university (20.5 percent) and in the general population (17 percent).

The School augments its successful track record for recruitment and retention—the highest black student enrollment at the university and in the state, and one of the highest retention rates in the unit (63.4 percent)--through a number of approaches. The university's "Quest for Student Success" initiative, a series of reforms to boost graduation and retention rates through changes such as course designs, enhanced advising, and new student data tracking software is one such effort. Others include providing financial support for tutors for Media Writing and software skills

development classes, and assistance in broadcast classes to master camera and other recording technology to address a potential need among any student who might not enter college with an appropriate pre-college education, according to the School's self study.

Another effective retention effort that gives voice to diverse students is the MTSU chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists, whose adviser is a member of the Journalism faculty. The organization holds regular meetings and presents relevant programs during the year. The Director has hosted informal meetings with students to enhance retention.

The School's recruitment efforts focus on maintaining and expanding its outreach to diverse populations. These include direct contact with students from underrepresented groups, followup and tracking through their high school senior year with periodic contact from the unit that encourages a follow-up visit to the campus. Students are also tracked through application, matriculation and retention. The dean and Director are actively engaged in student recruitment. They participate in recruitment trips to designated high schools and city recruiting fairs, and the Director visits community colleges in the area. The self study notes the biggest recruitment event of the year is the university's annual "True Blue" tour to 13 Tennessee cities and regional cities Huntsville, Alabama; Atlanta, Georgia; Louisville and Bowling Green, Kentucky, hosted by the university's president, a person of color. While not solely targeting diverse students, the university and participating academic units view this tour as a prime opportunity to identify and invite diverse students, especially those from Memphis, Chattanooga and Nashville. The event provides an important face-to-face meeting opportunity for students with School and college academic representatives and counselors.

The School's diversity enrollment is also bolstered by the Tennessee Promise program that provides tuition-free community or technical college to Tennessee high school graduates, as MTSU is the top designation university for transfer students.

(e) The unit has a climate that is free of harassment and discrimination, in keeping with the acceptable cultural practices of the population it serves, accommodates the needs of those with disabilities, and values the contributions of all forms of diversity.

According to the self study, the School's faculty and staff participate in an annual assessment in compliance with the requirements of MTSU policy. This policy states: "Supervisory personnel shall discuss the subject regularly in their staff meetings, ensure that employees have access to copies of the MTSU policy & brochure, and provide to Institutional Equity and Compliance documentation on all activities conducted within their areas." The university requires faculty and staff to complete annual online training frow Workplace Answers for sexual harassment topics and Titles VI and IX.

Additionally, the dean holds diversity discussions through lunchtime forums for faculty as a professional outreach and development opportunity and to identify and address faculty concerns. The dean, associate dean and Director have open-door policies to discuss issues as they arise.

The college has established a grievance committee to address faculty and staff issues, and the renovated offices and administrative suites are all ADA-compliant. In fact, MTSU is one of the most ADA-compliant universities in the Southeast, according to the self study.

Summary of findings:

- The School of Journalism has a diversity plan that focuses on goals and objectives consistent with the university mission, college diversity plan and ACEJMC guidelines.

- The School's curricula reflect instruction on issues and perspectives related to communication across diverse cultures.

- The School has effective efforts to recruit women and is developing measurable goals for improving its representation of domestic minority faculty.

- The School has effective efforts to help recruit and retain a student population reflecting the unit's geographic service area.

Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE

Table 6. Faculty populations, Full-time and Part-time

Academic year: 2015 – 2016 Full-time faculty

Group	Female	% of total faculty	Male	% of total faculty	Total	% of total faculty
Black/African-American	1	4.2%	0	0	1	4.2%
White	10	41.7%	9	37.5%	19	79.2%
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	0	0	0	0	0	0
Asian	2	8.3%	1	4.2%	3	12.5%
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	0	0	1	4.2%	1	4.2%
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0	
Two or more races	0	0	0	0	0	
Other	0	0	0	0	0	
International (any race)		0	0	0	0	
Total	13	54.2%*	11	45.9%*	24	100%*

*Rounded.

Academic year: 2015 – 2016 Part-time/adjunct Faculty

Group	Female	% of total faculty	Male	% of total faculty	Total	% of total faculty
Black/African-American	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	2	15.4%	11	84.6%	13	100%
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	0	0	0	0	0	0
Asian	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0	
Two or more races	0	0	0	0	0	
Other	0	0	0	0	0	
International (any race)	0	0	0	0	0	
Total	2	15.4	15	84.6	17	100%

PART II — Standard 4: Full-Time and Part-Time Faculty

The unit hires, supports and evaluates a capable faculty with a balance of academic and professional credentials appropriate for the unit's mission.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(a) The unit has written criteria for selecting and evaluating the performance of all full-time and part-time faculty and instructional staff.

The School has a policy regarding appointments, promotion and tenure, which substantially covers selection and evaluation of assistant professors. The Office of University Provost has a written policy regarding annual evaluations of all faculty members, including contract lecturers.

(b) Full-time faculty have primary responsibility for teaching, research/creative activity and service.

The School's 24 full-time faculty members have an average teaching workload of three courses per semester, although a few teach four. The School has 13 adjuncts who teach between one and three courses per semester. More than 75 percent of courses are taught by full-time faculty members.

(c) Credentials of the unit's faculty represent a balance of professional and scholarly experience and expertise kept current through faculty development opportunities, relationships with professional and scholarly associations, and appropriate supplementation of part-time and visiting faculty.

Fifteen of 24 faculty members in the School of Journalism are tenured, including the dean and associate dean. Twenty faculty members hold a terminal degree and four others balance substantial professional experience with education. The school has a journalist-in-residence position to support professional engagement for students. Two other affiliated full-time professionals provide significant professional contributions to the School's curriculum and public service. The School requires a balance of teaching, research and service from its full-time faculty. Thirteen adjunct faculty members offer professional experience to course instruction, primarily in skills courses.

The dean makes funding available for faculty training and education, with priority going to faculty members who will use the knowledge to make the curriculum "more contemporary" or who will learn advances in technology. For example, faculty members report that they were able to attend the Associated Press Managing Editors' "NewsTrain" seminar for free and that any time *The Tennessean* provides training for staffers, MTSU faculty members are invited to attend. Numerous faculty members belong to and/or have had leadership positions in professional and scholarly organizations, and several have served in leadership roles on campus and two have served on the Board of Regents.

The university makes available a variety of workshops and seminars designed to improve teaching. Nearly all faculty members report having attended at least one continuing education seminar or workshop in the past several years.

(d) The unit regularly evaluates instruction, whether onsite or online, using multiple measures that include student input.

The Tennessee Board of Regents mandates that teaching performance be a part of all tenure, promotion and reappointment decisions. The School evaluates teaching in several ways. Students complete an evaluation form during a class session close to the end of the semester. Faculty members see the results after grades are turned in. The results are reviewed by the Director of the School, and (in the case of tenure-track faculty) the Appointment, Promotion and Tenure Committee. The most recent evaluations are compared to previous scores for the instructor and also to School norms. If problem areas are detected, the Director counsels the instructor and works to prepare a plan to strengthen the faculty member's teaching.
The School also has a written policy for selection and evaluation of assistant professors and lecturers. The evaluation for assistant professors is particularly rigorous. They serve on one-year renewable contracts and are evaluated on their teaching, research and service annually.

Tenured faculty submit a form each year outlining their goals for the coming year, and they have conversations with the Director annually regarding their performance. The Director prepares an official evaluation for the permanent record every year that is shared with the faculty member.

Adjunct faculty are evaluated using student evaluations, and classroom visits when possible.

(e) The faculty has respect on campus for its university citizenship and the quality of education that the unit provides.

Conversations with the president, provost and vice president for communication (who also teaches media writing in the School), indicate the unit has a strong reputation on campus. Indeed, the School was described as the "core" of the College of Media and Entertainment.

Summary of findings:

- Full-time faculty members have primary responsibility for teaching, scholarship and research.
- Faculty members demonstrate a balance of academic and professional experience and expertise.
- Faculty members stay current through professional development and involvement.
- The School conducts regular evaluations of instruction and annual evaluation of faculty members.

Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE

PART II ─ Standard 5: Scholarship: Research, Creative and Professional Activity

With unit support, faculty members contribute to the advancement of scholarly and professional knowledge and engage in scholarship (research, creative and professional activity) that contributes to their development.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:
(a) The unit requires, supports and rewards faculty research, creative activity and/or professional activity.

The mission of the School values traditional research and creative activity for tenure and promotion.

According to the self study and discussions with administrators and faculty, the unit encourages and supports faculty travel to present papers or serve on panels at regional, national and international conferences and other venues for research, scholarship and professional and creative activity.

The School affirms its commitment to research in its updated strategic plan by identifying resources to promote the School by enhancing faculty opportunities for research, creative and professional development. The school's 2016-2017 budget includes a travel budget of $12,000, but it funded more than $21,000 in travel requests from budget allocations and supplemental funding. The School has funded 90% to 100% of all travel requests in the last five years.

Faculty are also encouraged to seek funding from other areas on campus that include the Graduate School and the MTSU Poll. The dean's office provides travel support for digital training that supports teaching and faculty creative and professional development.

(b) The unit specifies expectations for research, creative activity and/or professional activity in criteria for hiring, promotion and tenure.

The School's expectations for research, creative activity and/or professional activity in criteria for hiring, promotion and tenure are stated in its "Appointments, Promotion, Tenure and Reappointment Guidelines" approved by the faculty on April 29, 2015. As stated in the document, scholarship is an essential element of the academic environment and every faculty member in the School is expected to contribute to the advancement of the discipline through meaningful research, creative endeavors, or both.

The guidelines specify that scholarship consists of traditional research that leads to new knowledge, as well as academic, professional, and popular works that apply existing knowledge. The School embraces academic and professional (applied) research of a traditional nature and also recognizes creative works appearing in professional and popular media if they demonstrate high standards in the practice of the discipline. For academic research, emphasis is placed on peer-reviewed publications; for creative activity and professional productivity, emphasis is placed on works that reach a substantial audience and receive appropriate professional notice in publications or other forums.

(c) Evaluation criteria for promotion, tenure and merit recognition account for and acknowledge activities appropriate to faculty members' professional as well as scholarly specializations.

The unit measures scholarship in terms of quantity, quality, the nature of the scholarship, the reputation of the forum for the scholarship, and the originality of the scholarship.

The examples of the scholarship expectations for academic and professional candidates are similar to most Carnegie-classified Comprehensive institutions: peer-reviewed academic journal articles; books based on scholarship and published by highly regarded academic presses; peer-reviewed scholarly papers presented at regional and national conferences; peer-reviewed and invited presentations to recognized professional or academic associations; textbooks; analyses and critical reviews of professional subjects in academic journals and other professional media; editorship of scholarly or professional material; and citations of one's work, for academic faculty. Examples for professional faculty include articles, reviews, commentaries and creative projects published in newspapers, magazines or other popular media demonstrating high standards in the discipline's practice; national, juried creative projects; creative projects recognized by the creative community, authorship of peer-reviewed or refereed books, and editing of popular books and other publications.

(d) Faculty members communicate the results of research, creative and/or professional activity to other scholars, educators and practitioners through presentations, productions, exhibitions, workshops and publications appropriate to the activity and to the mission of the unit and institution.

The School's faculty includes several internationally known scholars and journalists who publish regularly. As noted in the self-study, for a faculty of 24, this balance addresses both professional activity and critical scholarship. In the past five years the faculty have achieved research, creative and/or professional productivity while teaching between 9-13 credit hours each semester. Collectively they have produced eight books, made 134 conference presentations at local, regional, national and international venues, published 50 refereed articles and presented 21 invited academic papers.

Almost half of the faculty members have published in peer-reviewed journals such as *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator*, *International Journal of Journalism and Mass Communications*, *Media, Culture and Society*, *Health Communication*, *Journalism History*, and *Asia Pacific Public Relations Journal*. Others have published in respected professional publications or newspapers such as *USA Today* and others. Faculty members have made peer-reviewed presentations at AEJMC, BEA, ICA, and the International Association for Media and Communication Research, among others. Faculty members have also presented papers at regional meetings of academic and professional associations.

(e) The unit fosters a climate that supports intellectual curiosity, critical analysis and the expression of differing points of view.

Faculty indicated in our interviews and discussions with them that the unit fosters a climate that supports intellectual curiosity, critical analysis and the expression of differing points of view.

Summary of findings:

- School faculty members contribute research and creative/professional activity appropriate to the unit's mission.

- The School's tenure and promotion guidelines recognize professional as well as scholarly activity.

Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE

Scholarship table (provided by unit):

Table 5: Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activities

| Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activities | Total from Unit* | Individuals | | | | Totals |
		Full Professors 9	Associate Professors 7	Assistant Professors 5	Other Faculty** 2	(23)
Awards and Honors	18	5	4	8	1	18
Grants Received Internal	19	5	7	6	1	19
Grants Received External	8	3	2	2	1	8
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co-authored	8	5	2	1		8
Textbooks, Sole- or Co-authored*	2		2			2
Books Edited						
Book Chapters	28	19	2	7		28
Monographs	1	1				1
Articles in Refereed Journals	50	27	6	17		50
Refereed Conference Papers	134	60	37	37		134
Invited Academic Papers	21	17		4		21
Encyclopedia Entries	12	10		2		12
Book Reviews	37	21	1	15		37
Articles in Non-refereed Publications	402	316	8	3	75	402
Juried Creative Works	8		4	4		8
Non-juried Creative Works	309	300	6	3		309
Other (specified):						
Invited speaker/research	124	120	1	3		124
Panelist	29	20	5	4		29
Professional presentation	55	48	7			55

PART II — Standard 6: Student Services

The unit provides students with the support and services that promote learning and ensure timely completion of their program of study.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(a)Faculty and/or professional advising staff ensure that students are aware of unit and institutional requirements for graduation and receive career and academic advising.

The School has benefited from the creation of a new advising center in the college. There are nine advisers in the center compared to just two advisers two years ago. The center has adopted current electronic systems to help make students aware of graduation requirements. The two systems used in the School are the Student Success Collaborative (SSC) and Pipeline MT. SSC is a system for tracking student progress, scheduling meetings, and documenting meetings. Pipeline MT is the primary student data system for recording grades and can be used by students and advisers to monitor degree progress. Students can walk in for advising meetings on Walk-in Wednesdays. There also is online advising using Skype. Faculty members have the primary responsibility for career advising.

Students, however, complained about the new advising system. The primary complaint was about advisers' lack of knowledge of program requirements and being passed around to different advisers.

(b)Faculty are available and accessible to students.

Faculty members are required to be in their offices 30 hours a week. Students expressed satisfaction with access to and the responsiveness of faculty. Faculty also communicate with students via email and are open to meeting with them before and after class.

(c)The unit keeps students informed about the activities, requirements and policies of the unit.

Students are made aware of activities, requirements and policies of the School through electronic channels such as the School's website, PipelineMT, the Student Success Collaborative, student media, and postings in the main hallway of the School's building.

(d)The unit and the institution provide students with extra-curricular activities and opportunities that are relevant to the curriculum and develop their professional as well as intellectual abilities and interests.

The School provides numerous opportunities for students to participate in extracurricular activities. Students expressed the importance of this participation to their fellow students.

The student organizations, media and activities available in the School include: the students newspaper, *Sidelines;* the student-run cable channel, MT10; the student-run radio station, WMTS 88.3 FM: student record label, Match Records; and the 100,000-watt professional public radio station, WMOT; student media outlets work collaboratively in the Center for Student Media; and student clubs such as the Public Relations Student Society of America.

(e)The accredited unit must gather, maintain and analyze enrollment, retention, graduation rates and other aggregate information for improving student services and reducing barriers to student success. The unit regularly publishes retention and graduation information on its website.

The University's Office of Student Success gathers, maintains and analyzes enrollment and retention rates that show the college's retention rates to be higher than those for the University as a whole. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Research publishes graduation rates by degree and concentration on the Provost's web site. The Schools' rates for 2013 were 73 percent and above for all concentrations.

Summary of findings:

- The School has moved to using a professional advising staff. Students said they lack confidence in the advising they get, however.
- The School's media collective, the Center for Innovation in Media, and various organizations provide opportunities for students.
- Data on retention and graduation rates can be found on the university website.

Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 7: Resources, Facilities and Equipment

The unit plans for, seeks and receives adequate resources to fulfill and sustain its mission.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(a) The unit has a detailed annual budget for the allocation of its resources that is related to its long-range, strategic plan.

The self-study reports that the unit has sufficient financial support to meet its needs. A thorough budget process is in place, with the School Director providing the dean with requests and recommendations; the dean then develops the budget for presentation to the president and provost. The current budget is essentially flat from previous years and there is little indication that will change.

Long-term budget needs are being addressed as the demand for new technology continues to impact the curriculum. A new student fee helps fund new equipment and faculty members are regularly assessing new technology changes to allow them to provide up-to-date instruction for students.

(b) The resources that the institution provides are adequate to achieve the unit's mission. The resources are fair in relation to those provided other units.

The School gets its fair share of resources within the broad university budget demands. State support comes from retail sales taxes. The Director reports that the overall budget, travel and other items are fair compared to other units on campus. Though the budget calls for only $12,000 for unit travel, faculty members say they usually find funding necessary to cover travel to relevant meetings.

(c) The facilities of the unit enable and promote effective scholarship, teaching and learning.

The School is located in the Bragg Media and Entertainment Building — built in 1991 and refurbished in 2009. That facility provides an up-to-date learning environment for Journalism students — quality classrooms, state-of-the-art equipment and access to digital information. There are no environmental concerns, and faculty members and students appreciate the quality of the facility. Of particular note was the amount of clean, open common area available to students. Technology support is provided by three employees, and financial resources have been enhanced through implementation of a new student fee.

Lecture rooms are state-of-the-art with overhead cameras and computer platforms. Rooms range from a large lecture hall that holds 77 students to smaller conference rooms — accommodating all types of instruction. Faculty members' offices have up-to-date personal computers and printers.

(d) The institution and the unit provide faculty and students with equipment or access to equipment to support its curriculum and the research, creative and professional activities of the faculty.

The unit has quality computers and lab equipment, and students are appreciative of that. One highlight is a new iMac computer lab with 27-inch iMacs, and there are other labs with the necessary software to meet the needs of both video-audio and publication students.

The Center for Innovation in Media provides an impressive collection of equipment necessary to tell stories across multiple platforms. Students say they have little difficulty gaining access to the equipment they need. The Center is also home to the school's electronic media: the 100,000-watt public radio station, the Sidelines daily news source and campus radio stations. Broadcasting equipment is sufficient. The college also takes pride in a huge mobile van, which is used to film athletic and music events and serves as a learning laboratory for students.

Many students have purchased their own cameras to meet course requirements – and they note the financial commitment that entails. There are a few cameras that can be checked out, but not many. The Director said there is a plan to purchase at least 30 new camera kits, which will improve quality and allow better standardization.

The School is focused on the growing digital demands students will face as they enter the workforce and is looking to upgrade the equipment available to those students. A new technology fee charged to students should generate $300,000 to be spent on technology and software.

(e) The institution and the unit provide sufficient library and information resources to support faculty and student research and professional development.

The James E. Walker Library opened in 1999 and contains 1,000,000 volumes and 33,000 periodicals. The building is near the Bragg Building, and students say it meets their needs. In fact, the Mac labs at the library are regularly used if Bragg labs are not available.

Summary of findings:

- The School has a detailed budget related to its strategic plan
- Its resources are adequate to achieve its mission and fair in relation to other units
- Facilities and equipment are sufficient to support the curriculum and faculty

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 8: Professional and Public Service

The unit and its faculty advance journalism and mass communication professions and fulfills obligations to its community, alumni and the greater public.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(a) The unit consults and communicates regularly with its alumni and is actively engaged with its alumni, professionals and professional associations to keep curriculum and teaching, whether on site or online, current and to promote the exchange of ideas.

Regular interaction with alumni was cited as a weakness in the previous accreditation report, and there have been some efforts to improve alumni engagement. The self-study cites a closed-group Facebook page with 340 members. A public-group Facebook page lists just 17 members, and only five posts in 2015.

The self-study notes alumni mixers and opportunities for meetings with students through involvement in professional associations. Additionally, a new website called "The Leading Edge" provides some outreach from the College of Media and Entertainment. That page includes a link "alumni scoop," but the site seems pretty meager — just notes on nine alumni. A new blog called "News and Views" provides some communication to alumni, but it also appears to be irregular, and it provides little in the way of interacting with alumni.

The Board of Trust, a professional advisory board that addresses the entire college, is in place and meets regularly. It includes Journalism alumni. The School has plans to develop a separate group of professionals who would focus more directly on activities of the Journalism unit. A new director of development for the college started in 2015, and she is expanding the number of events targeted to alumni. She has a list of 5,200 active email addresses for alumni and is looking for ways to expand communication.

For more on engagement of alumni and professionals for curricular improvement, see Standard 9(d) and (e).

(b) The unit provides leadership in the development of high standards of professional practice through such activities as offering continuing education, promoting professional ethics, evaluating professional performance and addressing communication issues of public consequence and concern.

The unit's unique association with the John Seigenthaler Chair of Excellence in First Amendment Studies gives it an enviable reputation as an expert in press freedoms. That status manifests itself in regular interaction with the nation's top professionals. The dean is also president of the Newseum Institute's First Amendment Center, based at Vanderbilt University nearby. That relationship puts the School in a position of being the go-to site for information about First Amendment issues for both journalists and academics.

Many of the School's outreach efforts fall in the First Amendment arena, but not all. The self-study provides a long, comprehensive list of articles, seminars and presentations generated by faculty members who are well aware of their responsibility for public service.

(c) The unit contributes to the improvement of journalism and mass communication as academic disciplines by supporting the faculty's involvement in academic associations and related activities.

The School's involvement with the John Seigenthaler Chair of Excellence in First Amendment Studies manifests itself in regular visitors to campus and national exposure on First Amendment matters. Faculty members also participate on campus and off in various initiatives. In conversations with educators from other departments, it was clear that the unit's faculty members are full contributors to the academic community.

(d) The unit contributes to its communities through *unit*-based service projects and events, service learning of its students, and civic engagement of its faculty.

Certainly the affiliation with the Siegenthaler Chair program and the First Amendment Center expands the reach of the unit to media professionals and scholars. The two draw speakers to campus and provide attention to First Amendment issues.

Additionally, public relations classes perform off-campus work with area non-profit organizations -- a positive example of outreach that enhances the unit's reputation.

(e) The unit supports scholastic journalism through such activities as faculty workshops, visiting lectures and critiques of student work.

The School supports scholastic journalism in a number of ways. A new "J-Camp" has been started, which draws high school students to a week-long session held on campus. Faculty members work as mentors at area high schools and participate in the Tennessee High School Press Association. That organization is based at Lipscomb University and has 60 member high schools. Its director highly values the contributions made by faculty members in the school.

Summary of findings:

- The School advances the professions through public events and community service projects.
- Leadership is setting high standards of professional practice.
- Faculty members are involved in academic and professional associations.
- The School is increasing its efforts to engage with alumni.

Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 9: Assessment of Learning Outcomes

The unit regularly assesses student learning and applies results to improve curriculum and instruction.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(a)The unit defines the goals for learning that students must achieve, including the "Professional Values and Competencies" of this Council.

The School integrates the 12 ACEJMC competencies into its own 13 learning outcomes for students. The learning outcomes are posted in the Bragg Media and Entertainment Building and, as applicable to courses, on syllabi.

(b)The unit has a written assessment plan that uses multiple direct and indirect measures to assess student learning.

The School's assessment plan, adopted in 2009 and revised in Fall 2015 as the unit revised its curriculum, includes direct and indirect measures that are designed to assess learning outcomes. Direct measures include standardized exams administered to all students; writing assessment by professionals; and internship evaluations. Indirect evaluations include surveys of students. A survey of alumni was conducted during the 2015-16 academic year.

(c)The unit collects and reports data from its assessment activities and applies the data to improve curriculum and instruction.

A faculty member in the School leads its efforts to collect, analyze and respond to assessment data, which is collected in some form each semester. Generally, faculty members in the School are not engaged in assessment and seem to know little about the processes that are in place to collect and analyze the data. Faculty meeting minutes indicate that assessment has not been a point of discussion at most meetings.

However, there is evidence of "closing the loop" in response to assessment data, especially to the feedback of professionals about student writing. For instance, feedback led to an evaluation of the way faculty members graded student writing, and a rubric was developed for faculty use in writing courses to encourage more evenness in evaluations. A module to improve students' math skills was also developed. A senior "exit exam" has been revised to better capture student performance on learning outcomes.

An interview with the Assistant to the Provost for Special Initiatives, who oversees the university's assessment efforts, said the School met the university's expectations for assessment of learning outcomes. MTSU is part of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and was successfully reviewed by SACS, on its assessment efforts, in 2016.

(d) The unit maintains contact with its alumni to assess their experiences in the professions and to provide suggestions for improving curriculum and instruction.

The dean of the College, a leader in the journalism field, has taken the lead in recruiting the input of experienced alumni and professionals on directions for the curriculum and instruction. The

dean hosted formal group discussions with alumni and media professionals in Washington and in Nashville to generate ideas for the School, including the need for "digital agility."

(e) The unit includes members of journalism and mass communication professions in its assessment process.

The School does this in two primary ways: through internship evaluations by supervisors in the professions, and by engaging professionals in the evaluation of writing and other work by students. The feedback has resulted in increased emphasis on writing skills in the curriculum.

Summary of findings:
- The School's 13 learning outcomes include the ACEJMC values and competencies.
- The School's assessment plan, adopted in 2009 and revised in 2015, includes multiple measures and incorporates professional input.
- The assessment results are being used in efforts to improve curriculum, instruction, and student performance.

Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE

PART III: Summary by site visit team

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

Strengths

- **Strong support from the highest levels of the university, which recognize the School as a signature program and laud its leadership.** The college, the School, its leadership and its faculty hold a strong reputation on campus, and the president indicated that he sees the School as "leading the pack" for innovative, applied undergraduate education.
- **A "perfect storm" of change-oriented leadership.** The dean and Director are seen, outside the unit and inside, as working together in ways that have the potential to make the School a player on the national stage. Employers and internship supervisors across the region say they like the energy coming from the School.
- **An array of special programs and resources that add value to the student experience.** The Center for Innovation in Media, Studio M lab, and the Seigenthaler Chair of Excellence in First Amendment Studies are three such enterprises that provide opportunities and programming.
- **A diverse, engaged student body.** Most students in the School are first-generation and hold down part- or full-time jobs; racial and ethnic diversity in the School also surpasses that of the university. Many are transfer students. Despite their challenges, they come across as committed and excited about opportunities in the School.
- **A student-centered ethos among the faculty.** Much of the reason for the commitment of the students may be in what they overwhelmingly said was the reason they love coming to the Bragg Building everyday: The faculty, who are their champions.

Weaknesses

- **An assessment process that does not engage faculty members enough to meaningfully, consistently influence curriculum and instruction.** Since the unit was found out of compliance on assessment in 2011, it has implemented the measures outlined in its (updated) 2009 plan. There has also been "closing the loop," but not in ways that can yet demonstrate improved learning outcomes. Most faculty members in the School do not seem to be engaged in the process.
- **Faculty composition that falls short of serving a diverse student body.** Although the School has made great strides in increasing its percentage of women, it must increase the representation of domestic under-represented groups in its faculty ranks.
- **An advising operation that has not engendered the confidence of students.** The School now uses a professional advising staff for students. Although retention and graduation rates and other data indicate this is a positive move, many students reported frustration with advising and a lack of confidence in the guidance they're getting.
- **Unevenness in the way media law and ethics are addressed in the curriculum.** While there are modules that address media law and ethics in a handful of courses, including a required course in the core, attention to these learning outcomes in the curriculum is not convincing.

2) List the standards with which the unit is not in compliance.   N/A

3) Summarize the problems or deficiencies that should be addressed before the next evaluation (i.e., related to non-compliance with standards).   N/A

4) In the case of a recommendation for provisional accreditation, list the deficiencies that should be addressed before the provisional status can be removed.   N/A

5) In the case of a recommendation for denial of accreditation, clearly and fully explain the reasons that led to the recommendation.   N/A

6) If the unit was previously accredited, summarize the significant deficiencies noted in the previous report and the actions taken to correct them. If the unit was in noncompliance in the same standard(s) on the previous two visits, identify the standard(s) and the problems noted. Explain actions taken to correct the problems.

The unit, previously the College of Communication at Middle Tennessee State University, was found out of compliance on two standards in its 2011 review: Diversity (3) and Assessment (9). Concerns with Diversity involved incorporating diversity into the curriculum and diversifying faculty ranks; Assessment 9 concerns involved implementation of the plan that had been adopted. The unit under review during this visit was not the entire College (now renamed as the College of Media and Entertainment) but the School of Journalism. The School of Journalism addressed the two out-of-compliance standards sufficiently to move into compliance on both. Please see details for each standard in this report.

7) The self-study is the heart of the accrediting process. Often the quality of that document determines the degree of success of the site visit. Summarize the team members' judgment of the self-study.

The self-study was sufficient but did contain some errors (mostly typographical) and gaps that the team addressed through further fact-finding on site.