

# Report of On-Site Evaluation

ACEJMC

Undergraduate program

2016- 2017

Name of Institution: **Southeast Missouri State University**

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: **Dr. Carlos Vargas, President**

Name of Unit: **Department of Mass Media**

Name and Title of Administrator: **Dr. Karie Hollerbach, Chair**

Date of 2016 - 2017 Accrediting Visit: **October 9-12, 2016**

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

Date of the previous accrediting visit: **January 27-29, 2013 (revisit)**

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: **Reaccreditation**

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: **Reaccreditation**

Recommendation by 2016 - 2017 Visiting Team: **Reaccreditation**

## Team Chair

Name and Title: Barbara B. Hines, Professor Emerita

Organization/School: Cathy Hughes School of Communications, Howard University

Signature Barbara B. Hines

## Team Members

Name and Title: Clark W. Bell

Organization/School: Retired/McCormick Foundation

Signature Clark W. Bell

Name and Title: Yvonne Chen, Associate Professor

Organization/School: William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications, The University of Kansas

Signature Yvonne Chen

Name and Title: Nancy Mitchell, Professor

Organization/School: College of Journalism and Mass Communications, The University of Nebraska, Lincoln

Signature Nancy Mitchell

Name and Title: Al Stavitsky, Dean

Organization/School: Donald W. Reynolds School of Journalism and Center for Advanced Media Studies, The University of Nevada, Reno

Signature Al Stavitsky

**PART I: General Information**

Name of Institution: Southeast Missouri State University

Name of Unit: Department of Mass Media

Year of Visit: 2016-17

**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
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges

**2. Indicate the institution's type of control.**

- Private
- 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.**

Southeast Missouri State University is duly authorized to operate and grant degrees by Chapter 174 of the revised Missouri statutes.

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

- Yes
- No

If yes, give the date of the last accrediting visit: 10/31/10 - 11/3/10; 1/27/13 - 1/29/13

**5. When was the unit or sequences within the unit first accredited by ACEJMC? 2004-05**

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

MISSION STATEMENT – Revised and Adopted May 2015

The mission of the Department of Mass Media at Southeast Missouri State University is to prepare our students to ethically and effectively lead, influence and craft media communications in an increasingly converged, diverse, interactive and global media environment.

By emphasizing student-centered and experiential learning through innovative curricula, the Department works in collaboration with media partners to prepare individuals to be critical, creative and independent thinkers who, based on research, can write and produce media communications that are effective and ethical using appropriate application of tools and technologies. In order to do this, students must appreciate and respect the values of freedom of speech and press, the history and role of media communications, diversity in a global society and the practical application of theories, legal and ethical issues in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.

**7. What are the type and length of terms?**

Semesters of   16   weeks

Quarters of        weeks

Summer sessions of  12  weeks

Intersessions of   4   weeks

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

Bachelor's degree

Master's degree

Ph.D. degree

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

Bachelor of Science in Mass Communication

**10. Credit hours required by the university for an undergraduate degree:** 120 semester hours

**11. Give the number of credit hours students may earn for internship experience.** 3.0 semester hours

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

Name of Sequence or Specialty

Advertising

Multimedia Journalism

Public Relations

TV & Film

Person in Charge

Dr. Karie Hollerbach

Dr. Tamara Buck

Dr. Susan Gonders

Dr. Jim Dufek

**13. Number of full-time students enrolled in the institution:** 11,978

**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):**

<u>Name of Sequence or Specialty</u>	<u>Undergraduate majors</u>
Advertising	51
Multimedia Journalism	40
Public Relations	99
TV & Film	58
Pre Majors	99
Total	347

**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.)

	<b>Fall 2016</b>	<b>Spring 2016</b>
MC312 <i>Ad Creative Concepts</i>	12	13
MC316 <i>Ad Media</i>	10	12
MC318 <i>Ad Digital Apps</i>	10	12
MC320 <i>Media News</i>	16	8
MC322 <i>Design for Mass Media</i>	not offered	10
MC323 <i>Sound for Media</i>	12	not offered
MC327 <i>Visuals for Media</i>	11	not offered
MC331 <i>Strategic Writing</i>	20	19
MC333 <i>Strategic Production</i>	20	20
MC334 <i>PR Research and Strategy</i>	16	19
MC351 <i>Basic TV &amp; Film Production</i>	19	19
MC352 <i>Video Post Production</i>	15	14
MC354 <i>Screenwriting</i>	20	not offered
MC366 <i>TV Directing</i>	17	not offered

MC418 <i>Ad Campaigns</i>	9	11
MC421 <i>Multimedia Storytelling</i>	not offered	8
MC430-01 <i>Strategic Comm Issues</i>	20	20
MC430-02 <i>Strategic Comm Issues</i>	20	19
MC430-03 <i>Strategic Comm Issues</i>	20	20
MC451 <i>Advanced Film Production</i>	19	not offered
MC469 <i>Advanced Video Production</i>	not offered	16

**16. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2016 – 2017 academic year: \$1,067,281**

**Percentage increase or decrease in three years: +15%**

**Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries: \$728,775**

**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.**

Dr. Tamara Buck, Associate Professor

Dr. Jim Dufek, Professor

Dr. Susan Gonders, Professor

Dr. Karie Hollerbach, Professor

Prof. Fred Jones, Professor

Dr. Don Jung, Associate Professor

Dr. Bruce Mims, Professor

Prof. Lok Pokhrel, Instructor

Prof. Mike Simmons, Instructor

**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.)**

Shad Burner (Fall 2016); Emily Sikes Blattel, Shad Burner, Kim Chronister (Spring 2016)

**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.**

Year	72 or more semester hours outside of journalism and mass communications		
	Total Graduates	Number	Percent
2015-2016 academic year		<u>  87  </u>	<u>  87  </u> <u>  100%  </u>
2014-2016 academic year		<u>  76  </u>	<u>  76  </u> <u>  100%  </u>

## **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.*

### **Background**

Founded in 1873, Southeast Missouri State University (SEMO) is a master's regional comprehensive university and the only university serving the southeastern part of Missouri. Located in Cape Girardeau, the university focuses on serving a 25-county region and the city of St. Louis, as well as embracing a global perspective. With an enrollment of nearly 12,000 students, Southeast's main campus is located on 325 acres in the center of the city. Its newest River Campus, which sits next to the Mississippi River in the downtown area, spans 17 acres.

The Department of Mass Media, founded in 1983 as the Department of Mass Communication, is the largest of the ten departments in the College of Liberal Arts and the eighth largest in the university. It was first accredited in 2005. However, leadership, curricular and assessment issues caused the Department to earn a provisional evaluation in 2011. The Department then regrouped, re-energized and reconfigured itself, earning reaccreditation in 2013.

As a result, the Bachelor of Science degree offers four options: Advertising, Multimedia Journalism, Public Relations and TV and Film. As of October 2016, there are nine full-time faculty members (including the chairperson), three staff positions and 347 students, including pre-majors. One position remains to be filled.

While the budget at the university has been stable during the last six years, department budgets have remained flat with the exception of modest faculty and staff cost-of-living increases, as well as some salary adjustments resulting from a university salary study. The Department has received a boost from a public partnership with Rust Communications that provides additional space, equipment and furnishings as well as curricular enhancements. It is also slated to move out of its building in January 2017 for major renovations.

There is a new university president who has been on campus for one year; a new provost arrived in 2016 and the dean of the College of Liberal Arts has served for eight years. The current Department chairperson has served since 2014; a search is on for her successor. Three faculty members are retirement-eligible and student enrollment continues to grow.

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 Department supports a dynamic strategic planning process. During this self-study review, there were two strategic plans. The first was approved in 2012 following the Department's reaccreditation year. In 2014, the university updated its strategic plan to include initiatives that prompted the Department to review its mission statement, strategic plan and diversity plan. All three were revised and approved in spring 2015. The streamlined mission of the program is "to prepare our students to ethically and effectively lead, influence and craft media communications in an increasingly converged, diverse,

interactive and global media environment.” The strategic plan now features ten objectives across six areas: curriculum, resources, convergence and cross-collaboration, experiential learning, diversity and faculty and staff.

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

The Department’s faculty meets monthly and is results oriented. There are three standing committees and a select number of ad hoc committees to facilitate and administer the work: the Curriculum Committee, the Endowed Scholarship Committee and the Tenure and Promotion Committee. Ad Hoc Committees include Searches, Advising Review and Diversity Plan.

Departmental faculty are well-respected and involved across the campus in numerous administrative and governance roles providing department, college and university levels of service.

**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.**

The chairperson is respected across campus for her accomplishments in stabilizing the Department and helping to center its focus. Students, faculty colleagues, administrators and staff cite her talent in mentoring and her ability to bring disparate voices together. The Department’s Professional Advisory Committee has been reactivated; alumni and friends of the Department are increasingly providing support for curricular opportunities, experiential learning and short- and long-term assistance.

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

The Faculty Handbook outlines the process for selecting, appointing and evaluating unit administrators. It provides guidelines for establishing both internal and national searches, conducting formal and informal reviews, conducting a periodic department chairperson review, and conducting an extraordinary department chairperson review.

**e) Faculty, staff and students have avenues to express concerns and have them addressed.**

The Department chairperson generally fields student complaints, student grade appeals and academic honesty concerns. Official university policies are outlined on the Dean of Students website, “Grade Appeals Process.” Guidelines for concerns or complaints about Academic Honesty are published in the Academic Bulletin. Faculty or staff complaints are resolved either under the Grievance Policy in the Faculty Handbook or under the guidelines published in the Grievance Policy for staff members in the Business Policy and Procedures Manual. There have been no student, faculty or staff complaints or grievances during the period of accreditation.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Mass Media faculty are fully involved in governance and the Department chairperson is praised for keeping faculty, students and staff focused during a period of curricular improvements, facility and equipment enhancements and enormous demands for both internal and external professional and public service.

**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 this requirement.**

The 72-hour credit hour rule is enforced by a graduation requirement that calls for 78 hours of coursework to be taken outside the Department. The Department reported 100% compliance with this rule.

**b) The unit provides a balance between theoretical and conceptual courses, professional skills courses, and courses that integrate theory and skills to achieve the range of student competencies listed by the Council.**

The Department is comprised of four options: Advertising, Multimedia Journalism, Public Relations and TV & Film. The Department ensures a balance between theory and practice by requiring four core courses for students in all options (see the list below). Faculty members regularly engage in conversations on how the core courses could better serve each option.

MC 101 Mass Communication and Society (3)

MC 301 Mass Communication Theory and Research (3)

MC 304 Diversity in Communication (3)

MC 401 Communication Law (3)

Required support courses include:

UI 382 History and Philosophy of American Mass Media (3)

MA 155 Statistical Reasoning (3)

Required courses in each option complement the theoretical and more general approach in the required core courses. Below are the descriptions and evaluations of each option offered:

### **Advertising**

The following are the Required Option Courses for the Advertising Option. A grade of 'C' or better is required in each required option course.

MC 211 Advertising and Society (3)

MC 310 Advertising Analysis and Strategy (3)

MC 312 Advertising Creative Concepts (3)

MC 316 Advertising Media (3)

MC 318 Advertising Digital Applications (3)

MC 418 Advertising Campaigns (3)

MC 429 Media Management (3)

The courses reflect a contemporary approach to promotional communication. Course content is current and compelling. The students were highly engaged in the interactive learning process through discussions and critiques of their work. Students said they valued the opportunity for small class sizes, caring professors, the emphasis on ethics and diversity, and the opportunity to engage in hands-on, real world projects. In some cases the clients implement student work. Students can choose to apply what they learn outside the classroom in the student advertising club, SECreative. Students are also excited about the opportunities to work with students across options on *The Arrow* in the new Rust Center for Media location. Faculty expect this collaboration to be a model for other efforts to integrate students across options. Students also collaborate through extracurricular promotion of *The Arrow*.

### **Multimedia Journalism**

The Multimedia Journalism curriculum overhaul was the Department's most extensive. The Journalism and Radio options were combined to form a new Multimedia Journalism program. The overhaul, which included updated skills instruction, was part of the curriculum revision and enrollment management plan that followed the last accreditation visit.

The following are the Required Option Courses for the Multimedia Journalism Option. A grade of 'C' or better is required in each required option course.

MC221 Media Elements (3)

MC320 Media News (3)

MC322 Design for Media (3)

MC323 Sound for Media (3)

MC327 Visuals for Media (3)

MC421 Media Storytelling (3)

MC429 Media Management (3)

In creating the Multimedia Journalism option, the unit terminated 12 courses ranging from Magazine Feature Writing to Broadcast Field Techniques. Four new required courses were created, including Media News and Media Sound. The new offerings are a mix of skills and theory courses. Students in the converged Multimedia Journalism option have fewer prerequisites to gain access to required courses and pass through the curriculum with greater flexibility. The once rigid silo mentality of the unit also has been addressed through team teaching and other techniques.

To meet professional expectations, the self-study said students need stronger development of fundamentals in a number of multimedia storytelling functions involving digital design, audio, slideshows, embedding and transmission skills.

MMJ experiential learning takes place primarily through *The Arrow*, which is published through the public-private partnership between Southeast and Rust Communications.

### **Public Relations**

The following are the Required Option Courses for the Public Relations Option. A grade of 'C' or better is required in each required option course.

MC231 Strategic Relations (3)

MC330 Public Relations Principles (3)

MC331 Strategic Writing (3)

MC333 Strategic Production (3)

MC334 Public Relations Research and Strategy (3)

MC430 Strategic Communication Issues (3)

MC434 Public Relations Case Studies and Campaigns (3)

The Public Relations Option presents a logical structure that guides students from survey-level courses to research, strategy, design and campaigns. During the assessment period, the Public Relations option created a dedicated Strategic Writing course and a dedicated Strategic Production course. Interviews with students confirmed the values of a dedicated writing course. Some, however, expressed a desire for a fundamental writing course before going in-depth into option-specific writing requirements. Students also found Strategic Production helpful in sharpening their InDesign skills.

Experiential learning opportunities are embedded in courses, such as Public Relations Case Studies and Campaigns, where students work to promote local businesses. Students can also choose to apply what they learn outside the classroom in the student-run firm, Riverfront Public Relations.

### **TV & Film**

The following are the Required Option Courses for the TV & Film Option. A grade of 'C' or better is required in each required option course.

MC 251 TV & Film in America (3)

MC 351 Basic TV & Film Production (3)

MC 352 Video Postproduction (3)

MC 354 Screenwriting (3)

MC 366 Television Directing (3)

MC 451 Advanced Film Production (3)

MC 469 Advanced Video Production (3)

The TV & Film Option represents a well-structured, logical progression of courses that integrate skills needed to prepare students for careers in video and film production. A strength of the curriculum is the range of embedded experiential learning opportunities, including production of athletics, news, public affairs and cultural programming for the OVC Digital Network and for two local television stations.

Students gain experience in the various roles involved in film and video production, working on both individual and group projects, and are exposed to business-side aspects such as budgeting and interacting with clients. The Department established the Fault Line Film Festival as a showcase for student screenplays and short films; it has expanded to include submissions from other states and features a red-carpet event.

Experiential learning in TV and Film also is impacted by student involvement in the Ohio Valley Conference (OVC) Digital Network and partnerships with two Raycom Media television stations.

During the review period, the Department decided to incorporate writing skills and assignments into each option, instead of having a stand-alone, department-wide writing course. As a result, some students felt that they were less prepared for the option-specific writing requirements. They expressed a desire for the Department to create a course that bridges their university-level writing courses to option-specific courses.

The pre-test administered at the beginning of a student's course of study and as a post-test at the end is designed to assess ACEJMC's values and competencies. Please see Standard 9 for more details.

**c) Instruction, whether on-site 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.**

Instruction, whether on-site or online, is demanding and current, and is responsive to professional expectations of digital, technological and multimedia competencies. The unit has an ongoing process in place to connect faculty and administrators to the professions they represent, with a specific understanding of the changing skills needed to be successful in the workplace.

Visits to the classroom and meetings with students revealed that instruction is a strength of the program. Most of the faculty conducted the classroom in an interactive manner. Small classes and engaged, qualified faculty with significant professional experience offer an environment for learning. Students also see quality faculty as an asset to the program. Students appreciate the many opportunities they have to gain experiences inside and outside the classroom, such as with *The Arrow*. Alumni with whom we spoke confirmed these observations.

One criticism in the last reaccreditation report focused on the silos of learning. The new facilities in the Rust Center for Media, a 13,000-square-foot student multimedia production center resulting from a public-private partnership, were designed to intentionally integrate students from different options.

The Rust Center for Media is a collaborative effort to integrate student learning across the options. For example, in the Multimedia Journalism Option, the partnership with Rust Communications to manage *The Arrow* has brought sustained contact with media professionals to students during the school year. Rust Communications also publishes student work in the *Southeast Missourian*, Cape Girardeau's daily newspaper. Under terms of the agreement, the university offers a Media Management course linked with production of *The Arrow*. The university also covers the cost of equipment, weekly staff payroll and a performance stipend for student managers.

Faculty members across different options are excited about the integration opportunity. In addition, students said they liked the requirement to take a course from one of the other options to broaden their perspectives.

**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.)**

Although the ratio of skills and laboratory sections does not exceed the 20-1 limit, the Department experiences course management issues. Several students reported that their graduation had to be delayed by a semester or year because they could not enroll in required courses. Some indicated that advising problems at the university level caused the delay and others said that the courses did not have enough seats or were offered infrequently. Students have also expressed concerns to the Department but saw no immediate changes. They mentioned that summer and winter courses are not financially feasible because they are more expensive and student loans do not cover summer and winter courses. Eliminating this bottleneck for students will help students improve the time-to-graduation and save them significant amounts of money.

**(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.**

The internship requirement was changed from a core requirement to an elective offering during the assessment period. Despite this, faculty members strongly encourage students to apply for internships. Students regularly receive information about internship opportunities via email or on the student associations' social media platforms. The unit supervises and evaluates internships when it awards academic credit. The internship coordinator evaluates these experiences by gathering feedback from both the student and field supervisor.

Outside the classroom, students gain experience through internships and other professional experiences. In addition, through two public-private agreements with professional media outlets, students in each option have an increasing opportunity for experiential learning opportunities. This is confirmed in student interviews as well.

In addition, the university has a campus-wide database that records and promotes job availability. Our conversations with the Career Services coordinator for Employer Relations in the Office of Career Services indicated open and frequent communication between the unit and the university.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Mass Media met the following assessment criteria: Balance of conceptual and skills courses, instruction that is demanding and current, no more than 20 students in skills classes, syllabi reflecting that all students acquire digital, technological and multimedia competencies and graduates completing 78 or more semester hours outside of the program. Our review of the public-private partnership and conversations with students suggests an opportunity for the Department to increase collaborations across options and perhaps streamline its core curriculum and option offerings.

**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 diversity 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.**

The Department was one of the first on campus to have a written diversity plan in 2004. Through the years, it has served faculty and students well. In 2015, the document was re-written to clearly identify the four areas (a diverse faculty, a representative student body, an inclusive curriculum and a supportive climate) and actionable objectives for each area. While the university does not have a formal diversity statement, a 2015 President's Task Force on Diversity Education recommended such a statement.

Since 1997, the Department has sponsored the Michael Davis Lecture Series to honor the former *Arrow* staff member and journalism student who was killed in a hazing incident. The lecture series has brought numerous African-American men and women to the campus, each with professional or academic connections to one of the Department's four curricular offerings. In 2015, the university's Speaker Series invited the Department to share the University Speakers Series, which features men and women at the forefront of their fields. The 2015 speaker was author and actor Hill Harper; 2016's speaker was Grammy winner and author Common.

**(b) The unit's curriculum fosters understanding of issues and perspectives that are inclusive in terms of domestic concerns about 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.**

Discussions and assignments concerning diverse issues are embedded in 26 of the 33 courses being offered. Of those same 33 courses, 17 have the professional value of global society embedded in them through courses units, activities and assignments. On the Exit Survey, graduating seniors report high levels of preparedness in understanding the diversity of groups in a global society. In meetings with students, they spoke confidently about their ability and comfort level navigating in a diverse, global society.

The Department introduced its Diversity in Communication course in 2006 as an elective, but it soon became apparent to faculty that it belonged in the core. By fall 2012, it was moved to the core and is open to enrollment from across the university. It has become one of the most popular courses, team taught by an African-American female Multimedia Journalism associate professor and a Caucasian male Advertising instructor. The teaching team jointly won the 2016 College of Liberal Arts Outstanding Teaching Award. That same team is teaching the Media Management course required for Advertising and Multimedia Journalism students.

**(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.**

The Dean of the College of Liberal Arts confirmed the difficulty SEMO has in recruiting faculty to Cape Girardeau because of a number of variables, including location, pay scale and teaching loads. That is not limited to women and minorities. The Department and the university have supported hiring two female faculty members who did not possess a terminal degree. One entered a Ph.D. program; the other a J.D. program. On completion of the programs, both moved into tenure-track positions.

At the time of completion of the self-study, there were three female faculty members (33%) and six males (67%). There is one minority female (11%). With the start of the fall semester, one male, Asian Pacific Islander joined the full-time faculty. To provide additional depth to their classes, faculty invite professionals of color to speak to their students; there is also a special effort to assign students to work with diverse clients in their skills and capstone courses.

Position announcements are placed in the appropriate channels to recruit faculty with an emphasis on placement directed to female and minority applicants. The Department also uses its faculty contacts in the profession and academe.

**(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.**

While the university's service region is predominantly White (75%), 20% is African-American. Within the university African-American student enrollment is 9.15% with Asian student enrollment at 1.02% and Hispanic/Latino at 1.67%. The Department has 17.63% African-American students, 1.16% Asian students and 1.39% Hispanic/Latino.

Faculty members are visible at all recruiting events, including the six "Show Me Days" for high school students and their parents. Special programs are planned for the new Rust Center for Media; the Department also works with the university's Multicultural Showcase for students and their families.

One faculty member serves as a visiting professional for the university's pre-collegiate Educational Access Program and visits local high schools to work with students on multimedia storytelling projects. There is an active student chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists, and an endowed scholarship (Jordan H. Hale Memorial Scholarship) for a minority recipient from the TV and Film option. Another endowed scholarship (Michael Davis Scholarship) is for a minority recipient from any departmental option, with preference given to an African-American student in the Multimedia Journalism option.

**(e) The unit has a climate that is free of harassment and all forms of 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.**

Students were unanimous about the Department's supportive climate and nurturing environment that is accepting and welcoming to all populations. They expressed concern about their observations that for some faculty, discussions surrounding diverse topics seemed "tense" or "sensitive" when they didn't need to be so. They appreciated the breadth of inclusion and appreciated how much they had learned while producing a television show about disabilities or being challenged to do work for a client that required understanding of diverse publics.

Course syllabi include the university statement on civility, as well as information related to university services for students with learning or physical disabilities.

**Accreditation site visit teams will apply this standard in compliance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations, as well as the laws of the countries in which non-U.S. institutions are located.**

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Mass Media embraces inclusion and has an effective plan with measurable goals to help insure that inclusion. There is wide instruction on issues and perspectives related to communication across diverse cultures. Students and faculty are diversity savvy. There is a good mix of faculty and the student body reflects the university's geographic service area.

**Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE**



**Table 6. Faculty Populations, Full-time and Part-time  
Academic year: 2015 – 2016 Full-time faculty (9)**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>% of total faculty</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>% of total faculty</b>
Black/African American	1	11%	0	0%
White	2	22%	6	67%
American Indian/Alaskan native	0	00%	0	00%
Asian	0	00%	0	00%
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	0	00%	0	00%
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander	0	00%	0	00%
Two or more races	0	00%	0	00%
Other race	0	00%	0	00%
International (any race)	0	00%	0	00%

**Academic year: 2015 – 2016 Part-time/adjunct faculty (3)**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>% of total faculty</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>% of total faculty</b>
Black/African American	0	00%	0	00%
White	2	66%	1	33%
American Indian/Alaskan native	0	00%	0	00%
Asian	0	00%	0	00%
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	0	00%	0	00%
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander	0	00%	0	00%
Two or more races	0	00%	0	00%

## **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 Department has written hiring criteria for full-time faculty, in accordance with university policies. A Human Resources Hiring Specialist assigned to the college briefs members of the departmental search committee to ensure protocols are followed. Hiring of part-time faculty occurs more informally, with the Department chairperson charged with recruiting qualified adjuncts.

Full-time faculty members are evaluated in several concurrent ways, which are set forth in written materials with stated criteria. These include mandatory classroom observation by two tenured faculty and the Department chairperson each semester for tenure-track faculty; student evaluation of each class; and annual performance reviews, conducted by the Department chairperson, with review by the dean of the college. The Department chairperson is also evaluated annually, both by the full-time faculty and by the college dean.

There are no formal evaluation criteria for part-time faculty set forth in university policies. The Department chairperson has chosen to observe each adjunct faculty member in class each year, and meets individually with the adjunct faculty members to discuss their performance.

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

Full-time faculty clearly have primary responsibility for teaching, research/creative activity and service. During the three academic years prior to the accreditation visit, 96 percent of all classes were taught by full-time faculty. Research and service are also the purview of the full-time faculty.

**(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.**

The Department has an experienced faculty. Seven of the nine faculty members are tenured, with between 15 and 33 years at SEMO. Five of the seven tenured faculty are at the rank of full professor, with two at associate rank. The other two faculty members are at the rank of instructor: one has been at Southeast for five years, the other is in his first year. (The latter is working on a Ph.D. at Washington State University, and upon completion will become a tenure-track assistant professor.) Most faculty members have considerable professional experience.

Faculty actively participate in professional development opportunities, both internal and external. The university's Center for Scholarship in Teaching and Learning and the Center for Instructional Technology offer a range of training and workshops. Collectively, the Department faculty participated in 90 such sessions during the six-year period of the self study. In addition, faculty have been active in

development opportunities offered through professional associations such as Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, National Association of Broadcasters, National Association of Black Journalists, Broadcast Education Association, College Media Association, the Missouri Broadcasters Association and the American Press Institute.

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

Regular evaluation of instruction is conducted using multiple measures that include student input. As noted above, each tenure-track faculty member is observed in class each semester by two tenured faculty members and the Department chairperson, who complete a Faculty Evaluation Form. Student ratings of instruction are collected each semester for all classes, using the Individual Development and Educational Assessment (IDEA) instrument. The Center for Scholarship in Teaching and Learning coordinates the IDEA administration.

If a faculty member's ratings come in below the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile for two courses in the same semester the dean is notified. The Dean may then, in consultation with the Department chairperson and the faculty member, develop a plan for improvement.

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

University constituents noted that the Department is highly respected across campus for the quality of its programs and for its university citizenship. University representatives who participated in the visit noted that the Department is "very engaged" across campus, and that it is "responsive" and "committed" to its students.

**SUMMARY:** The Department has an experienced faculty, most of whom have both considerable teaching and professional experience. Faculty members overwhelmingly have primary responsibility for teaching, research and service. They are involved with media industry groups and participate actively in professional development opportunities, both on and off campus. The unit engages in regular, ongoing peer evaluation of instruction. Faculty members are respected across campus for university citizenship and commitment to students.

**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 university recognizes faculty research and creative activities that contribute to the enhancement of the teaching and learning environment and professional growth. Specifically, the Southeast Faculty Handbook describes a major goal of the University is to "contribute to the general advancement of knowledge by stimulating research, scholarly activity, and creative endeavor relevant to the academic and public service programs of the University."

Interviews with tenured faculty confirmed the Department's support for research. The university and college also provide \$770 in professional development funding for each full-time faculty member. In addition, the university provides centralized support, including from the Grants and Research Funding Committee (GRFC) and Funding for Results (FFR). In the past six years, however, the Department was not successful in receiving support from either GRFC or FFR.

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

The university emphasizes teaching in the tenure and promotion process with research fulfilling supporting roles. The unit's expectations are in alignment with the university's expectations. Within this context, the Department's expectations for research, creative activity and/or professional activity are reflected in the printed advertisement of a tenure-track position and in its promotion and tenure document.

In Fall 2016, the Department added a new faculty member whose position will be converted to a tenure-track position upon completion of his Ph.D. within the contractual time limits stipulated by the university. The job announcement for the aforementioned faculty position includes "Demonstrated active research agenda and associated peer-reviewed professional productivity" as a requirement for research. Personal interviews with the hired faculty, Department chair, and Promotion & Tenure chair confirmed that the expectations (i.e., criteria for promotion) were clearly communicated to the faculty member. In addition, the faculty member received a "Criteria for Academic Rank" document, which lists specific examples for scholarly/research activity and professional development.

### **(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 university and the Department recognize the faculty's diverse scholarly specializations. As shown in the Southeast Faculty Handbook and the Department's "Criteria for Academic Rank" document, evaluation criteria encompass traditional scholarly research (e.g., peer-reviewed publications), creative activities (e.g., creative production of peer-reviewed materials, creative work) and professional development (e.g., leadership and/or active participation in scholarly/professional organizations, professional recognition).

**(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.**

Faculty members in this Department produce research that mostly focuses on the intersection between education and journalism and mass communication. Topics include free expression, public relations education, journalism/advertising history, media education and image representations of African-American women. In addition, faculty's creative works have appeared on ESPN, C-SPAN, TEDx, and local CBS and FOX affiliates.

Based on data from the Department, faculty members have received six internal grants, authored one textbook, one book chapter, three refereed journal articles, 10 refereed conference papers, one encyclopedia entry, 10 book reviews, 13 juried creative works, and 23 non-juried creative works during the period of the self-study. These activities indicate that this unit's faculty members communicate the results of their research and creative and/or professional activities to scholars, educators and practitioners.

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

The university's Faculty Handbook and the Department's Promotion & Tenure document (i.e., Criteria for Academic Rank) support and value faculty scholarly and creative works that foster intellectual curiosity, critical analysis and the expression of differing points of view. Informal mentoring between the option coordinator and faculty member(s) also indicated the unit's strong desire to foster exchanges of ideas. In addition, interviews with faculty indicated that the Department encourages them to explore research in their areas of expertise, even though research plays a secondary role in faculty's promotion and tenure process.

**SUMMARY:** The university is primarily a teaching institution. The record shows that faculty contribute research and creative/professional activity appropriate to the unit's mission. Criteria for tenure and promotion recognize a wide range of professional and scholarly activities. Given the mission of the university and Department, the site team considers the types and level of productivity of the full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty appropriate.

**Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE**

		<b>Individuals</b>
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<b>Creative and Professional Activities</b>	<b>Total from Unit*</b>	<b>Full Professors (6)</b>	<b>Associate Professors (2)</b>	<b>Assistant Professors (1)</b>	<b>Other Faculty* (1)</b>	<b>Totals (10)</b>
Awards and Honors	24	5	1		1	7
Grants Received Internal	6	2				2
Grants Received External						
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co-authored						
Textbooks, Sole- or Co-authored	1	1				1
Books Edited						
Book Chapters	1	1				1
Monographs						
Articles in Refereed Journals	3	2	1			3
Refereed Conference Papers	10	3	1	1		5
Invited Academic Papers						
Encyclopedia Entries	1	1				1
Book Reviews	10	1	1	1		3
Articles in Non-refereed Publications						
Juried Creative Works	13	3				3
Non-juried Creative Works	23	1				1
Other (specified)	48	5	1			6

\*Co-authored work should be counted as a single publication in the unit totals. However if, for example, two members of the faculty are co-authors on the same journal article, it would be reported as a publication for both authors.

\*\*One instructor not eligible for tenure track.

In the Other category:

Buck: panel presentation (peer reviewed), other presentations, workshop presentations (peer reviewed)

Dufek: reviewer (video festival judge – Academy of Television Arts & Sciences; US International Film and Video Festival)

Gonders: book essay, editorships, panel presentations (peer reviewed), other presentations

Hollerbach: book essays, panel presentations (peer reviewed), workshop presentations (peer reviewed), editorial reviews

Mims: panel presentations (peer reviewed)

Zibluk: book essay, panel presentation (peer reviewed), workshop presentation (peer reviewed)

## 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.**

Academic advising is mandatory for all students. The College of Liberal Arts provides professional academic advisory services to freshman. Faculty members have primary responsibility for academic advising of unit majors. They are aided by the university's Degree Maps checklist system, which uniformly charts an 8-semester path to degree completion. The Department created its own checklist document as part of the transition to the more contemporary curriculum introduced in 2012.

The advising load is heavy with some faculty members handling nearly 40 students each semester. The situation is particularly challenging in the popular Public Relations option. In response, both individual appointments and small-group student sessions are utilized. Students give mostly favorable reviews to this hybrid model, although some would prefer more individual attention. Other students say the peer group sessions helped them learn more about the degree completion process and post-graduation planning. Students have access to an online Degree Works course audit that tracks their progress toward degree completion

The university does not have a placement agency mechanism for students nor does it provide resources for the unit to administer one. However, the Office of Career Services provides students and alumni with the research tools and information to identify jobs, internships and continuing education opportunities. All students are required to complete four online career proficiency workshops.

**b) Faculty are available and accessible to students.**

Faculty members are required to schedule at least three posted office hours per week and most provide students with phone numbers and online contact information. Students give high ratings to the faculty on their availability and accessibility.

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

Students are kept well informed on activities, requirements and policies of the unit. Procedures include website, email and social media announcements, as well as large bulletin boards in common areas and message boards near classrooms. Relevant information also is discussed during group advising sessions. Informative emails from faculty, advisers and the unit chair are sent to majors, student media outlets and campus chapters of communications organizations.

**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.**

There are ample opportunities for students to engage in extra-curricular activities that are relevant to their academic, intellectual and professional pursuits. *The Arrow*, founded in 1911, is a weekly print newspaper that is updated daily online. Since 2011, it has been co-managed through a contractual arrangement with Rust Communications, which owns a chain of newspapers and other publishing and

radio properties. The successful public-private partnership has created experiential learning for students across all four curricular options.

In 2014, the university terminated its low power FM student-managed station due to declining participation and escalating costs. Students interested in audio production as part of their multimedia storytelling skills training are able to produce and post podcasts on *The Arrow's* website. Increased internship opportunities also are available at KRCU-FM, the university's National Public Radio affiliate.

Student organizations of nationally known professional groups include the Mass Communications Association-International, National Association of Black Journalists, National Broadcast Society, Public Relations Student Society of America and Society of Professional Journalists. Riverfront Public Relations and SECreative are local communication agencies operated by students.

**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 annually publishes retention and graduation information on its website.**

The unit collects and analyzes such data. The university has an established series of reporting mechanisms. Analytic reports on enrollment, retention and graduation data are distributed to the department chair. Faculty members are updated each semester. Pre-requisite checks and degree audits alert students of potential problems on their path to graduation. The unit is concerned about its low retention rate.

In 2014, the university's Office of Career Services began collecting graduate outcome data through an initial survey prior to the graduation ceremony and a follow up three months after graduation. The unit also uses surveys of alumni to gauge degree satisfaction and career achievement. The Department has asked the university to make its information more readily available.

**SUMMARY:** Advising services, student media and extracurricular activities meet requirements of the Student Services standard. Retention and graduation data are posted.

**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 unit has a detailed annual budget. It is challenging for the Department to relate the budgeting process to long-range strategic planning because the university dictates a process of resource allocation. Budgets are assigned annually by the university administration without provision for ongoing budget development. There was a budgetary increase of about 14 percent during the three-year period preceding the accreditation visit. However, the increase was linked primarily to central administration mandates: salary adjustments tied to a 2013 salary survey; new webcasting duties on behalf of the university's athletic conference; and a new publishing arrangement for *The Arrow*, in partnership with a private media firm, Rust Communications. Otherwise, the unit reports that university funding has "remained flat for years." The Department has the opportunity to submit budget requests to the dean of the college for possible inclusion in the college's requests to the University Budget Review Committee.

**(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 Department considers its resource level "above average" in comparison with other units across campus. While the Department of Mass Media does not have budget information for other units in the College of Liberal Arts, the dean's office reported that the Department has the third-largest budget of the seven college departments not included in the Holland School of Visual and Performing Arts. However, the Department reports that institutional resources are "probably below average when its ACEJMC accreditation requirements are factored into the equation."

The university provides what the Department terms "modest" funding lines for unit operation, equipment and faculty professional development; for video production and *Arrow* operations; a revenue stream from special course fees; and the ability to rollover funds from previous fiscal years. (It should be noted that special course fee monies are "forward funded" to the Department based on enrollment projections, but must be refunded by the unit if enrollments fall below projected levels. The Department has had to refund a portion of its course fee allotment in each of the three years preceding the site visit.)

The Department chairperson has had conversations with university development officials about prospects for increasing private fundraising efforts. However, the college has only one development officer, and the Department of Mass Media is one of nine Departments that vie for her attention. There is a similar situation with the central grants unit, though the Department chairperson does see some potential for increased grant-seeking in working with new personnel in that office.

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

The Department is primarily housed on the lower level of the Grauel Building, a 50-year-old structure that also includes the Departments of English and Communication Disorders. Other Departmental operations include video production facilities located on the second floor of Grauel as well as in the Rose Theatre annex, a converted theatre that is attached to the Grauel Building.

The Grauel Building is scheduled to undergo a \$3.5-million renovation between January and August 2017, which will require the Department to move to temporary quarters elsewhere on campus for the spring and summer terms. Following the renovation, the Department is expected to have improved and increased facilities. At the time of the site visit, some student media operations had already moved to the Rust Center for Media, a converted bank building in downtown Cape Girardeau with 13,000-square-foot of multimedia production space, about a five-minute drive or 15-minute walk from campus. Most video-production facilities and operations will move to the Rust Center for Media in summer 2017. (The Rust Center is accessible to students and faculty by the university shuttle bus.)

During the period of the self-study, the Department facilities (all on the lower-level of Grauel unless noted otherwise) included:

- Three SMART classrooms (with Internet and projection capabilities), seating 23-24 students each
- Two SMART lab classrooms, one with 20 iMac computers and the other with 20 PC computers
- One video-production lab and studio (located on the second floor of the Grauel Building)
- One video-production studio (located in the Rose Theatre annex)
- One production area for *The Arrow* newspaper and digital operations
- One drop-in student computer lab with six Macs

Following the renovation and the return from temporary quarters in August 2017, the Department facilities in the Grauel Building will include:

- Six SMART classrooms
- One SMART lab classroom for teaching video post-production
- One SMART lab classroom with wide-screen monitors for teaching design
- Video-production facilities for the OVC webcasting project

In addition, going forward, the Rust Center for Media will house operations for *The Arrow*, the SECreative student advertising team, the Riverfront PR student public relations team and the video-production facilities, including four studios. (The OVC webcasting and production facilities will remain in Grauel because of the university's investment in fiber-optic infrastructure.)

The Grauel renovation will also enable the Department to house all faculty and staff in one central location for the first time, with room for growth, and will include a conference room large enough for faculty meetings.

**(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.**

Faculty and students express satisfaction with the quantity and quality of the Department's equipment. In our student meeting, TV and Film students expressed a desire to have more equipment. There is a range of field gear from basic cameras for beginning students through more advanced cameras for upper-level students, along with support gear such as lights and audio recorders. Some students noted that batteries for aging field cameras were sometimes unreliable. Video-production studio equipment is satisfactory for the Department's various production and creative initiatives, and will increase in available space with the move to the Rust Center for Media, which features four studios. The forthcoming "Pro on the Go" Laptop Device Initiative will ease the need for computer lab access by giving students more production capacity on their laptops, and will provide access to more current software applications through the suite of software included on the MacBook Pro.

Faculty expressed concern about a lack of replacement and maintenance funding for equipment. Equipment purchases made in the period of the self-study were made with one-time funds from central administration, as noted above, to meet university needs, and there is no plan for addressing the replacement and maintenance needs that will arise. For example, the unit's video networking and storage system is reaching the end of its working life, and replacement will cost around \$50,000. The Department will have to seek funding through the university's competitive budget process, described above.

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

Library and information resources for the Department are maintained centrally in the university's Kent Library. The Department receives an annual allocation of about \$4,200 to purchase books and audio/visual resources. A faculty member (currently the chairperson) is tasked to serve as liaison to library administration on behalf of the Department. Faculty members report satisfaction with the state of library and information resources.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Mass Media has a detailed annual budget, though it is challenging to relate it to a long-term strategic planning because resources are allocated by central administration in a static process. Departmental resources are adequate to achieve its mission and are fair in relation to other units in the college. Faculty and students express satisfaction with the Department's facilities and equipment, and the move to the Rust Center for Media will provide improved facilities and additional space. Faculty members are concerned, however, about a lack of dedicated resources for equipment replacement and maintenance.

**Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE**

## PART II — Standard 8: Professional and Public Service

*The unit and its faculty advance journalism and mass communication professions and fulfill 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 alumni, professionals and professional associations to keep curriculum and teaching, whether on-site or online, current and to promote the exchange of ideas.**

Alumni and professionals regularly engage with faculty and students. The rebuilt curriculum was developed with input from a network of alumni and professionals. The Department relies on a tight bond between individual professors and former students, as well as long-time relationships with professional organizations throughout Missouri. A popular Facebook Page administered by Dr. Tamara Buck is a valuable source of career advice and job opportunities.

The Department has reinvigorated its Professional Advisory Council with younger alumni and professionals representing the four curricular options. Members of the council say it is committed to fund-raising and creating more internship and career shadowing opportunities. Professionals critique student work and provide counsel on capstone projects and new courses under consideration. Guest speakers and visiting professionals assist professors in strategic communication and media management courses.

**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.**

Professional service is considered in promotion and tenure decisions. It is measured in two categories—administrative/academic service and community/professional service. Faculty advise the student newspaper and a robust student television production unit. SETV produces *Arrow on the Air* and numerous public affairs programs that air on CBS and Fox affiliates. The department also has been assigned responsibility for live stream coverage of sporting events on the Ohio Valley Conference Digital Network.

Faculty members have advised and judged competitions for organizations including the U.S. International Film & Video Festival, National Scholastic Press Association, Missouri College Media Association, Regional EMMY Awards and the Public Relations Society of America.

**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.**

Faculty members have a consistent record of involvement in a broad range of organizations including the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications, Public Relations Society of America, College Media Association and Society of Professional Journalists. Several have held leadership positions, including Jim Dufek who recently served as president of the Media Communications Association-International.

**(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.**

Community service and civic engagement activities are hallmarks of the Department and its students. Faculty members have served on NPR-affiliate KRCU's Advisory Board, Cape Girardeau Chamber of Commerce and the Career & Technology Center. Faculty members also have created public information and promotional multi-media packages for a number of community organizations.

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

Outreach to high school journalism has produced mixed results, partly due to the decline of scholastic journalism activities offered by schools in the university's geographic region. There have been moves to become more involved with high school journalism programs in the St. Louis area. Earlier this year, the Department hosted the Missouri College Media Association's annual conference and awards ceremony. It also hosts an annual student film festival and a speaker series featuring successful African-American professionals with connections to the university.

**SUMMARY:** The Department meets the requirements of the Professional and Public Service standard. Faculty members are highly involved in academic and professional associations. The unit adequately consults and communicates with alumni and media professionals.

**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.**

In previous reaccreditation cycles, the Department has struggled with assessment. It was found in non-compliance for Standard 9 during the October 2010 site visit. The report noted that the unit had the foundation for a quality assessment effort, but the content of the plan was not well developed. The team saw reported systematic analysis of data or a connection between the assessment of student work and improvement of student learning. In 2011 the curriculum was significantly revised and the department made an effort to create new outcomes and a better process to assess student learning. Recognizing that it needed outside expertise, the Department invited a consultant to assist with the recreation of assessment for the new curriculum. As a result the consultant rewrote the assessment plan, which the unit adopted in the spring of 2012. The 2013 Revisit Team found the assessment implemented too late to warrant compliance at that time.

Faculty identified learning outcomes for the courses that align with ACEJMC and a second set that align with the College’s learning outcomes. Both sets of outcomes are listed in the syllabi for each course. The faculty are working on developing outcomes for each option in a comprehensive effort initiated by the University.

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

The Assessment Plan included in the self-study lists the ACEJMC Professional Values and Competencies. To gauge students’ progress toward achieving the outcomes, the unit has implemented six measures, some direct and some indirect:

Pre- and post-testing (direct measure). The 38-question multiple-choice questionnaire tests students’ knowledge of the first amendment, history, media ethics, law and writing accuracy. The test is administered in the MC 101: Mass Communication and Society course to provide a baseline and again at the end of the program of study in MC401: Communication Law. The questionnaire includes questions that test students’ knowledge. However, the site visit team noted that 11 of the 38 questions ask students to evaluate their abilities, which is an indirect measure.

Capstone Evaluation (direct measure). The capstone course in each option provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate the progress toward meeting the outcomes. When available, professionals help assess student achievement. The options each have developed rubrics to provide guidance in the evaluation process.

Student National and Regional Competitions (indirect measure). Competitions, such as Hearst Awards, Dow Jones internships, Public Relations Society of America and the American Advertising Federation awards provide further evidence of achievement.

Student Internship Feedback (indirect measure). Employers are surveyed about the student interns they hire (paid and unpaid).

Exit Surveys (indirect measure). The department administers Exit Surveys to graduating seniors and asks them to evaluate their experience, including the ACEJMC Professional Values and Competencies.

Admission, Graduation and Retention Rates (indirect measure). Data from Institutional Research helps the Department identify areas that hinder retention and graduation. This appears to be an area for further development.

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

Pre- and Post-Tests

The self-study included data indicating the pre- and post-tests have been administered consistently over a period of time. From fall 2012 to spring 2016, 88% (1,372) of the students enrolled in the Mass Communication and Society course, which is open to majors and non-majors, took the pre-test. The post-test was administered to students in a 400-level Communication Law class (89% of the 348 students completed the post-test).

Findings indicated that students' knowledge of the tested items increased over time. The analysis was separated in areas related to ACEJMC competencies: (application of knowledge, Mass Communication and Society, Mass Communication Theory and Research, Communication Law, History and Philosophy of American Mass Media and Writing). In some cases the scores indicated to faculty that good progress was being made by students. In other cases, they were able to use the assessment to make adjustments to courses. For example, in one course, Mass Communication Theory and Research, instructors discussed strategies to improve the content areas. In Communication Law, the responses on the Pre- and Post-tests helped faculty identify that students were having trouble distinguishing between libel/slander and obscenity/indecency, so instructors found ways to reinforce these legal distinctions in their courses. The report doesn't give much detail about the improvements that were made.

Capstone Evaluation

Faculty evaluated the capstone course in each option, using a rubric to evaluate student work. Advertising evaluated its campaigns course annually from 2012 through 2016. Findings indicated that the overall persuasive appeal, overall professionalism and overall visuals improved. Multimedia Journalism, which is one of the newer options, evaluated its online portfolio course for the past three years. It used resumes, works samples and overall professional appearance as evidence of learning. Faculty members concluded that two of the three assessments were strong. Public Relations evaluated development, creative execution and professional presentation in its capstone, using the Public Relations campaign plan and presentation as evidence of student learning. The capstone was evaluated consistently in the spring and fall semesters since 2012. Faculty members reported satisfaction with the consistently high scores its students achieved over time. TV & Film used the Advanced Video Production course to evaluate student achievement. Like advertising, it evaluated persuasive appeal, overall professionalism and overall visuals and found a steady improvement of student learning annually since 2012.

The self-study listed changes to each of the options that resulted from the assessment. For example, in Advertising additional focus on developing persuasive appeals was added to the courses leading to the capstone experience. Other changes to improve student learning included working more intentionally

with local media partners. Some of the changes reported could be directly traced to the formal assessment process.

The Multimedia Journalism option only listed adding assignments to improve proofreading skills and multimedia story developments. Assessment in this area appears underdeveloped.

The Public Relations faculty members concluded that it needed to encourage students to seek help in the Center for Writing Excellence and using online tutorials and editing quizzes. They identified a challenge of finding clients to work with students.

TV & Film notes a need for additional instruction and discussion with teams about the importance of impactful creation of visuals for video storytelling. However, what these changes are and how the faculty measured the impact of the changes was vague.

### Student Competitions

The Department claims a total of 146 local, regional, national and international awards in student competitions, which is one sign that students are achieving some level of professional competency.

### Student Internship Feedback

The Department has done a good job of tracking internship evaluations by supervisors since 2012 by aligning the evaluation form with ACEJMC competencies. High ratings were given to students for their understanding of ethics and ability to apply tools and technologies. Low scores were given for their ability to evaluate the accuracy of information and think critically. It should be noted that the lowest means were about 4.5 on a 5.0 scale with 5.0 being the highest. Actions taken as a result of these evaluations: communication between the department internship coordinator and internship field supervisors has increased. Some of those in the field didn't understand the academic language of the ACEJMC competencies.

### Exit Surveys

The self-study frequently refers to the Exit Surveys. This instrument asks students to rate their level of preparedness on the ACEJMC professional values and competencies. One question arises: Would students know how well prepared they are? Ironically, students rated their preparedness to think critically and their ability to evaluate the accuracy of professional work as the highest, exactly the opposite of reports from internship field supervisors. Students rated themselves less prepared in their ability to be apply numbers and understand freedom of speech issues. Previous assessment efforts revealed a perceived disparity in treatment of the options. The imminent renovation of the Grauel Building and the new Rust Center for Media were designed to serve all four options in a collaborative and converged setting, in part to address these concerns.

### Admission, Retention and Graduation Rates

The site visit team noted some concern about the student success data provided about retention and graduation rates. The retention of first-year students is significantly and consistently below the University's overall rate (in the fall 2014 54.3% Department, 74.3% University). Six-year graduation rates also showed some disparity as well. (For example, the six-year graduation rate for the Fall 2010 cohort was 42.9% Department, 51.8% University.) Efforts are being made by the institution to focus attention on retention and graduation rates. Retaining more students would require the Department to provide seats for them in the classroom. This highlights an opportunity and need for strategic planning.



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

Tracking alumni is the purview of the Office of Career Services and the Office of Alumni Association, and information isn't regularly shared. The Department can request information from those units. The Department makes an independent effort to keep in touch with its alumni. The Exit Survey asks students to provide a permanent address and email address to help stay connected after they graduate.

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

Journalism and mass communication professionals, including alumni, are engaged in evaluating the capstone course and appraising student intern performance. Those alumni and professionals who were contacted by the site visit team praised the Department enthusiastically.

**SUMMARY:** The Department defines student learning outcomes, including all of ACEJMC's professional values and competencies. It has made a sustained effort to evaluate the student progress toward achieving those outcomes with two direct methods of assessment: a pre- and post-test and capstone evaluation. The Department involved alumni and professional feedback in the evaluation of the capstones. While the report did not show a lot of evidence how the faculty used the findings to improve student learning in the courses and the majors, it made a good faith effort to do so. The move toward integrating students from different options in the new Rust Center of Media is a promising example of the Department's attempt to improve student learning across the department. As it is with other institutions, conducting meaningful assessment is a developmental process, and the Department will be expected to reflect increasingly sophisticated efforts to measure and improve student learning in the future.

**Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE**

### **PART III: Summary by site visit team**

#### **1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.**

##### STRENGTHS

Impressive new (Rust Center for Media) and expanding (Grauel Hall) facilities

Wide range of experiential opportunities

An energetic, dedicated and diverse student body

Well-crafted courses for 21<sup>st</sup> century media jobs

Inclusive learning environment and collaborative faculty

##### WEAKNESSES

Student retention rates

Class scheduling/support issues that make access to classes for students challenging

Lack of sophistication for meaningful Assessment

Lack of replacement and maintenance funds for equipment

#### **2) List the standards with which the unit is not in compliance.**

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

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

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

#### **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 weaknesses cited in the 2010 report were:

- a. Silo mentality that retards curricular innovation and convergence.
- b. A curriculum that tries to do too much with too little.
- c. Structural and personnel changes that have weakened continuity and vision in leadership.
- d. An assessment process without a strong feedback loop into the curriculum.
- e. Serious resource challenges in three different curricular areas, lack of staff support and the amount of equipment needed for a large number of majors.

The Department received provisional status, with non-compliance in Mission, Governance and Administration and Assessment of Learning Outcomes. In the revisit in 2013, all of the weaknesses had been corrected, with the exception of Assessment. Because the Department had chosen to start over its assessment after the 2010 visit, the revisit team felt there was a lack of experience in feeding data back

into the curriculum. Based on that concern, it found the Department in non-compliance with Assessment.

**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 accurately represented the program at Southeast Missouri. Well written and designed, the team did have some challenges with computation in some of the tables.