

# Report of On-Site Evaluation

ACEJMC

Undergraduate program

2017-2018

Name of Institution: Eastern Illinois University

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: University President David Glassman

Name of Unit: Department of Journalism

Name and Title of Administrator: Sally Renaud

Date of 2017-2018 Accrediting Visit: Nov. 5-8, 2017

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

Date of the previous accrediting visit: Oct. 10-12, 2011

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Reaccreditation

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Reaccreditation

Recommendation by 2017-2018 Visiting Team: Reaccreditation

*Prepared and submitted by:*

**Team Chair**

Name and Title: Jennifer Sizemore, vice president and editor-in-chief \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/School: Starbucks Coffee Company

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Team Members**

Name and Title: Clark Bell, McCormick Foundation (retired)

Organization/School: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Title: Mark Lodato, associate dean

Organization/School: ASU Cronkite School of Journalism

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## PART I: General information

**Name of Institution:** Eastern Illinois University

**Name of Unit:** Department of Journalism

**Year of Visit:** 2017

**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; check more than one if necessary.**

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.**

•110 Illinois Compiled Statutes 665/10-1 to 10-110

**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: October 9-12, 2011

**5. When was the unit or sequences within the unit first accredited by ACEJMC? 1982**

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

The Journalism Department is dedicated to educating students to become skillful communicators, critical thinkers, knowledgeable media consumers and users, and ethical leaders capable of understanding and protecting the democratic process. Students will be encouraged to gain the experience and skills essential to life-long learning in an enriched professional environment, including integrated learning opportunities in student and professional media. The faculty will assure excellence in teaching that reflects the diverse heritage that enriches a free and democratic society and prepares students for an ever-changing media in a multicultural, diverse, national and international communications environment.

Passed Sept. 28, 2014

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

Semesters of 15 weeks

Summer sessions of 4, 6 and 8 weeks

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

Bachelor's degree

Master's degree

Ph.D. degree

**9. List the specific undergraduate degrees as well as the majors or sequences being reviewed by ACEJMC. \*Indicate online degrees.**

Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism

**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. Specify semester-hour or quarter-hour credit.**

3 semester hours

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

<u>Name of Sequence or Specialty</u>	<u>Person in Charge</u>
Concentration in Broadcasting	Sally Renaud
Concentration in Design	Sally Renaud
Concentration in Editing	Sally Renaud
Concentration in News and Emerging Media	Sally Renaud
Concentration in Photojournalism	Sally Renaud
Concentration in Public Relations (through 2017)	Sally Renaud
Concentration in Sports Media Relations	Sally Renaud
Concentration in Writing and Reporting	Sally Renaud

**13. Number of full-time students enrolled in the institution:** 7,030 FTE

**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):** 72

<u>Name of Sequence or Specialty</u>	<u>Undergraduate majors</u>
Concentration in Broadcasting	9
Concentration in Design	3
Concentration in Editing	1
Concentration in News and Emerging Media	0
Concentration in Photojournalism	3
Concentration in Public Relations	1
Concentration in Sports Media Relations	1
Concentration in Writing and Reporting	3
No Concentration or Undecided	51

**15. Number of students in each section of all skills courses (newsriting, reporting, editing, photography, broadcast news, 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.)**

Fall 2017

JOU 2101:002	Writing for News Media	15
JOU 2101:003	Writing for News Media	15
JOU 2901:001	Copy Editing	9
JOU 2950:001	Visual Communication	15
JOU 3000:001	Advanced Reporting	15
JOU 3001:001	Photojournalism	15
JOU 3002:001	Multimedia Journalism	10
JOU 3300:001	Publication Design	13
JOU 3610:001	Broadcast News	13
JOU 4275:001	Journalism Internship	5

Spring 2017

JOU 2101:001	Writing for News Media	15
JOU 2101:002	Writing for News Media	10
JOU 2901:001	Copy Editing	14
JOU 2950:001	Visual Communication	15
JOU 3000:001	Advanced Reporting	12
JOU 3002:001	Multimedia Journalism	9
JOU 3102:001	Feature Writing	11
JOU 3300:001	Publication Design	13
JOU 3610:001	Broadcast News	7
JOU 3620:001	Advanced Broadcast News	13
JOU 4750:001	Independent Study:	2
	Advanced Publication Design	

**16. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2017 – 2018 academic year:**

- The beginning balance of the operating budget for FY17 is \$8,000. The dean of the College Arts and Humanities usually supplements this amount with additional monies during the year. For example, in FY14 the department’s operating budget was \$15,000 and the dean’s office transferred an additional \$9,899 into the account. The chart below shows these transfers from the past three years. With the state’s financial insecurities, at this point there is no way to estimate how much (if any) supplemental monies might be available. When salaries and funds from the equipment, instructional support and gift accounts are included, expected expenditures for FY17 will be \$745,877.

**• Percentage increase or decrease of the operating budget in three years:**

(from \$24,899 to \$15,000) decrease of 40 percent

	Original Operating Budget	Transfers from Dean’s Office
FY2014	\$15,000	\$9,899
FY2015	\$12,000	\$17,530
FY2016	\$12,000	\$3,000
FY2017	\$8,040	

- Amount spent this year on full-time faculty salaries: **\$572,116**

**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.**

Lola Burnham, professor  
 Joe Gisondi, professor  
 Les Hyder, professor (medical leave)  
 Ensung Kim, associate professor  
 Bryan Murley, associate professor  
 Brian Poulter, professor  
 Sally Renaud, professor and chair

**18. List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in fall 2017. Also list names of part-time faculty teaching spring 2017. (If your school has its accreditation visit in spring 2018, please provide the spring 2018 adjunct list in the updated information.)**

Joe Astrouski (spring 2017)  
 Amanda Bright (spring and fall 2017)  
 Beth Heldebrandt (spring and fall 2017)  
 Betsy Jewell (spring 2017)  
 Rich Moser (fall 2017)  
 Kelly Goodwin (spring and fall 2017)

**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.**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Graduates</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
2016-2017 academic year	<u>18</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>100</u>
2015-2016 academic year	<u>14</u>	<u>14</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.*

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 passed a strategic plan in the fall of 2014. It includes a revised mission statement and vision statement, and seven goals for the program (see Part III for details). The university administration began a “Vitalization” process in fall 2016, a process designed to produce a two-year plan based on the university’s core values and critical issues. Faculty are active in the governance of the university, serving on a variety of committees. The university administration’s work is considered a roadmap for the entire campus and is complementary and supportive of the department’s work.

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

Faculty in the unit are part of a union that adheres to the rules of the EIU/University Professionals of Illinois agreement. The unit is governed by faculty-established bylaws and curriculum changes originate with the unit’s Curriculum Committee, a committee of the whole. Its recommendations are sent to the College of Arts and Humanities committee, then to the university’s Council on Academic Affairs for final approval.

Other faculty committees include Department Personnel; Assessment; Outreach and Service; Scholarship; and Technology. Ad hoc committees are organized as needed.

**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 unit’s chair is evaluated annually by the dean of the College of Arts and Humanities. The dean’s most recent review, while calling out the need for the chair to stay nimble and open-minded, concludes: “Dr. Renaud has worked hard to preserve what has been most valuable in the Journalism department and tradition, while simultaneously cleaning up those areas of management, organization and process that had become seriously disordered under her predecessor ... (she) has continued to teach, conduct research and to speak at professional meetings.”

The team’s in-person meeting with the dean had a different tone. The dean, who is beginning her second year as interim, admitted she wasn’t yet fully up to speed on the journalism curriculum, faculty or students, but expressed her respect and admiration for the department’s ability to do a lot with a little, and its “great alumni relations” and mentoring work. She said she respects the professional service of the faculty “so much.” But she questioned the department’s leadership on what is clearly a vexing matter in the college: an ongoing conflict between Journalism and Communications Studies, over resources, student competition and curriculum overlap. She went on to say that she is concerned that the chair has not proactively accepted the challenge of working with Communications Studies leadership to find collaborative solutions together. At a time where Journalism is one of the most expensive departments in

the college (cost per student), she said she has repeatedly given the chair guidance to stay true to the unit's values and traditions, while also opening the unit's minds to the future and possible configurations, combinations or collaborations.

The university provost echoed the desire for new conversations about how the program might evolve and find new collaborations or integration, by "breaking down the silos." But he also clearly stated his enthusiastic support for the Department of Journalism. He said he is completely committed to the investments he has approved in the Daily Eastern News and WEIU-TV and WEIU-FM and that "it is so important that journalism be framed as a part of who we are (as a university)."

Select faculty from other departments talk about being able to rely on the unit's collaborative spirit, on everything from jointly bringing in speakers to an annual co-sponsorship of Constitution Day. Words like "fantastic" and "genuine" were used to describe the department chair. One faculty member from another department said the chair is "interested in creating connections."

Journalism faculty describe the chair as providing great leadership of professional and student services, someone who is proud of the department and committed to maintaining the department's core – journalism and democracy. Faculty say the chair "has done a really good job" in difficult circumstances – that included the death of the previous chair – using a leadership style that is "more negotiating than autocratic," a style which has proven effective as conflicts have arisen among faculty.

Alumni, many of whom are now professionals and remain involved in the program, are loyal and passionate – about their time in the program and about the current faculty and leadership: "The one constant is ethics and the one constant change is technology, but the faculty keeps up with that." ... "(The chair) is phenomenally motivating." One alum, who now works at a metro daily in the state, showed the site team a well-worn scrapbook of clips of every story and photo he published in the daily student newspaper in the 1970s. He saved everything, he said, although as you're going through the program, "you just don't know what you have." Appreciation for the breadth of experience gained was expressed by both newer and more veteran alumni, indicating that the program was and remains special in the eyes of its alums.

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

According to the internal governing process, the department faculty and the dean of the College of Arts and Humanities agree to either an internal search or a national external search. The chair has a job description with a list of responsibilities and is evaluated annually by the dean of the college.

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

Most student concerns are resolved between the instructor and student; the department chair and the college dean are available resources when there is not a satisfactory outcome. Grade appeals that can't be resolved are referred to a college grade appeals committee.

Faculty and staff are encouraged to air issues with the chair and also can go to the dean of the college. If matters are covered by the collective-bargaining agreements, formal grievance procedures are activated if the faculty or staff member desires.

## **Summary**

The unit is buttoned-up in Governance and Administration, and in large part it has no choice in the matter. The collective bargaining agreement mandates compliance with most of the expectations of this standard, and the unit executes as prescribed. The unit's chair is viewed as a compassionate leader who has helped steady the department in difficult times.

## **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.**

In academic year 2016-2017, the unit was 100 percent compliant with the rule requiring a minimum of 72 hours for a baccalaureate degree outside of journalism and mass communications. For academic year 2015-2016, the unit was 100 percent compliant with the 72-credit hour 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 nucleus of the curriculum is 13 required courses focused on core journalism concepts; eight are skills-based, and five are theoretical. Since the last accreditation cycle the number of credit hours required in the journalism core curriculum has increased from 27-28 to 34. Based upon assessment data since the last examination, the unit has introduced two new courses into the required core: Broadcast (JOU 3610) and Publications Design (JOU 3300). These join Writing for News Media (JOU 2101), Introduction to Visual Communication (JOU 2950), Advanced Reporting (JOU 3000), Introduction to Multimedia Journalism (JOU 3002) and Introduction to Copy Editing (JOU 2901) and a one credit Practicum (JOUR 3401) to compose the eight skills-based core classes.

The required theoretical classes, which focus on key concepts in journalism and mass communication, are Journalism and Democracy (JOU 2001), Communication Law (JOU 4771), Journalism Ethics (JOU 4102) and Race, Gender and the Media (JOU 3970) or Perspectives on Sports and the Media (JOU 3953). Also required is History of American Journalism (HIS 3940), a course taught by a Journalism faculty member.

As part of the assessment effort, the unit ties the curriculum to the ACEJMC 12 core values and competencies. Since the last accreditation cycle, the unit has improved syllabus language to ensure all courses clearly state how objectives correlate to the Council's core values and competencies. Within the required core, values and competencies are addressed as follows:

Value and Competency	Required Course
1	JOU 2001; JOU 4771; JOU 4102; JOU 4771
2	HIS 3940; JOU 2001; JOU 4771
3	JOU 3970; JOU 2001; JOU 2091; JOU 3953; JOU 4771
4	JOU 3970; JOU 2001; JOU 2091; JOU 3953; JOU 4771
5	JOU 2950; JOU 3300; JOU 3610; JOU 3002
6	JOU 4102; JOU 4771; JOU 2001
7	JOU 2101; JOU 3000; JOU 2001; JOU 4102; JOU 4771
8	JOU 3970; JOU 2101; JOU 3000
9	JOU 2101; JOU 3000; JOU 2950; JOU 3610
10	JOU 2950; JOU 2901; JOU 3300; JOU 3610; JOU 3002
11	JOU 2101; JOU 3000; JOU 2901
12	JOU 2950; JOU 3300; JOU 3002

Students at Eastern Illinois University are required to take 120 credit hours to graduate. Journalism majors are required to take 46 hours to obtain the degree, which must include 34 core credit requirements as noted above (the 3-credit history course is required but not considered core). Of the theoretical courses, beyond the required Journalism and Democracy, Journalism Ethics, and Communications Law, students must also select one Media and Society course from either Race, Gender and the Media or Perspectives on Sports and the Media. (Since the last accreditation cycle, the unit has removed Women and the Media, Minorities and the Media, Public Relations in Society and International Journalism and the World Press as options for this requirement. Concepts of Women and Media and Minorities and the Media have been incorporated into Race, Gender and the Media.) Students must choose an additional 12 hours of journalism coursework to complete the 46-hour requirement.

Students may (but are not required to) select from the following concentrations: Broadcast News, Design, Editing, News and Emerging Media; Photojournalism; Sports Media Relations or Writing and Reporting. However, as was the case in the last accreditation cycle, the majority of Journalism majors do not select a concentration. Currently only 21 of the 72 Journalism majors have selected a sequence concentration. The majority of the those are in Broadcasting (9) with the fewest in News and Emerging Media (0). The unit removed public relations as a concentration in 2016 when public relations became a major within the Communications Studies Department.

Beyond core requirements, the following is the curriculum for each:

**Broadcast News:** Field Production (CMN 2575) and Advanced Broadcast News (JOU 3620) are required. Students must also choose one of the following: Online Journalism (JOU 3703), Writing for Sports Media (JOU 3706), Advanced New Media Design (JOU 4761), Interactive Reporting and Design (JOU 4762) or Journalism Internship (JOU 4275).

**Design:** Photojournalism (JOU 3001) and Advanced Publication Design (JOU 4760) are required. Students must also take one of the following: Online Journalism (JOU 3703), Advanced Editing (JOU 3800) or Advanced Photojournalism (JOU 4751).

**Editing:** Advanced Editing (JOU 3800) is required. Students must also take two of the following: Photojournalism (JOU 3001), Online Journalism (JOU 3703), Media Management (JOU 4001), Advanced Publication Design (JOU 4760) or News Media Opinion Writing and Editing (JOU 4770).

**News and Emerging Media:** Online Journalism (JOU 3703), Interactive Reporting and Design (JOU 4762) and Advanced New Media Design (JOU 4761) are required.

**Photojournalism:** Photojournalism (JOU 3001), Online Journalism (JOU 3703) and Advanced Photojournalism (JOU 4751) are required.

**Sports Media Relations:** Sports Media Relations (JOU 2850), Writing for Sports Media (JOU 3706) and Perspectives on Sports and the Media (JOU 3953) are required.

**Writing and Reporting:** Feature Writing (JOU 3102) is required. Students must also take two of the following: Advanced Broadcast News (JOU 3620), Writing for Sports Media (JOU 3706), Advanced Editing (JOU 3800), Reporting on the Arts (JOU 3955) or News Media Opinion Writing and Editing (JOU 4770).

Since the last accreditation cycle the Department of Journalism has made significant changes to address a noted weakness that many of the concentrations have fewer than 10 students enrolled. In August 2017, the faculty voted to eliminate all journalism concentrations beginning in fall 2018. Most of the courses in the former concentrations will remain though offered less frequently, allowing students with singular interests to continue to develop an expertise.

A noted weakness during the last examination was that students, faculty and administrators were confused that both the Department of Journalism and Department of Communication Studies offered majors in Public Relations and Broadcast News. Beginning in fall 2016, the Department of Communications Studies became the sole provider of a public relations major. Students in the remaining public relations major are required to take two Journalism Department courses: Writing for News Media (JOU 2101) and Communications Law (JOU 4771). In fall 2015, the unit submitted a proposal to the provost/vice president requesting that all broadcast news classes be housed in the Journalism Department. In 2017, the unit is pursuing approval for a broadcast news major and minor.

The Department of Journalism offers minors in Journalism, Photojournalism and Sports Media Relations. The 18-credit Photojournalism Minor was launched in fall 2017. Journalism students are allowed, yet discouraged, to minor in Photojournalism. Journalism students are permitted to minor in Sports Media Relations.

**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.**

In response to assessment data and conversations with industry leaders, the department has made significant changes to its organization and curriculum since the last accreditation cycle in an effort to remain current. As noted previously, two courses were added to the required core curriculum: Broadcast News (JOU 3610) and Publication Design (JOU 3300). Knowledge from these courses, including videography, editing, writing and design on multiple platforms are intended to ensure all Journalism majors are in a position to compete for jobs in a changing media landscape. All concentrations will be eliminated as of fall 2018.

While students report basic exposure to social media platforms, there is a lack of instruction in the areas of digital audience engagement, social media analytics and data journalism. These topics are increasingly important in the current and emerging multiplatform landscape.

To remain responsive to the needs of the university, the unit began offering News, Information and Media Literacy (JOU 1000) as part of the university's general education program. It joins Journalism and Democracy (JOU 2001) as general education options.

As part of the assessment process, the Department of Journalism relies upon the outside evaluations of media professionals to ensure students are meeting professional expectations. The unit noted that in the most recent external evaluation, the ACEJMC competency *apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work*, multimedia students did not meet professional expectations. The unit is communicating with evaluators to ensure Introduction to Multimedia Journalism (JOU 3002) incorporates the latest approaches and technologies so that the class is able to remain a relevant measure of multimedia. Multimedia Journalism was described as only "scratching the surface," and in need of more instruction and feedback on student work. Students did report doing multimedia coursework and training in other courses. Students report that instruction in both Multimedia

Journalism and in Ethics are lacking clear direction. Ethics is considered “an easy A,” which doesn’t use time effectively. Both courses are taught by the same instructor.

Students are generally positive about their instruction, and praise faculty for their dedication to student success. Students say they feel confident in their ability to compete for jobs upon graduation given the skill set they have learned at Eastern Illinois. Students noted that classroom teaching prepares them well in both practical application and theory for roles within student media once they arrive.

Multiple faculty have been recognized for their achievements in teaching. In 2017 the Chair of the Journalism Department was inducted into the College Media Association’s Hall of Fame. One faculty member was named to the Honor Roll 4-Year Newspaper Adviser Award presented by the College Media Association. Another faculty member received the Presidential Award for service to student media from the College Media Association in 2012 and the EIU Achievement and Contribution Award in 2016.

Students are recognized for achievements in learning at an annual banquet. Awards include Outstanding Senior Journalist, Outstanding Photographer, Outstanding Senior Broadcaster and more. The unit’s chapter of Kappa Tau Alpha presents a Top Scholar Award and recognizes other chapter honorees. Student achievements are also recognized in the once-a-semester department newsletter.

**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 department is in full compliance with this rule. Skills classes are capped at 15 students and lecture classes do not exceed 25 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.**

There are several opportunities outside of the classroom for journalism majors to gain internship or other professional experiences. Students are required to work one semester at a student media organization as part of the graded course Practicum (JOU 3401). Student media at the university includes *The Daily Eastern News*, the *Warbler* yearbook and WEIU FM and TV. At *The Daily Eastern News*, students use current software to produce stories, artwork, photography, opinion pieces and multimedia content. Staff members are also active on social networks such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Students use digital design and editing skills to produce the *Warbler* yearbook. At WEIU-TV, students produce a nightly live TV newscast. Students use modern equipment to produce the HD program, which reaches 1 million households across 18 counties. Faculty and staff are readily available to provide critique and guidance. Students routinely praise the opportunities available to them through student media, where faculty and adviser support is readily available and welcome.

The unit states it does not have a formal internship policy, though it does award academic credit to students enrolled in Journalism Internship (JOU 4275) for one, two or three credit hours. Students must spend time commensurate with a typical workweek (40 hours) at the internship location for each hour of credit. Under the supervision of a full-time professional, students are evaluated on their work. In turn, students must provide a report describing their duties and experience. A full-time journalism faculty member serves as internship coordinator and reviews feedback from both professionals and students.

Approximately 45 students have served summer internships since 2011. Internship opportunities during the fall and spring semesters are rare, but permitted.

The Journalism Department discontinued a job fair to facilitate internship opportunities due to lack of participation. Today, networking through the internship coordinator and other faculty serves as the primary conduit to inform students of available opportunities across multiple platforms. Until 2015, the department participated in the Illinois Cooperative Work Study Program, funded through the Illinois Board of Higher Education, to place students in summer internships. The program funded up to 50 percent of a student's salary if a company created the internship for an Eastern Illinois University Journalism student. The program has been discontinued, but the University is expecting its return in 2018.

### **Summary**

The unit has made significant improvement to the curriculum during the accreditation cycle, highlighted by the elimination of concentrations and the addition of classes to the required core to ensure current instruction in both theory and skills courses. While students report basic exposure to social media platforms, opportunity exists to grow instruction in the areas of digital audience engagement, social media analytics and data journalism.

### **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 unit's diversity plan, last updated in 2010, does not include numerical goals and timelines. Rather, it includes aspirational goals for culture and inclusiveness and guidelines for developing recruiting plans and building awareness for the department. The diversity of the department's student enrollment is impressive, while faculty diversity remains a daunting challenge.

In fiscal 2017, Black/African-Americans represented 18.3 percent of the unit's enrollment, while the Hispanic/Latino category represented 8.5 percent. The unit's minority student population is higher than that of the university.

Of the seven full-time faculty members, two are white female and four are white male. An international full-time member of the faculty is a native of Korea who recently became a U.S. citizen. Three of the four part-time faculty are white women and one is a white male. Despite the imbalance, faculty, students and administrators say the unit has a collegial and pleasant culture of inclusiveness.

**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.**

The unit offers a Race and Gender in the Media upper-level course. Many other courses in the required core address global and domestic diversity issues. For example, to fulfill their liberal arts requirements, journalism students now must take a course in another department that emphasizes global diversity and addresses sexual orientation. Faculty regularly attend inclusion-focused training sessions. Tolerance and understanding of others are hallmarks of classes, student media and extra-curricular services offered by the unit.

**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 desire to enhance diversity of the faculty was stymied by the lack of a new tenure-track hire in this accreditation cycle. One popular full-time faculty member, an African-American woman, accepted an attractive offer from the University of Illinois. Her position has yet to be replaced due to a hiring freeze and campus-wide faculty attrition issues.

Meanwhile, the unit and the university use appropriate means to open channels of communication with diverse candidates for potential full-time and part-time faculty additions. Once again, geography and the

lack of qualified media professionals living in the market limit the available pool of candidates. The full-time international faculty member recently became a U.S. citizen.

**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**

The unit is heavily invested in scholastic journalism activities and organizations at the high school and community college level. The program's high school journalism summer workshop, now more than 25 years old, is viewed as a Midwest model for introducing minority students to campus life and the field of journalism.

The unit has five scholarships designed for minority students, two of which are earmarked for newly enrolled students. The scholarships are used to recruit and retain minority students. The unit also taps into university awards and grants programs to support minority students.

Minority students are active in campus media activities. The leadership and salaried positions in the student media outlets also are well represented by diverse students. A majority of the unit's well-utilized Journalism Ambassador program represent racial, ethnic and gender diversity.

**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.**

The unit promotes diversity through its course offerings, hosting speaker series, inclusiveness of student media and promoting other university events dealing with diversity. The program follows all university policies prohibiting harassment and discrimination, as well as policies promoting accommodations for students with disabilities and religious beliefs.

## **Summary**

Faculty diversity remains a major challenge for a university located far from a metropolitan area. The student population is impressively diverse and receives solid instruction in diversity-related topics. There are leadership opportunities and scholarship support for minority students.

## **COMPLIANCE**

## **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.**

As the unit notes in the self-study, much of the information relevant to this section is governed by the collective bargaining agreements between EIU and the University Professionals of Illinois, Local 4100. Tenured/tenure-track faculty members are governed by the Unit A Agreement; annually contracted faculty members are governed by the Unit B Agreement. Part-time ACFs become part of the Unit B bargaining unit after they have a 50 percent or more appointment for two academic years. The Journalism Department lost its two Unit B faculty in fall 2016 because of Illinois' budget impasse and falling enrollments.

Faculty evaluations are based on the Departmental Application of Criteria (DAC), which describes in great detail faculty performance expectations and responsibilities.

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

For the 2017-18 academic year, the Journalism Department employs seven Unit A faculty with one on medical leave – there were 13 Unit A faculty in the last accreditation report – and four adjunct instructors. The chair is not part of the bargaining unit but is counted in faculty totals. Five of the full-time faculty are professors, two are associate professors.

The full-time faculty in the Journalism Department: teach the majority of the courses in the curriculum (72 percent in 16-17; 85 percent in 14-15; 87 percent in 15-16); bear the service load to the department, university and to journalism education and the journalism profession; and continue to produce research/creative activity.

The four part-time instructors who teach one course a semester are area professionals with seven to 25 years of experience.

While research/creative activity has been reduced in the assessment period, there is still productivity even as the unit focuses on teaching – at what is, first, a teaching institution. The faculty service expectations are numerous and enthusiastically embraced.

### **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.**

Among full-time faculty members, professional experience ranges from two to 20 years. Of the seven tenured faculty, five have terminal degrees as defined by the university (2 Ph.D., 1 Ed.D., 2 M.F.A.); two faculty are All But Dissertation (ABD). Of the four part-time faculty, one is ABD, one has a master's degree and two have bachelor's degrees.



Faculty development opportunities include lectures and programs through the office of Faculty Development, and several faculty members have been selected to attend teaching conferences, such as Poynter's Teachapalooza, Center for News Literacy at Stony Brook in Chicago, and Faculty Summer Institute at the University of Illinois.

The Mid-America Press Institute was headquartered at EIU until 2016. For many years the connections made through that organization were a boon for the program, keeping the network of regional media both close to the program and available as a pipeline of employment for students. The last EIU director retired and with diminished resources locally the MPI is now based at the University of Illinois. However, lines of communication and networking remain open.

As an alum said about the effectiveness of the faculty, "They are just a crackerjack staff."

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

The evaluation of instruction is also governed by the collective bargaining agreements. Teaching and performance of primary duties is considered the most important of three areas of evaluation that also include research/creative activity and service.

The chair and a faculty colleague conduct peer evaluations of teaching during each evaluation period, as required by the agreements. Official department student evaluations are also required for at least half of a faculty member's course load every fall and spring term. The five "core items" in the Purdue evaluation form are used for the student evaluations.

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

As mentioned above, faculty from other departments talk enthusiastically about relying on the unit's collaborative spirit on everything from jointly bringing in experts to co-sponsoring events. The unit is viewed as "responsive, enthusiastic and engaged." Journalism students are appreciated in other classes because they are "exceptionally creative, curious, and they really know how to write."

## Summary

Much of the faculty structure, guidelines and evaluation are governed by the union agreements that the unit operates under. They are in full compliance with both the agreements and Standard 4. Across campus, the faculty has a reputation for being open to collaboration and being a good partner; its students are prized for their engagement and honed writing skills.

## COMPLIANCE

**Table 6. Faculty Populations, Full-time and Part-time**

Show numbers of female, male, minority, white and international faculty members and the percentages they represent of the unit's total faculty. (Report international faculty the same way the university reports them.)

**Academic year: 2016 – 2017 Full-time faculty**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>% of total faculty</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>% of total faculty</b>
Black/African American				
White	2	29%	4	57%
American Indian/Alaskan native				
Asian				
Hispanic/Latino (any race)				
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander				
Two or more races				
Other race				
International (any race)	1	14%		14%

**Academic year: 2016 – 2017 Part-time/adjunct faculty**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>% of total faculty</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>% of total faculty</b>
Black/African American				
White	3	75%	1	25%
American Indian/Alaskan native				
Asian				
Hispanic/Latino (any race)				
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander				
Two or more races				
Other race				
International (any race)				

## **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 unit's Application of Criteria clearly defines expectations for faculty research, creative activity and/or professional activity. Eastern Illinois University's Collective Bargaining Agreement requires this document be used to fulfill the unit's responsibility for promotion, tenure and salary increases.

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

The unit's Application of Criteria and the union's collective bargaining agreement outline expectations for faculty research, creative activity and/or professional activity as criteria for hiring, promotion and tenure.

**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's Application of Criteria and union collective bargaining agreement together clearly define expectations for faculty research, creative activity and/or professional activity. Standards are defined as satisfactory, significant or superior. Faculty members indicate the process for promotion and tenure is fair, and support the policy, which allows the department significant input in establishing criteria for the unit.

**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.**

Unit research has declined significantly since the last site team visit. During the last accreditation cycle, assistant, associate and full professors amassed almost 200 instances of grants, creative work, papers, journals, etc. In the current cycle, that number has been cut in half.

Much of the decline can be attributed to the reduction in faculty. Retirement, attrition and budget cuts resulting in unfilled positions have resulted in a full-time faculty decrease from 13 assistant, associate or full professors to seven in 2017. Meanwhile one faculty member is on extended medical leave, and two others are provided course relief to account for other duties. All three assistant professors identified in 2011 have achieved tenure, thus leaving none at that rank, which is traditionally heavy in research production.

Despite the challenges noted above, remaining faculty have shown adequate evidence of communicating 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 the institution. An examination of the unit's productivity by rank

indicates 50 instances of research and/or creative activity by full professors, 25 by associate professors and 19 by assistant professors. *(See chart at end of Standard 5)*

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

In the accrediting period, two faculty members have taken sabbaticals to support research activity. Opportunities for travel funding are minimal as the university struggles financially. Ten faculty members have taken advantage of travel funding opportunities during the past six years.

**Summary**

Unit faculty members contribute to the advancement of scholarly and professional knowledge and engage in scholarship that contributes to their development. The significant decline in research compared to the previous accreditation cycle can be attributed to the reduction in faculty due to retirement, attrition and budget cuts resulting in unfilled positions.

**COMPLIANCE**

Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activities	By Unit *	By Individuals				Totals (13)
		Full Professors (4)	Associate Professors (3)	Assistant Professors (4)	Other Faculty** (2)	
Awards and Honors		4		1		4
Grants Received Internal		2			1	3
Grants Received External		10				10
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co-authored						0
Textbooks, Sole- or Co-authored		3				3
Books Edited				1		1
Book Chapters		3				3
Monographs						0
Articles in Refereed Journals		1		2		3
Refereed Conference Papers		14	11	7		32
Invited Academic Papers		3	2	2		7
Encyclopedia Entries						0
Book Reviews			1			1
Articles in Non-Refereed Publications		4	3	1		8
Juried Creative Works						0
Non-juried Creative Works		1	1			2
Other: Conference papers, non-juried		7	6	5	5	23
Other: General-interest book		1				
Other: Blog		1	1			2

\*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.

\*\*Includes all full-time faculty who do not hold listed ranks, such as instructors and others on term appointments. Many faculty in this category may hold teaching appointments without significant scholarship, research or creative requirements.

Other: Includes faculty presentations at campus, state and national conventions at workshops such as the National High School Journalism Conference, Illinois College Press Association, and Illinois Community College Press Association.

Other: Includes authorship of two successful blogs by faculty members.

## 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.**

Students appear to adequately understand the published requirements for graduation but indicated some inconsistencies in the advising process. The University's Academic Advising Center handles first semester freshmen. In the second semester, students are assigned faculty advisers based on their academic interests and personal preferences. Some transfer students and journalism majors with specialized concentrations reported communications challenges with program, college or university advising. If needed, the unit chair intervenes to resolve issues.

Students are able to change advisers in later years if their interests shift toward other academic or career options. Students with junior standing (60 hours or more) are encouraged to apply for the graduation process.

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

This is a close-knit unit, with most faculty members exceeding their office-hour requirements. More pertinent is that students and faculty have very positive relationships because of personal attention in classroom and extra-curricular media activities. The accessibility factor is sweetened by the unit's small class sizes and the role of faculty members in academic/career counseling. Beyond the classroom, faculty are actively engaged as advisers to campus media organizations and student professional societies.

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

Students are kept regularly informed about unit activities. In fall 2016, the office administrator successfully introduced a preferred contact system to remind majors and minors about requirements, activities and policies of the unit. Before registering for classes each semester, advisers and students work off a required course checklist.

**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.**

All majors participate in one or more of the student media operations. Options include *The Daily Eastern News* and its companion online news site and *The Warbler*, a large bound yearbook. Broadcasting news and information opportunities are available for students on a PBS-affiliated television station and an FM radio outlet. WEIU-TV, broadcasting to an estimated market of nearly 1 million residents in 18 counties, produces a live 30-minute weekday newscast. WEIU-FM 88.9, has a music format with limited news coverage.

The Society for Collegiate Journalists and National Association of Black Journalists have had campus chapters, although NABJ is presently on hiatus. With the help of an engaged alumni group, the unit has

created a viable career counseling and placement strategy to assist students in job searches. Alumni and local news managers actively recruit journalism students for entry-level positions. Those interviewed expressed satisfaction with the training and work ethic of program graduates. Close connections to the Illinois Press Association, Chicago Headline Club, Mid-America Press Institute and college media associations also develop career opportunities.

Of those unit students graduating in 2015-2016, 50 percent are reported to be working in a journalism-related job, 36 percent are working in a non-journalism job and 14 percent registered for graduate school.

**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's published rates for retention and graduation mirror those of the university. The unit's six-year graduation rate of students entering in 2010 stood at 53.6 percent, compared with less than 50 percent in the previous four years. The freshman-to-sophomore retention rate was 78 percent for the students entering in 2010. The unit has participated in two university initiatives to improve retention performance.

In fiscal 2017, some 28 undergraduate majors received scholarships (median average of \$500) from funds controlled by the unit. In fiscal 2016, 45 students received scholarships with a median average of \$400.

## Summary

The unit is creative in finding ways to recruit, retain, train and place students. There is ample evidence of strong student media, a loyal alumni base and close connections to scholastic, college and professional groups.

## 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 detailed annual budget covers all expenditures directly controlled by the unit. The total budget for the 2016-2017 self-study year was \$773,241. That's down 20 percent from just two years earlier and nearly 30 percent from the previous self-study year in 2011-2012. The steep decreases are reflective of the cutback in state government support for public universities in Illinois. The outlook for improvement is not good.

The unit has a strategic plan that was adopted in 2014. The budget is allocated annually by the dean of the college after the unit chair discusses spending priorities with faculty members. The chair has some discretion in moving funds within the unit.

**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.**

Things are very tight throughout the university, but the program chair believes the unit has received its fair share of funding. Total university revenue was down 35 percent in fiscal 2017 and another 17.6 percent in fiscal 2016. Total state funding for the university has been less than 60 percent of expectations based on appropriations before the fiscal crisis. In fiscal year 2017, state appropriations to the university dipped 7 percent from the previous year to \$83.6 million. The unit's fiscal 2017 budget was trimmed by 10.6 percent and there are forecasts for another double-digit dip in fiscal 2018.

The results are obvious. For the past two years, the unit has purchased only basic office and personal supplies. Classroom computers are on a four-year replacement cycle, compared with three years at the time of the last site visit. However, other technology, such as video and still cameras, are adequate for an accredited journalism program. Alumni support, student lab fees and creative budgeting have helped the unit meet some equipment and student travel needs.

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

The unit shares the highly functional and well-appointed Buzzard Hall with the Education Department. The bright and open 139,000 -square-foot building was constructed in 1957 and remodeled in 1997. It provides comfortable space for classes, labs, offices, meeting rooms and campus media operations. The building also offers ample open spaces and seating areas for students to network. A student organization room includes a well-equipped media resources center.

**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.**

Students and faculty are generally satisfied with their access to technology. However, some expressed concern about the level of technology investment and up-to-date caliber of the media-related computer resources. Many faculty members have opted for laptops rather than desktop computers. Desktop terminals in classrooms and computer labs are adequate, as is the equipment available for student usage



outside the building. Lack of after-hours access and availability of some equipment inside Buzzard Hall were cited, prompting students to use central library or other campus technology centers.

The unit has traditionally received lab fees for three technology-driven classes. A fourth course with fees was added last year after the university lifted a moratorium on supplemental student fees. The unit expects to continue adding nominal student fees in support of new technology instruction, for equipment software.

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

The unit offers a 16-seat conference room and a reading room/student lounge with shelved materials and a computer with access to the central library's databases. Buzzard Hall also offers a small Instructional Technology Center and a Professional Development Center.

The university's excellent Booth Library is well-equipped with information resources and technology, including the versatile 11-station Media Lab Plus and a glass-enclosed lab with 58 computers. West of the library is the Gregg Technology Center, which has 41 iMac computers with access to all software and hardware required by journalism students to complete class assignments. Booth has a dedicated research and reference librarian who serves journalism and three other college programs.

**Summary**

The program has a superb physical plant, ample resources and a very capable support staff. There are challenges in replacing digital equipment, although alumni and retired faculty members have been generous in supporting equipment needs and student travel.

**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.**

The unit maintains good contacts with alumni and encourages ongoing interaction with them through social media interaction and frequent in-person interactions.

Alumni come back to campus to serve, along with other area media professionals, on the Student Publications Board, which meets three times a year. Alumni spoke at a symposium as part of *The Daily Eastern News*' 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in 2015, sharing their journalism journeys and how the skills they learned in the department shaped their careers.

Flyers on site document that a broad mix of alumni stop by throughout every semester. The unit calls on alums for topic-specific supplemental conversation through face-to-face, conference call or Skype/Facetime. Examples include a photojournalism class that interviews professional photographers including alums; sports/media students hear from alums on topics from athletic budgets to covering professional sports; working reporters talk to writing classes about crime coverage and the forms different kinds of real-life assignments can take.

Unit alumni are always on the program as presenters at the Illinois Community College Journalism Association's fall and spring workshops, as well as at the Illinois College Press Association's annual convention in Chicago.

Alumni also judge yearbook and newspaper contests for the unit at the high school, community college and college levels.

In addition, every semester a media professional visits as part of the Fox-Thornburgh series. The professionals go to classes, meet student media teams and sometimes speak at campus-wide events. Beyond the formal presentations, media professionals are invited to talk to classes informally and formally based on course syllabi.

For the past six years, The Agency, a student-run public relations firm founded in the department in 1993, produced a twice-yearly newspaper for alumni, *-30-*. Now that the PR major has moved out of the department to Communications Studies, the unit has mostly been using social media to communicate with alumni. The chair and director of Student Publications are currently collecting "Class Notes" and stories for a print edition of *-30-* to come out in January, prior to the annual alumni event held in Chicago in February.

Alumni working in the field report that they remain in close contact with the program and enjoy the community they have built on Facebook.

**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.**

News-related panel discussions are part of the department's public service to the profession. For example, in 2014, the unit organized three events after the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo. The editor, photographer and reporter from the St. Louis American, an African American paper, spent the day with the unit, and a designer from the St. Louis Post-Dispatch talked about designing multiple editions on those long nights.

The department also judges professional media contests through the Illinois Press Association and Foundation.

Until recently, the department was the headquarters of the Mid-America Press Institute, which is made up of more than 50 newspapers from 20 states.

**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 participate in and attend conferences and workshops of numerous professional societies on behalf of the unit. All the major statewide press associations at the high school and college levels are run by the unit and there is a long history of leadership in the College Media Association. They are active in AEJMC and the Society of Professional Journalists.

**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.**

From student media to extensive involvement with high schools and community colleges, the unit is highly regarded on campus and in the community for its service. The student media, while not under direct control of the unit, are closely tied to the department in hearts and minds across campus and their proximity to faculty members (based in the same building) means they rely upon the unit for advice and mentoring, even while faculty ensure assignments for student media are integrated into assignments. A tenured journalism professor serves as interim director of the student publications, reporting to the provost. One hundred percent of majors participate in one or more campus media.

Publications include: *The Daily Eastern News* and its companion website, [dailyeasternnews.com](http://dailyeasternnews.com), the *Warbler*, the college yearbook, and *The Vehicle*, a once-a-semester literary magazine.

In addition, WEIU-TV and WEIU-FM are operated by the university's Radio/TV Center. One of the center's main purposes is to serve as a laboratory for students interested in careers in broadcasting. The center produces a weekday live 30-minute newscast and a 24/7 radio station that serve as outlets both for students being educated in journalism and broadcast – and other students across campus as well. The news director is an adjunct professor in journalism.

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

To be succinct: The unit has service to scholastic journalism covered. The self-study describes its involvement as "very active" and more accurately says it is "part of our DNA." This is truly a highlight for a small unit with a rich history of scholastic commitment.

Currently, the chair is the executive director of the Illinois Journalism Education Association, a statewide organization of high school newspaper, yearbook and broadcast advisers and journalism teachers. It works closely with the Illinois Press Association, promoting support for scholastic journalism. IJEA and the unit take the lead role in organizing a statewide journalism competition sponsored by the Illinois High School Association. Each summer the department runs the Illinois Press Foundation/EIU High School Journalism Workshop partially funded by the Illinois Press Foundation, the Dow Jones News Fund and the McCormick Foundation. Eighteen high school students attend the two-week camp. The two local high schools get training and printing for their newspapers. The EIU yearbook staff works with one of the schools on its yearbook. And there are ongoing workshops on everything from Photoshop to journalism fundamentals.

### **Summary**

The unit has a robust ongoing conversation with its alumni, and maintains a leadership role in regional professional activities and scholastic journalism programs. It is deeply involved in student publications that provide a variety of experiences for its majors.

### **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 the Council.**

The unit’s assessment plan takes each of the Council’s 12 professional values and competencies and provides assessment measures. First implemented in 2004, the assessment plan was revised in 2007, 2008, 2012 and most recently summer 2017. The university and Department of Journalism’s declining enrollment and reduced number of faculty prompted the unit to design an assessment plan that was both effective and manageable given existing resources. The latest revision resulted in a revised assessment of the department’s core required courses (including History of American Journalism). The University’s assessment director concurred with the decision.

A weakness noted in the last examination was a lack of consistent, clear learning objectives in each syllabus, and how they relate to the ACEJMC values and competencies. Since that examination, the unit has worked to ensure reference to the appropriate values and competencies in each syllabus. A spot check of syllabi by the site team confirmed value and competency language.

The unit appoints one faculty member as the assessment coordinator. It should be noted that the same faculty member has led assessment efforts and plan improvements since the last examination period, providing valuable consistency and context. The unit’s assessment plan has identified corresponding required core courses that measure each of the ACEJMC’s 12 professional values and competencies. Some values and competencies have as many as six courses identified. Measurement tools, both direct and indirect, are also clearly identified for each of the 12 values and competencies as part of the assessment plan. Each semester syllabi are submitted to unit administration, and are periodically reviewed by the chair and/or assessment coordinator to ensure stated learning outcomes that address the values and competencies appropriate for each course.

As stated previously, the unit has a detailed assessment plan in place, last revised summer 2017. Recent changes to the plan are designed to ensure quality instruction and assessment while remaining manageable given the size of the department. The key change was to focus annual assessment on the unit’s required core curriculum. Since the last examination, that core has expanded to include courses in Broadcast News and Publication Design. In addition, the assessment plan now requires evaluation in the skills areas of news writing, broadcast news writing, copy editing, photography, multimedia journalism and publication design. Assessment also takes place in the required theoretical areas of ethics, law, history and media and society.

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

Multiple direct assessment measures for each core class are detailed in the assessment plan. These measures include selected exam or quiz questions, standardized assessment assignments, assessment pre-tests and post-tests, and essays. In courses where exam or quiz questions are used, faculty identify questions from exams that are applicable to a given core value and competency. The assessment plan smartly cross-references values and competencies with corresponding measurement tools by course. Tools include exam and quiz questions, standardized assignments, a math assessment test, a style

assessment test, pre-test/post-test. Faculty are also provided a list of value and competency objectives for each required course.

Multiple indirect assessment measures for each core class are detailed in the assessment plan. These measures include alumni surveys, internship surveys and student exit interviews. Internship surveys are used to evaluate student performance and employer satisfaction regarding core values and competencies. Alumni surveys are used to explore whether alumni find their education properly prepared them for workforce. Exit interviews are used to allow graduating seniors an opportunity for feedback and evaluation of values and competencies as they relate to their education. The combination of measures to assess ACEJMC's professional values and competencies have been effective in identified proactive change for the unit.

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

The assessment plan, last revised summer 2017, provides a detailed procedure to collect, report and apply data to improve curriculum and instruction. The plan requires faculty teaching courses in which exam questions are used for assessment to report results of the applicable questions each semester to the department assessment coordinator. Instructors with assessment requirements are required to assign, collect, then store the standardized assessment assignment(s) on a specified server. These results must be provided no later than one week after the end of the fall and spring semesters. The department internship coordinator(s) will provide internship surveys to the assessment coordinator. At present, they are one and the same. It is the responsibility of the department chair to provide alumni survey results and exit interview data twice a year to the coordinator.

Every three years, the unit gathers a group of outside evaluators made up of professional journalists and educators from other universities. Together they are given a random sample of 30 percent of the standardized assessment assignments using designated rubrics for the core values and competencies identified for each course. Courses used as part of this measurement are: Writing for the News Media (JOU 2101), Introduction to Copy Editing (JOU 2901), Introduction to Visual Communication (JOU 2950), Advanced Reporting and Research (JOU 3000), Introduction to Multimedia Journalism (3002), Publication Design (JOU 3300) and Broadcast News (JOU 3610). Participants use rubrics to evaluate the assignments.

Every two years the assessment coordinator provides a report to the university. However, one submission was missed due to the university assessment coordinator's sabbatical. Three reports (2011-12, 2012-13, 2016-17) were completed during the accreditation cycle and available to the committee. The unit has used assessment data from both direct and indirect measures to make multiple changes to the curriculum since the last examination.

For example, assessment data, specifically an identified need to ensure all students are exposed to the most current skills, led to the decision to require students to take Publication Design (JOU 3300) and Broadcast News (JOU 3610) as part of the core curriculum. Since requiring students to take Publication Design, initial scores from outside evaluations have actually declined compared to previous years. The unit will monitor the outcome in the next round of outside evaluations to determine whether this was a one-time anomaly or indicative of requiring students who have no natural interest in design to take the course. Faculty who teach the course have been made aware of the scores.

In 2016-2017 student pre-test/post-test scores did not meet expectations for Objective 4 (global diversity). The unit now requires students to take a course in another department that emphasizes global

diversity as part of the student's liberal arts curriculum. The list of approved courses is to be reviewed once a year by faculty. In addition, faculty teaching Journalism and Democracy (JOU 2001) have begun to rewrite questions on the pre-test/post-test that are meant to gauge students' knowledge in this area. Discussion of what they teach and how has led to a renewed awareness of the need to cover those topics in class. The three faculty who teach Journalism and Democracy arrived at some common ground on content and approach to meet the objective.

Student exit interviews and employer surveys revealed a need for further student professional development both during college and just prior to graduation in anticipation to entering the job market. In response, faculty intend to create a professional development sequence of one-credit courses. The first course would introduce new students to the expectations at college. A second course is the existing one-credit Practicum. The final "capstone" course would focus on the profession, including a module on global and domestic cultural diversity. As part of this experience students would be required to build a portfolio during the first course, and continue to add to it throughout their college career.

Outside evaluators' assessments in 2013 prompted change to Writing for the News Media (JOU 2101). Instructors moved away from a complicated News Sim assignment to a simplified instrument more realistic to what can be expected from students in an introductory news writing course. The unit reports significant improvement from summer 2013 to summer 2017 in most areas of the rubric used to evaluate JOU 2101 students' work.

Recent direct assessment revealed math scores in Advanced Reporting and Research (JOU 3000) did not meet expectations. The assessment coordinator is currently conducting a historical analysis to identify the problem and possible solutions.

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

The unit remains in contact with alumni via email, social media and personal contact. Alumni are described as quick to respond when asked to contribute to student engagement or assessment. Several alums report maintaining a strong relationship with the department and engaging regularly with students and leadership. During the university's budget crisis, many department alumni wrote letters to the university president attesting to the strength of the unit and its impact on their own careers. Graduates often return to speak to classes and offer informal counsel to students seeking careers in journalism and media.

Alumni are used as part of the assessment process. As previously noted, every three years the unit gathers a group of outside evaluators made up of professional journalists and educators from other universities. These professionals include alumni, many of whom have also hired other Eastern Illinois University journalism graduates.

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

Affinity for the department among regional professionals is strong. Several speak to the high quality of the graduates, and are quick to praise leadership and faculty for outstanding work and dedication to their students' success. In turn, these professionals are happy to volunteer to participate in the assessment process when called upon. At the external evaluation exercise every three years, professionals drive from as far as two hours away to participate. These relationships in turn result in internship and job opportunities for students.

## **Summary**

The unit's assessment plan is clear and effective in its use of direct and indirect measures to assess student learning. The unit defines goals for learning, including the "Professional Values and Competencies." There is evidence of the unit's use of assessment data to improve classroom effectiveness with the help of faculty, alumni and professionals.

## **COMPLIANCE**



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

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

##### Strengths:

- A solid assessment plan that includes smart improvements over the last accreditation; syllabi reflect ACEJMC competencies in a much-improved manner.
- A simplified curriculum that eliminates specializations, requiring multiplatform education to reflect the current state of media.
- A student body that is more diverse than that of the university and the service area.
- A chair who is extolled by the unit faculty, respected by campus faculty, called “passionate” by the provost and said to be “the best human ever” by students.
- Loyal and engaged alumni who participate in unit activities and raised \$60,000 for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- A daily newspaper completely staffed by students that extends the reach and reputation of the department across campus and the community – and is printed on site.
- A long tradition of intensive scholastic and community college outreach and service, including an annual summer scholastic camp and leadership in every statewide association.

##### Weaknesses:

- The enrollment decline that was mentioned in the last accreditation cycle, and at a 50 percent reduction has continued at a faster rate than the university overall; at this rate the unit would have only 36 students by the next accreditation visit (the provost said 40 are required for a major).
- A faculty that is less diverse than the last accreditation, with no opportunity to add faculty lines.
- A core multimedia course that has been flagged by assessment as inadequate and continues to be; a lack of data journalism and audience analytics in the curriculum.
- Throughout much of the accreditation period, overarching budget and enrollment decline issues at the state and university levels.
- Uncertainty about the outcome of conversations about a possible merger with the Communication Studies department.

#### **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.**

Weakness #1 The unit does not have a strategic plan. Although the university does not require one, administrators spoke to wanting a clearer vision of the unit's plans.

Response: The department passed a five-year strategic plan in fall 2014 for FY2015-2020, with a revised mission statement, a vision statement and seven goals:

- GOAL 1: Define/Focus the program to better serve our students
- GOAL 2: Change the curriculum to better educate students
- GOAL 3: Revising the curriculum to better support student media
- GOAL 4: Expand recruitment efforts
- GOAL 5: Improve marketing efforts
- GOAL 6: Use journalism alumni to form a task force to assist the department in various ways, including on campus visits and to assist in recruitment efforts in their communities.
- GOAL 7: Encourage faculty development

Weakness #2 The unit has seven concentrations; some of them have fewer than 10 students in them. The majority of the unit's students have elected not to choose a concentration.

Response: The faculty voted on Aug. 23, 2017, to eliminate all journalism concentrations beginning in fall 2018. Most of the courses in the former concentrations are still offered in the curriculum as electives, so it was noted that journalism faculty advisers could work with students with singular interests such as reporting, design, editing, broadcast, photojournalism and sports media relations to ensure their elective coursework reflects and supports instruction and practice in those interests. In addition, students also can work toward a Photojournalism or Sports Media Relations Minor to enhance their curriculum.

Weakness #3 Faculty and students as well as administrators outside the unit noted that both the Department of Journalism and the Department of Communication Studies offer majors in Public Relations and Broadcast News. The issue was referenced in the last accrediting report and has yet to be addressed.

Response: Coinciding with the retirement of the unit's primary PR professor, the decision was made that beginning fall 2016, public relations became a major in the Communication Studies Department. It is no longer a concentration in the Department of Journalism, and The Agency, the student-run public relations agency founded, administered and supported by the Journalism Department, moved to Communication Studies as well. Accommodations were made for students already in the public relations pipeline in journalism to finish their coursework, as the actual major would not be available until Fall

2016. Students in the new Public Relations major are required to take two journalism classes: JOU 2101: Writing for News Media and JOU 4771: Communication Law.

**Broadcast:** In fall 2015, the department submitted a proposal to the provost/vice president for Academic Affairs, requesting that all broadcast news classes be housed in the journalism department, and a broadcast news concentration be offered only in journalism. No formal response has been issued. In 2017, proposals for a broadcast news major and minor in the journalism department are being crafted. Communication Studies is making its own proposals to house the majors.

Weakness #4 The university has seen a decline in enrollment, as has journalism. The unit has 145 students, down from 209 at the time of the last visit. There is no recruitment plan in place, but the unit is aware of the decline in enrollment.

Response: The department's enrollment issues continue to parallel the university's enrollment issues. The department's 2015 strategic plan addressed the concerns, and the department started to implement some programs to work toward the goals for recruitment and retention as laid out in the plan. The department created a Recruitment and Retention Committee that has created recruitment programs such as a Journalism Shadowing Program, where prospective students attend classes, have lunch with student media leaders and Journalism Ambassadors, go out on assignment, and watch a live *News Watch* production and subsequent critique. The unit is also working with the university's Admissions Office 1) to showcase student media during traditional campus visits and to have a presence at events the department hosts, such as the Illinois Community College Journalism Association Fall Conference and the Illinois High School Association state journalism tournament; 2) to create an extensive communication plan with prospective students, including handwritten postcards and emails; 3) to send journalism students back into their high schools during breaks to talk about their EIU journalism experiences and opportunities; 4) to work with journalism alumni who are now high school journalism teachers to be resources in their schools for the program.

**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 clean, well-written and organized.