

**Report of On-Site Evaluation**  
**ACEJMC**  
**Undergraduate program**  
**2017-2018**

Name of Institution: **Florida A&M University**

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: **Larry Robinson**

Name of Unit: **Division of Journalism**

Names and Titles of Administrators: **Dhyana Ziegler, interim dean; Valerie White, interim director**

Date of 2017-2018 Accrediting Visit: **Feb. 4-7, 2018**

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

Date of the previous accrediting visit: **Feb. 5-8, 2012**

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: **Re-accreditation**

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: **Re-accreditation**

Recommendation by 2017-2018 Visiting Team: **Re-accreditation**

*Prepared and submitted by:*

Team Chair

Name and Title: **Caesar Andrews, Leonard Distinguished Chair in Media Ethics and Writing**

Organization/School: **University of Nevada, Reno**

*Signature* \_\_\_\_\_

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**Team Members**

Name and Title: **Brooke Barnett, Associate Provost and Professor**

Organization/School: **Elon University**

*Signature* \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Title: **Gracie Lawson-Borders, Dean Cathy Hughes School of Communications**

Organization/School: **Howard University**

*Signature* \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Title: **John Paluszek, Senior Counsel (Retired)**

Organization/School: **Ketchum**

*Signature* \_\_\_\_\_

## PART I: General information

Name of Institution: Florida A&M University

Name of Unit: Division of Journalism

Year of Visit: 2018

**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.**

Florida A&M University is legally authorized to provide education beyond the secondary level in the State of Florida pursuant to F.S 1001.76, powers and duties of the Board of Governors, (2) Regulatory Authority, (a) pursuant to 5.7, Article IX of the State Constitution.

**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: 2012

**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 School of Journalism & Graphic Communication (SJGC) adopted a new Mission and Vision statement September 1, 2017 as part of its Program Improvement Plan requested by University. The SJGC consists of two Divisions: Division of Journalism and the Division of Graphics. Both divisions operate under the same mission and vision statement.

### MISSION

The School of Journalism & Graphic Communication will prepare students for a digital environment with a pedagogical emphasis on active learning in journalism, public relations and graphic design. The SJGC embraces the University's commitment to diversity and community service.

**VISION**

To become globally recognized as a premier school that provides students with the knowledge, skills and experience to excel in digital and traditional aspects of journalism, public relations and graphic design.

*\*\* Adopted 9/1/2017*

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

Semesters of   16   weeks  
 Quarters of        weeks Summer  
 Sessions of   8   weeks (summer term only)  
 Intersessions of        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 Science, Public Relations; Bachelor of Science, Journalism

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

125 semester hours

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

Students are required to earn at least one semester credit hour for internship; however, SJGC encourages its students to participate in two or more.

**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>
Sequence Broadcast Journalism	Kenneth Jones
Sequence Journalism & Public Relations	Valerie White

**13. Number of full-time students enrolled in the institution: 9,913**

**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 major (fall 2016)</u>
Sequence Broadcast Journalism	149
Sequence Public Relations	145
Pre-majors Pre-journalism	176
Total	470

**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.)**

**Fall 2016: Face-to-Face Courses**

<b>Course</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>
JOU 1040----001	Language Skills	20
JOU 1040----002	Language Skills	24
JOU 1040----003	Language Skills	28
JOU 2100C---001	Reporting & Writing I	22
JOU 2100C---002	Reporting & Writing I	21
JOU 2100C---003	Reporting & Writing I	21
JOU 3101C---001	Reporting & Writing II	23
JOU 3100C---002	Reporting & Writing II	22
JOU 4181----001	Public Affairs Reporting	17
JOU 4342C---001	Reporting & Writing III	17
JOU 4342C---002	Reporting & Writing III	25
JOU 4342C---003	Reporting & Writing III	21
JOU 4945----001	Student Media Practicum	35
PUR 3000----001	Intro to PR	29
PUR 3105C---001	PR Communications	22
PUR 4800C---001	PR Campaigns	10
PUR 4800C---002	PR Campaigns	23
RTV 3320C---001	TV News	19
RTV 3320C---002	TV News	18
RTV 3332C---001	Specialized Reporting	20
RTV 3601C---002	Broadcast Announcing	17
RTV 3681C---001	Advanced TV News	22
MMC 4922--- 001	Senior Capstone	48

**Spring 2016: Face-to-Face Courses**

<b>Course</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>
JOU 1040-----001	Language Skills	25
JOU 1040-----002	Language Skills	17
JOU 1040-----003	Language Skills	26
JOU 2100C---001	Reporting & Writing I	22
JOU 2100C---002	Reporting & Writing I	22
JOU 2100C---003	Reporting & Writing I	22
JOU 3101C---001	Reporting & Writing II	22
JOU 3100C---002	Reporting & Writing II	7
JOU 4181-----001	Public Affairs Reporting	20
JOU 4342C---001	Reporting & Writing III	20
JOU 4342C---002	Reporting & Writing III	27
JOU 4342C---003	Reporting & Writing III	20
JOU 4945-----001	Student Media Practicum	32
PUR 3000-----001	Intro to PR	23
PUR 3105C---001	PR Communications	8
PUR 4800C---001	PR Campaigns	25
RTV 3320C---001	TV News	21
RTV 3332C---001	Specialized Reporting	16
RTV 3601C---002	Broadcast Announcing	21
RTV 3681C---001	Advanced TV News	12
MMC 4922--- 001	Senior Capstone	

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JOU 3100C---002	Reporting & Writing II	22
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MMC 4922--- 001	Senior Capstone	41

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JOU 1040----002	Language Skills	21
JOU 1040----003	Language Skills	25
JOU 2100C--001	Reporting & Writing I	17
JOU 2100C--002	Reporting & Writing I	17
JOU 2100C--003	Reporting & Writing I	20
JOU 2100C--004	Reporting & Writing I	20
JOU 3101C--001	Reporting & Writing II	20
JOU 3100C--002	Reporting & Writing II	21
JOU 3100C--003	Reporting & Writing II	18
JOU 4181----001	Public Affairs Reporting	21
JOU 4342C--001	Reporting & Writing III	17
JOU 4342C--002	Reporting & Writing III	13
JOU 4342C--003	Reporting & Writing III	18
JOU 4945----001	Student Media Practicum	22
PUR 3105C--001	PR Communications	22
PUR 4800C--001	PR Campaigns	19
PUR 4800C--002	PR Campaigns	10
RTV 3320C--001	TV News	21
RTV 3332C--001	Specialized Reporting	13
RTV 3601C--001	Broadcast Announcing	15
RTV 3601C--002	Broadcast Announcing	20
RTV 3681C--001	Advanced TV News	15

**Spring 2018: Face-to-Face Courses**

<b>Course</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>
JOU 1040----001	Language Skills	20
JOU 1040----002	Language Skills	20
JOU 1040----003	Language Skills	20
JOU 2100C--001	Reporting & Writing I	20
JOU 2100C--002	Reporting & Writing I	19
JOU 2100C--003	Reporting & Writing I	20
JOU 3101CE--501 On-line	Reporting & Writing II	20
JOU 3100--002	Reporting & Writing II	21
JOU 3100C--003	Reporting & Writing II	20
JOU 4342C--001	Reporting & Writing III	20
JOU 4342C--002	Reporting & Writing III	20
JOU 4342C--003	Reporting & Writing III	9
JOU 4945----001	Student Media Practicum	38
PUR 3105C--001	PR Communications	20
PUR 4800C--001	PR Campaigns	10
PUR 4800C--002	PR Campaigns	20
RTV 3320C--001	TV News	20
RTV 3332C--001	Specialized Reporting	19
RTV 3601C--001	Broadcast Announcing	13
RTV 3601C--002	Broadcast Announcing	15
RTV 3681C--001	Advanced TV News	19
MMC 4922---001	Senior Capstone	86

\*\*Division of Journalism is addressing the 20 enrollment cap on skill courses. Since fall, 2016, there has been a decrease in the number of courses not capped at 20.

**16. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2017 – 2018 academic year: Give percentage increase or decrease in three years:**

Faculty/Staff salaries (full time)	\$4,175,820
Part-Time (adjunct)	6,899
Supplies (Expense)	25,000
Total	\$4,207,719

2014-2015 Total = 5,310,330 (22.5% decrease in funding for 2017-2018)

**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.**

Faculty members in the Division of Journalism are hired into one of two tracks: tenure earning or professional track. Faculty in the professional track are not required to demonstrate research scholarship for promotion. They are evaluated on their creative productivity and service to the Division of Journalism. The following are the current list of faculty for Fall 2017.

Douglas Blackburn, Visiting Associate Professor-Full-time (Professional)  
Dr. Bettye Grable, Associate Professor-Full-time (Tenured)  
Francine Huff, Knight Chair/Professor-Full-time (Professional)  
Ranata Hughes, Internship Coordinator/Visiting Instructor-Full-time (Professional)  
Dr. Leah Hunter, Assistant Professor-Full-time (Tenure-track)  
William Jiles, Assistant to the Dean/Instructor-Full-time (Professional)  
Kenneth Jones, Professor-Full-time (Professional)  
Maurice Johnson, Visiting Assistant Professor-Full-time (Professional)  
Ann Kimbrough, Professor-Full-time (Tenured – On Leave)  
Angeline Taylor, Visiting Instructor-Full-time (Professional)  
Dr. Valerie White, Interim Division Director/Associate Professor-Full-time (Tenured)  
Kalisha Whitman, Assistant Professor-Full-time (Professional)  
Dr. Dhyan Ziegler, Interim Dean/Professor-Full-time (Tenured)

**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.)**

Fall 2017

Adjuncts teaching journalism courses:

- Kimberly Bryant
- Brennen Grant-Cannon

Spring 2018

Adjuncts teaching Journalism courses:

- Kimberly Bryant
- Chandra Clark
- Brennen Grant-Cannon

**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
2016-2017 Academic year	84	84	100
2015-2016 Academic year	103	103	100



## PART II — Standard 1: Mission, Governance and Administration

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The self-study included written plans as required by Standard 1. Revised mission/vision statements and strategic plans established by the School of Journalism & Graphic Communication are fully incorporated within the Division of Journalism.

The strategic plan in place at the time of the last site team visit and covering 2010-20 is now supplemented by a Program Improvement Plan, adopted in September 2017 and reflecting priorities for SJGC, and therefore the Division of Journalism, for 2017-22.

These updated plans apparently align with initiatives by the University's new president. The Division's plans identify sound foundations for achievements. But, at least based on information presented in the self-study, some elements will benefit from more specificity.

As part of SJGC's strategic plan, the Division of Journalism is seeking to accelerate five priorities during a 12-month period that started in fall 2017. Two goals, attaining reaccreditation and reactivating a boot camp program for students featuring alumni, are clearly measurable. The others might benefit from more precise targets.

Mission statement:

*"The School of Journalism & Graphic Communication will prepare students for a digital environment with a pedagogical emphasis on active learning in journalism, public relations and graphic design. The SJGC embraces the University's commitment to diversity and community service."*

Vision statement:

*"To become globally recognized as a premier school that provides students with the knowledge, skills and experience to excel in digital and traditional aspects of journalism, public relations and graphic design."*

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

The self-study describes an environment in which faculty members participate fully in governance within the unit. Faculty members confirmed during interviews that they are active in the operational life of the unit. Additionally, written policies and procedures establish the role of faculty in governance, and minutes of faculty and committee meetings provide supporting evidence that shared governance is an organizing principle of the unit. For at least some faculty, the increased transparency cultivated by the interim dean contributes positively to the practice of faculty governance. "It's a whole new ballgame," said one, citing the example of budgets now being available for review.

The self-study reported that faculty meetings are held monthly. Committees are plentiful, including: Academic Conduct, Assessment, Broadcast Awards, Capstone Review, CBS Summer Internship, Curriculum, Hearst Awards, Public Relations, Recruitment/Admissions, Scholarship, Student of the Year, Tenure and Promotion, Technology and Grads Are Back, the latter a Homecoming Week tradition featuring workshops and other sessions led by alumni.

The involvement of SJGC faculty in governance extends beyond the unit, with one member serving on Florida A&M University's Board of Trustees and leading the faculty Senate, and others serving on university-level committees, including Academic Policies, Merit Pay and Sabbatical, as well as Curriculum, and Tenure and Promotion.

**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.**

As of the February 2018 site visit, interim leaders were in place as dean of SJGC and director of the Division of Journalism. Both individuals were appointed in May 2017. Both are long-standing members of the faculty, and in significant ways deeply knowledgeable about the program's history, culture, challenges and opportunities.

The interim dean is a respected scholar with substantial professional credentials, as well. She first joined the faculty in 1997 and has served in a wide range of administrative roles across the campus, including instructional technology, research and planning. She provides oversight of SJGC's two divisions – the Journalism Division, the unit under review and which offers degrees in two sequences, Journalism and Public Relations; and the Graphic Division, which is not part of ACEJMC accreditation.

The interim director of the Division of Journalism is the supervisor of the two sequences that are housed in the unit seeking reaccreditation – Journalism and Public Relations. She is credited for oversight of the student newspaper, *The FAMUAN*, plus other campus media. She has served many years as leader of an organization that until recent years produced annual conferences for students and educators at historically black colleges and universities. She is temporarily serving as Division director for a second time in six years.

A shifting cast of leaders at various levels of the University over the past six years, including president, provost, assistant provost and several deans, posed a continuity challenge for the campus, creating a cascading set of turnover and interim positions in several academic units. Transition within the School of Journalism & Graphic Communication during the same period – two deans, four Division of Journalism directors (one person twice) – further exacerbated the program's flagging effectiveness.

While the current dean was just eight months into her interim assignment when the site team visited, nearly all faculty members, representatives from other FAMU programs and the provost cited her multifaceted leadership credentials as a quickly obvious asset. The consensus expressed to the site team: The interim dean has energized SJGC and created palpable momentum. A student who had attended a colloquium earlier in THE semester, where the dean discussed current and coming plans, captured the anticipated impact of the interim leader in clear and simple terms: "She'll stretch us."

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

According to information the unit provided to the team, orderly policies and procedures govern the selection and evaluation of School and Division leaders.

For the SJGC dean position:

- Vacancy is announced.
- Provost names a search committee, including a chair.
- Committee screens applicants and interviews contenders.
- Committee provides recommendations to the provost, with ranking of top candidates.
- Provost consults with a committee of faculty, staff and students before making final decision.
- Also, during vacancies, the provost may name an interim director. This was the scenario in place at the time of the 2018 site team visit.

- The provost evaluates the dean each year. Faculty may contribute by completing a University questionnaire on administrators.

For the Division of Journalism director position:

- The dean may select the head of the accredited Division of Journalism, or a search committee may be charged with screening candidates.
- The dean evaluates the performance of the director of Division.

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

A full set of procedures included in the self-study described steps for students seeking to file complaints or appeals. They are clearly articulated and appear to be reasonable.

**SUMMARY:** Most people interviewed by site team members acknowledged that the Division of Journalism, and the School of Journalism & Graphic Communication that it resides within, lost some ground since reaccreditation in 2012. However, even critical observers pointed to continuing and often significant value and virtues of the program. The site team shares that sentiment. The program seems aware of its lapses, including low research activity and inconsistent follow-through on assessment. Its interim dean is credited with swiftly revitalizing planning and rethinking opportunities for moving the School forward. And the unit maintains respect among FAMU peers as a leader in engaging its students, marshalling technology, winning support from high-profile alumni and providing model service to the campus.

**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 Division meets the requirement of students taking a minimum of 72 semester credit hours outside the major. Students are required to seek advising before registration or a registration hold will be placed on their record. The curriculum requirements are discussed during advising and denoted on course guideline sheets for each sequence. The two academic advisers use sheets listing by rank freshman to senior courses, and they use the electronic advising system to track courses. Students' transcripts are used to check progress and keep students up to date on their program. The advisers also can use early intervention by running Blackboard analytics to reach out to students who might be floundering in a course.

**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 Division requires 125 credit hours to complete the degree in both the Journalism and Public Relations sequences. The curriculum is designed around the Division's 12 standards that incorporate ACEJMC's core values. Course descriptions and sampling of syllabi reflect that the beginning courses center on skills from grammar to writing and building technological skills. As students traverse through, the first 15-18 credit hours covering news values and judgment, they can build reporting and writing skills, multimedia storytelling, computer-assisted reporting and niche topical areas as well as an understanding of media effects.

**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.**

The curriculum appears to capture the dynamic digital media environment with a constantly changing landscape. During the site visit, time was spent visiting some courses across the curriculum. For example, the Prof. Development Colloquium course was held in a smart room in which the faculty member incorporated technology with video and students' mobile devices to demonstrate concepts. The students were working on content relevant to media and journalism and required to respond with answers and analysis of the information they covered. The Communication and Law course created an environment in which technology fostered an engaged dialogue with students in discussion of case law and issues such as First Amendment Rights, Hate Speech, Son of Sam laws, to name a few of the topics. The faculty member guided the students through understanding of theory and concepts applicable to the topics. The Broadcasting and Announcing course is taught by a former radio and TV broadcaster. The course is infused with examples and work in which students strengthen their understanding and skills in broadcasting. When asked what they would tell other students about their program, several shared: "It's so hands-on here." "Your resume will look great because you will get to practice what you learned." "I'm happy to attest to the nurturing we get here; professors care truly beyond academics. The community here, everyone wants to see you succeed."

The Public Relations curriculum is a balance of theoretical and professional skills courses. In presenting five such courses the unit meets the current standards for excellence in undergraduate public relations education recommended by The Commission on Public Relations Education (“The Port of Entry”, 2006).

The sequence establishes a conceptual foundation for the public relations profession by examining the evolution of public relations in society, fundamental theories and processes, strategic planning and the public discourse of critical issues. Addressing skills, instruction includes study of pre- and post-research methodologies, writing, media relations and case history applications among a spectrum of public relations clients.

Faculty professional experience augments texts and other resources in such instruction. Internship providers indicated that Division students are well-prepared to be productive team members when they first report for duty. Several have been hired by employers interviewed for this report. Students say they feel well-prepared to undertake the variety of tasks inherent in public relations practice.

**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.)**

There have been some challenges for the program in not exceeding the 20:1 seats in skills courses. For the past two years these courses have exceeded the limit, averaging 1-4 seats over. The 2018 spring courses were included in the self-study to illustrate the interim dean’s effort to address this challenge.

Spring 2018

JOU 1040 Lang. Skills for Media Prof.	3 sections	20 seats each
JOU 2100C Newswriting & Rept. I	3 sections	2@20 seats; 1@19 seats
JOU 3101C Newswriting & Rept. II	3 sections	1 online @20 seats; 1@20, 1@18 seats
JOU 4342C Newswriting & Rept. III	3 sections	2@20 seats; 1@9 seats
PUR 3105C PR Communications I	1 section	1@20 seats
PUR 4500 PR Research & Strategies	2 sections	1@20, 1@9 seats
PUR 4800C PR Campaigns	2 sections	2@20 seats each

The curriculum head explained that since the last site visit the unit has lost faculty through resignations and retirements, and the budget has not permitted hiring of new faculty. Yet, the Florida Board of Governors now requires a focus on four-year graduation rates to get students out on time. In addition, the state Legislature’s incentive to receive additional funds requires schools to meet new performance metrics such as student job placements in Florida and in the student’s field of study, according to the curriculum head. The interim dean started her tenure in May 2017 in the midst of change in the Division and across the campus. She said the faculty dropped from 16 FTEs to 13 and she has not been able to replace the three lost positions. There are about five faculty, nearly 40 percent, in the Division with fewer than three years in the unit. The dean says she continues to impress upon the interim provost that the unit needs more faculty and more course sections to meet curriculum needs. The dean included the spring 2018 enrollments in the self-study to illustrate her movement to get the skills classes where they should be. She has heightened awareness of addressing this concern with enrollment in skills courses. The site team met with the interim provost to discuss this issue. The interim provost stated he was aware of the Division’s need for more permanent faculty to replace those who left. This coupled with the dean’s efforts should continue the trajectory of keeping skills courses in line with the required ratio.

**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 Division requires one internship for credit as part of the program. The internship coordinator says students usually take three, four or more internships. In addition to the coordinator, there is an internship portal that students regularly visit to learn about internships. The Division remains in close contact with

alumni who mentor, identify and provide internships for students. The interim dean has bolstered the Board of Visitors with alumni, one a member of the Division's alumni hall of fame and the senior vice president of news for CBS News. One alumnus, a public relations specialist and board member, says members work with faculty and students, identifying opportunities within their own companies and elsewhere for internships and employment. Although there was strong praise about students in internships, there were some concerns voiced about the basic skills and preparation of students in nonproduction-based internships in print and magazines. The appendices list a broad range of internships sites for students during the previous two years.

The curriculum head shared that the unit has an ongoing program to select three students each semester after completion of the TV News course, to intern at the local CBS affiliate in Tallahassee. Many of the selected students go on to compete for national summer internships for CBS in New York. A number of students attest to their success with internships. A broadcast senior described a summer internship at CBS network in New York in which she stepped right in with a "know how" to cut packages, had experience using ENPS software and used her skills to assist students from different institutions who did not have the same exposure. "I can honestly say this is the best decision I have ever made (attending FAMU). We get very hands-on."

One graduating Public Relations senior said she had six internships, locally and in Atlanta. "When I came back I was a beast" from the experience during internships.

**SUMMARY:** One of the Division's many strengths is a hands-on approach to learning with a practical curriculum to guide students through the academic program. The curriculum was redesigned in 2010 to reflect the multimedia and digital needs of a changing media industry. Students receive a bachelor's degree in two concentrations: Journalism and Public Relations. Though there are traditional names on some courses, the course content has been redesigned to reflect the evolving digital and social media skills needed in the media industry.

For example, TV News is a required skills course with students using SanDisk memory cards in cameras, writing scripts, developing multimedia packages, and posting social media updates with content delivery on USB drives or directly to the server. The Reporting and Writing II course has a multimedia focus requiring online videos, photos and interactive graphics as part of the news gathering and storytelling.

The core curriculum of 31 credit hours includes foundational and skills courses. The basics of journalism and public relations are built through skill courses: Language Skills for Media Professional, Reporting & Writing I, II and III, which are designed to expose students to news values, writing and news gathering skills. Students respond to the program's hands-on environment with immediate participation in student media and other units on campus where communication skills are needed. One transfer student said: "everything is within arm's reach, but you have to go out and get it." A graduating senior joined a chorus of "I love it here" and "I feel prepared." Students discussed the significance of courses such as Media Ethics, Communication Law, TV News and Advanced TV News, and the documentary course's impact on what they do when working at student media outlets and during internships. They expressed that their exposure to technology and software helps in their skill development and work in the industry. A senior faculty member, who teaches the TV News course, was viewed as tough, a father figure, but someone who cares and helps students learn and know the craft.

The head of curriculum planning said the unit's strategy included taking traditional courses and changing the content in syllabi to reflect preparation of digital skills coupled with the foundations of good writing, news values and judgment. They want students to have student media experience, internships and job placement. "We push students outside their comfort zone" to stretch and expand their skills. He finds it important to stay in touch with industry to make sure the curriculum is meeting industry needs. The unit also works to match faculty skills and backgrounds to teach courses that reflect their expertise. The program has only one online course at this time, Newswriting & Reporting II. The

goal is to add three to four more online courses, as faculty are certified to teach online, with plans to offer them in fall 2018 or spring 2019.

**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 unit has made a commitment to diversity and inclusion, as evidenced in conversations with faculty, staff, students and alumni. There are written elements of these commitments in statements and presentations such as this from the president, "FAMU has always embraced diversity and inclusion as it relates to understanding and valuing differences, as well as leveraging the differences and similarities of all our University constituents and key stakeholders for the greater good of our University." Diversity is listed among the core values in the new strategic plan "FAMU Rising." There are plans for a university-wide culture survey and internal assessment from which strategies will be developed and a university-wide Diversity and Inclusion council will form to monitor progress. The dean's Program Improvement Plan for the next five years, which connects up the FAMU Rising plan, includes a goal to increase diversity among students, faculty and staff. However, there is no unit specific plan, unit level definition of diversity or identification of under-represented groups.

In talking with faculty and students it appears that although not formalized, these definitions are in operation and are part of the ethos of the unit. Faculty offered expansive and comprehensive definitions of diversity that they are operationalizing in their courses and a few syllabi include definitions of diversity. The unit primarily serves an underrepresented population in higher education and additionally works to attract first-generation and high-financial-need students and African American students and black students from outside of the United States. Faculty work to prepare students for communication careers where they will interact with people from a variety of backgrounds.

**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 self-study states that "Diversity and inclusion are mandated in each course syllabus to support SJGC's commitment to an atmosphere of inclusiveness among students, faculty and staff." The self-study also states: "The diversity goal is met by exposing students in each academic track to the journalistic beliefs, ideas, practices and dignity of all mass media cultures from around the world." However, the self-study does not articulate specifics on the ways in which this happens. Conversations with students and faculty suggest that there is an infusion in many of the required courses. For example, faculty and students offered numerous examples of specific assignments that help students "move out of their comfort zone" as well as overall approaches to interacting with and producing content for diverse audiences. One student described that she was taught about active listening as a key aspect of interviewing skills and this helped her to better understand someone who did not share her identity or cultural background. Students also said that age, language, gender identity and sexual orientation were included in class discussions about audience as well as sources and media representation.

**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 University has position statements that establish its commitments. The faculty are predominately African-American and predominately women. The SJGC focuses on bringing guests from a variety of



backgrounds and perspectives to the campus. Faculty members have presented about women and people of color in the professions and also serve on a number of external boards related to the advancement of underserved groups. The unit has also supported the interests and professional growth of the faculty who are predominately women and people of color.

A weakness identified in the last report was the lack of specific strategies related to their goal to recruit Asian, Latino or international faculty. This is a goal in the dean's Program Improvement Plan over the next five years. That plan does not outline specific strategies but the unit has increased the diversity of the applicant pools in the last year and plan to give particular attention to attracting a diverse pool of candidates in future searches. The Graphic Communications faculty is more racially and ethnically diverse and students in the Division of Journalism benefit from this increased diversity as they are required to take courses in this area.

**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.**

The unit enjoys a higher retention and graduation rate than the overall University. The unit's mission is focused on serving African American and black students, which they do well. It is working to increase students from other racial and ethnic backgrounds and those who attend are successful in the program and in student leadership roles. Increased student diversity is a goal in the dean's Program Improvement Plan over the next five years and several outreach efforts are planned. Faculty also named efforts to retain LGBTQIA students and students on the autism spectrum.

**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 University has resources for students who are facing harassment or discrimination. Many, but not all, syllabi include the disability and non-discrimination statements. Conversations with faculty, staff and students showed many knew where they should report harassment or discrimination, but there was confusion around whether they were required to do so. Several students knew specifically where those reports should be made and also about counseling resources on campus. Most faculty also named the counseling center as a way to get students to resources and help they may need.

**SUMMARY:** The unit is committed to diversity and inclusion and is increasingly working to make those commitments to diversity clearer in its written plans and syllabi and is beginning in earnest more intentional strategies toward those explicit goals. It is clear from conversations across students and faculty that the unit has created a family-like atmosphere, is ably serving an underserved population of students and values domestic and global diversity in the curriculum and in the student experience.

**Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE**

**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	10	77	2	15.3
White	0	0	1	7.7.
American Indian/Alaskan native	0	0	0	0
Asian	0	0	0	0
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	0	0	0	0
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
Two or more races	0	0	0	0
Other race	0	0	0	0
International (any race)	0	0	0	0

**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	3	1.00	0	0
White	0	0	0	0
American Indian/Alaskan native	0	0	0	0.
Asian	0	0	0	0
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	0	0	0	0
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
Two or more races	0	0	0	0
Other races	0	0	0	0
International (any race)	0	0	0	0

**\*Computational error in percentage of total faculty number reported.**

## 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 unit uses the University evaluation form for performance reviews and student perceptions of teaching. The unit also follows University guidelines for recruiting faculty, but notes that this puts it at a disadvantage in terms of timing for the hire as these hires are made in summer for a fall start just a few months later.

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

The majority of courses in the unit are taught by full-time faculty (ranging from 75 percent to 94 percent over the past few years). The faculty are heavily involved in university-wide service as well. According to the University time allocation and performance appraisal documents, the faculty roles are meant to focus on these three areas of faculty life - teaching, research/creative activity and service.

**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 faculty have an impressive combined number of years of professional experience. However, several faculty members are not active in professional development or scholarly or creative activity and some have not been connected in the profession for a number of years. Few faculty have produced peer-reviewed scholarship since the last accreditation visit. Several of the CVs had not been updated for a few years.

The number of visiting faculty and lack of consistency was noted as a concern among colleagues and students. As one person put it, "We want faculty who are committed and here for the long-term. Some of the faculty who retired were our most rigorous and productive, so we need to get that back as well." One person who hosts FAMU interns said that some of the faculty are top notch, but increasingly faculty are less experienced in the profession and the classroom.

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

Course evaluations are given to students each term, but response rates are so low that they are not deemed as very useful. The evaluations were administered by the University Testing Center via Blackboard. The response rate is about 10 percent. In a few classes only one or two students responded. The evaluation method for students used to be a paper form. That method yielded close to a 100 percent response rate. But faculty have other methods for soliciting feedback. For example, one faculty member developed her own instrument, solicits feedback at the midterm and end of term and meets with students one-on-one. This availability was noted by the students. One student said, "We have faculty who put in the time and the overtime to help us and really want to hear how we are doing." Faculty had a brief discussion about the evaluation process during a faculty meeting to determine options for the future.

The Division director uses a university-wide form to evaluate classroom instruction each year during the spring, usually in March or April. The collective bargaining agreement dictates how faculty evaluations

are executed. Faculty prepare a dossier of their activities for the evaluation and the assignment of responsibility form is reviewed and used during the evaluation. The director visits some adjuncts and visiting-faculty classrooms.

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

The unit enjoys respect campus-wide and its members are leaders in the campus community. Comments during the visit and phone calls prior confirm that the Division of Journalism is seen as a very strong program on campus. Several people commented that the past few years have been rough for the unit, but point to new leadership and the continued care and time devoted to student success as evidence that the unit is back on track. Students, alums, faculty, staff and others who work outside the unit on the FAMU campus all use the language of family to describe the mentorship in the School. Many people we talked with shared specific stories of the ways in which the unit provides a quality experience for students.

**SUMMARY:** The faculty and staff in the unit are diligently focused on their students. They are less active in scholarship and professional activity than they have been in the past and are looking for opportunities to hire more permanent track faculty as one way to increase productivity. Some faculty are active in professional organizations, but several are not as current. Across the board, students feel that faculty are invested in their success.

**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 Division of Journalism requires scholarship and creative and professional activity intended to “ignite a passion for journalism.” Related faculty performance is reviewed in a process detailed in the “SJGC Criteria for Tenure and Promotion” guidelines.

Academic scholarship and research have declined since the previous site visit. An extended series of changes in the University leadership, as well as in the unit, have made for a less stable framework for such work. Three tenure-track Ph.D. faculty members have retired or otherwise left the unit, thereby reducing the capacity for scholarship and, therefore, lowering scholarly output (see grid below). By necessity and by an evolving culture the unit has instead relied heavily on creative activity such as presentations at conferences – featured speaker or panelist – articles in more general publications and topical films. Faculty expressed various degrees of dismay. One volunteered that in recent years research in the unit “dwindled.” The provost acknowledged the decline and indicated that the interim dean is taking steps to address this issue.

The SJGC grant program for faculty professional development generally provides \$1,500 per faculty member annually. In addition, members can compete for funding by the university-wide FAMU Faculty Travel Grants. Sabbaticals for scholarship are reviewed by a University review committee and awarded by the Board of Trustees.

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

The unit’s “Tenure and Promotion Policies” document is a detailed guide to faculty hiring and advancement. It states clearly the qualifications and accomplishments expected for both faculty tracks – professional practice track and tenure track.

Candidates for both tracks must have at least three years of appropriate professional experience. Professional track candidates must hold a master’s degree in a relevant field and/or a bachelor’s degree with experience and reputation that will enable them to make unique contributions to the School. Tenure candidates must hold a Ph.D. in journalism or a closely related field and must meet the University’s criteria for publications and/or creative activities as judged by the unit’s tenured faculty, the Division director and the dean.

Faculty are evaluated annually on evidence of papers or creative works at professional meetings/societies or exhibitions; papers or articles published in professional journals; books published; and creative work in areas of professional expertise. Ongoing research and proposals for new research are also factored into evaluations.

### **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 Division of Journalism recognizes and values faculty activities and accomplishment in the profession. Leadership in professional societies, awards and documentation of international reputation

and impact are elements in evaluations. The Division also values evidence that a candidate would be able to make a positive contribution to its academic environment through teaching, research or creative activity, and service.

**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.**

Results of faculty scholarship and creative activity appear in communication vehicles consistent with the unit's mission and policies. The self-study list of faculty scholarship since the last accreditation visit – research, creative and professional activities – includes: two scholarly books (sole or co-authored); one article in a refereed journal; three refereed conference papers; four invited academic papers; one book review; two articles in non-refereed publications; one juried creative work; three non-juried creative works; and one workshop speaking event. In addition, the list shows 22 conference presentations (featured speaker or panelist).

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

The Division's intellectual climate reflects the mission of the University in preparing students for working and growing in a diverse society. The selection of research projects, creative activities, curriculum and extra-curricular activities span the special interests of the African-American community and those of the nation. Students said that they were prepared to address the spectrum of ideas they will likely encounter in entering and practicing in a free speech society.

**SUMMARY:** The Division of Journalism's scholarly output has declined significantly during the past six years. The new unit administration has plans that, with University support, are expected to reverse that direction in the years immediately ahead.

**Overall evaluation: NON-COMPLIANCE**

Scholarship Research Creative and Professional Activities	Total from Unit*	Individuals					Totals
		Full Professors (6)	Associate Professors (4)	Assistant Professors (3)	Other Faculty (2)	12	
Awards and Honors	12	7	3	0	2	12	
Grants Received Internal						0	
Grants Received External						0	
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co- Authored	2	2	0	0	0	2	
Textbook, Sole- or co-authored						0	
Books Edited						0	
Book Chapters						0	
Monographs						0	
Articles in Referred Journals <sup>1</sup>	1	1	0	0	0	1	
Refereed Conference Papers	3	3	0	0	0	3	
Invited Academic Papers	4	4	0	0	0	4	
Encyclopedia Entries						0	
Book Reviews	1	0	0	1	0	1	
Articles in Non-referred Publications	2	2	0	0	0	2	
Juried Creative Works	1	0	0	1	0	1	
Non-juried Creative Works	3	3	0	0	0	3	
Other (Conference Presentations)	22	8	0	14	0	22	
Speaker/Workshops	5	3	2	0	0	5	
Board of Trustees	1	1	0	0	0	1	

## 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.**

FAMU converted to a centralized academic advising model recently, with designated professional advisers replacing a combination of faculty and general University support. This approach evoked mixed reviews. Students meeting with the team seemed satisfied, and some faculty members say the system is an improvement and appreciate the official lessening of the advising load on instructors. Others within SJGC with oversight for students' progress shared concerns about how the new system is executed, citing occasional faulty recommendations.

The students, almost all seniors, said that advising is mostly effective, some citing by name the two advisers assigned to SJGC. The advisers report to a campus-wide Undergraduate Student Success Center, but occupy offices in the SJGC building.

Students noted that they still consult with Division of Journalism faculty for advice on courses, internships and career issues. Some described the help they get from instructors as irreplaceable.

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

Students praised the attention they receive from individual faculty members, describing access to caring instructors as a distinct strength of the program. From all apparent indications, faculty availability is a cultural mainstay of the unit.

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

The Blackboard platform appears to be a major source of information about the School of Journalism & Graphic Communication. The unit's social media platforms keep ongoing tallies of activities. TV monitors show a mix of promotional videos and event highlights. Bulletin boards are flush with recent or upcoming activities. Reminders about various opportunities line hallway walls.

**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.**

Students enjoy outstanding opportunities for polishing their skills and exploring career options by working on campus media.

Site team members witnessed about 15 students creating a live Monday newscast for FAMU-TV20, one of three produced each week with about 60 total students involved – some for various class credits, others as volunteers. Instructors shouted guidance in the control room while students carried out their roles as producers, anchors, cameramen, reporters and more. The 30 minutes of impressive orchestration was followed by a quick, candid yet encouraging critique of the newscast from professional instructors and a student leader.



Other ample opportunities exist with *The FAMUAN*, published online, but also twice a month in print, and *Journey*, a student magazine. WANM 90.5, the campus radio station, is another rich option for students. They gain experience writing scripts, hosting, producing and more, supported by an executive staff.

Public Relations students seemed just as inclined to get involved in campus media as Journalism students. Example: The current editor of *The FAMUAN* is in the PR track.

Student chapters of NABJ, PRSSA and SPJ were active as of spring 2018.

**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 required enrollment, retention and graduation rates for SJGC are posted on the School's website, dated May 2017 – the most recent data available. The information includes a statement of the unit's aspirations and context on the data. The most recent information available for various categories is listed below.

#### **RETENTION**

- SJGC retention rates for 2013-14, based on 67 students in that year's cohort, were:
  - 77.6 percent retained after first year;
  - 65.7 percent after two years;
  - 64.2 percent after three years.
- In 2015-16, with 73 students in cohort, 91.8 percent were retained after first year.

#### **GRADUATION**

- SJGC graduation rates for 2011-12, based on 102 students, were:
  - 16.7 percent in four years;
  - 43.1 percent in five years;
  - 48 percent in six years.
- In 2012-13, from a cohort of 63 students, 30.1 percent graduated in four years; 42.9 percent in five years.

**SUMMARY:** Students realize fantastic opportunities for earning a wide range of practical experience on campus media – newspaper, online, TV and radio. A new model for advising gets mixed reviews from faculty, though actual advising is considered effective by students and improving by some faculty members. SJGC graduation and retention rates are targeted for improvement, though both tend to exceed the University's overall performance.

**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 Division's budget is allocated after the University receives its funding from the state. The school provided a table of its budget for the past three years: 2015-16, \$6.45 million; 2016-17, \$6.40 million; and 2017-18, \$6.43 million, which has stayed relatively consistent over the three years, although the individual equipment, maintenance and supplies budgets are down. In previous years the School captured additional funds from the University and state to upgrade computer labs, smart classrooms and other technology. The ongoing need for technology and software updates will require funds in the future to support maintenance efforts and to keep resources available for students.

The interim dean has enhanced the Board of Visitors with new members, a number of them prominent alumni in media and public relations. There is a required minimum donation to be on the board, to help raise funds for school projects.

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

The School of Journalism & Graphic Communication has a building with lots of space and impressive resources and technology to support students and the curriculum. The building is well-appointed with technology and is a little over 12 years old. There are two studios, Studio A and B in the Pamela D. Oliver Production Hall; with Studio A used for live newscasts for FAMU-TV 20 and public affairs shows. The unit has about 15 computer labs with both MAC and PC labs around the building. There are nearly 400 computer workstations around the School in labs and workrooms. Software such as AP ENPS, Sony Vegas, Apple Final Cut Pro, Avid Protocols and others applicable to industry needs are loaded on machines. (Appendix 7.1 provides details on software and equipment.) Smart classrooms are teed up and ready for video, doc scanning and other uses; video cameras and other technologies are accessible to students.

The Convergence Room on the third floor is a daily hub of activity where student media have viable space to create and develop content across platforms. The Convergence Room is surrounded by student media – *The FAMUAN*, *Journey* magazine, WANM-FM90.5, and FAMU-TV20. A tour of the facility confirmed the availability and use of technology throughout. Large television monitors are visible in the hallways streaming content created by students from TV 20 newscasts, interviews and other programs created by students.

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

Faculty and students make daily use of the technology and resources in the building. In smart classrooms there is an array of technology to complement course content. The faculty and students move from classes, to studios, to editing suites throughout the day, working on projects for courses and for student media. During the visit, the site team watched a TV 20 live newscast, one of three held weekly Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. During the show, the student team was professional, on point and worked well together, from the on-air anchors, to reporters, floor directors, producers and the team in the control room. They use an app for the producer rundown of the show that's usable on any mobile device, and on the day of the live newscast, packages covered topics from local to national and international stories, including the 52<sup>nd</sup> Super Bowl and NFL players' connection to the north Florida area. The faculty advisers and production team held a de-briefing after the newscast highlighting

strengths and lessons learned during the newscast. The site team was impressed with how astute the students were in running the live newscast.

**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 staff work with students on skills development. They are trained on equipment so they can actively participate in student media and other projects. Students can check out equipment and have access to 16 editing suites in the area surrounding Studios A and B.

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

The Division has a librarian assigned to the school in the library on the fourth floor. An array of analog and digital material, e.g. magazines, video, computers, etc., are available for use by students. The library also has equipment for students to edit projects into the early evening. Students can also go to the Digital Center in the main library, which has 24-hour access, to prepare their work.

**SUMMARY:** The unit enjoys a well-appointed building with ample space and technology that serve the needs of students. Faculty members and staff knowledgeable of media production standards, software and other technical tools are able to simulate the kinds of practical environments students will face in internships and eventually in the media jobs they land.

**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.**

The Division has established and maintained communication channels with alumni and a broad range of professionals – directly and via their professional societies and associations – in order to keep curriculum and instruction current and promote dialogue. These outreach efforts keep students abreast of developments in the journalism and public relations professions. The unit also regularly promotes exchanges of ideas on topical subjects being addressed within those professions – such as diversity, cultural change, and media ethics.

Alumni and other interested professionals are regularly contacted through the unit’s social media, School and University publications, and special events. Students especially value the annual event “Grads Are Back” – alumni/students workshops during Homecoming Week.

A Board of Visitors composed of alumni in journalism and public relations provides counsel on keeping curriculum and extra-curricular activity current. Board members provide counsel on unit development, internships, job placement, fellowship opportunities, fundraising and classroom guest lectures. An illustrative outcome: An alumna established the CBS Internship Fellowship program awarding two fully funded internships per year for training at CBS’ New York City headquarters. The program, now in its sixth year, has generated jobs for SJGC graduates in several CBS departments.

Faculty engagement in related professional societies generates a continuing flow of information on the current development and evolution of these professions. These organizations range from the American Society of News Editors and Public Relations Society of America, to the Society of Professional Journalists and National Association of Black Journalists.

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

The Knight Faculty Development Fund supports development of faculty leadership skills in journalism and public relations through workshops and training. Applying such training, faculty host conferences, such as the NABJ Multimedia Short Course and PR Crash Courses. In the Knight Chair Speaker Series, a faculty member hosted two speaker events and a First Amendment panel relating to issues on HBCU campuses. From 2006 to 2016 the unit hosted the Media Sales Institute, a 10-day program for recent graduates from FAMU and other HBCUs across the country, to provide training for media sales management careers.

FAMU’s School of Business and Industry partners with SJGC to provide cross-curriculum instruction on related aspects of advertising and marketing.

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

The self-study reflects that faculty participation and leadership in academic associations and related activities has been recognized by professional societies in journalism and mass communications. These

include Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications, Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communications, Broadcast Education Association, and Society of News Design.

**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.**

The Division operates media that service University and local communities while providing multiple student learning opportunities. FAMU-TV 20, WANM-FM, the award-winning student-run newspaper *The FAMUAN* and the quarterly magazine *Journey* each generate content produced by students under faculty supervision. With these operational responsibilities, the students contribute to the unit's service to campus and local communities. Leaders of other campus units expressed praise and appreciation for a variety of support services supplied by the Division of Journalism.

Faculty accompany members of the Public Relations Student Society of America chapter to the PRSSA national conference and serve as panelists at the National Association of Black Journalists annual convention. For years, PRodigy, a student public relations agency, serviced clients both on campus and businesses and non-profit organizations; however, it was discontinued shortly after the last site visit. It has just been re-established and called "PRrecision".

The self-study lists numerous faculty service activities, awards and other recognitions of faculty members, ranging from local to statewide engagements.

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

Division faculty regularly visit local elementary and high schools imparting the basics of their disciplines to aspiring young students. In one example, a faculty member assisted in the set-up of a live morning newscast at the Astoria Park Elementary School and consulted on the public relations aspects of the newscast. He has also counseled students at a rural Madison County school on the use of their newspaper skills as instruments for collegiate and professional careers. Division students volunteer at Rickards High School in Tallahassee as mentors teaching students basic videography and editing. The Rickards students have visited the Division's campus facilities and dialogued with the unit's students.

At the time of the last site visit and well before, the unit operated a Dow Jones summer camp for future generations of journalists. In 2015 the Division was forced to cease participation due to a staffing shortage. It plans to restart the program in the near future.

**SUMMARY:** The Division of Journalism's new leadership recognizes the value of its professional and public service tradition and accomplishments. The unit encourages faculty and students to increase participation in such civic engagement.

**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 the Council.**

The Division of Journalism’s various descriptions of its assessment goals include ACEJMC’s “Professional Values and Competencies.” As an academic unit of FAMU, the unit is also obligated to fulfill the assessment terms of the state-mandated Academic Learning Compact. So, the unit blends its overall assessment efforts to cover both sets of requirements.

In practice, all 12 principles appear to be covered in some form. References to the full complement of ACEJMC values and competencies can be found in various parts of the self-study. But all 12 are not explicitly stated in the actual written plan. For example, First Amendment principles and numerical literacy are not stated in the main document. However, to be fair, these and other principles are addressed within the totality of the self-study, in syllabuses and in other Division of Journalism material. But referring to all values and competencies in the main plan will help clarify commitment to the full 12.

• *Who is in charge of the assessment program (e.g., administrator, sequence coordinator or faculty committee)?*

Revitalization of assessment efforts resulted in a three-member committee formed in 2017 to help add a more systematic approach to efforts. The committee is focused on making sure a sound and consistent structure is developed. Previously, other faculty members and administrators served as coordinators.

• *How has the unit verified that core and required courses cover all 12 of ACEJMC’s professional values and competencies?*

The self-study included a grid for tracking student learning outcomes, with categories for the specific direct and indirect measures being assessed, and a column noting how often the data are assessed.

The pre-test/post-test conducted in core courses includes questions compatible with the values and competencies, covering language skills, ethics, law and critical thinking. The test is used to reinforce course content, and vice versa.

The capstone portfolio required of graduating seniors offers a comprehensive platform, potentially covering all 12 professional values and competencies. Students must submit at least 10 published clips and answer questions on ethics and law. Invariably their command of multiple aspects of media is expected to be on display, including content and concepts aligned with the ACEJMC 12.

During internships, also required for credit, the unit provides a confidential evaluation form for workplace supervisors to rate each intern. It covers ratings for writing and production skills, many of which are compatible with ACEJMC requirements, along with professional attitude and interpersonal skills.

This collective set of tasks and experiences is required of all majors, setting the stage for assessment of a considerable number of ACEJMC values and competencies.

• *How has the unit ensured that the syllabuses for these courses state learning outcomes that address the values and competencies appropriate for each course?*

Evidence of attention to the 12 ACEJMC values and competencies are sprinkled throughout most syllabuses.

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

- *What direct measures of assessment does the unit use, where in the curriculum and when?*
  - Capstone portfolio, from course for graduating seniors. A capstone course is offered spring and fall.
  - Pre-test/post-test on language mechanics, media concepts and other topics, including: spelling, word usage, AP style, active/passive voice, irregular verbs, grammar, news judgment, ethics, law, newswriting, broadcast, public relations, online, and information resources. Many questions are compatible with ACEJMC values and competencies. The courses for conducting tests are: Jour 1040 Language Skills for Media and Jour 2100 Reporting & Writing. Spring and fall.
  - Internships: One internship is required as a condition of graduation. Students are evaluated by internship supervisors in the workplace, and those results are to be used by the unit to assess overall performance. Spring and fall.
- *What indirect measures does it use, where and when?*
  - A graduating senior survey is conducted. Before each graduation.
  - No other formal indirect measures were listed in the self-study, though the unit in 2016 and 2017 conducted separate surveys of students who had completed the capstone course. This survey sought information on employment status, and students' views of their SJGC experiences. In addition, the survey is used to update alumni contact information. Annually.
- *Are these measures effective for assessing ACEJMC's professional values and competencies?*

Unit representatives said they are confident some efforts over the years have been effective, and that refined steps that they started implementing in 2017 will help improve upon results.

While some notable efforts were identified by the site team, the overall work of assessment in the unit is not yet stitched together cohesively and consistently.

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

- *How does the unit collect and analyze the findings and identify unsatisfactory learning of specific values and competencies?*

Efforts over the past six years seem to have included periods of productive results, but also significant timeframes lacking in thoroughness and follow-through. So, the record appears inconsistent. Examples in the self-study and additional material provided to the team point to sound episodes of assessment. But not all documented the full path from collection, to analysis, to specific steps interjected into curriculum and instruction.

- *What specific values and competencies had graduating classes not mastered satisfactorily?*

Writing remains a concern. Faculty members said that some students seeking to complete their capstone portfolio, which requires 10 published clips plus other evidence of competence, demonstrate deficiencies that merit more attention.

- *How does the unit decide how to address these areas of concern and what actions did it take to do so?*

According to the unit, additional training and coaching have been provided. One faculty member discussed how dissatisfaction with writing among some seniors led to heavier emphasis on writing quality during earlier stages of the curriculum, well before the capstone experience is started.

- *How does the unit evaluate whether its actions overcame the weaknesses in student learning and what were the results?*

Language in the self-study shows encouraging signs of attention to results, with particular attention to writing. But sustained, conclusive results were not fully documented, and not yet obvious.

- *Was the program of data analysis and action effective for identifying and overcoming unsatisfactory student learning?*

The unit's most recent analysis seems too new to yield any conclusive indicators of progress. But it appears to be on the right track. Data from the University's tracking system for SJGC assessment was made available to the team, as well. Some categories are compatible with ACEJMC's 12 professional values and competencies.

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

Contact with alumni is a signature strength of the School of Journalism & Graphic Communication. Several are members of a revitalized Board of Visitors, an impressive cast of talent willing to provide insights and suggestions to the School. Some alumni serve on portfolio review panels. Others return to the campus for panel discussions, workshops and other forums where their experiences can be translated into lessons for elevating the Division's assessment strategies.

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

Professionals confirmed that they participated in assessing students' portfolios; some suggested more organized coordination by the unit. Internship files include letters of agreement and evaluations of students. Professionals who talked with the site team expressed largely favorable comments, but some pointed to the need for more attention to reporting and writing basics.

**SUMMARY:** A record of attention to assessment is apparent in meeting minutes, discussions with faculty members and others, and in self-study details combined with additional data provided to the team during visit. But lack of continuity across the past six years reduced the effectiveness of SJGC's assessment efforts. Uneven documentation of assessment across the full range of the process – gather, measure, analyze, identify opportunities, implement meaningful changes – made substantive assessment results sometimes difficult to verify. Valiant attempts to embolden assessment in 2017 is a positive indicator of potential for reclaiming assessment as a persistent strength.

**Overall evaluation: NON-COMPLIANCE**



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

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

##### **Strengths:**

- Caring and devoted faculty.
- Excellent campus media opportunities.
- Dynamic interim dean.
- SJGC image among campus peers as a distinct leader.
- Cultivation of alumni involvement, including high-profile media professionals.
- Spacious, well-equipped facilities

##### **Weaknesses:**

- Incomplete and inconsistent execution of assessment.
- Underperforming faculty scholarship.
- Skills classes exceeding the 20:1 guideline for students-to-teacher ratio.
- Instability of leadership positions in unit, as well as across the University.

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

- 5. Scholarship: Research, Creative and Professional Activity.
- 9. Assessment of Learning Outcomes.

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

- **Standard 5. Scholarship: Research, Creative and Professional Activity:** Determine unit's capacity for scholarship and produce outcomes that match strategic goals. Provide resources the dean will need to add full-time tenure-track faculty, increase academic research, and cultivate fundraising.
- **Standard 9. Assessment of Learning Outcomes:** Review direct and indirect measures to assure assessment results are aggregated for programmatic analysis. Refine plan. Document details for the full assessment process: gather, measure, analyze, discuss, apply ideas for improving quality of curriculum and instruction. Maintain consistent assessment across six-year accreditation cycle.

#### **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.**

All standards were found in compliance during the 2012 site-team visit. Two weaknesses, or areas of concern, were cited:

- **2012 team report:** *“Insufficient urgency to define and execute a methodical pursuit of external funding as part of a state system where government support has been declining for years.”*
  - **2018 update:** Evidence of renewed attention was apparent, with re-creation of an advisory board with a financial contribution required for membership. The advisory board created a fundraising committee.
- **2012 team report:** *“Diversity and Inclusiveness plan lacks specific strategies likely to be effective in recruiting faculty who are Hispanic, Asian, or from other countries.”*
  - **2018 update:** The unit reports deliberate recruiting of a more diverse pool of candidates in recent job searches. The unit has plans for a more intentional focus on strategic recruitment for future hires.

**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 provided a combination of sections sufficient for the needs of the site team, but others that were insufficient and lacking in supporting material. The unit was responsive whenever additional information was requested to fill the voids. The challenge of preparing the self-study in the throes of major leadership transitions is acknowledged.



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April 5, 2018

Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication  
University of Kansas School of Journalism  
Stauffer-Flint Hall  
1435 Jayhawk Blvd.  
Lawrence, Kansas 66045-7575

Dear Accrediting Council,

I am writing in response to the Council's March 29, 2018 notification regarding the outcome of the recent Accrediting Committee meeting. As noted therein, the Committee voted against the Site Team's recommendation to award accreditation to the Division of Journalism due to the program's non-compliance with Standard 5 (Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activity) and Standard 9 (Assessment of Learning Outcomes). While we are disappointed with this outcome, the University is very appreciative of the extensive work conducted by the Site Team and the thorough review and analysis of the Accrediting Committee in reaching its decision. Please be assured that the University administration, and the faculty and staff of the Division of Journalism, are taking the appropriate steps to ensure that the areas of non-compliance are appropriately addressed.

As President of Florida A&M University, I want to personally thank the Council for its continued support of the University and for its ongoing efforts to ensure that the accrediting process supports the work of the academic programs in providing excellent education in journalism and public relations for students throughout the country. Florida A&M University is also committed to that mission.

The Division of Journalism has a rich legacy and history, which includes being the first Historically Black College and University accredited program in the country. We are extremely proud of the accomplishments of our alumni of this prestigious program. Many of them have achieved tremendous success in their careers and have assumed leadership positions in the industry. We look forward to working with the Council in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Larry Robinson  
President

cc: Susanne Shaw, ACEJMC Executive Director  
Caesar Andrews, Team Chair  
Dr. Dhyana Ziegler, Interim Dean  
Dr. Valerie White, Interim Director