

2018-19

**Revisit Team Report
for Accreditation in Journalism
and Mass Communications**

Name of Accredited Unit: Jandoli School of Communication

Name of Institution: St. Bonaventure University

Name of Administrator: Aaron Chimbel, Dean

Date of Original Site Visit: Jan. 22-25, 2017

Revisit Date: Feb. 10-12, 2019

Revisit Team Chair: Jerry Ceppos, Professor, Manship School of Mass Communication, Louisiana State University

Revisit Team Member: Sheri Broyles, Professor, Frank W. and Sue Mayborn School of Journalism, University of North Texas

Revisit Team's Recommendation:

Undergraduate program: Accreditation

Professional master's program: Accreditation

1. List each standard found in noncompliance and the reasons as cited in the original team report. (This would be the initial accreditation for St. Bonaventure.)

Standard 3: Diversity

Undergraduate: The School's diversity plan and associated activities lack demonstrable action plans, which have been used successfully elsewhere, that would make the School a model of diversity.

Graduate: The diversity plan for the School includes the graduate program. The plan had been only recently adopted at the time of the original visit. While there is some indication that diverse and global issues were included in both master's programs, the self-study did not provide data that demonstrated how diversity is incorporated into the program.

Standard 9. Assessment of learning outcomes:

The School of Communication is focused on its mission to educate students. It was clear that the faculty deeply care about student success and are dedicated to making sure their students excel in the classroom as well as in the profession once they graduate. However, there is little systematic assessment process to determine whether students are becoming competent in the values and competences that the Council requires for all accredited programs. There is a plan moving forward, but at the point of the initial site visit, there is not enough evidence that assessment has been ongoing and systematic during the years leading up to accreditation.

2. For each standard that had been in noncompliance, provide a summary of the team's findings regarding corrections. Provide an evaluation of compliance or noncompliance.

Standard 3, Diversity:

Historically the School's diversity initiatives have been indirect and individualized rather than quantitative and systemic. The School developed a five-year strategic diversity and inclusion plan (2018-2023), which it stated was "a steadfast and overt focus on diversity and inclusion throughout the academic pipeline, from recruitment and enrollment through attendance and degree completion."

The diversity plan focused on five strategies:

Strategy 1: Create an ongoing working diversity advocate and committee

Strategy 2: Analyze and revise undergraduate and graduate curriculum and syllabi to reflect overt and measurable diversity objectives

Strategy 3: Increase faculty/staff access to and engagement in diversity and inclusion resources and training

Strategy 4: Identify and incorporate diversity and inclusion cues in the physical and digital space (Murphy Building, Jandoli School website, Jandoli School social media)

Strategy 5: Establish the Jandoli School as a university-wide influencer in creating and supporting activities, events and communications which exemplify diversity and inclusivity

The first image on the School's website is of a Strategic Communication major who had been named to the American Advertising Federation's (AAF) Most Promising Multicultural Students program, also noting that this was the second consecutive year that a St. Bonaventure student had been so honored. When honing into links on the website there seemed to be intention in the choice of photos as there was at least one face of color on most pages.

To spot check syllabi for evidence of diversity, five syllabi were randomly chosen from JMC syllabi and five from SC syllabi.

For those in Journalism and Mass Communications there was generally specific language. Some examples:

- "The importance of listening to those whose voices are never heard."
- "Write for specific and diverse audiences."
- "Begin to understand the important role diversity plays in your role as a storyteller."

However, there was no indication in the week-by-week outline with the last quote of what the students would focus on. Also of note: in a Sports Writing class there was mention of a female sports writer as a guest speaker.

Strategic Communications classes varied in how diversity was addressed. Some examples:

- "Understand how to use social media and other online platforms to reach audiences including diverse populations."
- "Understand how to craft communication for the increasingly diverse audience in a business setting."
- "Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, ability/disability, sexual orientation and other forms of diversity in domestic and global society in relation to publics/stakeholders and organizational dynamics."

Overall the School has addressed the diversity issues found in the original accreditation visit. However, it should continue to monitor this subject to ensure that students understand the importance of diversity across the curriculum.

Also of note, it seems there would still be easy ways to make diversity more obvious in the building. There are many photos of students – but few faces of color.

Undergraduate Overall Evaluation: Compliance

Professional Master's Evaluation: Compliance

Standard 9, Assessment of learning outcomes:

The School's ambitious revised 89-page assessment plan, produced under the supervision of the new dean, Aaron Chimbel, includes extensive direct and indirect measures, such as a move to additional pre- and post-tests. For example, undergraduate students are tested four times on

writing ability, including whether they have retained material taught years earlier. The first writing pre-test was administered in fall 2018, so there is no data to compare at this time.

The School's Assessment Committee (the associate dean and directors of each graduate program) develops a report every summer based on data collected the previous academic year. The report is shared with faculty during the summer or fall and with the Advisory Council. The report is also available on the School's Moodle site and by request.

Since the last visit, the faculty saw weaknesses in undergraduate internship performance and the School's advisory council criticized students' video skills. Therefore, the School added a required video-production course for all undergraduates. The faculty also increased the Comprehensive Experience course from a zero-credit course to a two-credit course after data from student surveys showed a need for more preparation in job-hunting skills such as resumes and cover letters.

The most recent university-wide surveys aimed at undergraduates show that recent Jandoli School graduates are satisfied with their time at the University and the School. Graduate-student satisfaction surveys were less definitive due to low participation. Some students in both the Strategic Leadership and Integrated Marketing Communications program showed some dissatisfaction. As a result, the IMC program has undergone a major overhaul. A new director took over, making a number of changes. All course titles were updated and a more concentrated focus on digital and social media began. A mid-point check-in for students was added to ensure students are on track to graduate. Additional electives, particularly in such areas as mobile, analytics and design, are now offered so that students have increased choices.

For the graduate programs, the School considered the idea of a pre-test and post-test "a bit remedial" because most of the students are working professionals. As a result, all incoming graduate students are pre-tested. If students score at least 85% on the pre-test, they are considered to be coming in with the requisite knowledge. If not, they are offered remedial help. The pre-test will be given with the Spring 2019 incoming students.

Two interesting elements of the assessment program in the graduate Strategic Leadership program are, first, a "360 Survey" that each student takes at the beginning of the program, administered by a testing firm, to allow students to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses. Another is a "formal rater evaluation" used in the graduate Project in Strategic Leadership that provides specific feedback to students on learning goals. The project is a comprehensive case study of an organization. The School expected the 25 students to earn at least 90 out of 100 possible points. Three did not earn a 90, but those three did earn 89 points.

In the IMC graduate area, each master's project defense is judged by a panel of three members based on a rubric. In spring 2018, 11 students defended; three passed with no revisions, seven passed with revisions and one had to re-present. In September 2018, eight defended; one passed with no revisions and the other seven passed with revisions. In fall 2018, eight students defended. Four passed with revisions and four had to re-present. In the future, panelists won't discuss the presentations; instead they will write their evaluations. As a result of this assessment, the School is looking at the curriculum and at why so many revisions are needed.

Although this is not a report about enrollment management, it is worth mentioning that the number of undergraduate students at the School decreased by a third from Fall 2014 to Fall 2018. The decreases came at the same time that the University reported big declines. The School is responding by developing two new majors—an approved sports-media degree and a proposed broadcast-journalism program--and planning an aggressive recruitment effort.

Undergraduate Overall Evaluation: Compliance

Professional Master’s Evaluation: Compliance

3. Describe any other weaknesses cited by the site team in its report and any additional concerns cited by the Council in its letter to the unit regarding provisional status.

The original team noted, “While the school clearly is aware of the importance of the digital revolution, neither the displays in the building nor student conversation emphasizes the importance of the revolution.”

4. For EACH of the other weaknesses cited by the site team or concerns cited by the Council, provide a summary of the revisit team’s findings regarding corrections.

Since the visit, the School has changed its *Communication Today* course every semester to reflect issues and evolution brought by digital changes. Its *Professional Writing* course touches on ways the digital revolution has democratized publishing. Its *Media Law* course is updated every semester with examples of the law’s intersection with technology. Its *Video Production* course is creating digital reporting through messaging pictures and video. A number of other courses also emphasize digital. Of note is *The Digital World*, a fundamental examination of the skills needed to succeed in communications technology.

It is worth noting that the Jandoli School pioneered online degree programs at St. Bonaventure, which now embraces online graduate programs all over the university. In terms of visibility, the School has live-streamed several Jandoli School and University presentations. Dr. Chris Mackowski has been incorporating more short videos, shot and edited on his iPhone, into his online courses. Professors Anne Lee and Rich Lee turned President Trump’s decision not to attend the 2017 White House Correspondents’ Association dinner into a teaching tool, asking working journalists, students, faculty and alumni to post short videos in which they explained why journalism is important.

In terms of visibility, the School is in the beginning phase of a multi-million-dollar fundraising program to renovate its building with a digital newsroom, new HD television studio, interactive classrooms, flexible creative spaces, new technology and more. In addition, the University already has allocated \$400,000 to upgrade digital and broadcast equipment. At the graduate level, the IMC program faculty significantly revamped the program to make digital, mobile and social communication inherent in the program, which had remained largely unchanged since it started in 2002.

5. Summary conclusion and recommendation:

In two years, the School has prepared remarkably detailed proposals to solve its diversity and assessment problems. In diversity, the faculty talked about “overt” changes that “focus on observable and measurable strategies and tactics...that can be regularly assessed and measured quantitatively to ensure we are reaching every student in our program.” The updated assessment plan provides for more direct assessment and is helped by the School’s Advisory Council and by other professionals. The School’s improvements were organized well for the revisit team, which found both standards in compliance and recommends initial accreditation of both the undergraduate and master’s program.

Accrediting Council

On Education in Journalism and Mass Communications

Patricia Thompson
Executive Director

March 26, 2019

Aaron Chimbel
Dean
Jandoli School of Communication
St. Bonaventure University
P.O. Box J
St. Bonaventure, NY 14778

Dear Aaron:

Thank you for attending the March 23 Accrediting Committee meeting in Chicago. The Committee reviewed the visit report presented by Jerry Ceppos.

As you know, the Committee voted 14-0, with one member abstaining, in favor of the team's recommendation to the Council that the Jandoli School of Communication at St. Bonaventure University receive initial accreditation for its undergraduate and graduate programs.

If you wish to respond to the Committee's action, please email your response to Pat Thompson (pthomps1@olemiss.edu) as a PDF by noon Thursday, April 4. The response must be on letterhead and signed. The response will be sent to Council members. A copy of the response also should be sent to Jerry.

The Council will review the visit report and the Committee's recommendation before making its decision. The Council will meet in Chicago on Friday, April 26, at the Westin Hotel, 909 N. Michigan Ave.

If you have questions about the Committee or Council meetings, please contact Pat.

Sincerely,



Chris Callahan
Chair, Accrediting Committee

cc: Dennis R. Deperro, President, St. Bonaventure University
Jerry Ceppos, Team Chair
Peter Bhatia, ACEJMC President
Pat Thompson, ACEJMC Executive Director

Accrediting Council

On Education in Journalism and Mass Communications

Patricia Thompson
Executive Director

Dennis R. Deperro, President
St. Bonaventure University
203 Hopkins Hall
P.O. Box A
St. Bonaventure, NY 14778

May 9, 2019

Dear President Deperro:

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications met April 26 in Chicago and voted 16-0, with 1 abstention, that the undergraduate and professional master's programs in the Jandoli School of Communication at St. Bonaventure University receive initial accreditation. Aaron Chimel, dean, and Pauline Hoffman, associate professor, attended the meeting.

The Council concurred with the recommendations for accreditation made by the Accrediting Committee and the revisit site team. The next visit for the Jandoli School of Communication will be during the 2022-2023 academic year.

Please accept my congratulations and best wishes for continued success for the Jandoli School of Communication at St. Bonaventure University, its students, faculty and the professional media constituencies it serves.

Sincerely,



Peter Bhatia
ACEJMC President

cc: Aaron Chimel, dean
Jerry Ceppos, revisit team chair
Chris Callahan, chair, Accrediting Committee
Patricia Thompson, executive director, ACEJMC