

## Report of On-Site Evaluation

ACEJMC

Undergraduate program

2018-2019

Name of Institution: University of Minnesota

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Eric Kaler, President

Name of Unit: Hubbard School of Journalism & Mass Communication

Name and Title of Administrator: Elisia Cohen, Director

Date of 2018-2019 Accrediting Visit: Oct. 21-24, 2018

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

Date of the previous accrediting visit: Oct. 14-17, 2012

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Reaccreditation

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Reaccreditation

Recommendation by 2018-2019 Visiting Team: Reaccreditation

*Prepared and submitted by:*

### Team Chair

Name and Title: Douglas Anderson, Senior Research Professor

Organization/School: Arizona State University; Dean Emeritus, Penn State University

Signature

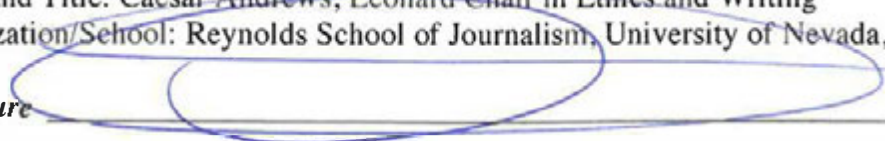


### Team Members

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

Organization/School: Reynolds School of Journalism, University of Nevada, Reno

Signature



Name and Title: Scott Fiene, Assistant Dean for Curriculum and Assessment

Organization/School: School of Journalism and New Media, University of Mississippi

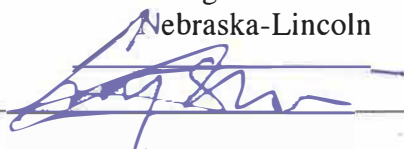
Signature



Name and Title: Amy Struthers, Interim Dean

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

Signature



## PART I: General information

**Name of Institution:** University of Minnesota

**Name of Unit:** Hubbard School of Journalism and Mass Communication

**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

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

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

- Private
- Public
- Other (specify)

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

The University of Minnesota was originally established under Chapter 3 of the Territorial Laws of 1851, and charged with providing territorial citizens "...the means of acquiring thorough knowledge of Literature, Science and the Arts." In 1974, the state legislature amended the Minnesota Constitution to incorporate Chapter 3 of the Territorial Laws, under Article 13, Section 3, "perpetuating unto the University all rights, immunities, franchises and endowments previously conferred."

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

- Yes
- No

**If yes, give the date of the last accrediting visit:** October 14-17, 2012

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

The Hubbard School of Journalism and Mass Communication's first ACEJMC accreditation occurred in 1948.

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

The mission of the Hubbard School of Journalism & Mass Communication (HSJMC) is to integrate mass communication education, research, and outreach. We focus on preparing students for careers in the wide variety of specializations within journalism and strategic communication, and on expanding and sharing knowledge of mass communication and its role in society. We do this through teaching, research, and outreach that are focused on improving the practice of journalism and strategic communication. We believe in professional preparation and in a liberal education rooted in the arts and social sciences. We are committed to teaching students to think critically and creatively in an environment that is diverse, dynamic, globally aware, interactive, and intellectually challenging. We prepare undergraduate students to be leaders in mass communication fields and to be thoughtful, productive citizens in their communities and in public life. We prepare graduate students to be the next generation of leading scholars, educators, and professionals. (Reaffirmed by faculty, April 1, 2018.)

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

Semesters: 15 weeks

Quarters: NA

Summer sessions: 8 weeks

Intersessions: 3 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.**

Journalism Major – Professional Journalism Track

Journalism Major – Professional Strategic Communication Track

(While the HSJMC continues to offer the Journalism Major – Mass Communication Track, the track does not have a professional orientation and therefore is not being put forward for review.)

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

120 semester-hour credits

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

One semester-hour credit (S/N) is earned in conjunction with an internship. Students may register for up to three internships for a total of three credits.

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

HSJMC offers three tracks of study: professional journalism, professional strategic communication, and mass communication. The Director of Undergraduate Studies and the Undergraduate Committee provide overall coordination of all three tracks of study.

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

29,747 (Full-time undergraduate students, Spring 2018)

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

Fall 2018

<i>Name of Sequence or Specialty</i>	<i>Undergraduate majors</i>
Professional Strategic Communication	502
Professional Journalism	238
Mass Communication	14
<u>Premajor</u>	<u>134</u>
Total	888

**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.)**

<i>Course Number</i>	<i>Course Name</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Enrollment</i>
JOUR 3101W-1	News Reporting and Writing	Laboratory	20
JOUR 3101W-2	News Reporting and Writing	Laboratory	19
JOUR 3101W-3	News Reporting and Writing	Laboratory	19
JOUR 3102-1	Multimedia Prod & Storytelling	Laboratory	19
JOUR 3102-2	Multimedia Prod & Storytelling	Laboratory	18
JOUR 3102-3	Multimedia Prod & Storytelling	Laboratory	14
JOUR 3103-1	Interactive and Data Journalism	Laboratory	20
JOUR 3121-1	Intermediate News Reporting	Laboratory	19
JOUR 3173W-1	Magazine & Feature Writing	Laboratory	20
JOUR 3241W-1	Advertising Strategy and Creative Development	Laboratory	20
JOUR 3241W-2	Advertising Strategy and Creative Development	Laboratory	20
JOUR 3241W-3	Advertising Strategy and Creative Development	Laboratory	20
JOUR 3251-1	Evaluative Research in Strategic Communication	Lecture*	41
JOUR 3253-1	Account Planning	Lecture*	47
JOUR 3261-1	Media Planning	Lecture*	47
JOUR 3275-1	Digital Strategy in Strategic Communication	Lecture*	29
JOUR 3275-2	Digital Strategy in Strategic Communication	Lecture*	30
JOUR 3279W-1	Professional Writing for Strategic Communication	Laboratory	20
JOUR 3279W-2	Professional Writing for Strategic Communication	Laboratory	17
JOUR 3279W-3	Professional Writing for Strategic Communication	Laboratory	20

JOUR 3279W-4	Professional Writing for Strategic Communication	Laboratory	20
JOUR 3321-1	Media Design	Laboratory	19
JOUR 3321-2	Media Design	Laboratory	20
JOUR 3321-3	Media Design	Laboratory	19
JOUR 3451-1	TV, Radio, and Digital News Reporting	Laboratory	15
JOUR 3451-2	TV, Radio, and Digital News Reporting	Laboratory	15
JOUR 4171-1	Covering the Arts	Laboratory	20
JOUR 4242-1	Advertising Portfolio Development	Laboratory	20
JOUR 4243-1	Digital Content for Brand Communications	Laboratory	20
JOUR 4259 -1	Strategic Communication Case Analysis	Lecture*	27
JOUR 4262-1	Management for Strategic Communication	Lecture*	47
JOUR 4263-1	Strategic Communication Campaigns	Laboratory	20
JOUR 4263-2	Strategic Communication Campaigns	Laboratory	20
JOUR 4263-3	Strategic Communication Campaigns	Laboratory	18
JOUR 4302-1	Photojournalism	Laboratory	19
JOUR 4451-1	Advanced Multimedia Storytelling	Laboratory	12
JOUR 4451-2	Advanced Multimedia Storytelling	Laboratory	12
JOUR 4990-1	Charnley Project: Covering Election News	Laboratory	19
JOUR 4992-1	Field Based Practicum	Laboratory	19

\*This is a lecture-based course with no lab sections and therefore open to larger enrollments. In the strategic communication track, the “planning” classes are delivered by lecture. The “execution” courses are taught in laboratories.

**16. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2018–2019 academic year:**

The anticipated unit expenditure for 2018-19 is \$7,754,285.

**Give percentage increase or decrease in three years:**

This figure represents a 7 percent increase over three years.

**Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries:**

The anticipated amount expected to be spent of full-time faculty salaries in FY 2018-19 is \$2,564,297, including fringe.

**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.**

**Full-time faculty**

The School has 24 tenured, tenure-track and contract faculty effective fall 2018. Additionally, there are seven full-time academic appointees and one full-time Postdoctoral Associate. See the following for a complete listing of HSJMC faculty.

*Full-time Tenured, Tenure-Track, and Contract Faculty*

*Professor*

Elisia Cohen	Professor / Director, Hubbard School of Journalism and Mass Communication
Kathleen Hansen	Professor
Jisu Huh	Professor / Raymond O. Mithun Chair in Advertising and Director of Graduate Studies

Jane Kirtley Silha Professor of Media Ethics and Law / Director, Silha Center for the Study of Media Ethics and Law  
Marco Yzer Professor / Academic Director of the BA/MA in Health Communication

*Associate Professor*

Matt Carlson Associate Professor  
Giovanna Dell'Orto Associate Professor (sabbatical 2018-19)  
Ken Doyle Associate Professor  
Chris Ison Associate Professor (Contract) / Director of Undergraduate Studies  
Stacey Kanihan Associate Professor (Contract) / Academic Director of the Professional MA in Strategic Communication  
Matthew Weber Associate Professor; Cowles Endowed Fellow of Media Management

*Assistant Professors*

Colin Agur Assistant Professor  
Betsy Anderson Assistant Professor (Contract)  
Sid Bedingfield Assistant Professor (single semester leave F18)  
Valarie Belair-Gagnon Assistant Professor / Director, Minnesota Journalism Center  
Diane Cormany Assistant Professor (Contract)  
Sherri Jean Katz Assistant Professor (single semester leave F18)  
Susan LoRusso Assistant Professor (Contract)  
Rebekah Nagler Assistant Professor  
Amy O'Connor Assistant Professor  
Hyejoon Rim Assistant Professor  
Claire Segijn Assistant Professor  
Christopher Terry Assistant Professor  
Benjamin Toff Assistant Professor

*Instructors/Lecturers*

Gayle Golden Senior Lecturer  
Mark Jenson Lecturer  
Scott Libin Hubbard Senior Fellow  
Regina McCombs Lecturer  
Len Mitsch Teaching Specialist  
Amelia Reigstad Lecturer  
Steven Wehrenberg Teaching Professor / Program Director of the Professional MA in Strategic Communication

*Full-time Postdoctoral Associate*

Errol Salomon Postdoctoral Associate

**18. List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in fall 2018. Also list names of part-time faculty teaching spring 2018.**

*Part-time Faculty*

Susan Andre	Spring 2018/ Fall 2018
Germaine Broeckert	Spring 2018
Ruth DeFoster	Spring 2018/ Fall 2018
Dee DePass	Spring 2018
Michelle Fitzgerald	Fall 2018

Matthew Furman	Spring 2018
Melody Gilbert	Spring 2018
Stephanie Glaros	Spring 201
Daniel Gore	Spring 2018
Judy Hohmann	Spring 2018
Earl Johnston	Spring 2018/ Fall 2018
Kent Kaiser	Spring 2018
Ann Karich	Spring 2018
Eva Keiser	Spring 2018
Abbey Kleinert	Spring 2018
Matt Kucharski	Fall 2018
Andrew Mannix	Fall 2018
Sean O'Brien	Spring 2018
Joan O'Fallon	Spring 2018
James Offerman	Spring 2018/ Fall 2018
Dominic Papatola	Fall 2018
Craig Pladson	Spring 2018
James Pounds	Spring 2018/ Fall 2018
Michael Rand	Spring 2018
Rusty Ray	Fall 2018
Gail Rosenblum	Spring 2018/ Fall 2018
John Rosengren	Spring 2018
Jeanne Schacht	Spring 2018/ Fall 2018
David Schimke	Spring 2018
Courtney Sinner	Fall 2018
Meredith Speier	Spring 2018
Jason Sprenger	Spring 2018
Douglas Stokes	Spring 2018/ Fall 2018
Mary Jo Webster	Spring 2018
Jennifer Westpfahl	Spring 2018
Michelle Wood	Spring 2018
Jeffrey Young	Fall 2018

**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.**

<i>Year</i>	<i>72 or more semester hours outside of journalism and mass communications</i>		
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
2017-2018 academic year	246	246	100%
2016-2017 academic year	270	270	100%

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

### OVERVIEW

The University of Minnesota is home to one of the blue bloods of America's journalism education programs. It awarded its first journalism degree more than a century ago—in 1917. In 1922, the Department of Journalism was formed in the then College of Science, Literature and the Arts. In 1940, with funding provided largely through an endowment established by William J. Murphy, publisher of the *Minneapolis Tribune*, the unit moved into what the self-study labels “one of the first buildings in the nation built exclusively for journalism education.” The Department established a research division in 1944, the first journalism program in the country to do so.

Well-maintained Murphy Hall has aged gracefully. Photos on walls throughout the building provide glimpses of the families and distinguished individuals who have played prominent roles in the evolution of the program. The Severeid Library showcases the hundreds of dust-free bound theses and dissertations that the School's graduate students have written over the decades. Framed portraits of more than 30 emeriti faculty members hang in the Thomas Heggen Memorial Library.

The unit, which was in the initial cohort of the field's nationally accredited programs in 1948, has been continuously reaccredited in six-year cycles ever since. The self-study notes, however, that “severe institutional funding cuts during the 1980s set the stage for two provisional accreditation reviews by ACEJMC, citing lack of funding, outdated equipment and faculty dissension.” Since 1996, though, the School has received full reaccreditation in each review.

The upsurge gained momentum in 1999, with a \$10.5 million renovation of Murphy Hall, the appointment of a new director and completion of a \$19 million capital campaign, which included a \$10 million pledge from Hubbard Broadcasting. In 2017, the unit was named the Hubbard School of Journalism and Mass Communication, in honor of the Hubbard family. In that same year, the current director of the School was appointed.

The School, with 754 undergraduate majors and 134 pre-majors, is one of the largest academic units in the College of Liberal Arts. With its distinguished graduate program heritage, the School offers a professional master's degree program in strategic communication, B.A./M.A. in health communication and academic M.A./Ph.D. in mass communication. The School also houses two of the country's best known JMC centers: the Minnesota Journalism Center and the Silha Center for the Study of Media Ethics and Law.

Two of the School's three undergraduate majors are within the scope of this review: the Journalism Major—Professional Journalism Track—and the Journalism Major—Professional Strategic Communication Track. The Professional Journalism Track enrolls 238 undergraduates; the Professional Strategic Communication Track enrolls 502. The School's undergraduate and graduate students are served by a full-time faculty of 32, who possess a healthy balance of academic and professional credentials, and a strong stable of adjuncts drawn from the media rich metropolitan area.

Other relevant numerical nuggets: all 246 of the School's 2017-2018 graduates and all 270 of the program's 2016-2017 graduates met the ACEJMC requirement of earning 72 or more semester hours outside the program; the School bats a thousand on the 20-1 ratio requirement for sections of skills courses; the School's sparkling four-year graduation rate consistently hovers around 90 percent, clearly one of the best percentages, if not the best, of JMC programs housed in the country's public institutions;



and the School's permanent endowment of \$39 million stands among the largest of the nation's accredited programs.

The Hubbard School's mission statement, most recently reaffirmed in April 2018, is succinct: "[T]o integrate mass communication education, research and outreach. We focus on preparing students for careers in the wide variety of specializations within journalism and strategic communication, and on expanding and sharing knowledge of mass communication and its role in society. We do this through teaching, research, and outreach that are focused on improving the practice of journalism and strategic communication. We believe in professional preparation and in a liberal education rooted in the arts and social sciences. We are committed to teaching students to think critically and creatively in an environment that is diverse, dynamic, globally aware, interactive, and intellectually challenging. We prepare undergraduate students to be leaders in mass communication fields and to be thoughtful, productive citizens in their communities and in public life. We prepare graduate students to be the next generation of leading scholars, educators and professionals."

The School is embedded in one of the nation's leading public research-intensive universities. The University of Minnesota, founded in 1851, is the fourth largest in America, with more than 52,000 full- and part-time students on the Twin Cities campus. Its permanent endowment of \$3.1 billion also is among the largest of the country's public institutions.

Institutional financial support of the School is up from the last ACEJMC review. And the self-study noted: "Perhaps the most noticeable changes from the 2012 site-team visit are the significant changes to the School's curriculum in several areas, including: strategic communication and digital media, health communication, and in our contributions to liberal education. We also have added terrific hires in leading-edge areas of the field such as: computational journalism, visual editing, media multitasking/advertising, non-profit communication, health communication, and political communication, among others."

The current director, in her second year, enjoys the strong support of the central administration and the School's faculty and staff. Faculty members describe her as effective, energetic, transparent and collegial. By all accounts, she hit the ground running.

Morale in the School is very good. Several faculty members, of various ranks and lengths of time in the program, spoke of a culture of mutual respect. One faculty member said flatly: "People get along. It's largely a happy crew."

#### **Unit performance with regard to indicators:**

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

The School has a mission statement and a thoughtfully written strategic plan that is in sync with that of the College of Liberal Arts. The self-study noted that the college engages in a three-year planning process with its academic units. The purpose of the joint planning process is "to establish a set of common understandings and agreements between the college and the unit about the short- and long-term goals of the unit, and to develop a roadmap to help achieve those goals." In summer 2018, the School received an overall positive, constructive response to its current plan from the college's administration.

The college praised the School for the “care and attention it devoted to the . . . plan.” The dean and associate dean of the college said it looked forward to working with the School “to further your goals to support and retain high-profile research-active faculty, raise your national profile in strategic communications, and strengthen connections with the social sciences in key areas identified in your plan.” As one outgrowth of the School’s plan, the college authorized it to conduct four tenure-track faculty searches over the next three years. The plan identifies some key areas shared by the college and School, including producing the “most desirable graduates available;” moving forward with “a relentless focus on research and creative excellence;” working to “mirror the community at large;” and deepening “a culture of engagement for our alumni, community and state.”

Commendably, the School was among the first dozen programs in the country this summer to post the now required information on the ACEJMC searchable data website. Among other relevant data, the School provided details on its technology, equipment and facilities; budgets and fees; students and faculty; retention and graduation percentages; and graduate employment numbers.

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

To assert simply that the School’s faculty members are involved in shared governance in substantive ways would be understatement. The “Regulations of the Faculty of the Hubbard School of Journalism and Mass Communication” document runs nine single-spaced pages, covering everything from the “definition of faculty” to “voting” to required, regular “meetings” to “areas of authority” to “salaries” to “budgetary recommendations”—and more. The preamble notes that the “faculty of the Hubbard School . . . operates on principles and methods agreed upon by the Board of Regents, the President, the University Senate, the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, the Office of Graduate Education, and by the Director of the School and its faculty as joint holders of the privilege and responsibility of employment at the University of Minnesota.” The preamble also states: “The Director is the responsible leader of the faculty, under whose directions the affairs of the School are administered and the principles herein delimit established practices in making policy decisions on the several levels of administration; as such they express the joint obligation of officers and teachers to work together constructively and harmoniously in the joint task of maintaining the venturesomeness, the integrity, and the efficiency of the educational, service and research practices of the institution.” As noted above, the policies and procedures are laboriously spelled out. The School has a logical list of standing appointed and elected committees, including: graduate affairs, undergraduate studies, diversity and salary increment, in addition to searches for various hires. The School’s faculty members clearly are college and university good citizens, serving on a broad spectrum of committees across the campus. The faculty met at least monthly during 2017-2018.

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

The School’s director, in the second year of her appointment, is its chief administrative officer, with direct and indirect reports from all faculty, graduate students and 14 administrative staff. She reports directly to the dean of the College of Liberal Arts, who reports to the provost and to the president of the University system. Members of the School’s administrative team include the director of graduate studies, director of undergraduate studies, curriculum and adjunct faculty coordinator, administrative director of the Professional M.A. Program in Strategic Communication, academic coordinator of the

M.A. Program in Health Communication, and directors of the Silha Center and Minnesota Journalism Center.

The School's director, who was appointed in 2017, is seen, as noted above, as a respected, energetic and effective leader — one who understands and supports the academic and professional missions of the program. One upper-level administrator said: "She is doing an exceptional job. She is visionary — and she pays great attention to detail."

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

The director of the School is appointed by the dean of the College of Liberal Arts, "in consultation with the (School's) faculty, members of the communications professions, and others." Within the School, most administrative appointments are made by the director "in consultation with (the) faculty and subject to review by the faculty." The self-study notes that the appointment of the director of graduate studies is an exception. That person is nominated and elected by the School's graduate faculty in the last meeting of each spring semester and then must be approved by the college. The dean of the college reviews the School's director annually and conducts a comprehensive three-year review. During both reviews, the chair of the School's salary increment advisory committee "collects and assesses faculty and staff input on the director's performance." The committee then provides a written report to the dean and the School's director. The evaluation process, which is clearly transparent, focuses on administration, teaching, research/creative activity and service. The School's review of the director's first year, which was written by the chair of the salary increment committee, was very positive. Its concluding paragraph: "Taking into account the comments received, the consensus among those responding is that during her first months at the University of Minnesota, (the director) has exceeded all expectations." And this concluding sentence: "Perhaps one comment sums up the consensus of faculty and staff who responded: 'She was the right person for the job.'"

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

Given its emphasis on policies and procedures in general, it is not surprising that School procedures for the timely resolution of complaints are clearly outlined and followed.

**SUMMARY:** The School's adhered to mission statement and strategic plan are carefully drawn. Shared governance is apparent, with written regulations and policies in place. The director, in her second year, is off to a strong start and has earned the respect of the central administration, faculty and staff.

**Overall evaluation compliance / non-compliance:**

**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:**

Discussions of indicators b, c and e must describe and evaluate the individual academic sequences in the unit.

**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 unit had an astounding 100 percent compliance with the 72-hour requirement. The course catalog makes explicit reference to this requirement, and professional advisers work with students to ensure that the requirement is met on four-year graduation plans. The degree audit system issues a message to indicate to students whether they have successfully met the requirement or not.

**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 unit's curriculum provides a balance between theoretical and conceptual courses, professional skills courses, and courses that integrate theory and skills. The School mapped all of its courses to the 12 ACEJMC values and competencies, has added new assessment activities, and has undertaken significant curriculum redesign since the last accreditation visit. Classes across the curriculum are clearly identified as context (theoretical/conceptual) or skills classes. Faculty and student comments indicate there are classes that effectively combine hands-on work with theoretical and conceptual underpinnings.

A campus representative noted that the unit has recently undergone a thorough review of the School's curriculum, including an update of all course catalog descriptions for the first time since 1999. The careful attention to these details has made academic advising easier, according to another representative of the campus, who commented that the unit "feels like a well-oiled machine" in its offerings that facilitate four-year graduation planning. Moreover, this reflects the constant evolution of the curriculum that multiple faculty members reported, an ongoing effort to keep instruction apace with the changing media landscape. Another campus representative said the unit is very clearly "invested in the undergraduate experience, leading to employment and to happy alums."

There are two professional tracks within the School's curriculum, both of which are within the scope of this review: Professional Journalism and Professional Strategic Communication. Strategic Communication is the largest track with 502 students; journalism has 238 students.

All students in both tracks take two required classes: Media in a Changing World and Information for

Mass Communication.

Students in the two majors then split into tracks that include the following:

### **PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM**

There are two required courses in the Professional Journalism track, News Reporting and Writing, and Mass Media Law, as well as 15 hours of skills courses and nine hours of context courses. There is a wide range of courses for students to choose from in both the skills and context groupings. The mix of classes is appropriate, and it includes both traditional and digital media education. Courses range from Multimedia Production & Storytelling to Interactive and Data Journalism. There are unique offerings that take advantage of the rich media environment in the Twin Cities, such as the Brovald-Sim Community Journalism Practicum, a field-based course that combines on-site internships with campus classroom instruction.

Students reported high satisfaction with the Professional Journalism track. They called the faculty “responsive and accessible.” Several expressed an interest in more courses that would zero in on specific areas such as sports reporting or coverage of music.

### **PROFESSIONAL STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION**

Two required courses, Principles of Strategic Communication and Strategic Communication Campaigns, are followed by 15 hours of skills courses and nine hours of context courses. There is a wide range of courses for students to choose from in both groupings. The mix is appropriate, and includes advertising and public relations courses, as well as classes that combine the two disciplines.

Students reported high satisfaction with the Professional Strategic Communication track, their teachers and the curriculum. Students said that their professors really want to help them succeed; they told numerous stories of the availability of faculty and willingness to help.

Some students commented on the need for more specific public relations courses, noting that the majority of the course offerings focused on advertising issues and skills. In addition, some students said the program emphasized internships and jobs in ad agencies to the exclusion of other career paths. Other students felt that foundational courses became repetitive in content, while electives were “thinly spread,” meaning they sometimes could not get into classes they wanted and could not develop an area of expertise.

Faculty members described incorporating community clients into many of their course assignments, building engagement through an appropriate mix of theory and practice. Professionals frequently are invited to speak; this involvement of the robust professional community in the Twin Cities adds “excitement, a diversity of intellectual perspectives, and combines scholarship with practice,” according to one faculty member. Faculty also reported constant efforts to update syllabi and classes with current content and trends in the industries.

**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 School has made numerous revisions to its curriculum during this accreditation cycle, as part of its on-going effort to keep instruction both rigorous and current. Media professionals have contributed to this constant updating. All course profiles now include sections listing “Expected Technology Competencies” that students should have before enrolling in a course, and “Expected Technology Goals” that students should acquire by completion of the class. Digital and Social Media classes and content have been added across the curriculum, although students noted that they would like to see even more, particularly in the area of content creation using tools such as Adobe Creative Suite.

Student achievement is recognized in a number of ways, including induction into Kappa Tau Alpha. Faculty members are routinely evaluated for their teaching, by students and by peers.

**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.)**

All skills classes and lab sections reported for the last two semesters meet the 20-1 maximum student-faculty 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 unit “strongly encourages and supports internship-based learning,” a commitment that is reflected in the clear written processes for students to get internship credit. Students reported faculty and staff assistance in identifying internships through connections in the professional community. Whether students choose to receive credit or not, the vast majority of hands went up in the room full of students who were asked to indicate who among them currently had or had in the past, an internship in the industry.

**SUMMARY:** The unit offers a curriculum that is carefully constructed, but not rigid, in that it is constantly updated and provides students with many choices for areas of interest. Professionals are engaged in the program’s evolution, helping to ensure currency of the instruction. Faculty members report a passion for teaching, even those with very active research agendas. Students enthusiastically confirm this positive engagement of their professors.

**Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:**

**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.**

An 11-page plan governs the unit's performance and aspirations on diversity and inclusiveness. The School revised the document in December 2017, its third update since formal implementation in 2000. Four themes anchor the current plan, each outlined in a separate section:

- Student recruitment and retention.
- Curriculum.
- Engagement, by way of events and outreach.
- Faculty recruitment and retention.

Under each section, goals are stated, followed by strategies and tactics for achieving each goal. As a means of assigning tangible accountability, either one or more individuals, or the Diversity Committee as a whole, is listed as responsible for following through on each objective.

Expectations of a hospitable, respectful workplace climate are addressed in the unit's diversity plan and in this representative statement from self-study: "The HSJMC emphasizes its commitment to creating an inclusive environment that welcomes a rich diversity of races ethnicities, cultures and ideas. It includes language to this effect on syllabi and on other school literature."

According to the plan, the School embraces an expansive range of characteristics under its diversity banner: Race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

**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 describes a holistic approach to immersing students in skills-driven and conceptual principles of diversity. The School expects diversity and inclusiveness throughout the curriculum, not just via diversity-themed courses. So, while students signed up for Diversity and Mass Communications as well as for Mass Media and Popular Culture as electives in fall 2018, the School places primary responsibility for embedding diversity values on the collective power of the full curriculum. Under this approach, the School expects students to encounter diversity instruction in all manner of classes, starting with their entry into the major, and reinforced continuously on through their capstone experiences.

Indicators of success were apparent.

Students participating in group conversations with team members demonstrated an understanding of diversity as articulated by ACEJMC's standard. They noted that their courses typically included attention to diversity, sometimes across extended periods, other times for a week or so. Judging from overall comments, students understand diversity as a broad concept covering multiple layers of demographics – some students, for example, cited the different generations and varied areas of expertise exhibited by professors. At the same time, students' comments indicated they recognize the primacy of race, ethnicity and gender.

While the majority of students in a second round of conversations said diversity was a frequent topic in their classes, one said she did not recall much about hearing multicultural media issues until she enrolled in an elective centered on diversity.

Additional evidence of the unit's diversity commitment was apparent in an extensive set of self-study summaries illustrating substantive attention to diversity in courses, and in conversations with faculty members. A few examples:

- Introductory Jour 1001 explores several elements of diversity, including the history of ethnic media in the U.S.
- The ethics course features movie clips that lend themselves to analysis of racial, ethnic and gender dynamics.
- Media law examines the civil rights tentacles of notable cases such as *Near v. Minnesota* and *New York Times v. Sullivan*; another law section focuses on minority ownership in media.
- A game course instructor strives to "get them beyond 'Here's what I see. Here's what I know. '... What about (the different perspectives) of others?'"
- A photo instructor stresses skills necessary to shoot images of subjects with darker skin complexions.
- A special course identified the addicted community as an often misunderstood subject of news coverage, an assignment seen as forcing students out of their comfort zones.

**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.**

Recruiting for faculty and staff positions was mixed during the re-accreditation review period. The School experienced gains among females across multiple faculty ranks as well as solid representation of international faculty, but attempts to attract under-represented domestic faculty went unfulfilled, despite what were described as vigorous efforts.

The School recruits and retains female faculty and staff members with a high degree of success. The program's chief administrative officer, hired as director in 2017, is female, as is the faculty member who preceded her as interim director. Of 32 faculty positions, 18 are female. Women hold 9 of 11 staff positions listed on organizational chart, one an Asian.

Seven faculty members can be classified under international diversity. Their countries of previous residence: South Korea; Italy; Canada; and the Netherlands.

The state of domestic diversity was the subject of extensive team discussions with the director and with



individual faculty members. The result for full-time faculty, as of the team's visit: One Native American male faculty member, plus two Asian females with international origins.

The self-study cited a run of tough breaks and setbacks in recent years affecting retention and hiring goals. One African American colleague took medical leave of absence. Another, who was tenured, was lured to a different academic unit on campus. Aggressive recruitment of a Hispanic finalist seemed on the verge of paying off, until derailed by the surprising inability of another academic discipline on campus to close the deal on a promising spousal hire. Furthermore, according to the self-study, Minnesota's lack of cachet as a destination for people of color was exacerbated more than once by supply and demand – too few diverse candidates, pursued by other aggressive suitors, in places with a more diverse community profile.

Overall adjunct faculty numbers are 41 total, three diverse - comparable to figures reported in the previous site visit. Persistent challenges in diversifying the corps of part-time instructors are being addressed with what coordinators consider a potential breakthrough in recruitment tactics, launched in fall 2018.

In addition to the regular part-time instructors, seven adjunct-styled Diversity Fellows were recruited from the ranks of local media professionals, some already occasional guest classroom speakers. Adjunct recruiters said they repeatedly invited several to teach a course over the years, but prospects were too busy to take on full-semester loads. Experimenting with reframed roles for the prospect created a possible solution to long-term recruitment dilemmas: The School decided to try pairing each fellow with a faculty instructor, and establishing flexible schedules allowing periodic lectures, work with students on projects and other ways to create interaction with students. In addition, the School redirected funds to pay fellows more for their adjunct-like services.

The inaugural group consists of four journalists and three strategic communications professionals – two African Americans; three Asians; one Hispanic; and one Native American.

A group of 10 students meeting with the team on its second day on campus seemed generally aware of the added classroom visits by diverse professionals, labeled “adjunct adjuncts” by one observant student. One faculty member described the early successes of two training sessions conducted by a journalist-fellow, on source development and on interviewing. Students, he added, benefitted from the fellow's diverse presence as well as techniques and perspectives fresh from the newsroom. More such interactions with students were planned.

No one seemed ready to declare total victory during the early stages of experiment. But coordinators reported positive response already from students experiencing more diverse instructors. Coordinators said their vision for the program is to first grow the ranks of adjuncts, then help certain fellows position themselves for future faculty searches.

**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.**

Current student enrollment figures are slightly below the university's levels, though slightly above School figures six years ago. For the most part, differences are statistically insignificant.

Enrollment totals for 2017-18 (and six years ago)

- **White:** 80.7 percent School (84.2 percent in 2012) vs. 68.9 percent university
- **Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander:** 0.2 percent (0.2 percent in 2012) vs. 0.4 percent university.
- **American Indian/Alaskan Native:** 0.8 percent (0.9 percent in 2012) vs. 1.3 percent university
- **Hispanic:** 3.1 percent School (3.0 percent in 2012) vs. 3.4 percent university.
- **Black/African American:** 4.3 percent (4.2 in 2012) vs. 5.3 percent university
- **Asian:** 6 percent (7.2 in 2012) vs. 11 percent university.
- **International:** 4.5 percent (3.4 in 2012) vs. 9 percent university.

Minnesota population totals: White 80.6 percent; black/African American 6.2 percent; Hispanic 5.2 percent; Asian: 4.9 percent; American Indian/Alaskan native, 1.3 percent; Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander, 0.1 percent.

Admissions is centralized at the university-level, without direct control by the unit. However, the School's diversity plan still calls for continued independent recruiting efforts combined with more aggressive steps to help shape outcomes, including cultivation of community college programs and high schools with enrollments of under-represented students.

The self-study celebrated campus-leading four-year graduation rates for students of color, which increased to 88.2 percent, just below the overall School rate, which increased to nearly 90.

**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.**

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

Almost all students, staff and faculty described the School as a pleasant, supportive academic home. Faculty additionally characterized their relations as dominated by collaboration, civility and constructive engagement.

Some students said their instructors not only provided the expertise and guidance they have come to expect, many also praised responsiveness and the convivial quality of their interactions.

Evidence of an expansive approach to diversity was heard or observed in multiple cases. One instructor talked about becoming more conscious of different learning styles after speculating that about 10 percent of course students had some form of disability. A gay instructor said he self-identified early in the employment process, anticipating a welcoming environment, which he remains pleased with.

**SUMMARY:** The School pursues diversity with sound goals, good will, an occasional flash of creativity, and some outstanding results. Students grasp the basics of the role and reach of diversity, often with appropriate nuance. The presence of discourse inside classroom appears sound. Representation of females throughout the faculty and staff ranks is commendable. And key student diversity enrollment percentages are roughly parallel to those of the university. One substantial lapse is the make-up of full-time faculty. The total includes valuable international faculty, though just one person fitting a domestic diversity classification was employed at the time of the site visit. The unit

uniformly acknowledges this weakness, even as it experiments with a promising Diversity Fellows program that has already added seven people of color to the list of adjunct-like instructors spending time with students.

**Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:**

**COMPLIANCE**

Academic year: 2017 – 2018 Full-time faculty\*

Group	Female	% of total faculty	Male	% of total faculty
Black/African-American	0	0	0	0
White	14	50%	11	39.3%
American Indian/Alaskan native	0	0	1	3.6%
Asian	2	7.1%	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)**	5	17.9%	2	7.1%

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

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

### **Unit performance with regard to indicators:**

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

The School has written criteria for selecting and evaluating the performance of all full- and part-time faculty members, as well as instructional staff—and carefully follows the constructed procedures. The self-study notes that “the process and criteria for the selection of full-time and part-time faculty and academic (instructional) staff are designed to attract a large and diverse pool of highly qualified applicants and produce outstanding appointments.”

Authorization for searches flow from annual budget consultations between the School and the College of Liberal Arts. After a search is authorized, a formal requisition is prepared that defines the position and a search committee is formed. School committees also may include a professor from outside the School or a graduate student from within. For some searches, professionals from external communications organizations are invited to serve. Gender and ethnic diversity are considered when search committees are formed. The School advertises widely for full-time positions. Finalists are invited for campus interviews. The search committee solicits input. The School makes a recommendation to the dean of the college, who must approve before an offer can be extended.

Part-time faculty members are recruited to teach a course during a given term. As is the case at many universities, the School maintains a standing job posting on the website of Minnesota's Office of Human Resources. The self-study notes that the School's director and faculty members often “recruit candidates to this pool . . . (as well as) through their networks of local, regional, and national academic and professional colleagues and associations.”

Expectations of full- and part-time faculty members are made clear in the college's “Workload Principles and Guidelines for Regular (Tenured and Tenure-Track) Faculty Members;” in the college's “Workload Principles & Guidelines;” and in the School's carefully crafted Standards for Promotion and Tenure. In a nutshell, according to the self-study, each full-time faculty member is expected to “accomplish superior teaching, scholarship or creative activity, and service, though the proportion of each activity in the workload of an individual faculty member may vary somewhat from one academic year to the next.” Guidelines for promotion and tenure are clearly spelled out and adhered to.

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

The teaching, research, creative and professional activity, and service responsibilities of each of the School's 32 full-time faculty members vary based on the talents and interests of the faculty member and the needs of the unit. The normal teaching load for tenured and tenure-track faculty members is two courses per semester. The normal load for full-time contract faculty members is five courses per academic year. There are, of course, exceptions to the standard loads, including releases for course development, research and outreach opportunities. Commendably, new tenure-track faculty members in the School receive a two-course release at a logical juncture in the first four years of their appointment,

thus allowing them to focus on scholarly or creative work that will add heft to their scholarly record during the tenure review process.

During the three academic years prior to the site visit, the School's full-time faculty members taught an average of 56 percent of all core and required courses offered and generated an average of 73 percent of all student credit hours produced.

The self-study notes that the college and the School "each set high expectations for teaching, research, creative and professional activity, and service. Each faculty member is expected to be an excellent teacher, mentor, and adviser, along with demonstrating national or international recognition for scholarly activity. Each is expected to perform service that contributes to the well-being of the School, the College of Liberal Arts, the University as a whole, professional organizations at the national or international level, and the extended community."

**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 School boasts an exceptionally well balanced, productive and distinguished faculty. The 32 full-time faculty members are distributed well across four ranks: 5 tenured full professors; 6 associate professors, 4 of whom are tenured and 2 of whom are on contract; 13 assistant professors, 10 of whom are on tenure-track and 3 of whom are on contract; and 8 instructors/lecturers. Some members of the full-time faculty are hybrids, who possess academic credentials and professional experience; some faculty members possess the strong scholarly records one would expect at a research-intensive university; and the strength of some faculty members lies in their extraordinary professional backgrounds.

Their balance is reflected also in degrees: 22 hold the Ph.D. degree; 1 holds the J.D.; 6 hold master's degrees; and 3 hold baccalaureate degrees. Of the 32 full-time faculty members, 18 are females and 14 are males. Their primary areas are evenly split: 16 in Strategic Communication and 16 in Journalism.

The self-study also correctly points out that the School's faculty members "have earned degrees from a wide range of prestigious universities representing a diversity of viewpoints within the discipline."

The part-time faculty numbered 41 during the 2017-2018 academic year—and add additional balance to the teaching mission of the School. Their collective credentials are impressive, but not surprising, because, as the self-study notes: "The Twin Cities is home to a robust professional community in the fields of journalism, public relations, advertising, and general management, which results in a rich pool of potential adjunct faculty members. Many ad agency executives and creative directors are (School) graduates." More than half hold advanced degrees. The self-study summarized their professional backgrounds, which "range from several years of staff- or freelance-level experience to several decades of management or executive-level experience in print/broadcast media, public relations, or advertising. A number of adjunct faculty operate successful private communication businesses, and many have won important awards from their professional organizations." Of the 41, 21 are males and 20 are females.

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

Each class is evaluated for teaching quality. University, college and School policies dictate that reviews of teaching must include student evaluations and some form of peer evaluation, but may include other measures as well. School policy states that evaluations of teaching also may include publication of textbooks; development and review of instructional materials; development of new courses, including new areas of instruction; substantive refinement of courses and use of new technologies; supervision of undergraduate research and honors projects; mentoring or advising of graduate or undergraduate students; and recognition received through teaching-related awards and grants. A broad spectrum of School, college and university programs and workshops is offered to faculty members who seek to refine and expand their instructional methods and strategies.

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

The quality of education provided by the School's faculty is highly praised by central administrators and others at the university. Several of those who attended the Monday luncheon noted that the School is well known across campus for its instructional commitment to undergraduate education. Students also spoke generally in glowing terms about the accessibility and credentials of their instructors. One major capsulized the essence of comments by others: "I've never met a teacher here who is not available to a student, whether to talk about a class or an internship."

**SUMMARY:** This exceptionally well-balanced, gifted, respected and dedicated faculty, based on all accounts, consistently delivers quality instruction to students.

**Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:**

**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.**

As one would expect from a School housed in one of the country's leading research universities, its faculty members are research active and productive. This statement from the self-study hits the nail on the head: "The School is fortunate to exist within a larger University environment that sets the highest standards . . . . The University and the College of Liberal Arts express the aim that all faculty members will attain national recognition for scholarly work. This is underscored by regulations for faculty tenure. [The School] embraces and extends these high standards by fostering its own climate in support of outstanding scholarship, creating and promoting numerous opportunities to engage in scholarly, professional and creative activity."

Support for faculty research, creative and professional activities would earn a spot in the top tier of the country's ACEJMC programs. The support begins with competitive, generous startup packages for new faculty members (funding for research needs over a four-year period, including expenditures for a research assistant, travel expenses beyond the School's annual allocation, summer support and course releases); a generous \$4,000 annual allocation for all faculty members for travel, research, creative and professional development activities; seed and matching money for grant proposals; and additional support from extramural sources. Faculty development leaves and sabbaticals are awarded when merited, as are family and personal leaves.

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

Policies and expectations are crystal clear. The university tenure code sets the tone: "What the [institution] seeks above all in its faculty members is intellectual distinction and academic integrity. The basis for awarding indefinite tenure to the candidates possessing these qualities is the determination that each has established and is likely to continue to develop a distinguished record of academic achievement that is the foundation for national or international reputation or both." The School's criteria are precise.

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

As noted above, expectations for faculty research, creative and professional activities are clearly spelled out. As indicated in Standard 4, the faculty possesses balance that is reflected in, among other things, their academic and professional credentials; their areas of research and creative interests and contributions; and their teaching specializations. The School respects the range of contributions its diverse faculty makes.

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

The School deservedly earned an international reputation nearly a century ago for its research active faculty. Minnesota faculty members have served as editor, managing editor, assistant editor, assistant managing editor or business manager of one of the field's premier journals, *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* (formerly *Journalism Quarterly*), for 45 of its 94-year publication history. The tradition of scholarly productivity continues. Since the School earned reaccreditation six years ago, its faculty members collectively serve on a variety of editorial boards and have produced worthy **numbers**: 6 scholarly books; 4 textbooks; 4 edited books; 33 book chapters; 101 articles in refereed journals; 129 refereed conference papers; 78 invited academic papers; 8 encyclopedia entries; 16 book reviews; and 14 articles in non-refereed publications. Their works also have been published in or presented at an impressive spectrum of **outlets and venues**: a diverse range of top-flight journals, and a strong array of national and international conferences, representing a spectrum of divisions, and scholarly and professional interest groups within professional associations. Faculty members also have consistently sought and received internal and external grants.

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

As made clear throughout this report, the university, college and School combine to truly foster a climate of intellectual curiosity. As noted above, start-up packages for new hires, opportunities for release time for faculty members to pursue special projects, noteworthy travel funding and generous leave policies combine to create a healthy environment. The School also is home to two well-established centers that consistently bring together academics and professionals: The Minnesota Journalism Center and the Silha Center for the Study of Media Ethics and Law.

**SUMMARY:** A tradition for excellence in research, scholarship, creative and professional activity in journalism-mass communication was established long ago at Minnesota. The School's faculty members -- across its professorial ranks -- take full advantage of the support currently provided and consistently produce first-rate scholarship that is widely distributed. Prospects also are bright for the future. One senior member of the faculty said: "We have the most impressive group of young professors since I've been here."

**Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:**

**COMPLIANCE**



Report of on-site evaluation of undergraduate programs for 2018-2019 Visits

Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activities through Fall 2017*	Total from Unit**	Individuals				Totals (23)
		Full Professors (5)	Associate Professors (3)	Assistant Professors (10)	Other Faculty*** (5)	
Awards and Honors	17	10	0	7	0	17
Grants Received Internal	19	5	4	10	0	19
Grants Received External	19	8	2	9	0	19
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co-authored	6	1	5	1	0	7
Textbooks, Sole- or Co-authored	4	4	0	0	1	5
Books Edited	4	1	2	1	0	4
Book Chapters	33	17	4	12	0	33
Monographs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Articles in Refereed Journals	101	46	1	57	5	109
Refereed Conference Papers	129	41	17	65	8	131
Invited Academic Papers	78	3	56	19	0	78
Encyclopedia Entries	8	6	1	4	0	11
Book Reviews	16	5	8	3	0	16
Articles in Non-refereed Publications	14	8	0	5	1	14
Juried Creative Works	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-juried Creative Works	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other (please specify)	20	10	0	10	0	20

## PART II — Standard 6: Student Services

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

Students receive advising for general university requirements (e.g., “*what foreign language courses are needed*”) at the college level. CLA advisers also assist with degree audits, registration policies and processes, grade petitions, general academic issues and other matters. Students then work with the School for advising specific to the major, which includes exploring the major itself, course scheduling, assistance with unit courses and prerequisites, learning about internships and careers, and so forth. This two-prong approach is clearly articulated on the School website.

Within the School, academic advising is centralized with a professional staff, which means faculty are able to focus more of their time with students on discussions about academic interests and careers. On the School website, there is a directory of who to contact for what, a list of faculty mentors by subject areas, a calendar showing drop-in advising hours and more.

Twice each academic year (fall and spring), faculty members attend an event with new students. Students create a plan that outlines the courses they will take to complete their degree, and this plan is discussed and approved by faculty members at the meeting. Faculty members also use this time to visit with small groups of students to discuss the individual degree plans and review requirements. While some students often deviate from their approved plan (for example, take a course out of sequence) they generally know the path that’s required at the start of their work on the degree and feel confident they will get all the course they need to graduate.

The 72-credit rule is programed into APAS (a university online degree audit system). Students are expected to monitor this and the college’s advising office will not clear students for graduation if 72 credits are not taken outside of the School. A few students mentioned that the APAS system did not always reflect changes they have made since they first outlined their degree plan, but they indicated this was not a big concern.

Conversations with students indicate they feel informed about program requirements and that communication with the advisers and faculty mentors is good. Many students specifically mentioned that the Student Services office was available, helpful and well organized. A university-wide student survey (SERU) shows 95 percent of the students in the School indicate program requirements are well defined, and 92 percent indicate department rules and policies are clearly communicated.

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

Students feel faculty members are available even after normal working hours, are open and willing to visit, and keep their scheduled appointments. Some commented that even adjuncts, who have more limited availability in Murphy Hall, are responsive. Faculty said they enjoy meeting with and getting to know students. Office hours are posted near doors of faculty offices. Students who have transferred from other programs, or who are knowledgeable about other programs, said the School has professors who care more, are more responsive, and are more connected to the “real world” than their counterparts elsewhere.

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

The School website is well organized with links about majors/minors, courses, advising, careers, study-abroad opportunities, scholarships, student organizations, highlights of student work and profiles of selected students. The news section of the site includes information about students, faculty and alums; upcoming events; current and archived copies of Murphy Reporter (the alumni magazine); and more. Students also mention Murphy Weekly, a weekly e-newsletter (distributed on Wednesday) as being a key source of information about upcoming events, job postings, things happening around the School, and so forth. There also is good signage around the building, as well as a variety of brochures and other materials available in the Student Services office. Some information about activities, requirements and policies is also shared in the classroom. Students said that they feel informed and knowledgeable about things they need to know.

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

There are six student clubs: AdClub (for those interested in advertising); MMPA Media and Publishing Club (for those interested in the magazine and publishing industries); NSCA (National Student Advertising Competition, which involves entering campaigns in national competitions); PRISM (a multicultural student organization); PRSSA (Public Relations Student Society of America, for those interested in public relations); and SPJ (Society of Professional Journalists, a student club for journalists). There is a small office suite in Murphy Hall where each club maintains a desk and keep files. A staff member in the Student Services office is designated as a coordinator for each of the clubs – although she is not a faculty adviser, she helped the clubs get started, maintains their registration with the university, requires students to create an annual plan and helps promote the clubs to new students (via speaking to classes, an engagement fair and other ways). Each club receives \$300 in annual funding from the School. Information about each club is found on the website. In meetings with students, all said they are aware of the various clubs and many are members.

Students also are encouraged to work for the Minnesota Daily student newspaper, Wake magazine, KUOM public radio and StudioU (which produces video content for the university community). Several students also work in CLAgency, a student-run agency housed in the college.

Students are also aware of internship opportunities and noted the advantage of the School being in the heart of a large media and strategic communications market.

**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.**

Information about graduation and retention is available on the School website. The graduation rate shown is from 2017 and is significantly higher than the university-wide graduation rate. The information is presented in an easy-to-understand format, along with additional statistics that promote the School's overall student satisfaction, advising satisfaction and faculty interaction. This portion of the site also highlights where some students land jobs after graduation, as well as the percentages of

courses taught by full-time and adjunct faculty.

**SUMMARY:** The School does a good job of meeting this standard. Faculty members and students feel that advising works well. Students are knowledgeable about the program, the requirements and the extra-curricular opportunities available. Communication between the School and the students is good. The website contains the required information, and then some.

**Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:**

**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 School finances are meticulously detailed—and clearly related to its strategic plan. Annual expenditures for 2018-2019 are projected to total \$7,754,285, up from \$7,543,553 in 2017-2018, and an increase of 11.2 percent from 2015-2016. As is routinely the case, the lion's share of expenditures is earmarked for salaries (full-time teaching, part-time teaching, teaching assistants, students, clerical and administrative): \$5,975,471.

The School's yearly budget process consists of: an annual recurring allocation from the College of Liberal Arts, which flows from goals-based priority requests from the School; one-time "soft" funding commitments from the college; recurring endowment allocations that support, among other things, the unit's centers, and faculty and staff salaries; and annually determined endowment allocations that fund scholarships, fellowships, faculty research, technology and infrastructure, and some facilities projects.

The School was pleased that it received a commitment from the college prior to the fall semester to fund four tenure-track searches for needed new faculty positions over the next three years.

The School is blessed to have a permanent endowment of some \$39 million—one of the largest of ACEJMC-accredited programs. Decades ago, the School was among the country's journalism-mass communication programs early leaders in raising private funds—and it continues on that path. Allocations from the endowment, as noted above, provide a true margin of excellence for, among other things, its two major centers, as well as supplements for programs and salaries. The School also awarded \$364,400 for scholarships in 2017-2018, which is very good for a program of this size.

The self-study concluded that "the School is well-funded for resources, facilities and equipment." It also noted that "the unit's most urgent needs for resources were met by a commitment from the (dean of the college) to a multi-year hiring plan in support of the School's undergraduate goals and approval of facilities renovations in line with the School's naming."

Bottom line: Although clearly not awash in riches, through a combination of university allocations, yearly payouts from an impressive permanent endowment and annual private fundraising, the School certainly provides a strong education for its students and operating support for its faculty.

#### **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 appears to be treated fairly within the university and, as noted above, is providing more than adequate support for its students, staff and faculty members

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

The School has made a number of improvements to Murphy Hall to improve the student experience, including a renovation of the multimedia auditorium. The technology in that space was completely updated during the past academic year, and new seating with fresh carpeting and acoustic panels. A long

list of additional upgrades was completed during 2017-2018.

In addition to its renovated auditorium, Murphy Hall now boasts four multimedia classrooms, a Digital Media Studio, a Multimedia Conference Center, the Digital Information Resource Center/Sevareid Library, physical spaces for both the Minnesota Journalism Center and the Silha Center for Study of Media Ethics and Law, and a research suite with a focus group facility. These facilities address the research needs of faculty members and graduate students as well as the teaching and learning related to undergraduate education.

Plans already are underway for additional, ongoing facility renovations over the next budget cycle.

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

The School provides access to a significant inventory of equipment for both faculty members and students, and the institution provides yet another layer of access.

The Digital Media Studio is filled with 66 workstations equipped with Adobe Creative Cloud, and a fully equipped broadcast production facility.

A checkout room makes available to students nearly 70 camcorder kits of various kinds and about two dozen still cameras, along with many accessories.

Students said they know how to get the equipment they need and don't have any problems getting camera gear when they need it. They did express frustration at not having access to Adobe Creative Cloud outside the building; a number of students said there are insufficient workstations for busy times of the semester, and with the building inaccessible evenings and weekends, it makes it sometimes difficult to complete projects.

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

The Digital Information Resource Center/Sevareid Library has both traditional and digital resources for faculty members and staff. The institution has a dedicated Journalism and Digital Media librarian who provides research and instructional support.

**SUMMARY:** The School's annual expenditures have been on a consistent upward trajectory, and it is treated fairly within the university. Annual payouts from the School's \$39 million permanent endowment help to ensure needs of the faculty and students are met. The School's recent renovations to Murphy Hall are part of a well-planned series of activities to ensure facilities that enhance teaching, learning and scholarship. Gear for digital content creation is adequate and accessible to students.

**Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:**

**COMPLIANCE**

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

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

### **Unit performance with regard to indicators:**

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

The unit's relationships with alumni and other professionals appear robust. A 12-member HSJMC Advisory Board pursues opportunities for sustaining a strong network of program graduates, which in turn interacts with the School in multiple ways. The unit takes advantage of its location in a major market for media. The self-study affirms the centrality of engagement with professionals: "Access to this professional community is a hallmark of the student experience and the centerpiece of the School's outreach activity."

The School is a frequent collaborator, host and convener of events. It works closely with a wide range of industry organizations, including the International Association of Business Communications, the Midwest Broadcast Journalists Association, the Minnesota Media and Publishing Association, state chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists and The Asian American Journalists Association.

Curriculum reviews, program initiatives and events routinely involve professionals, many of them alumni in influential media jobs in the state and across the country. Newsletters, social media channels, and other forums keep alumni updated on School activities, often inviting comments and participation. Alumni in turn are active as adjuncts, guest speakers, panelists, mentors, internship resources and more.

Over the past six years, the School says hundreds of speakers have graced the campus, spending valuable time with students and sharing their insights on the industry.

**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 School projects an extraordinary leadership profile on media standards of performance and public engagement on a meaningful range of ethical challenges, First Amendment analyses and other urgent media issues. It houses two of journalism education's most consequential centers – the Minnesota Journalism Center and the Silha Center for the Study of Media Ethics and Law. More broadly the School maintains a reputation as a rich source of research, professional development opportunities, forums for public discourse, other activities that contribute to the assessment of media and the debate over the future of various fields of communications.

MJC, in existence since 1979, creates conferences and other programs intended to strengthen relations between media professionals and academics, ultimately aiming to improve journalism quality. The center also produces research and other analyses.

The Silha Center examines ethical and legal issues in media through annual lectures, other periodic forums, training opportunities and a journal published three times a year. Its 33<sup>rd</sup> annual lecture in fall 2018 focused on “the First Amendment and #metoo,” typical of the highly relevant topics address by the center.

The two cultivate close relationships with professionals in the state and beyond.

**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.**

Minnesota’s support for faculty research, course development, external engagement and matters affecting work-life balance appears to be bountiful. At least \$4,000 is available per faculty member each year for travel and development, more when necessary.

The School encourages training, travel to relevant venues hosting gatherings of interest, academic engagement beyond the campus, and various levels of sabbaticals, allowing faculty members to focus on special projects or other academic prerogatives.

School faculty members are active in regional, national and international associations and conferences.

**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.**

Students praised options provided to them in the Minneapolis-St. Paul media market. Internships appear to be readily available. Practicums allow students to work directly with major newsrooms and other media outlets on challenging assignments under realistic workplace conditions.

One faculty member pointed to a published enterprising report about university students in recovery from substance addiction as an example of a culture that encourages students to stretch, learn and grow as working journalists.

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

The School is a national and state touchstone of scholastic journalism. The National Scholastic Press Association, in conjunction with the Associated Collegiate Press, is housed near the campus, along with the Minnesota branch of NSPA. They advocate for First Amendment principles and provide training for student journalists and media advisers at middle schools, high schools and colleges.

The School’s director serves as president of the national groups, and two faculty members serve on the board of directors.

The School’s status as headquarters makes Minneapolis a notable convener and partner in journalism education conferences, workshops and other activities. NSPA and ACP collaborate routinely on national programming for student journalists and their advisers, convening several thousand participants each year. The Minnesota High School Press Association State Conference’s annual gathering attracts



hundreds of participants interested in online media, newspapers, yearbooks, magazines and broadcast.

The School's footprint during the review period extended to playing host to or collaborating on projects with diversity objectives, including a multicultural journalism camp sponsored by the Asian American Journalists Association, a marketing training experience sponsored by BrandLab, and a high school TV broadcast camp in partnership with private University of St. Thomas.

**SUMMARY:** The School is a striking model of excellence in professional and public service. Its manifesto is broad, deep, frequent and effective. Both the Minnesota Journalism Center and the Silha Center for the Study of Media Ethics and Law are widely recognized for first-rate programming on consequential topics in media. The School's long record of engagement with scholastic journalism is commendable. Students, the public and media professions reap ongoing benefits from the School's exacting record of service.

**Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:**

**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:**

*The Accrediting Committee and Council seek site-team reports on assessment that are appropriately detailed for a judgment on compliance that is informed, fair and consistent from one team to another. Please respond to each of these questions in your report on indicators (a), (b) and (c):*

#### **a) The unit defines the goals for learning that students must achieve, including the “Professional Values and Competencies” of the Council.**

- Who is in charge of the assessment program (e.g., administrator, sequence coordinator or faculty committee)?
- How has the unit verified that core and required courses cover all 12 of ACEJMC’s professional 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?

There is a written assessment plan that includes the 12 ACEJMC Professional Values and Competencies as well as the School’s mission statement. The plan was originally approved by the faculty in 2003, with revisions in 2011, 2017 and 2018. A designated faculty member is responsible for the overall assessment program, with colleagues sharing leadership roles in the process. There also are several faculty committees involved, as well as outside professionals who review and evaluate outcomes.

Clearly, a lot of people actively participate in the process, with the benefit being that assessment appears to be widely understood by the faculty. Conversations indicate that all are aware of how the assessment process works in general, and how they and their courses are involved specifically. Assessment may be seen as tangential to the central mission of the unit and may not always be well understood at some institutions, but the faculty at the School articulate the process well and share examples of how they have made improvements based on the feedback. Assessment – at least as an activity -- seems imbedded in the faculty’s DNA and is key to what they do.

Comments from faculty:

*“We’ve come a long way from what we used to do.”*

*“We use results to brainstorm about ideas of things we can do better.”*

*“It’s a very organized process. I know what I’m supposed to do.” (This is from a new faculty member.)*

*“The feedback prompted me to makes some changes.”*

*“We have made a lot of progress and improvements. For example, our Strategic Communication students didn’t used to know much about things like freedom of speech and now they do.”*

The School has created a grid that maps all courses to the 12 values and competencies. Almost all align with at least one of the items, either as “awareness,” “understanding” or “application.” A random selection of syllabuses shows the values and competencies are included on each.

**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?
- What indirect measures does it use, where and when?
- Are these measures effective for assessing ACEJMC’s professional values and competencies?

The School considers the following as direct measures:

- Course evaluations and surveys by students
- A university-wide Student Experience in Research (SERU) survey
- Assessments by industry professionals (for all skills courses, capstone projects and field-based practica)
- Context course assessments (a test for graduating seniors)
- Writing assessments

Indirect measures include:

- Annual graduate placement survey (conducted by the office of Student Services)
- Curriculum planning and syllabus review (an ongoing process of analysis and revisions of course profiles)
- Competitions and awards

These measures are effective for assessing the ACEJMC’s professional values and competencies.

**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?
  - What specific values and competencies had graduating classes not mastered satisfactorily?
  - How does the unit decide how to address these areas of concern and what actions did it take to do so?
  - How does the unit evaluate whether its actions overcame the weaknesses in student learning and what were the results?
    - Was the program of data analysis and action effective for identifying and overcoming unsatisfactory student learning?

For skills courses, the assessment process works like this: Approximately every three years, a specific course is up for assessment (there is a schedule for which courses are assessed each year). A student produces a final paper or project that is reviewed by several industry professionals. These professionals complete a rubric indicating how well the students performed on each item being measured. A composite report is created and reviewed by an assessment committee. Weaknesses are identified and communicated with the instructors who then use the feedback to make improvements.

For the capstone projects and field-based practica, outside professionals (or in the case of internships, the student’s supervisor) evaluate the work. As is the case for skills courses, weaknesses are identified and communicated with faculty members who then use the information to make improvements.

For the context courses, the assessment is in the form of one survey administered to seniors that asks questions about things directly related to the competencies, such as First Amendment rights, the Freedom of Information Act, the importance of diversity, and so forth. Results are then presented to all undergraduate faculty members and discussions ensue about which context courses should be modified to improve learning. The reason all undergraduate faculty members are involved in the discussion is because the knowledge measured on the survey comes from a variety of courses students have taken previously, not the specific course in which the survey is given.

Many improvements have been made based on the results of the assessments. A few examples:

- In Jour3279W Professional Writing for Strategic Communications: Students wrote in a clear, organized manner and properly used AP style, but some did not properly format a news release or had trouble with spelling. More review of these items now occurs in the course.
- Jour 3321 Media Design: Some students were not meeting a key objective, so instructors discussed ways students could use past assignments to guide future assignments.
- It was learned some students in the Strategic Communications program did not have a good understanding of things such as free press and ethics. Adjustments were made in some context courses to emphasize these concepts.

Other examples of some high-level changes include adding technology competency goals to strategic communication course profiles; the addition of several new courses; major revisions to some courses; the development of expected writing competencies for the School overall, and so forth.

Faculty members are able to articulate the improvements and are proud of the progress they are making. A solid process of gathering and using information is in place. The analysis and action is effective for overcoming unsatisfactory student learning.

But while the curriculum mapping, the inclusion of competencies on syllabuses, the methods of measurement, the feedback and the changes made to the courses appears effective, there's so much going on it may sometimes be difficult to sort out which metrics are most important and where the focus should be.

Additionally, there appear to be no specific goals set for any of the measures. For example, while outside professionals may indicate 60 percent of the students in a given class met the expectations for a particular item, there's nothing to indicate whether that's acceptable or not, nor what the standard should be.

It is unclear which specific values and competencies the graduating class as an overall cohort has and has not mastered. The survey administered to graduating seniors is shared with faculty members and the results of each question are discussed and dissected. Appropriate actions are taken in individual courses where it is felt that the deficiency resides. But there is no overall analysis as to mastery and deficiencies of specific items on the survey.

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

Alumni are extensively involved in assessment. About half of the group of industry professionals who assess course projects are generally alumni. Alumni were also highly involved in a major overhaul of curriculum that occurred some five years ago.

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

The School includes professionals in the evaluation of course outcomes at all levels. For example, industry professionals are involved in evaluating all skills courses, all of the field-practica courses and all of the capstone projects. This allows faculty to receive feedback from beginning, intermediate and capstone courses. And it helps ensure that the evaluation of outcomes is based on things that are relevant and current with the profession.

**SUMMARY:** There is considerable activity as it relates to assessment, and many faculty members are involved in the process. Nearly all members of faculty praise the well-organized assessment process, and report they are using the results to make changes. The loop is closed and the changes are documented. There is progress. A concern is the number of items being assessed and a hard-to-articulate focus. Also, there are no minimal targets established for each assessed item, which means that while progress can be documented, it's difficult to know exactly what the desired outcome should be.

**Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:**

**COMPLIANCE**

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

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

##### **The School has several strengths:**

- An impressively well-balanced full-time faculty that earns praise from students, professional constituents and central administrators for the instruction they provide.
- A research active faculty spread across the professorial ranks, which includes particularly promising new and relatively new members.
- A quick-study, second-year director praised for her energy, effectiveness and transparency; an effective leadership team; and a dedicated faculty and staff determined to build upon the program's teaching and research tradition of excellence established nearly a century ago.
- A strong and productive relationship with the media rich metropolitan market that is effectively leveraged for the benefit of students and faculty.
- Noteworthy support packages for new hires as well as funding for the annual travel and development needs of all full-time faculty members.
- Two major centers that long have served the discipline and media industries with distinction.
- Exceptional commitment to, support for and involvement in scholastic journalism.
- Strong students who appreciate and take full advantage of the instructional and extracurricular activities available to them.
- Four-year graduation rates that consistently hover around 90 percent—extraordinary for a public institution, at or near the top of programs housed on campus, and a testament to the program's dedication to student services.
- One of journalism-mass communication education's largest permanent endowments, which helps provide a cushion of excellence for students and faculty.

##### **The School faces some challenges, which should be addressed before the next site visit:**

- A need to create a more fully diverse faculty and staff. Add even more urgency to the recruitment of faculty members that reflects domestic diversity. Increase diversity among adjuncts. The promising Diversity Fellows initiative may very well provide a reliable pipeline for future adjuncts and perhaps even for full-time faculty job searches. The project merits monitoring for effectiveness and sustainability. The unit could also refine approaches to attracting more under-represented students.
- A need to continue to modify its assessment procedures, with an eye toward possibly streamlining the process. As noted in the narrative for Standard 9, the School is to be commended for such extensive faculty involvement and seriousness of purpose. But the sheer quantity of material being assembled annually appears at times to be overly voluminous and amorphous. An effort to set specific targets or goals might also be considered.

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

The School was found in compliance with all nine standards on the previous visit, but the site team listed three weaknesses in its summary section:

- *Adjunct Faculty Diversity.* While the School has made significant progress on diversity, people of color represented fewer than 9 percent of the adjunct faculty (three out of 35) last year, and two of them were newly hired. The School identified this as an area of continuing concern.

In 2017-2018, 41 adjuncts taught in the School (21 males and 20 females, including 1 female Asian, 1 female African-American and 1 male Hispanic/Latino). The self-study noted: "Since the last self-study, a workforce shortage in the Twin Cities area has made recruiting adjuncts more difficult. As a result, the School has recruited three professional full-time instructors to support its instructional needs within the past year. Diversity in the industry, overall, is a concern of the Twin Cities Communications Council [of which the School's director is a member]. Underrepresented minority professionals often report not being able to make a semester-long commitment due to the professional obligations and opportunities. The unit has responded by: 1) revising its compensation plan and raising adjunct faculty compensation to improve local competitiveness and 2) developing a diversity Faculty Fellows program to enhance the available pool of instructors working with students. This is an area of continued work for the unit." The Faculty Fellows initiative, launched in fall 2018, is very promising. The School invited seven local media professionals from under-represented population groups to serve in roles akin to the tasks of adjuncts, including leading lectures, conducting workshops and seminars, managing projects and mentoring individual students. Fellows, all working professionals, are paired with a faculty member, and the two end up sorting frequency of visits to the campus. The goals are to increase diversity of the School's instructors and perhaps build a pipeline for future adjunct and faculty opportunities.

- *Public Relations Faculty.* Public relations students represent about one-third of the School's overall majors, but there remains only one faculty member who specializes in public relations.

The current full-time faculty who teach in the undergraduate public relations area includes six members. Four additional full-time faculty members have expertise in advertising. The self-study notes: “Two tenured searches are underway in advertising and health communication; both hires will be expected to contribute to the strategic communication area of our program.” Clearly, significant progress has been made since the last review.

• *Internships/Career Development.* The School noted in the self-study that the lack of internship and career services staff support is a significant deficiency for a program of its size.

Since the last review, a full-time staff member has been hired by the College of Liberal Arts to support student career development. The self-study noted: “[T]his partnership with (the college) has benefited (School) students tremendously.” The School also has established a “Professional Networking Day” each semester. Students spoke positively of their internship experiences.

**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, which involved input from a spectrum of faculty and staff members, was logically organized, candid and contextual. Commendably, it was completed and sent to team members before the deadline, no small feat for a program undergoing an October site visit. During the visit, faculty and staff members responded quickly to requests for additional information. The team’s workroom was comfortably spacious, with computers and auxiliary materials being checked out by the School in advance of the visit. [Team members noted also that they had never been on a site visit where the workroom refreshments and supplies included BAND-AIDs, Roloids and Advil. Fortunately, they were not needed.]