

## Report of On-Site Evaluation

ACEJMC  
Undergraduate program  
2019-2020

Name of Institution: San Francisco State University

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Lynn Mahoney, President

Name of Unit: Journalism Department

Name and Title of Administrator: Rachele Kanigel, Chair

Date of 2019-2020 Accrediting Visit: Dec. 1-4, 2019

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

Date of the previous accrediting visit: Nov. 18-20, 2013

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Reaccreditation

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Reaccreditation

Recommendation by 2019-2020 Visiting Team: Reaccreditation

*Prepared and submitted by:*

### Team Chair

Name and Title: Douglas Anderson, Faculty Affiliate

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

Signature 

### Team Members

Name and Title: Earnest L. Perry, Associate Dean, Graduate Studies

Organization/School: School of Journalism, University of Missouri

Signature 

Name and Title: Patty Reksten, Freelance

Organization/School: Former director of photography, *The Oregonian*

Signature 

Name and Title:

Organization/School:

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**PART I: General information**

**Name of Institution:** San Francisco State University

**Name of Unit:** Journalism Department

**Year of Visit:** 2019

**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.**

California Education Code and the Master Plan (1960) give us the latest authorization to teach at the college level via the California University System. WASC accreditation: 2013-2023.

**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:**

2013

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

1967

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

The mission of the Journalism Department is to educate students and provide research and professional leadership in an evolving media landscape by promoting integrity, creativity, innovation and social responsibility in accurately telling the stories of a multicultural world. The Department emphasizes four tenets:

- Journalism requires strong research, reporting and writing skills augmented by critical thinking, clarity of expression, commitment to fairness, and an understanding of the profession's obligation to the public.

- Journalists have social responsibilities to support the democratic process and help promote understanding of issues that emerge in surrounding communities. These principles, as well as ethical and legal ones, are integrated throughout the curriculum.
- Journalists must develop a well-rounded store of knowledge and ideas about the world and recognize their own biases and limitations while developing an ever-alert curiosity about the past, present and future.
- Journalists must also learn to provide news coverage that accurately reflects the diversity of people and cultures within our communities and the world.

(Revised Fall 2017)

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

Semesters of 16 weeks  
 Quarters of        weeks  
 Summer sessions of 5 to 10 weeks  
 Intersessions of 3 weeks

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

- Bachelor of Arts degree with emphases in print/online and photojournalism
- 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.**

1. Print/Online Journalism
2. Photojournalism

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

120 semester hours

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

Eight semester hours – 3 for credit toward the major, up to 5 for overall units required to graduate.

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

SEQUENCE/SPECIALTY	PERSON IN CHARGE
Print/Online	Rachele Kanigel
Photojournalism	Kim Komenich

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

29,586

**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):**

SEQUENCE/SPECIALTY	UNDERGRADUATE MAJORS
Print/Online	251*
Photojournalism	96*

\*revised 11/22/19

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. 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.)**

Spring 2019 – Skills Classes

CLASS	ENROLLMENT
JOUR 221-01 Newswriting	18
JOUR 221-02 Newswriting	20
JOUR 226-01 Digital Newsgathering	20
JOUR 226-02 Digital Newsgathering	18
JOUR 235-01 Photojournalism I	20
JOUR 235-02 Photojournalism I	20
JOUR 235-03 Photojournalism I	20
JOUR 235-04 Photojournalism I	20
JOUR 235-05 Photojournalism I	20
JOUR 235-05 Photojournalism I	20
JOUR 300GW-01 Reporting	14
JOUR 300GW-02 Reporting	18
JOUR 300GW-04 Reporting	13
JOUR 320-01 Investigative Reporting	19
JOUR 330-01 Editing	20
JOUR 330-02 Editing	14
JOUR 335-01 Photojournalism II	11
JOUR 395-01 Online Journalism	18
JOUR 395-02 Online Journalism	18
JOUR 400-01 Multimedia Journalism	20
JOUR 400-02 Multimedia Journalism	20
JOUR 426-01 Data Journalism	19
JOUR 435-01 Photojournalism III	12
JOUR 495-01 Profiles	17
JOUR 595-01 Magazine Writing	20
JOUR 605-01 Magazine Pub Lab	13
JOUR 609-01 Publication Lab	17
JOUR 609-02 Publication Lab	16
JOUR 609-03 Publication Lab (Photo)	6

Spring 2019 – Skills Classes

CLASS	ENROLLMENT
JOUR 221-01 Newswriting	20
JOUR 221-02 Newswriting	20
JOUR 226-01 Digital Newsgathering	18
JOUR 226-02 Digital Newsgathering	18
JOUR 235-01 Photojournalism I	20
JOUR 235-02 Photojournalism I	20
JOUR 235-03 Photojournalism I	20
JOUR 235-04 Photojournalism I	20
JOUR 235-05 Photojournalism I	20
JOUR 300GW-01 Reporting	18
JOUR 300GW-02 Reporting	11
JOUR 300GW-03 Reporting	15
JOUR 321-01 Feature Writing	12
JOUR 330-01 Editing	14

JOUR 330-02 Editing	16
JOUR 335-01 Photojournalism II	14
JOUR 395-01 Online Journalism	15
JOUR 395-02 Online Journalism	15
JOUR 400-01 Multimedia Journalism	19
JOUR 400-02 Multimedia Journalism	15
JOUR 595-01 Magazine Writing	19
JOUR 605-01 Magazine Pub Lab	15
JOUR 609-01 Publication Lab	16
JOUR 609-02 Publication Lab	9
JOUR 609-03 Publication Lab (Photo)	9

Spring 2019 – Online Skills Classes

CLASS	ENROLLMENT
JOUR 222-01 Newswriting lab	14
JOUR 222-02 Newswriting lab	16
JOUR 222-03 Newswriting lab	16

16. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2019–2020 academic year:

**\$1,193,527**

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

9.1 percent increase

17. List name and rank of all full-time faculty in the accredited unit in Fall 2019. (Full-time faculty refers to those defined as such by the university.) Identify those not teaching because of leaves, sabbaticals, etc.

FALL 2019 FULL-TIME FACULTY	RANK
Cristina Azocar	Associate Professor
Lourdes Cárdenas	Assistant Professor
Sachi Cunningham	Associate Professor
Josh Davis	Assistant Professor
Jon Funabiki	Professor, on leave
Jesse Garnier	Associate Professor
Rachele Kanigel	Professor and chair
Kim Komenich	Associate Professor
Laura Moorhead	Assistant Professor
Venise Wagner	Professor

18. List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in Fall 2019. Also list names of part-time faculty teaching spring 2019. (If your school has its accreditation visit in spring 2020, please provide the spring 2020 adjunct list in the updated information.)

SPRING 2019	FALL 2019
Joanne Derbort	Harriet Chiang
Fernando Gallo	David Greene
Emil Guillermo	Sibylla Herbrich
Sibylla Herbrich	Don Menn
Bruce Koon	Gary Moskowitz
Don Menn	Beth Renneisen
Harry Mok	Scot Tucker
Gary Moskowitz	
Beth Renneisen	

Scot Tucker

Jim Wagstaffe

**19. Schools on the semester system: For each of the last two academic years, please give the number and percentage of graduates who earned 72 or more semester hours outside of journalism and mass communications.**

YEAR	72 OR MORE SEMESTER HOURS OUTSIDE OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATIONS		
	GRADUATES	# IN COMPLIANCE	PERCENTAGE
2018-2019 academic year	75	75	100%
2017-2018 academic year	67	67	100%

**20. Schools on the quarter system:**

N/A

## TEAM OVERVIEW

The Journalism Department at San Francisco State University will celebrate its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020. Journalism courses were first offered at the institution in 1935 through the English Department. Now housed in the College of Liberal & Creative Arts, the Journalism Department enrolls 347 students. The Department was first accredited in 1967, and has been continuously reaccredited since then.

The unit's enrollment is up from the time of its last ACEJMC review, but below that of 11 years ago. The self-study noted: "In 2008, the Journalism Department had more than 600 students. With faculty stretched thin, the university designated the major as 'impacted' and the faculty developed a selective admissions process. But perhaps we were too selective: in 2013 enrollment in the major had dropped to 236 students. In 2012, the university lifted the impactation designation and our student population stabilized. Since 2015, we have remained steady at between 350 and 400 students, a more reasonable number given the size of our faculty."

San Francisco State, a public, urban university, which enrolls some 30,000 students, is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. SFSU is one of 23 universities in the California State University System, which enrolls nearly a half-million students and is home to more than 50,000 faculty members. SFSU's mission: "Inspired by the diversity of our community that includes many first-generation college students, and the courage of an academic community that strives to break down traditional boundaries SF State equips its students to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. With the unwavering commitment to social justice that is central to the work of the university SF State prepares its students to become productive, ethical, active citizens with a global perspective." The self-study notes that more than 45 percent of the university's students are Pell Grant eligible.

The Journalism Department offers a Bachelor of Arts degree, with emphases in Print/Online and Photojournalism, both of which are within the scope of this review. The Print/Online emphasis enrolls 251 students; the Photojournalism emphasis enrolls 96. The Department's students are served by a full-time faculty of 10, and a stable of adjuncts drawn from the media rich metropolitan area. The self-study notes: "Since 1985, the Department has emphasized an increasingly diverse student body."

Other relevant numbers: all 67 of the Department's 2017-2018 graduates and all 75 of the program's 2018-2019 graduates met the ACEJMC requirement of earning 72 or more semester hours outside the unit; the Department also bats a thousand on the 20-1 ratio requirement for sections of skills courses.

The Department's mission statement, which most recently was revised in 2017, is succinct: "The mission of the Journalism Department is to educate students and provide research and professional leadership in an evolving media landscape by promoting integrity, creativity, innovation and social responsibility in accurately telling the stories of a multicultural world." Its four tenets: 1. Journalism requires strong research, reporting and writing skills augmented by critical thinking, clarity of expression, commitment to fairness, and an understanding of the profession's obligation to the public; 2. Journalists have social responsibilities to support the democratic process and help promote understanding of issues that emerge in the surrounding community. These principles, as well as ethical and legal ones, are integrated throughout the curriculum; 3. Journalists must develop a well-rounded store of knowledge and ideas about the world and recognize their own biases and limitations while developing an ever-alert curiosity about the past, present and future; 4. Journalists must also learn to provide news coverage that accurately reflects the diversity of people and cultures within our communities and the world."

Institutional financial support for the Department remains extremely tight, but it is up 9.1 percent from three years ago. The self-study noted that the institution is "still recovering from the 2008 downturn."

The current chair is in her first year. A senior-level administrator said she “quickly ramped up.” A veteran faculty member, who described her as “unselfish,” said she “rose quickly to the challenge.”

Overall morale in the unit is described as positive. One faculty member said that “any major divisions on the faculty are history.” Another noted: “We have honest, strong discussions, but we are civil. We’ve weathered some storms, but we are in a period of relative calm.” Another said: “We might disagree on some things, but when we have to, we go to bat for one another. We are collaborative as we work toward a common goal.”



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

### 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 unit annually updates its data on the ACEJMC searchable database website (<https://lookup.acejmc.org>).**

The Department has a mission statement and a strategic plan. The mission statement, which as noted in the overview, is cogent and thoughtful. The unit's strategic plan for 2019-2022, which was adopted in Fall 2018, is built around four goals: 1. Improve writing and reputation for writing; 2. Collaborate with the Broadcast and Electronic Communication Arts (BECA) Department; 3. Build the professional network among faculty, students, staff and alumni that develops pipelines to help students gain access to more professional opportunities; and 4. Increase fundraising efforts. Each goal includes relevant strategies and actions. The strategic plan is realistic and logical, given the size of the program, and the extent of its current internal and external resources.

Commendably, the Department was in the first wave of programs in the country to post the now required information on the ACEJMC searchable data website.

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

The Department's bylaws, amended most recently in May 2019, are straightforward. They ensure faculty oversight of educational policy and curriculum. The first paragraph makes that clear: "The goal of the Journalism Department Bylaws is to fill in the gaps between departmental, college, Academic Senate and university policies. They are used, among other reasons, to address problems related to collegiality and civility; to prevent departmental conflict about processes; and to ensure equity in teaching and service assignments." Faculty members are involved in shared governance in substantive ways. The Department has a logical list of standing and ad hoc committees, complete with details on membership and overarching responsibilities. The required standing committees: curriculum; lecturer recruitment; retention, tenure and promotions; assessment; scholarship; leadership circle; facilities and equipment; and standards. Ad hoc committees include post-tenure review; hiring; and chair election. The bylaws also make clear that, with the exception of those in the first year of their appointments, "all tenured and tenure-track faculty are required to advise students." In addition to a day-long retreat at the beginning of each semester, the faculty met eight times in Fall 2018 and seven times in Spring 2019. To say that the Department's faculty is involved in substantive shared governance would be understatement.

**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 Department's chair, as noted in the overview, is in the first semester of her appointment. By all accounts, she is off to a good start. In addition to the normal flow of unit responsibilities, she has had her hands full finalizing the self-study and preparing the unit for a site visit in her first months on the job. One faculty member said that the chair works comfortably with external constituents. Her colleagues described her as innovative, gracious, pragmatic and a diligent problem solver. Her

administrative superiors voiced strong support for her early efforts

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

Chairs are elected every three years. The prior chair served two full terms. University procedures for the process are clearly spelled out, right down to how votes are tallied and by whom. The Department's chair-election committee is responsible for conducting the mid-term chair feedback process.

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

Given its emphasis on policies in general, it is not surprising that the Department has written procedures for the resolution of complaints.

**SUMMARY:** The Department's adhered to mission statement and strategic plan are carefully drawn. Shared governance is apparent, with comprehensive written regulations and policies in place. The chair, in her first semester, is off to a strong start after a seamless transition from her respected predecessor.

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

**COMPLIANCE**

## PART II — Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

**a). The unit requires that students take a minimum of 72 semester credit hours (or 104 quarter credit hours) required for a baccalaureate degree outside of journalism and mass communications and meet the liberal arts and sciences-general education requirements of the institution. ACEJMC expects at least 95 percent of the graduating classes in the two academic years preceding an accreditation visit to meet this requirement.**

One hundred percent of the Department's graduating students completed 72 semester credit hours outside the major over the two academic years preceding the accreditation visit.

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

The Department instituted a revised curriculum in Fall 2019 that continues to focus on developing student journalistic skills, but made changes that strengthens the core concepts of law and ethics. It also moved cultural diversity earlier in the program so what is taught could be utilized more effectively in upper-level courses. The social impact of journalism class covers the role of journalism in a democratic society, media literacy, media effects theories and media history.

The Department specifies the 12 learning outcomes outlined in the Accrediting Council's values and competencies. The Department emphasizes four tenets that touch on both skills and theory:

- Journalism requires strong research, reporting and writing skills augmented by critical thinking, clarity of expression, commitment to fairness, and an understanding of the profession's obligation to the public.
- Journalists have social responsibilities to support the democratic process and promote understanding of issues that emerge in the community.
- Journalists must develop a well-rounded store of knowledge and ideas about the world and recognize their own biases and limitations while developing a curiosity about the past, present and future.
- Journalists must learn to reflect the diversity of the world and the communities they serve and apply cultural proficiency to the practice of journalism.

The revisions provide students with more flexibility, while enabling them to take deeper dives in areas of specialization. In meetings, students expressed excitement about the new capstone course, which gives them the option to develop an individual project. There was some concern that no longer tying the course to student publications could create staffing issues, but they believe that the change is worth it. The previously combined law and ethics course has been separated into two stand-alone courses—one in law and one in ethics—thus allowing students to more fully explore the nuances of ethics in journalism. The change to a stand-alone ethics course was made in part to address what the faculty contends was a need to emphasize those principles more after several instances of plagiarism and fabrication during the 2018-2019 academic year. The Department formed a standards committee to develop a new policy on academic and professional integrity and to adjudicate cases where students are accused of dishonesty. The committee is currently in the process of drafting this policy.

**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.**

Department faculty members continue to work as journalists in multimedia, web publishing, and other technologically demanding areas. They bring that expertise back into their courses. They invite working journalists in as guest speakers or presenters. These journalists are also asked to evaluate students and the instruction and skills offered. Students learn web publishing, content management systems, social networks, and a variety of flavors of multimedia, including medium- to long-form visual projects and 360-degree immersive or augmented reality. The Department also offers data journalism, where students are taught a suite of programming languages (PHP, JavaScript, and SQL) to extract, present and visualize primary source data in a valid and credible manner.

Photojournalism majors follow a four-course sequence. Students are required to complete real- world assignments. In addition, they explore the changing marketplace for digital journalists in an advanced course that includes grant writing and lighting instruction. Another course includes in-depth documentary work. The photojournalism sequence has produced some outstanding graduates. Students routinely win regional and national awards, placing in such competitions as College Photographer of the Year as well as others. Faculty members are revered by the students as passionate about their craft and always available to help with projects. One senior said that her professor helped her with a documentary by loaning her his multimedia equipment. Students consistently referred to their photojournalism teachers as tireless advocates for them and their profession.

Students in both the Print/Online and Photojournalism sequences take online journalism using the most updated software and are taught by faculty members who practice the craft in the profession.

A continuing problem in the curriculum is the inability of students to gain broadcast journalism skills. Students are allowed to take classes in the Broadcast and Electronic Communication Arts (BECA) Department, but the courses count as electives because they are outside the major. The Department is in the early stages of developing a joint major in Spanish Journalism with BECA and the Spanish Department. This has the potential to open the door to further cooperation between BECA and Journalism, along with the fact that several Journalism courses are currently cross-listed with Chinese Studies and Latino/Latina Studies. The Journalism Department chair is in conversations with the BECA chair to cross list courses from the two units.

Students report that the coursework is demanding, rigorous and prepares them well for the profession. Several students commented that what they learned in their courses helped them succeed in internships and other professional opportunities. In meetings, the students talked glowingly about the instruction and professional advice they received from faculty members, especially as it relates to what they need to know to succeed in the profession.

Excellence in teaching is required for promotion and tenure in the Department and the college. Faculty members have received numerous awards for their teaching. Examples include: A faculty member, who received the campus Center for Equity and Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CEETL) High Impact Teaching Award and the Academic Technology Recognition of Faculty Excellence Award. She also received a two-year \$12,309 initial grant, followed by \$4,000 for two semesters to redesign a course using technology. She followed that up with an Institute for Civic & Community Engagement (ICCE), community-based journalism course grant worth \$4,100. Another faculty member won the Center for Equity and Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CEETL) High Impact Teaching Award, a \$35,000 Innovation in Journalism Education grant from the Online News Association, the Democracy Fund,

Ethics & Excellence in Journalism Foundation, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Robert R. McCormick Foundation, “Newspoints.” Another faculty member received the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs Grant from Academic Affairs, \$20,409 awarded for Americans with Disabilities A.C.T.: Activism, Culture, and Technology, with Catherine J. Kudlick and the Longmore Institute on Disability. The grant was used for development of an oral history course collaboration with the History Department, Journalism Department and Longmore Institute.

**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 labs enrolled 20 or fewer students.

**e). The unit advocates and encourages opportunities for internship and other professional experiences outside the classroom and supervises and evaluates them when it awards academic credit.**

The Department recommends, but does not require, internships. Students can earn up to six credits through internships, but only three credits can be counted toward their degree. Under the revised 2019-2020 curriculum, the internship course is an elective and does not fulfill the capstone requirement. Students enrolled in the internship course must complete three journal entries detailing the ups and downs of their internship as well as links to their published work, an interview with their supervisor, a reading assignment that shows how they are researching the work they wish to pursue and a résumé. Internship supervisors must complete both a mid-term (Fall only) and final evaluation for the student to receive a grade. The final evaluation includes questions specifically relating to the program’s learning objectives.

**SUMMARY:** The Department provides a robust and challenging array of courses that gives students the skills they need to succeed in today’s journalism environment. The curriculum revisions that went into effect in Fall 2019 may strengthen ethical and law foundations, which will further solidify the already strong diversity components that is infused in the program. The new capstone and the opportunity for students to select additional electives provide a flexibility that was not previously available. Cross-listed courses with Chinese Studies and Latino/Latina Studies also provide additional opportunities. Current discussions with Broadcast Electronic and Communication Arts to cross list courses may offer additional opportunities for curricular collaboration.

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

**COMPLIANCE**

## PART II — Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness

### 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.**

In Fall 2017, the Department revised its diversity plan, recommitting to a continuation of a strong diversity component in its curriculum and mission. Diversity is part of the soul of this unit. It can be seen in the classes, among the staff, in external relations, and the research and creative work of the faculty and students. It is more than the words written in the plan. It is the culture of the Department.

**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 Department has a holistic approach to ensuring that students understand more than the basics of diversity, inclusion and equity. In the revised curriculum, the required Cultural Diversity and News Media course has been moved to earlier in the program, so students will have the conceptual basis of diversity that connects with the practical skills that they will get in subsequent courses. In Fall 2018, the Department hired a new faculty member to start the process of creating a program in Spanish-language journalism, in cooperation with the Broadcast Electronic and Communication Arts Department and Latina/Latino Studies Department to create a path for the many Latino journalism students wishing to report on their communities. According to the faculty member leading the effort, the goal is to provide bilingual students with the journalistic and cultural skills to tell the stories of an underserved group in both Spanish and English.

The Cultural Diversity and News course reviews historical coverage in mainstream media of various minority communities, including women and LGBTQ people. It also examines the ethical basis for diversity in coverage and it pushes students to examine structural obstacles that stand in the way of improved coverage. Another objective of the course is to challenge students to explore their own personal biases and look outside of their own experiences. In meetings, students expressed appreciation for the course and confirmed that the principles taught are infused in the newswriting, reporting and other advanced writing and visual classes. Some students, a few faculty members and the self-study mentioned that the one area where diversity of content could be strengthened is student publications.

**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.**

Between 2005 and 2019 the Department head was a woman of color. Six of the 10 full-time faculty members are women and six are ethnic minority or mixed race. The part-time faculty is 64 percent white, 27 percent Asian and 9 percent Latino. Most part-time faculty members are men. The faculty has used the well-known diversity initiatives of the program and the diversity of San Francisco to recruit. Faculty members have also used their personal networks to recruit a diverse pool of candidates.

**d). The unit demonstrates effective efforts to help recruit and retain a student population**

**reflecting the diversity of the population eligible to enroll in institutions of higher education in the region or population it serves, with special attention to recruiting under-represented groups.**

The Department has a well-deserved reputation for the diversity of its student body. Forty-two percent of the student body is Latino/Latina, 26 percent is White, 11 percent Asian and 6 percent African-American. The number of African-American males has been low and the Asian population is relatively low in comparison to the demographics of the region. The Department is concerned about the low number of African-American males and has reached out to the San Francisco Unified School District and to Oakland Public Schools to establish an outreach program. There has been some success in San Francisco, but not in Oakland. The Department chair and several faculty members plan to double their efforts in 2020.

In Spring 2018, a faculty member received an internal grant of \$12,309 to develop a curricular support program targeting students in the reporting class. In the class, students are assigned a neighborhood beat where they generate, report and write stories. This gets the students out into communities they would not otherwise venture into where they learn about other cultures from their lived experiences.

**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.**

Every syllabus is required to include language about discrimination and Title IX harassment. Faculty members are encouraged to talk about this language with students so that they understand. The faculty also has been instructed by the university, per federal law, to report any incident of sexual harassment or misconduct, even if the incident happened off campus or before the student was enrolled in the university. All faculty members, including lecturers, are required to take an online sexual harassment course offered by the California State University system.

Faculty members also are required to include information in their syllabi about the Department's commitment to serving people with disabilities. Faculty members coordinate with the Disability Programs and Resource Center, DPRC, to schedule exams outside of the classroom when needed. DPRC also provides additional support for students with disabilities.

**SUMMARY:** This program embraces diversity in all its forms. It is part of the curriculum and cultural fabric of the faculty, staff and students. They collectively recognize the current challenges and have the foundation and commitment to meet them.

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

**COMPLIANCE**

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

Academic year: 2018 – 2019 Full-time faculty

GROUP	FEMALE	% OF FACULTY	MALE	% OF FACULTY
Black/African-American	1	10%	0	0%
White	2	20%	1	11%
American Indian/Alaskan native	1	10%	0	0%
Asian	0	0%	1	10%
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	1	10%	0	0%
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander	0	0%	0	0%
Two or more races	2	20%	1	10%
Other race	0	0%	0	0%
International (any race)	0	0%	0	0%

Academic year: 2018 – 2019 Part-time/adjunct faculty

GROUP	FEMALE	% OF FACULTY	MALE	% OF FACULTY
Black/African-American	0	0%	0	0%
White	3	27.3%	4	36.4%
American Indian/Alaskan native	0	0%	0	0%
Asian	0	0%	3	27.3%
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	0	0%	1	9.0%
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander	0	0%	0	0%
Two or more races	0	0%	0	0%
Other race	0	0%	0	0%

(Please include the Faculty Population table at the end of this section.)



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

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The Department has written criteria for selecting and evaluating the performance of all full- and part-time faculty members—and carefully follows the constructed procedures. Authorization for full-time faculty searches comes from the provost and president. If the Department receives a faculty line, a hiring committee is formed. The self-study notes: “Semi-finalists are interviewed by video conference and finalists are brought for campus visits. The committee puts forward its choice to the chair. If the chair and the committee disagree and can’t come to a resolution they meet with the dean. The dean will then make the decision and proceed with negotiations.” The self-study also noted that there rarely are openings for adjuncts “because after teaching for two semesters they receive an entitlement to teach the following semester, per the collective bargaining agreement.” As a result, most adjuncts have substantial teaching experience. Written procedures are in place for evaluating full- and part-time faculty members.

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

For the most part, the Department’s tenured and tenure-track faculty members teach a three-three course load. The Department chair teaches a one-one load. New faculty members generally teach two courses in their first semester and sometimes a two-two load in their first year.

During the three years prior to the site visit, the Department’s full-time faculty members taught an average of 49 percent of all core and required courses offered: 54 percent in 2016-2017; 38 percent in 2017-2018; and 54 percent in 2018-2019. As the self-study notes, 2017-2018 was “an anomaly because we had multiple full-time faculty on leave (medical leave, sabbatical, teaching in other departments) at the same time. Because two additional faculty members joined us in 2018 and 2019, we are confident that in the future the majority of courses will be taught by full-time faculty.” Indeed, during Fall 2019, 69 percent of the Department’s courses are being taught by full-time faculty members—which is a good omen.

The unit’s written criteria for retention, tenure and promotion clearly address expectations for teaching effectiveness: “The primary mission of San Francisco State University is teaching, and the Journalism Department takes the mission very seriously.” The document also outlines expectations for research and scholarship; creative and professional activity; and contributions to campus and community. The self-study emphasized that the unit “sees professional achievement and growth as an indispensable component of teaching excellence and expects candidates to demonstrate accomplishments in this area as a condition of retention, tenure and promotion. The candidate should demonstrate a coherent and consistent pattern of productive activity.”

#### **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.**

Ranks of the unit’s 10-person full-time faculty are well distributed: 3 tenured full professors; 4 tenured associate professors; and 3 tenure-track assistant professors. Of the 10, two hold doctoral degrees, 7

hold master's degrees and 1 holds a baccalaureate degree. The full-time faculty averages about a quarter-century of professional experience, including work at, among other entities, the *Los Angeles Times*, *New York Times*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, Associated Press, *Frontline*, *Vice News*, NPR, *Wired* and the *Oakland Tribune*. As noted in Standard 3, the full-time faculty is exceptionally diverse. Six are women. Of the 10, 1 is Native American; 1 is Latina; 1 is Asian American; 1 is black; and 2 are mixed race. The part-time faculty in 2018-2019 (seven in Fall and 12 in the Spring) averaged more than 25 years of professional experience.

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

Tenure-track and tenured faculty members are evaluated in teaching as stipulated by the Academic Senate policy. Tenure-track faculty members are evaluated each semester by a faculty member of higher rank, as well as by students. The Department has a carefully constructed form for peer feedback on teaching effectiveness, which includes comments on the instructor's command of the subject matter, content, clarity of the presentation, interaction and rapport with students, innovation in curriculum and teaching methods, and whether "inclusive journalism" is apparent during class sessions and in the syllabus. Online student evaluations are conducted in all classes taught by tenure-track faculty members, with the instrument containing a mixture of closed-ended and open-ended questions. Tenured faculty members, in accordance with Academic Senate policy, are not required to have peer evaluations, but, according to the self-study, "they can opt to do so for their files for promotion to full professor." Once tenured, faculty members are required to undergo a post-tenure review every five years. The Department uses the university's "Temporary Faculty Evaluation Form" when evaluating adjuncts.

A tenure-track faculty member spoke of the "very comfortable transition" when she joined the Department. She said that she was grateful for the support extended to her and that she appreciated the respect colleagues in the unit have for one another.

The self-study also notes that its faculty members make use of the university's Center for Equity and Excellence in Teaching and Learning, describing it as "the hub connecting all SF State faculty with support and professional development opportunities that promote equity-minded, innovative and reflective learning and teaching."

**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 Department's faculty is praised by students and others on campus. Attendees at the Monday luncheon were effusive in their comments about the Journalism faculty and its commitment to quality instruction and students. One, for example, spoke of the faculty's "tireless commitment to students and colleagues."

**SUMMARY:** Based on all accounts, this well-balanced faculty, which possesses a blend of professional and academic credentials, consistently delivers dedicated, quality instruction to students.

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

**COMPLIANCE**

## **PART II — Standard 5: Scholarship: Research, Creative and Professional Activity**

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

#### **a). The unit requires, supports and rewards faculty research, creative activity and/or professional activity.**

The university and the Department require professional achievement and continued growth. Faculty members are encouraged to apply for external funding and there is support for sabbaticals, leaves and course releases. The university supports travel to present work at professional and academic conferences. Promotion and tenure policies require faculty members to produce research and/or creative work.

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

The Department expects faculty members to develop a program of research and/or creative/professional journalistic activity. Curriculum development may be considered in combination with a program of research and/or creative/professional journalistic activity. Faculty members should demonstrate a coherent and consistent pattern of productive activity.

The Department embraces innovative reporting and storytelling. Faculty members are expected to develop impactful research and/or creative works in the field.

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

Yes, the Department does account for and acknowledge professional activity and academic research for promotion, tenure and merit recognition. Research may include long-form journalistic work, academic scholarship and journalism opinion pieces.

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

Faculty members in the Department present their creative work and research in academic and professional publications and at conferences and meetings locally, nationally and internationally. They participate in community and campus events where they present their research and professional work to diverse audiences. They meet this challenge despite heavy teaching and service loads.

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

Intellectual curiosity and expression of different points of view are part of everyday practice in this unit. Faculty members display this in the professional activities and research/creative works they produce, the courses they develop and teach and the presentations they give. They challenge their students and the community they serve to look past the biases and stereotypes that make up much of journalism. The Department culture is built on embracing different points of view.

**SUMMARY:** Faculty members, despite their heavy teaching and service obligations, produce cutting edge journalistic works and rigorous academic research. The number of books, manuscripts and other publications is impressive. The fact that much of the work is related to diversity and inclusion, a controversial minefield, makes it all the more impressive.

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

**COMPLIANCE**

Report of on-site evaluation of undergraduate programs for 2019-2020 Visits

SCHOLARSHIP, RESEARCH, CREATIVE AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES	INDIVIDUALS					TOTALS (10)
	TOTAL FROM UNIT*	FULL PROFESSORS (3)	ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS (4)	ASSISTANT PROFESSORS (3)	OTHER FACULTY ** (0)	
Awards and Honors	12	1	9	2		
Grants Received Internal	2	1		1		
Grants Received External	6	3	3	1		
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co-authored	2		1	1		
Textbooks, Sole- or Co-authored	3	3				
Books Edited	0					
Book Chapters	3	2	1			
Monographs	0					
Articles in Refereed Journals	3	3				
Refereed Conference Papers	15	2	4	9		
Invited Academic Papers	0					
Encyclopedia Entries	0					
Book Reviews	1		1			
Articles in Non-refereed Publications	59	16	37	6		
Juried Creative Works	0		40			
Non-juried Creative Works	0					
Other (please specify)	11	2 (IP)	8 (IP)	1 (IP)		
Invited Presentations (IP)						

## 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.**

During a designated advising week, faculty members meet with upper-level students. They advise them about classes to take that meet their graduation requirements. There are academic advising planning sheets for journalism and photojournalism students as well as different forms for transfer students for both sequences. Students say that the faculty not only offers career advice, but often paves the way for them to get internships and take advantage of special programs.

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

Faculty members have posted office hours, but are available at other times as well. One faculty member is often in a computer lab during his office hours because he says that's the most effective way to help students. Another comes in on weekends to help with projects or answer questions. Most students say that faculty members are passionate about not only teaching, but helping them individually. In two meetings, the students roundly praised the dedicated faculty as outstanding. The Department just received a \$15,000 grant to restart a mentoring program. The director already has organized group mentoring and conducted a resume writing and cover letter workshop.

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

In Spring 2018, the then Department chair produced a video to show students how to read their Degree Progress Report, which is the official university record of a fulfillment of requirements. The feedback has been very positive, say faculty members and students alike. Journalism and photojournalism requirements are available in the online student handbook as well. There are advising tips on a sheet that include registration information for upcoming semesters.

#### **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.**

Because such a large contingent of the faculty still contributes to the industry there are numerous extra-curricular activities available for students. Guest speakers and lecturers contribute to institutional knowledge. Faculty members coordinate with others outside the Department in bringing special programs to the students. The photojournalism sequence, for example, has a day-long event planned that will address the changing reality of the kinds of jobs available after graduation. The event will include best practices for assignment generation, shooting, copyright, sales, billing and surviving as a photojournalist/multimedia professional. Students say they would like more help in addressing the business of journalism.

#### **e). The accredited unit must gather, maintain and analyze enrollment, retention, graduation rates and other aggregate information for improving student services and reducing barriers to student success. The unit annually publishes retention and graduation information on its website.**

The most recent retention and graduation data is online. It can be accessed by the public at the

university, college and Department level. The Department also relies on senior exit survey comments to determine areas in which they need to improve. Alumni and students say they would like even more access to digital, broadcast and management training. Anticipated changes in the curriculum should address some of the needs.

**SUMMARY:** The Department and its faculty continue to find ways to improve advising for students as well as strategies to facilitate internships and eventual jobs. Several students say that they received internships and job interviews because of the numerous outside contacts of the faculty.

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

**COMPLIANCE**

## PART II — Standard 7: Resources, Facilities and Equipment

### 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 first sentence of the self-study's executive summary for Standard 7 gets quickly to the point: "The Journalism Department is a lean unit with limited resources." That said, fortunately for students, it makes the most of its funding to provide a solid education for them, including external and internal allocations for state-of-the-art photo and video equipment. The unit's expenditures are projected to total \$1,193,527 in 2019-2020, 9.1 percent up from \$1,093,665 in 2017-2018. As is routinely the case, the lion's share of expenditures is earmarked for salaries (full-time teaching, part-time teaching, teaching assistants, clerical and administrative): \$1,128,865. The largest amount of operating funds is earmarked for equipment: \$50,000. Expenditures align with the program's strategic plan.

The dean of the College of Liberal & Creative Arts determines the operating budget for the program. As an outgrowth of the collective bargaining agreement, the self-study notes also that "neither the department nor faculty have a role in determining salaries for faculty and staff." The unit's technology committee oversees the distribution of funds for equipment. Unit support for scholarships is modest, even for a unit this size. The program awarded scholarships totaling \$28,887 in 2018-2019.

The unit's three-year strategic plan commendably includes "fundraising" as one of its four overarching goals. It intends to place more emphasis on identifying, reaching out to, cultivating and seeking donations from alumni and other potential supporters. Groundwork is being laid by the Department chair to involve graduates more extensively in its embryonic fundraising efforts, as well as to seek guidance and support from one of the development officers in the College of Liberal & Creative Arts.

As noted above, despite the tightness of its no-frills budget, the unit provides a solid education for its students.

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

The Department is treated fairly within the university. Its full-time-equivalent faculty instruction cost per full-time equivalent student (FTES) in 2017-2018 was \$4,113—some 30 percent higher than the \$3,166 College of Liberal & Creative Arts as a whole. The self-study notes: "As a medium-sized department in terms of enrollment, faculty and majors, (our) annual non-equipment operating budget is in the median of the college, and (our) instructional equipment funds, which are allocated separately, are regularly at the high end of college funding, in line with the creative arts due to (our) reliance on multiple computer labs as well as technical equipment." As noted above, the unit is providing adequate support for its students, staff and faculty members.

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

Professors and lecturers who teach photojournalism and multimedia say that the unit has received its fair share of equipment. Those who teach multimedia, however, hope that eventually the Department is able



to buy some pool video cameras with inter-changeable lenses that can be used for documentary work. A pilot project for the Fall 2019 semester resulted in free Adobe Creative Cloud licenses to all currently enrolled Journalism majors and minors.

Facilities are bright and a few classrooms multifunctional. The main teaching room for photojournalism students is also used as a lighting studio and the huge display monitor can serve as a vehicle for guest speakers who reside anywhere. Another computer room that is divided into two parts allows small-group discussions as well as a vehicle for teaching. All computer rooms allow for interactive teaching. As of this semester, there also is state-of-the-art podcasting equipment.

**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.**

Photojournalism majors usually have their own basic equipment, but the Department has specialty lenses that can be checked out by the students for sporting and other special events. The unit also has a cooperative relationship for Canon USA's "seed" program that provides loaner equipment. All faculty computers and computer labs have access to the software. The Department hopes to extend the licenses. The Department purchased 10 Canon video cameras this year

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

Although there is a modest book library in the Department, a San Francisco State University librarian works quite closely with students in not only providing instruction on research methods, but also helping them refine their searches. She said that students excel in this area, often becoming "incredibly tenacious researchers." There is a plethora of information available to faculty and students online.

**SUMMARY:** The Department's annual expenditures are up slightly from three years ago, and it is treated fairly within the college and university. The unit deserves credit for stretching each dollar it is allocated for maximum positive impact on the education it consistently provides to students. It plans to more aggressively pursue private funds. Classrooms and labs are functionally spacious. Students have sufficient access to equipment needs. The unit's space is well maintained.

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

**COMPLIANCE**

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

### 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.**

This faculty's professional and public service record is impressive. One member has won at least two Emmys for his work. Another is a Pulitzer-Prize winning photographer. Their specialties are extensive. One faculty member works with inmates at San Quentin to develop a Spanish news section for the *San Quentin News*. Yet another serves as director of the Renaissance Journalism Center. Just one example of some of the work under his auspices has been a three-year initiative "to empower young people to tell the overlooked and untold stories of their lives and community." All are featured speakers and presenters in a variety of local, state and national venues. Some serve on national boards. One was president of the College Media Association and served as a Fulbright Specialist for a mass communication program in Bhutan. Another works with the National Cancer Institute to use eye-tracking technology to assess how the public understands the news. Another professor is the co-author and co-editor of *Reporting Inequality: Tools and Methods for Covering Race and Ethnicity*. The list goes on.

**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.**

In 2017, the faculty played host to "The State of the First Amendment: Business as Usual or Panic in the Streets." The Department brought in an impressive array of panelists from a wide variety of disciplines. In 2019, the culturally-diverse faculty sponsored an event called "Covering Immigration from a Bicultural and Bilingual Perspective." The panelists were well-known and from a variety of backgrounds. Faculty members cooperate with others on campus to present programs as well. One example: serving as a moderator for a joint program with the Jewish Studies Department.

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

Faculty members travel to present papers and lectures. All full-time faculty members can apply for \$1,000 grants each year for travel. The Department chair also is actively trying to raise money to support more travel for both students and faculty members. In August, she received a \$10,000 donation to enable a faculty member and students to travel to Washington D.C. Considering the extensive public and professional service that this faculty provides, it would be advantageous to have a larger travel fund.

**d). The unit contributes to its communities through unit-based service projects and events, service learning of its students and civic engagement of its faculty.**

The Department has a long-term collaboration with *El Tecolote*, a bilingual Spanish newspaper based in the Mission District of San Francisco. A class works directly with the paper and interns who work with *El Tecolote* each semester. Many of the courses in both journalism and photojournalism include civic engagement and documenting the diverse cultures in greater San Francisco. The Department also has a close relationship with the daily newspaper in San Francisco.

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

The mission of the faculty is “to prepare students to excel as journalists in a complex, multicultural world; to improve both the practice of journalism and journalism research; contribute to students’ and the public’s understanding of freedom of expression and the ethical responsibilities of mass media, and to strengthen the Department’s curriculum to help shape its evolving mission.” The unit interacts regularly with area high schools, community colleges and scholastic media organizations. Faculty members presented at the National Scholastic Press Association conventions in San Francisco in 2013 and 2018, and have served as judges for high school and community college journalism competitions.

Commendably, the Department is also active with the Journalism Association of Community Colleges, an organization of the two-year institutions that feed into SFSU. Faculty members present at the annual Northern California and statewide conventions and serve as judges for on-site competitions. A member of the faculty served for several years on the advisory board to the Northern California community college journalism programs.

**SUMMARY:** This is an outstanding faculty, which engages in meaningful, unselfish, and impressive public and professional service. The public-service record of the Department would compare favorably to that of many much larger programs across the country.

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

**COMPLIANCE**

## PART II — Standard 9: Assessment of Learning Outcomes

### 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?

The unit clearly defines the goals for student learning, and it links the goals to the Council’s professional values and competencies. The unit’s assessment plan, previously approved in 2014, was revised in 2019. Its 14 learning outcomes: news judgment, critical and independent thinking, cultural competency proficiency, writing, analytical competence, research and reporting, media literacy, news media law, critical evaluation, data and numbers, technology, visual competence, ethics and history. The unit also has a well-conceived matrix for learning outcomes. The matrix lists each outcome area (for example, news judgment) and then it supplies the program’s courses that bring about awareness, understanding and application of that specific outcome. Through an effective feedback loop, the Department has implemented significant curricular revisions, many of which were informed by ongoing assessment procedures. The unit is committed to showing what it wants its students to learn, how it will determine whether it is succeeding and what actions it will then take to make improvements based on the information it collects. Comprehensive annual assessment reports are generated.

The Department chair heads the unit’s committee that is in charge of assessment. As noted above, the unit’s 14 program learning outcomes are linked logically to the Council’s values and competencies, and are assessed annually. Faculty members are provided a syllabus checklist of items that must be listed, including student learning outcomes. The Department chair is charged with the responsibility of reviewing syllabi for all courses at the beginning of each semester.

**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 Department’s assessment plan, as noted above, is thoughtfully constructed. Data are systematically gathered and analyzed, all coordinated under the auspices of the assessment committee. The plan employs a variety of direct and indirect measures.

The four *direct* measures: (1) Entrance, midterm and exit exams for Newswriting; (2) entrance and exit exams for Reporting; (3) portfolio review, focusing on courses such as Reporting, Digital Newsgathering, Photo II and Publication Labs; and (4) portfolio review from the capstone Internship course. Expectations are clearly outlined for each direct measure. For example, as the plan notes: “These

standardized exams serve three purposes: a) to ensure more uniform learning outcomes across the sections of Newswriting; b) to assess how well instruction meets learning outcomes; and c) to better control enrollments through the program, as Newswriting and Reporting are both gateway courses. Students cannot move through the curriculum until they have mastered the basic skills of Newswriting.” Portfolio review committees consist of three faculty members and three professional members.

The three *indirect* measures: (1) senior exit surveys (all students who apply for graduation must complete a program evaluation before the chair will sign off on their application); (2) alumni surveys (every three years graduates of the program are surveyed to evaluate the quality of their education as it relates to their current professional work); and (3) internship reports, for approved internships, where students receive credit for Publication Lab experience; and (4) occasional student forums, which are held periodically to solicit feedback from students about their experiences in the program. The Department chair said, for example, that “comments made during these forums informed faculty decisions about the curriculum revision.”

The direct and indirect measures are valuable—and effective--when assessing ACEJMC’s professional values and competencies. The unit’s assessment plan contains a comprehensive, well-conceived rubric for assessing all learning outcomes.

**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?

The Department annually collects, synthesizes, reports and applies data from its assessment activities, and applies the data to improve curriculum and instruction. Examples abound. The unit conscientiously makes use of assessment results to “close the loop.” The Department recently updated its curriculum, partly in response to weaknesses identified in annual assessment reports and comments from students in surveys. One course, Media Law and Ethics, has been reconfigured into two stand-alone courses: one in Media Law and the other in Journalism Ethics. As a result, more emphasis is now placed on journalism ethics and integrity. The unit also pointed out that, “Publication Lab Newspaper/Online and Publication Lab Magazine no longer count as the capstone requirement. Beginning with the cohort entering in Fall 2019, these courses will count as a practicum and students are required only to take one semester of Publication Lab.” In the new curriculum, which evolved from changes triggered by assessment findings, print-online students must take Senior Seminar and will be required to complete major reporting projects, comparable to a senior thesis. Another example: Students no longer are required to take Online Journalism and Multimedia Journalism, in part, according to the unit, “because students complained they were too similar.” The unit also, in response to clearly articulated concerns by students, will now offer more electives, thus creating a smoother path to meet graduation requirements. In addition, the new chair has asked the curriculum committee to discuss ways to strengthen instruction in data and numbers, a weakness that has manifested itself with regularity in annual assessment reports.

The unit’s annual assessment reports are comprehensive. Produced by the assessment committee each year, they do not gather dust. They are discussed at annual Fall faculty retreats and are posted on the faculty-staff site. They provide results of direct and indirect measures, complete with suggestions for

curriculum and programmatic adjustments. The unit was proud to report that 95 percent of respondents in its 2019 alumni survey were “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” that they had received a quality journalism education.

As mentioned above, recent assessments have shown that mastery of “data and numbers” is lacking in too many students. The unit’s reaction: Adding learning modules and assignments on data and numbers to Newswriting and Reporting classes and expanding instruction in using Excel to analyze numerical data in Digital Newsgathering. Also, as noted earlier, the Media Law and Ethics course has now been reconfigured into two separate offerings.

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

The Department maintains good contact with its alumni through periodic surveys. Graduates of the program serve as guest lecturers. The Department also noted that five alumni were invited to attend the Fall 2019 faculty retreat, where they shared perceptions of their experiences in the program and offered suggestions for improving curriculum and instruction.

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

As noted above, professionals annually are part of portfolio assessment teams.

**SUMMARY:** The Department has a written assessment plan, most recently revised in 2019. It involves media professionals annually in the process and appears more precise than at the time of the previous review. A three-person committee, headed by the unit chair, oversees the assessment process. Each year the Department systematically gathers information, synthesizes it, analyzes the findings and “closes the loop” by making programmatic and curricular adjustments.

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

**COMPLIANCE**

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

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

##### **The Department has several strengths:**

- A hard-working, high-octane, balanced full-time faculty that possesses a good blend of academic and professional credentials—and that diligently provides quality instruction to students.
- A Diverse (with a capital *D*) student body and faculty, who are committed to and engaged in a variety of pedagogical, curricular and programmatic inclusivity initiatives.
- An instructional environment that provides a range of hands-on experiences for students.
- An assessment plan that is systematically adhered to—from the annual gathering of relevant information, to the synthesis of data and ultimate application.
- Its location in a major market, which opens multiple doors for students who seek involvement in a wide spectrum of media experiences.
- An array of public service activities, many of which focus on culturally diverse issues, that are particularly impactful and far-reaching for a unit of this size.

##### **The Department faces some challenges:**

- A need to continue to find ways to confront the reality of consistently striving to do more with institutionally allocated resources that likely will remain basically static.
- A need to ramp up its embryonic efforts to engage in more aggressive private fundraising efforts.
- A need to possibly expand curricular and career opportunities for its majors by continuing to explore potential collaborative programs or partnerships with logically related units on campus.

#### **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 previous report cited this deficiency: “More classes need to be taught by tenure and tenure-line faculty. While the availability of distinguished adjuncts in San Francisco is a wisely utilized asset, the current percentage—less than 40—cannot endure.”

The Department has tackled this deficiency head on. During the three years prior to the site visit, the unit’s full-time faculty taught less than 50 percent of all core and required courses offered in only a single semester, which was an anomaly because of the convergence of a medical leave, a sabbatical leave and teaching assignments in another department. Some 69 percent of required and core courses are being taught by full-time faculty in Fall 2019, which, as noted in the narrative in Standard 4, is a “good omen.”

**7) The self-study is the heart of the accrediting process. Often the quality of that document determines the degree of success of the site visit. Summarize the team members’ judgment of the self-study.**

The self-study was readable, candid and contextual. It provided the basic information the team required.