

Report of ACEJMC On-Site Evaluation
Professional master's/Undergraduate programs
2021-- 2022

Name of Institution: American University
Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Sylvia M. Burwell, President
Name of Unit: School of Communication
Name and Title of Administrator: **Sam Fulwood III, Dean**
Date of 2021-2022 Accrediting Visit: **January 30 – February 2, 2022**

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

Date of the previous accrediting visit: November 9 – 12, 2014
Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Reaccreditation
Undergraduate program: Reaccreditation
Professional master's program: Reaccreditation
Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Reaccreditation
Undergraduate program: Reaccreditation
Professional master's program: Reaccreditation

Undergraduate program recommendation by 2021-2022 Visiting Team: **Reaccreditation**
Professional master's program recommendation by 2021-2022 Visiting Team: **Reaccreditation**

Prepared and submitted by:

Team Chair

Name and Title: Thor Wasbotten, Managing Director; Professor
Organization/School: Markkula Center for Applied Ethics at Santa Clara University; School of Media and Journalism at Kent State University

Signature _____

Thor Wasbotten

Team Member

Name and Title: Diane McFarlin, Dean Emeritus
Organization/School: College of Journalism and Communications, University of Florida

Signature _____

Diane McFarlin

Team Member

Name and Title: Africa Price, Chief of Staff
Organization/School: Government Affairs, City of Shreveport, Louisiana

Signature _____

Africa Price

Team Member

Name and Title: Helen Katz, Ph.D., Executive Vice President, Research
Organization/School: Publicis Media

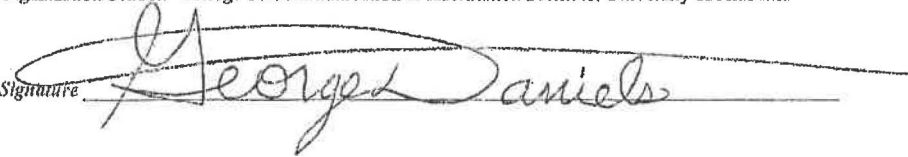
Signature _____

Helen Katz

Team Member

Name and Title: George L. Daniels, Ph.D., Associate Professor

Organization/School: College of Communication & Information Sciences, University of Alabama

Signature: 

Please indicate if team members participated on site or virtually only:

On site: Thor Washotten, Diane McFarlin, Africa Price, Dr. Helen Katz

Virtually: Dr. George Daniels _____

PART I: General information

Name of Institution: American University

Name of Unit: School of Communication

Year of Visit: 2022

1. Check regional association by which the institution now is accredited.

- Higher Learning Commission
- Middle States Commission on Higher Education
- New England Commission on Higher Education
- Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
- Southern Association of Colleges and School Commission on Colleges
- 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.

H.R. No. 10304

Fifty-Second Congress of the United States, At the Second Session, Begun and held in the City of Washington, in the District of Columbia, on Monday, the fifth day of December, eighteen hundred and ninety-two,

AN ACT To incorporate the American University

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

That John H. Vincent, John E. Andrus, James M. Buckley, Mark Hoyt, Jesse L. Hurlburt, James M. King, Charles C. McCabe, Charles H. Payne, John E. Searles, junior, John S. Huyler, of New York; Charles W. Buoy, J.A.M. Chapman, G.P. Hukill, Robert E. Pattison, Charles Scott, Mrs. Matthew Simpson of Pennsylvania; Julian S. Carr, of North Carolina; David H. Carroll, Jacob Tome, Alpheus W. Wilson, of Maryland; Charles H. Fowler, of Minnesota; William M. Springer, J.B. Hobbs, of Illinois; John P. Newman, of Nebraska; Job H. Jackson, of Delaware; Redfield Proctor, of Vermont; W.W. Smith, of Virginia; D.B. Wesson, M. Burnham, of Massachusetts; Thomas Bowman, of Missouri; and John F. Hurst, Louis E. McComas, Benjamin Charlton, Andrew B. Duvall, Matthew G. Emery, Charles C. Glover, S.S. Henkle, Benjamin F. Leighton, John E. Beall, Aldis B. Browne, Mrs. John A. Logan, H.B. Moulton, Hiram Price, Mrs. Elizabeth J. Somers, Brainard H. Warner, and S.W. Woodward of the

District of Columbia, their associates and successors, two thirds of whom shall at all times be members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, are hereby constituted a body politic and corporate by the name The American University, with power to sue and be sued, plead and be impleaded, and have perpetual succession; to acquire, take by devise, bequest or otherwise, hold, purchase, encumber, and convey such real and personal estate as shall be required for the purpose of its incorporation; to make and use a common seal, and the same to alter at pleasure; to choose a board of trustees consisting of not more than fifty, of whom fifteen shall constitute a quorum to do business, and which board shall be authorized to fill any vacancies in their number, to appoint such officers and agents as the business of the corporation shall require, and to make by-laws for the accomplishment of its purposes, for the management of its property, and for the regulation of its affairs. Said corporation is hereby empowered to establish and maintain within the District of Columbia a university for the promotion of education. The said corporation shall have power to grant and confer diplomas and the usual college and university degrees, and honorary degrees, and also such other powers as may be necessary fully to carry out and execute the general purposes of the said corporation as herein appearing.

Sec. 2 That this act may be amended or repealed at any time by the Congress in its pleasure.

Charles F. Crisp (D-Ga)
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Levi P. Morton
Vice President of the United States
and President of the Senate

Approved February 24th, 1893
Benjamin Harrison
President of the United States

* * * * *

Approved by virtue of a Special Act of Congress of the United States, February 24, 1893 (27 Stat. 476).

AN ACT To incorporate the American University

Section 1.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

That John H. Vincent, John E. Andrus, James M. Buckley, Mark Hoyt, Jesse L. Hurlburt, James M. King, Charles C. McCabe, Charles H. Payne, John E. Searles, junior, John S. Huyler, of New York; Charles W. Buoy, J.A.M. Chapman, G.P. Hukill, Robert E. Pattison, Charles Scott, Mrs. Matthew Simpson of Pennsylvania; Julian S. Carr, of North Carolina; David H. Carroll, Jacob Tome, Alpheus W. Wilson, of Maryland; Charles H. Fowler, of Minnesota; William M. Springer, J.B. Hobbs, of Illinois; John P. Newman, of Nebraska; Job H. Jackson, of Delaware; Redfield Proctor, of Vermont; W.W. Smith, of Virginia; D.B. Wesson, M. Burnham, of Massachusetts; Thomas Bowman, of Missouri; and John F. Hurst, Louis E. McComas, Benjamin Charlton, Andrew B. Duvall, Matthew G. Emery, Charles C. Glover, S.S. Henkle, Benjamin F. Leighton, John E. Beall, Aldis B. Browne, Mrs. John A. Logan, H.B. Moulton, Hiram Price, Mrs. Elizabeth J. Somers, Brainard H. Warner, and S.W. Woodward of the District of Columbia, their associates and successors, including individuals who are members of the

United Methodist Church, including (subject to their acceptance) the Bishop of the Washington Episcopal Area and General Secretary of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church, are hereby constituted a body politic and corporate by the name The American University, with power to sue and be sued, plead and be impleaded, and have perpetual succession; to acquire, take by devise, bequest or otherwise, hold, purchase, encumber, and convey such real and personal estate as shall be required for the purpose of its incorporation; to make and use a common seal, and the same to alter at pleasure; and incorporators aforesaid, their associates and successors, who shall possess the qualifications herein required, shall constitute a board of trustees, by which the business of said corporation shall be transacted, which board shall hereafter consist of not less than twenty-five or more than fifty persons, eleven of whom shall constitute a quorum to do business, and which board shall be authorized to fill any vacancies in their number, to appoint such officers and agents as the business of the corporation shall require; and to make by-laws for the accomplishments of its purposes, for the management of its property, and for the regulation of its affairs. Said corporation is hereby empowered to establish and maintain within the District of Columbia a university for the promotion of education. The said corporation shall have power to grant and confer diplomas and the usual college and university degrees, and honorary degrees, and also such other powers as may be necessary fully to carry out and execute the general purposes of the said corporation as herein appearing.

Section 2.

a. After the date of enactment of this section –

1. no person shall be elected to the board of trustees of the corporation unless the election of such person has been approved by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church; members of the board of trustees shall hold office until their successors are elected.

2. all property, both real and personal, of the corporation shall be held in perpetuity for educational purposes under the auspices of the United Methodist Church,

3. the board of trustees of the corporation shall not propose any amendment by the Congress to this Act unless the proposal of such amendment has been previously approved by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church.

b. In the case of any violation by the corporation or the board of trustees of any provisions of subsection (a) of this section, all right, title, and interest of the corporation shall vest in the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church, a corporation organized under the laws of the State of Tennessee, or its successor.

Section 3. That this act may be amended or repealed at any time by the Congress in its pleasure.

* * * * *

Approved by virtue of a Special Act of Congress of the United States, February 24, 1893 (27 Stat. 476), as amended by the following Acts of Congress: March 3, 1895 (28 Stat. 1814); June 30, 1951 (65 Stat. 107); August 1, 1953 (67 Stat. 359); October 31, 1990 (104 Stat. 1160); September 9, 1996 (110 Stat. 2378).

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: November 9 - 12, 2014

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

1976

6. Provide the unit's undergraduate mission statement and the separate mission statement for the graduate program. Statements should give the date of adoption and/or last revision.

SOC Mission Statement: AU SOC engages in the most pressing issues of our time through teaching, scholarship, and professional experiences in communication and media in Washington and beyond. (Approved at the SOC Council October 10, 2018.)

SOC Journalism updated its previous mission October 1, 2021. It covers both MA and BA programs. It is: SOC Journalism trains journalists to seek truth in an evolving news landscape, question the powerful, promote ethical journalism, and practice inclusivity in reporting news all in an effort to protect freedom of the press and democracy.

Public Communication relies on the School's mission statement to define its programs.

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Semesters of 15 weeks

Summer sessions of 6 to 7 weeks

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

- + Bachelor's degree
- + Master's degree
- ___ Ph.D. degree

9. List the specific undergraduate and professional master's degrees as well as the majors or sequences being reviewed by ACEJMC.

- BA in Communication: Journalism
- Public Relations and Strategic Communication (formerly BA in Communication: Public Communication)
- MA in Communication: Journalism and Public Affairs
- MA Strategic Communication

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

Bachelor's: a minimum of 120 semester credit hours

Master's: 30 graduate credits required in PC; 33 graduate credits required in the full-time Journalism program; 30 credits are required for the weekend Journalism program.

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

Both undergraduate Journalism and Public Relations and Strategic Communication students may earn up to six semester-hour credits after curricular changes implementing ACEJMC revisions were approved.

Graduate students in Journalism and Strategic Communication may earn a maximum of three credit hours for an internship.

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

Name of Sequence or Specialty	Person in Charge
BA in Communication Journalism: Journalism	Amy Eisman
BA in Communication Journalism: Broadcast	Amy Eisman
BA in Communication: Public Relations & Strategic Communication	Dina Inverso

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

Fall 2021 AU Enrollment

Undergraduate	8,463
Graduate	4,963
Law	1,426
Total	14,852

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):

Name of Sequence or Specialty	Undergraduate majors
BA in Journalism	137
BA in Journalism: Broadcast	N/A
Journalism Intended	156
BA in Public Relations & Strategic Communication	248
Public Relations & Strategic Communication Intended	72
Undecided	32
Total	645

15. Number of graduate students enrolled:

	on-site	online
Journalism and Strategic Communication	76	0
All SOC graduate programs.	249	69
MA in Strategic Communication (Weekday Program)	38	0
(Online Program)	0	69
MA in Journalism and Public Affairs (Broadcast)	6	0
(Investigative)	16	0
(International)	6	0
MA in Journalism and Digital Storytelling	10	0

16. 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. Submit two semesters with the self-study and update as needed when the site team arrives on site. 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 campaign courses are exempt from the 20-1 ratio.)

Public Communication – Spring 2021

Course	Students
COMM-301-001, Public Relations	18
COMM-301-002, Public Relations	18
COMM-301-003, Public Relations	18
COMM-301-004, Public Relations	18
COMM-310-001/006, Public Speaking	18
COMM-310-002/007, Public Speaking	18
COMM-310-003/008, Public Speaking	20
COMM-310-004/009, Public Speaking	18
COMM-310-005/010, Public Speaking	18
COMM-337-001, Public Relations Writing	16
COMM-337-002, Public Relations Writing	18
COMM-337-003, Public Relations Writing	18
COMM-337-004, Public Relations Writing	18
COMM-346-001, Public Relations Case Studies	18
COMM-346-002, Public Relations Case Studies	18
COMM-346-003, Public Relations Case Studies	18
COMM-380-001, Public Communication Research	18
COMM-380-002, Public Communication Research	18
COMM-380-003, Public Communication Research	18
COMM-380-004, Public Communication Research	18
COMM-420-011/620-009, Telling Stories with Data	16
COMM-420-012/620-010, Taming Big Data	17
COMM-420-013/642-003, Strat Comm Leadership & Management	18
COMM-437-001, Public Relations Portfolio	17
COMM-437-002, Public Relations Portfolio	20
COMM-437-003, Public Relations Portfolio	20
COMM-437-004, Public Relations Portfolio	20
COMM-437-005, Public Relations Portfolio	19
COMM-469/669-001, Digital Strat Comm Analytics	18
COMM-485/685-001, Strat Comm & Content Creation	18
COMM-533-002, Ethics in Strategic Comm	20
COMM-540-001, Social Marketing for Social Impact	20
COMM-540-002, Social Marketing for Social Impact	20
COMM-542-001, Media Relations	18
COMM-543-005/006, Speechwriting	17
COMM-543-007/008/009, Speechwriting	15
COMM-640-001, Principles of Strategic Comm	14
COMM-642-002, Strat Comm Leadership & Management	14
COMM-644-001, Writing for Strategic Comm	14

Report of on-site evaluation of professional master's and undergraduate programs for 2021-2022 Visits

COMM-649-002, Int'l Strategic Communication	14
COMM-738-001/003, Research for Strategic Comm	13
COMM-738-002, Research for Strategic Comm	9

Journalism – Spring 2021

Course	Students
COMM-105-003, Visual Literacy	18
COMM-105-004, Visual Literacy	17
COMM-105-005, Visual Literacy	18
COMM-105-006, Visual Literacy	17
COMM-105-007, Visual Literacy	18
COMM-105-009, Visual Literacy	18
COMM-200-001, Writing for Communication	18
COMM-200-003, Writing for Communication	18
COMM-200-004, Writing for Communication	17
COMM-200-005, Writing for Communication	18
COMM-200-006, Writing for Communication	18
COMM-200-007, Writing for Communication	18
COMM-200-008, Writing for Communication	18
COMM-260-001, Quant Methods for Journalists	18
COMM-260-002, Quant Methods for Journalists	18
COMM-291-001, Communication Field Experience	10
COMM-305-001, Digital Skills	18
COMM-305-003, Digital Skills	13
COMM-305-004, Digital Skills	16
COMM-320-001, Reporting	17
COMM-320-003, Reporting	17
COMM-325-001, Feature Article Writing	18
COMM-330-001, Principles of Photography	18
COMM-330-002, Principles of Photography	18
COMM-330-004, Principles of Photography	18
COMM-385-001, Digital Audio & Podcast Production	9
COMM-391-001, Communication Careers Internship	9
COMM-417/617-001, Fundamentals of News Design	18
COMM-419/619-001, In-Depth Journalism	18
COMM-420/620-003, The Data of Divides	9
COMM-420/620-004, Investigative Broadcast Journalism	14
COMM-420/620-005, Podcasting Tools & Techniques	17
COMM-420-012/620-010, Taming Big Data	17
COMM-425-001, Advanced Reporting	18
COMM-425-002, Advanced Reporting	18
COMM-428-001/620-011, Advanced Broadcast Production	7
COMM-432/632-001, Backpack Video Journalism	11
COMM-491-001, Senior Professional Internship	17
COMM-544-001, Foreign Correspondence	16
COMM-588-001, Race/Ethnic & Community Reporting	10
COMM-618-001, Data-Driven Journalism	8
COMM-632-002, Backpack Video Journalism	5

COMM-700-001, Investigative Journalism Practicum	7
COMM-717-001, Photography/Visual Storytelling	5
COMM-720-001, Capstone Seminar in Journalism	7

Public Communication – Fall 2021

Course	Students
COMM-301-001/005, Public Relations	18
COMM-301-002/006, Public Relations	13
COMM-301-003/007, Public Relations	18
COMM-301-004/008, Public Relations	11
COMM-310-001/006, Public Speaking	16
COMM-310-002/007, Public Speaking	17
COMM-310-003/008, Public Speaking	18
COMM-310-004/009, Public Speaking	17
COMM-310-005/010, Public Speaking	13
COMM-310-011, Public Speaking	18
COMM-337-001, Public Relations Writing	16
COMM-337-002, Public Relations Writing	17
COMM-337-003, Public Relations Writing	14
COMM-337-005, Public Relations Writing	18
COMM-346-002, Public Relations Case Studies	18
COMM-346-003, Public Relations Case Studies	18
COMM-346-005, Public Relations Case Studies	15
COMM-346-006, Public Relations Case Studies	18
COMM-346-007, Public Relations Case Studies	14
COMM-380-001, Public Communication Research	15
COMM-380-003, Public Communication Research	18
COMM-380-004, Public Communication Research	17
COMM-380-005, Public Communication Research	18
COMM-439-002, Political Communication	18
COMM-485-001, Strat Comm & Content Creation	18
COMM-551-001, Grassroots Digital Advocacy	7
COMM-573-001, Visual Design in Strat Comm	18
COMM-608-003, Social Media Strategies & Tactics	18
COMM-639-002, Political Communication	14
COMM-640-001, Principles of Strategic Comm	18
COMM-640-002, Principles of Strategic Comm	18
COMM-640-003, Principles of Strategic Comm	18
COMM-640-004, Principles of Strategic Comm	16
COMM-640-006, Principles of Strategic Comm	15
COMM-640-007, Principles of Strategic Comm	9
COMM-641-001, Crisis Communication	11
COMM-644-001, Writing for Strategic Comm	12
COMM-644-002, Writing for Strategic Comm	0 WL
COMM-644-003, Writing for Strategic Comm	18
COMM-644-005, Writing for Strategic Comm	9
COMM-669-001, Digital Strat Comm Analytics	18
COMM-735-001, Communication Theory	16

Report of on-site evaluation of professional master's and undergraduate programs for 2021-2022 Visits

COMM-735-002, Communication Theory	11
COMM-735-003, Communication Theory	8
COMM-735-005, Communication Theory	13
COMM-738-001, Research for Strategic Comm	18
COMM-738-002, Research for Strategic Comm	18
COMM-738-004, Research for Strategic Comm	15
COMM-738-006, Research for Strategic Comm	14
COMM-738-007, Research for Strategic Comm	14
COMM-738-008, Research for Strategic Comm	13

Journalism – Fall 2021

Course	Students
COMM-105-001, Visual Literacy	18
COMM-105-002, Visual Literacy	18
COMM-105-003, Visual Literacy	14
COMM-105-004, Visual Literacy	18
COMM-105-005, Visual Literacy	17
COMM-105-006, Visual Literacy	18
COMM-105-007, Visual Literacy	18
COMM-105-008, Visual Literacy	18
COMM-105-009, Visual Literacy	14
COMM-200-001, Writing for Communication	11
COMM-200-002, Writing for Communication	18
COMM-200-003, Writing for Communication	18
COMM-200-004, Writing for Communication	15
COMM-200-005, Writing for Communication	16
COMM-200-006, Writing for Communication	18
COMM-200-007, Writing for Communication	13
COMM-260-004, Quant Methods for Journalists	18
COMM-260-005, Quant Methods for Journalists	18
COMM-260-006, Quant Methods for Journalists	18
COMM-291-001, Communication Field Experience	1
COMM-305-001, Digital Skills	18
COMM-305-002, Digital Skills	18
COMM-305-003, Digital Skills	18
COMM-320-001, Reporting	18
COMM-320-002, Reporting	18
COMM-330-001, Principles of Photography	15
COMM-330-002, Principles of Photography	12
COMM-330-003, Principles of Photography	13
COMM-385-001, Digital Audio & Podcast Production	14
COMM-391-001, Communication Careers Internship	5
COMM-418/618-001, Data-Driven Journalism	13
COMM-420-004/620-005, Reporting on Immigration	7
COMM-420-006/620-007, Investigative Broadcast Journalism	9
COMM-425-001, Advanced Reporting	18
COMM-425-002, Advanced Reporting	17
COMM-426-002, Sports Writing and Reporting	16

COMM-432-001, Backpack Video Journalism	11
COMM-462-001, Journalism Capstone	11
COMM-491-001, Senior Professional Internship	14
COMM-521-001, Opinion Writing	16
COMM-607-001, International Investigative Reporting	17
COMM-620-003, Audio Storytelling	6
COMM-621-001, Community News Reporting	14
COMM-621-002, Community News Reporting	14
COMM-622-002, Writing/Editing for Convergent Media	6
COMM-652-001, Web Studio	6
COMM-700-001, Investigative Journalism Practicum	8
COMM-719-002, Longform Storytelling	9
COMM-721-001, Digital Audio & Podcast Production	6
COMM-724-001, Reporting of Public Affairs	12
COMM-724-002, Reporting of Public Affairs	6
COMM-724-003, Reporting of Public Affairs	10

17. Total expenditures from all sources planned by the unit for the 2021–2022 academic year: Give percentage increase or decrease in three years:

The School of Communication operating budgets for FY21 total \$16,814,480. That budget includes the main, technology, divisions, graduate services, (the unaccredited online MA in Strategic Communication via vendor Wiley), graduate financial aid, and Current newspaper accounts.

Percentage increase or decrease in three years:

- Decreased 13.15% from FY18 to FY19
- Decreased 0.73% from FY19 to FY20
- Increased 12.5% from FY20 to FY21

(American University changed its fiscal year, resulting in major swings in FY19 and FY20 because financial statements had to be modified. The increase/decrease for these fiscal years should be considered an anomaly as opposed to indicative of a pattern.)

FY21 salaries for Journalism and Public Communication faculty are budgeted at \$2,639,921

18. List name and rank of all full-time faculty in the accredited unit in fall 2021. (Full-time faculty refers to those defined as such by the university.) Identify those not teaching because of leaves, sabbaticals, etc.

Faculty	Rank
Bernardini, Dario	Senior Professorial Lecturer
Bhaskar, Rajul	Professorial Lecturer
Borum Chattoo, Caty	Assistant Professor
Braddock, Kurt	Assistant Professor
Bryant, Terry	Senior Professorial Lecturer
Doshi, Priya	Senior Professorial Lecturer
Eisman, Amy	Assistant Professor
Graf, Joseph	Assistant Professor

Hall, Jane	Associate Professor
Halsne, Chris	Professorial Lecturer
Inverso, Dina	Senior Professorial Lecturer
Karavanov, Anya	Senior Professorial Lecturer
Kumar, Pallavi	Assistant Professor
Lewis, Chuck	Professor
Melillo Farrill, Wendy	Associate Professor
Menchen-Trevino, Ericka	Assistant Professor
Mollica, Jason	Professorial Lecturer
Olmsted, Jill	Associate Professor
O'Rourke, Molly	Hurst Senior Professorial Lecturer
Parell, Christie	Senior Professorial Lecturer
Patterson, Jeremiah	Professorial Lecturer
Perri, Lynne	Senior Professorial Lecturer
Puglisi, Gemma	Assistant Professor
Steinhorn, Leonard	Professor
Sullivan, John	Senior Professorial Lecturer
Susca, Margot	Assistant Professor
Talan, Scott	Assistant Professor
Trevisan, Filippo	Associate Professor
Watson, John	Associate Professor
Weissman, Paula	Senior Professorial Lecturer
Williams, Sherri	Assistant Professor
Zaharna, Rhonda	Professor

19. List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in fall 2021. Also list names of part-time faculty teaching spring 2021. (If your school has its accreditation visit in spring 2022, please provide the spring 2022 adjunct list when the site team arrives for the visit.)

Fall 2021

Chris Adams
 Cecilia Simon
 Elvina Nawaguna
 Patricia Guadalupe (Natashka McDonald)
 Paul Albergo
 Brett Zongker
 Andrew Tran
 Brooke (Dani) Rizzo
 Rob Roberts
 Matt Glassman
 Windsor Edwards
 Brian Westley
 Barbara Wall
 Tom Curley

Fernando Pizarro
Mary Ann Akers
Don Markus
Rema Rahman
Siri Bulusu
Amy Nutt
Jennifer LaFleur
Mark Fahey
Chris Lawrence
Erica Basu
Aras Coskuntuncel
Amy Clark
Bethany Hardy
Gillie Haynes
Arthur Swift
Ana Gamonal de Navarro
Kenneth Walsh
Dara Klatt
Alexis Janney
Anthony LaFauce
Sedale McCall
Amy Fox
Joseph Walsh
Cameron Zotter
Steven Lott
John (Jack) Hornady
Christine Neal
Brenda Foster
Nicholas Jacobs
Adam Konowe
Mathew Friedman
Matthew Charles

Spring 2021

Dani Rizzo
Chris Adams
Natashka McDonald
Elvina Nawaguna
Vandana Mathur
Cecilia Simon
Andrew Tran
Elizabeth Lucas
Iris Krasnow
Don Markus
William Miller
Brian Westley
Mary Ann Akers
Sean McMinn
Whitney Harris

Madeline Marshall
Aras Coskuntuncel
Brenda Foster
Gillie Haynes
Art Swift
Ken Walsh
Adam Konowe
Amy Clark
Rob Engle
Anthony LaFauce
Sedale McCall
BJ Talley
Cameron Zotter
Meredith Geisler
Bob Lehrman
Eric Schnure
Maggie Maloney
Joe Walsh

20. 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.

72 or more semester hours outside of journalism and mass communications

	<u>Total Graduates</u>	<u>Number in Compliance Percent</u>
2020-2021 academic year	155	144 (92.9%)
2019-2020 academic year	150	148 (98.7%)

PART II — Standard 1: Mission, Governance and Administration

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

OVERVIEW

American University has a long history in journalism education, graduating its first student in 1929. For the next 50 years, the University offered media-related courses and sought and received ACEJMC accreditation for its Journalism and Public Communication programs in 1976. In 1993, the University established the School of Communication, which now offers a distinctive mix of undergraduate and graduate degrees in Journalism, Public Communication, Film and Media Arts, and Communication Studies. Only the Journalism and Public Communication Divisions are within the scope of this ACEJMC review, including both undergraduate and graduate programs.

The School has 52 full-time faculty positions (13 in Journalism; 19 in Public Communication) and is able to recruit adjunct faculty in one of the world's major media markets. Much of the focus in the Journalism Division is on "public affairs;" the Public Communication Division focuses on "strategic communication for the nonprofit, political, and governmental sectors," each reflecting the University's location in Washington, D.C.

The School enrolls 699 undergraduate students in its Journalism and Public Communication programs. It also enrolls 63 students in its accredited master's programs in Journalism and Strategic Communication.

The University enrolls almost 8,500 undergraduate students and more than 6,000 graduate and law students. Students come from more than 120 countries and are described by the University as "students who want to understand – and influence – how the world works."

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>).

American University's Statement of Common Purpose frames the School's mission and programs:

The University actively encourages a commitment to public service, inclusive participation in University governance, equity and equal access, and an appreciation of diverse cultures and viewpoints. Its commitment to social justice, its ability to respond to the needs of a changing world while retaining its core values, and its capacity to turn to educational advantage the resources of the nation's capital are hallmarks of the institution.

In 2017, the School engaged an external consultant to lead an exploration and refinement of the School's priorities and goals, as well as its mission, vision and values. Through a rigorous, inclusive, and

reflective process, the faculty, staff, and leadership ratified new mission and vision statements and established the School's values and strategic priorities in October 2018.

Our Mission: AU SOC engages the most pressing issues of our time through teaching, scholarship, and professional experiences in communication and media in Washington and beyond.

Our Vision: AU SOC is a top student-centered school where engaged scholars, passionate learners, bold leaders and active alumni advance knowledge, shape professional practice, and address society's current and emerging challenges.

Our Values: Inclusion; Scholarship; Excellence; Social Impact; Integrity; Collaboration; Innovation

SOC's Strategic Priorities:

- *Develop and deliver high-impact scholarship and programs that generate new knowledge, contribute to professional and creative practice, and shape large-scale discourse.*
- *Support and enhance pedagogical excellence throughout all SOC programs.*
- *Increase student access to transformational experiential learning opportunities.*
- *Promote inclusive excellence.*
- *Increase our visibility and enhance our reputation.*
- *Attract, engage, and retain top talent to AU.*
- *Increase resource development to support attainment of strategic priorities.*

In October 2021, the Journalism Division updated its own mission statement to focus more on the unique aspects of the discipline:

SOC Journalism trains journalists to seek truth in an evolving news landscape, question the powerful, promote ethical journalism, and practice inclusivity in reporting news all in an effort to protect freedom of the press and democracy.

The Journalism Division mission statement covers both its undergraduate and graduate programs. Public Communication relies on the School's mission statement to define its programs.

The School's Strategic Plan outlines goals for 2018-2021. There are clearly defined priorities and a thoughtful approach to structure and resources that could lead to success. There is minimal evidence, however, that shows how the School formally measured its success based on the plan after the 2018-2019 academic year. It was during this time that the dean left the University. The interim dean served for two years through a failed dean search and then the beginning of the pandemic, and while universally praised for her leadership, was focused on other important priorities. With the new dean's arrival in summer of 2021, there is an expectation that the School will begin a new strategic planning process. The new Dean has already begun to lay out his vision: *"We must compete against the media and communication industry leaders, who are drawing from professionals from the same pool of applicants possessing the knowledge that we seek to offer our students. This is a pivotal time for SOC to make investments that will transform our student experience, enrich and sustain the work of unparalleled*

teacher-scholars, and bolster programs that have a lasting impact on established and emerging fields. This vision looks to elevating our work to new heights and promoting the School's profile as a premier destination for the study of communication in all its forms."

The Provost says the School has a central role in the future of American University and acknowledges the value journalism and public communication offer to civil discourse and public affairs and policy. There is a clear sense of alignment between central administration and the School and support for the new dean.

The School updated the searchable ACEJMC database while the team was on site.

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

Faculty members reported a high level of satisfaction with their role in governance. Part of this satisfaction is a result of the impressive collegiality and passion the faculty have for the School, their students, and each other.

The University's Faculty Manual states, "The university is committed to following its procedures that promote shared governance that is transparent and accountable at every level of operation. Effective governance requires broad participation. Individual faculty can be their own best advocates through maintaining familiarity with this Manual and by staying current with issues in faculty governance."

The School's bylaws flow from the University manual and provide a framework for faculty governance and are overseen by the faculty governance committee. Bylaws are amended by a two-thirds vote of the faculty.

The new dean has continued the regular monthly "SOC Council" meetings that are required for faculty and senior unit administrators. There are multiple standing faculty committees that maintain faculty oversight of educational policy, including committees or procedures for curriculum, outcomes and assessment, grievances, and tenure and promotion.

The School was the first at American University to establish an inclusion officer to ensure best practices in hiring and to work with any student who believes there has been classroom discrimination or bias. All incidents are reported to the University.

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 chief administrative officer of the School is its dean, who reports to the University's provost. Sam Fulwood III, a prominent journalist, public policy analyst and author, became Dean in 2021 after an international search. Previously, the School's interim dean was a highly regarded professor who led the School through the beginning stages of the coronavirus pandemic.

The School comprises four divisions: Journalism; Public Communication; Film & Media Arts; and, Communication Studies. Only Journalism and Public Communication are under the scope of this review. Each division has a director who manages the day-to-day operations of both the undergraduate and

graduate programs and looks ahead to ensure that proper courses are being offered and faculty are assigned to teach them.

Faculty expressed satisfaction in the leadership of the School during the entire period of this accreditation cycle, even through the transition from a long-standing dean to an interim to a new dean. There is enthusiasm for the diversity in leadership and excitement for the future.

In the few weeks prior to the site team's arrival, the School announced two major external partnerships that will enhance both student experiences and community engagement: A new investigative journalism fellowship program with ESPN that will "embed a full-time graduate student alongside ESPN's journalists; and, a partnership with "Journal-isms," which will "connect veteran journalists and students, sharing real-world experience across the generations and support SOC's efforts to increase the School's reach into communities of color. It will also provide a home base for "Journal-isms" that will help ensure its future stability."

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

The Dean is evaluated annually by the Provost, based on performance against stated goals. The current Dean has not yet been in his role for a year and has not been reviewed.

The Dean appoints and annually reviews the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, the Assistant Dean for Administration and Strategic Initiatives, the Executive Director of *Current* (an editorially independent service published six times per year), and Director of Communication and Outreach. The Senior Associate Dean annually reviews the Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Academic Services, the Assistant Dean for Graduate Academic Services, and the Assistant Dean for Budget and Technology. When openings occur, the Dean appoints a search committee – including both faculty and staff – to solicit and evaluate applications, schedule interviews and provide feedback. The Dean makes the final decision on the School's administrative hires.

Division directors are elected by the faculty in their specific divisions for a three-year term and serve at the Dean's discretion. There is no limit to the number of terms each division director may serve if re-elected. There are associate division directors appointed by the division directors.

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

The University's Faculty Manual outlines the process for dealing with issues and encourages faculty members "to resolve their disagreements with the University or other faculty members through informal, frank and open discussion." The policy also provides regulations for dealing with faculty misconduct, including incompetence, bullying, sexual or discriminatory harassment, discrimination, a pattern or practice of failing to meet university contractual obligations, failure to carry out the obligations of one's position, violations of university policies, or violations of scholarly integrity.

Staff are governed by the Staff Personnel Policy Manual and are provided procedures both for informal and formal resolution of issues.

Students, both undergraduate and graduate, have access to formal procedures through the Complaint Process section on the University's website. The University's Center for Diversity & Inclusion and the

School's own inclusion officer work with students who have concerns about classroom, campus, or personal issues.

Professional master's program / Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The School's mission statement and the Journalism Division's mission statement stand for both the undergraduate and graduate programs. Public Communication relies on the School's mission statement to define its programs. There are no separate strategic plans for graduate programs. Distinctions for graduate students are drawn in curriculum and instruction, as well as the level of experiential opportunities and fellowships.

g). The unit has designated administrative oversight of the professional master's program as well as policies and procedures that ensure faculty oversight of educational policy and curriculum in the professional master's program.

The division directors (akin to department chairs) supervise the professional master's programs for their divisions. The policies and procedures for faculty governance of the graduate programs are the same as those for the undergraduate programs. The highest ranking administrator for the master's programs is the Assistant Dean for Graduate Administrative Services, who oversees operations and advising.

The previous accreditation report identified challenges for the master's programs: 1. To consolidate some of its 13 master's degree programs, some of which overlap. (*Note: Only three of these programs were under review in 2014-2015*); and, 2. To "market more aggressively and build a brand that allows the School's M.A. offerings to stand out in a crowded field of institutions in greater Washington."

The School reports that it has "phased out" a few of the programs that were not under review and has developed a more organized and targeted brand marketing approach through multiple changes.

- The responsibility for marketing is now shared between the School, the University's Communications office, and Graduate Academic Services;
- There has been a shift from relying on traditional advertising to nearly all-digital promotion;
- The School is now in direct contact with their external marketing partner;
- The University has created an Office of Graduate & Professional Studies, which developed a brand campaign for graduate programs;
- The School engages faculty in monthly webinars;
- The School has established fellowships; and,
- The School improved the financial award model to better match students with appropriate funding.

SUMMARY:

(Undergraduate:)

There is an enthusiasm at all levels of the faculty and administration that is impressive. They know the advantages they enjoy by being located in the Washington, D.C. area. There is an equal enthusiasm for the new Dean who brings a wealth of experience in journalism and public communication, and as

multiple faculty shared, embraces his responsibility to represent the entire School. Shared governance continues to be “alive and well.” With the changes in leadership over the past three years, there has been a decrease in strategic planning and reporting. The School is encouraged to begin the process of strategic planning to set a clear direction under new leadership.

(Professional Master's:)

The professional master's programs in both Journalism and Strategic Communication share their mission and strategic plan with the undergraduate program. While this might suggest a lack of priority, quite the opposite is true, as the graduate program benefits from the attention of all faculty and administrators and is viewed as a distinctive asset.

It also is distinguished by exceptional experiences, such as the Washington Post practicum and prestigious fellowships that are not available to undergraduates, in addition to higher-level coursework.

Overall evaluation (undergraduate program), compliance/noncompliance: COMPLIANCE

Overall evaluation (professional master's program), compliance/ noncompliance: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

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 School has two accredited undergraduate Divisions – Journalism and Public Communication – that offer two degrees: Journalism; and, Public Relations and Strategic Communications (PRSC). In each degree students must complete at least 42 credit hours in the School. Both majors require a set of core courses, additional courses in the sequence, skills courses, media studies, and requirements outside of the unit. For Journalism students, this involves 9 credits of core courses, 18 credits in Journalism, 9 credits in Journalism skills classes, 9 credits in Media Studies, and 6 credits in History and Economics (3 each). For PRSC, 45 hours are required within the School. This includes 21 credits in core courses, 12 credits from within the sequence, 9 credits as electives. Both sequences require 6 credit hours in History (3) and Economics (3), as well as an outside minor or second major outside of the School. Students must earn 72 credit hours outside of the major. Academic advisors help students to track their compliance. These hours are accrued from the AU Core program (40 credit hours), one minor outside of the School (at least 18 credit hours), U.S. History and Economics courses (6 credit hours), and electives outside of the School (at least 8 hours).

Information the School presented to the team showed that in the last two years, the School has been in compliance for one of the two years. In 2019-20, 98.7 percent of students met the 72-hour rule, but in 2020-21, the percentage noted in the self-study fell below the 95 percent requirement, to 92.9 percent. It was unclear how this had happened and attempts to find an explanation were unsuccessful due to turnover in key positions. After the visit, the School submitted data showing the 2020-21 percentage was an error on their part, and that they met the requirement for both years.

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.

All Journalism students complete the following core courses:

- COMM-100 Understanding Media FA4 (3)
- COMM-200 Writing for Communication (3)
- COMM-260 Quantitative Methods for Journalists (3)

They must then take the following required courses:

- COMM-305 Digital Skills (3)
- COMM-320 Reporting (3)
- COMM-401 Communication Law (3)
- COMM-409 Journalism Ethics (3)

- COMM-425 Advanced Reporting (3)

All Public Relations & Strategic Communication students complete the following core courses:

- COMM-100 Understanding Media FA4 (3)
- COMM-209 Communication and Society FA4 (3)
- COMM-301 Public Relations (3) (with grade of B or better)
- COMM-337 Public Relations Writing (3)
- COMM-346 Public Relations Case Studies (3)
- COMM-380 Public Communication Research (3)
- COMM-437 Public Relations Portfolio (3)

Public Relations & Strategic Communication – The PRSC curriculum covers all the basics necessary for a career in this field. Once students have completed their seven core courses, they take 12 credit hours from 22 course options, including courses that cover Public Speaking, Political Communication, Ethics, Speechwriting, and Strategic Health Communication. They then complete an additional 9 credit hours from 33 different courses offered. No more than six of those credit hours can be from COMM 291 (Communication Field Experience), COMM 391 (Communication Careers Internship) and COMM 491 (Senior Professional Internship).

Journalism– Similarly, the Journalism major provides students with the fundamentals needed, along with a wide range of options. After students complete their eight core courses, they take nine credit hours of skills courses (including the three intern/field experience options noted above). There are 18 offerings here, including Data-Driven Journalism, Sports Writing and Reporting, Advanced Television and Video Production, and Race, Ethnic, and Community Reporting. There are also nine credit hours required in Media Studies. Students have 20 courses from which to choose.

In both majors, there is an effective balance between theoretical and professional courses. This was echoed by students during the site team visit. They noted that there is a good mix of theoretical and practical knowledge offered, and that the coursework is application-focused. The Journalism Division has increased its emphasis in the past seven years on three areas: investigative journalism; race, gender, sexuality and diversity; and emerging media. These are explored through both theoretical/traditional and professional/future-focused lenses. While core instruction teaches students about journalism ethics and media law, other classes focus on more recent topics such as data journalism, immigration, or podcasting. The Journalism curriculum has been updated significantly two times since the last accreditation. In Fall 2016, the course content and curriculum mapping were updated, based on both student exit survey feedback and working professionals/alumni input that indicated students needed to have stronger skills in reporting, digital media, and ethical issues.

The second set of changes, in Fall 2020, were in response to challenges faced specifically with Broadcast Journalism, which had faced declining enrollment as a result, in part, of requiring students to take additional courses (Quantitative and Ethics) and that the School had eliminated – and then reintroduced – the Broadcast Journalism track. The new curriculum included the introduction of an audio curriculum focused on podcasting, as well as a reduction in the duration of the audio production class (from 6 hours to 2.5 hours) to align with student schedules more effectively. Within the Journalism Division, there are now two tracks: Journalism and Broadcast Journalism.

All courses map to each of ACEJMC's 12 professional values and competencies.

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.

As noted above, both Divisions are highly responsive to changes in their respective professions, ensuring that the instruction does remain current and demanding.

Journalism: Courses in the Journalism sequence are evaluated and refreshed on a regular basis. Digital and technological classes are required, and professionals have taught these classes to ensure that the material is current. A course in Storytelling in Emerging Media, introduced as an elective, will soon become a permanent addition to the curriculum.

Public Relations & Strategic Communication: Technology is introduced to students in several courses, allowing them to learn industry tools such as Qualtrics, Cision, Google Analytics, and Meltwater. Adjunct faculty are also relied upon to keep content up to date in the latest PR skills, trends, and technology. For example, courses in Social Media Strategies, Content Creation, and Public Speaking all benefit from having professionals in the classroom. Their decades of industry experience help students learn about the latest marketing strategies and approaches. New courses are added as well to ensure currency. Two that have been added permanently to the curriculum include:

- COMM 469/649 Digital Strategic Communication Analytics was first offered in 2017-18 to ensure students understand the critical role of digital and social strategy in Public Relations.
- COMM 469 Strategic Communication & Content Creation was added to educate students on both technological and theoretical aspects of content creation.

Electives are also kept updated in the PRSC curriculum. Examples include Digital Analytics + Certifications (with Meltwater); Advertising Lab; Communication for Social Change; and Documentary Storytelling.

The School is willing to explore new approaches to teaching. As a result of the pandemic, beginning in Fall 2021, four required classes (Undergraduate Research, PR Case Studies, Writing, and Communication and Society) are now being offered in hybrid mode, combining in-person and remote instruction. One area of concern, mentioned by both undergraduate and graduate students, was the need for Adobe Creative Suite licenses on personal computers rather than having that only available on campus.

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.)

No courses exceeded the 20-1 ratio for all the courses listed in the self-study. The School appears willing to open up new sections where needed to ensure students have an optimal learning experience.

Where there are multiple sections offered, the School takes several steps to ensure consistency in learning objectives and standards. This starts when adjunct faculty (who teach the majority of these kinds of classes) are hired. Division Directors or Associate Division Directors review syllabi for all first-time faculty and subsequently review course evaluations to ensure that the course was delivered effectively and as planned. For the core writing courses, all faculty teaching these must attend a training session each semester.

Starting in Fall 2021, COMM 200 Writing for Communication is required for five different majors (Journalism, Communication Studies, Business & Entertainment, CLEG, and Environmental Studies), although some students in Journalism and Public Communication expressed that the introductory courses (COMM 100 and 200) are “too basic and do not challenge us enough.”

The Public Communication Division takes similar actions to ensure consistency across its courses. All new faculty are assigned a faculty mentor and their syllabi must be reviewed and approved before each semester begins. They also undergo an informal mid-semester student evaluation. Training sessions are offered for all new adjunct faculty, and they can choose to meet mid-semester for a check-in with the Division Director or Associate Division Director. In a meeting the site team held with a number of adjunct faculty, all expressed enthusiasm for the support they received from the School. A large number of the adjuncts have taught at AU for many years.

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.

All students in the School take full advantage of the many internship offerings in the Washington, D.C. area and beyond. They usually find these through the Dean’s Internship program administered by SOC, the American University Career Center, or directly from individual faculty members. All internships, whether 1-, 2-, or 3-credit hours, require supervision by faculty, and in order to get the full credit, at least 85 percent of the work they do must be non-administrative. Additionally, there must be clear learning outcomes; the student’s performance in the workplace should be evaluated (no more than half the final grade); and the student has to undertake academic assignments (at least half the final grade).

There are multiple opportunities on campus for both Journalism and Public Communications students to gain professional experiences. These include 10 different media organizations run by the Student Media Board: AmLit, ATV, AWOL, The Eagle, The Blackprint, Her Campus AU, Photo Collective, Visible Magazine, WVAU, and Second District Records. Additionally, there are three student chapters of national professional organizations: Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA), AU Association of Black Journalists (part of NABJ), and National Association of Hispanic Journalists. The Social Media Club is an organization that provides an opportunity for all students to learn from media professionals in this area.

Professional master’s program / Unit performance with regard to indicators:

f). At least half of the required credit hours are in either professional skills or courses that integrate theory and skills appropriate to professional communication careers.

The two master’s programs both show at least half of the required 33 credit hours falling under either professional skills or integrated theory/skills classes.

The 33-credit program for an MA in Journalism requires 12 credits in basic skills, reporting of public affairs, community news reporting and communication law. Students select specialties in Investigative, International, or Broadcast Journalism. Students may select an internship as an elective and have interned at CNN, NBC, VOA, NPR, WAMU, Bloomberg, The Washington Post, Politico, and Scripps, among others.

The MA in Journalism recently added one hour of ethics content to each class session of daily instruction in the three-week, 3-credit hour “Boot Camp for Journalists,” a required course for all incoming graduate students. The program refocused the former Online News Production course into one that features a program news site, thewash.org, with more local content to address the need for additional online reporting and writing instruction.

The graduate program in Journalism is distinguished by its experiential components. Among the most notable is the practicum at The Washington Post, which embeds master’s candidates with investigative teams. One student was part of a team that won a Pulitzer Prize for a 2016 investigation of police killings. Graduate students also are selected for fellowships at the Post, the Center for Public Integrity, PBS Frontline and the Investigative Reporting Workshop, USA Today and ESPN. These students receive a stipend and free or reduced tuition and, in most cases, employment after graduation.

The MA in Strategic Communication requires 30 credits for graduation. Of these, 15 hours are required (covering five 3-credit classes). The other half (15 hours) include electives that cover Advocacy & Social Impact, Digital Communication Strategy & Analytics, Corporate Communication & Reputation Management, and International Strategic Communication. Students must take a minimum of three courses in a topic area to list a concentration.

g). Instruction and curricular requirements for professional master’s students are more advanced and rigorous than for undergraduate students, including courses open to both undergraduate and graduate students.

The graduate and undergraduate journalism programs are distinct in terms of core courses and learning outcomes and objectives.

All core graduate courses are only for the graduate students. All students must take one course in common, Communication Law. There are some classes open to both graduate and undergraduate students, but there are added requirements for the graduate students, including more intensive assignments and additional work, such as case studies, supplemental reading, and more frequent quizzes. The standards for grading are typically higher.

For example, in COMM 417/617 (Fundamentals of News Design), the graduate students must complete three additional assignments (case study, paper on an influential publication designer, and a quiz on additional readings). Similarly, Public Communication graduate courses offer greater depth and rigor than those at the undergraduate level. In COMM 481/681 (Entertainment Communication) the graduates are assigned additional readings and assignments, including a case study analysis, a group project, and the leading of class discussions. For COMM 442/642 (Strategic Communications Leadership & Management), in which all the students participate in crucial conversations on negotiations and on employee counseling, graduate students receive additional grades based on the feedback provided to classmates.

In Spring 2021, there were seven Journalism courses and 11 Strategic Communication courses cross-listed for both undergraduate and graduate students. The self-study listed 26 professional courses specifically designed for graduate students across both MA programs.

SUMMARY:

(Undergraduate:)

The School of Communication provides a rigorous, professionally oriented curriculum to both Journalism and Public Communication students, with an effective balance of conceptual and skills courses, and significant opportunities for experiential learning. The instruction remains current through ongoing evaluation and, where necessary, changes to course offerings, ensuring that students are well versed in digital and technological competencies.

(Professional Master's:)

The graduate program in Journalism is designed to train professional, working journalists. Deadlines are more intense and plentiful because students use Washington, D.C., as a laboratory, covering Capitol Hill, the Supreme Court and other institutions, as well as public policy issues. Similarly, the Strategic Communication graduate students have many opportunities to enjoy experiential learning opportunities both in and out of the classroom.

As one faculty member noted, "The graduate program provides a completely different experience than undergrad. It goes deeper and is more intensive." Students in the graduate programs who had received their undergraduate degree from AU generally agreed with this sentiment.

Overall evaluation (undergraduate program), compliance/noncompliance: COMPLIANCE

Overall evaluation (professional master's program), compliance/ noncompliance: COMPLIANCE

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.

The School has been a leader in campus-wide conversations regarding diversity and efforts to design and implement initiatives throughout all aspects of campus life. The School was the first to establish a Diversity Committee, which caused other schools across the campus to confirm it their own ways. Later, the University moved in the direction of making diversity and inclusion a priority with a university-wide effort to move the need across the entire campus by developing an Excellence Inclusion Plan and a Center for Diversity and Inclusion. The Center is dedicated to enhancing LGBTQ, multicultural, first generation and women's experiences on campus.

The School focuses on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and integrates these principles in to every aspect of the School. It has created processes and tools that have served as a model for the rest of the University. The School has a plan that highlights nine priorities regarding diversity. Some of those efforts included expanding the Diversity Committee to include students; dedicating resources to the plan; providing training for faculty and staff; improving recruiting efforts for staff and students; and engaging and supporting the student groups.

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 School works to expose students to diversity through issue-based assignments, authorships, and guest lecturers that help to weave diversity throughout the curriculum. Additionally, specific courses have been created to ensure diverse issues and perspectives within the curriculum. These include Race, Ethnic and Community Reporting; Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Media; Identity, Power, and Misrepresentation; Comedy for Social Change; Multicultural Strategic Communication Campaigns; Reporting on Immigration; and Advanced Data-Driven Journalism: The Data of Divides. Also, the RACE (Race and Communication Exploration) Matters initiative was designed to infuse scholarship, teaching, and public engagement to explore practices of racial equity of organizations within the School. In AY 2020-21, the Dean's office and Inclusion Team launched the RACE Matters grant process, which gave nearly \$20,000 in funding for faculty and staff proposals that addressed racism in the areas of research, production, events, curricular development, and student-focused communication.

Diverse student organizations also help to expose students to professional ethnicity organizations through student chapters of National Association of Black Journalists, National Association of Hispanic Journalists, and Public Relations Student Society of America. Student-operated publications like the Blackprint and Visible offer a platform for raising minority issues and an amplifier of marginalized voices.

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.

Recruitment and retention of domestic minority faculty is a concern for the School. While the School's DEI representative does work to train search teams in what is needed to attract a diverse pool of applicants, it is important to always have a diversity representative on the search teams to help the School improve its numbers in recruitment of full-time minority faculty. The Full-Time Faculty Recruitment table below shows that over the past three years there were nine openings, an overall pool of 164 applicants, 75 of which were minority candidates (46 percent). There were only 4 minority finalists for all 9 open positions. One offer was made to a minority candidate, which was accepted. For the same openings, 73 females were in the pool, 12 were considered, 7 were made offers and 5 accepted.

Full-time Faculty Recruitment

Provide the following information for any searches for full-time faculty members conducted by the unit within the past three years.

Academic years:	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	2019 - 2020
Openings	5	2	2
Total applicants in hiring pool	54	46	64
Females in hiring pool	23	20	30
Female finalists considered	6	1	5
Offers made to females	5	1	1
Offers accepted by females	4	0	1
Minorities in hiring pool	27	28	20
Minority finalists considered	2	0	2
Offers made to minorities	1	0	0
Offers accepted by minorities	1	0	0
International faculty in hiring pool	4	0	6
International faculty considered	0	0	0
Offers made to international faculty	0	0	0
Offers accepted by international faculty	0	0	0

Faculty Populations Chart

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

Full-time faculty

Academic year: 2020–2021	FT Faculty		% Of Total	
	Female	Faculty	Male	Faculty
Black/African American	1	3.1	2*	6.2
White	15	46.9	12	37.5
American Indian/Alaskan native	0	0	0	0
Asian	3	9.4	0	0
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	0	0	0	0
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
Two or more races	0	0	0	0
Other race	0	0	0	0
International (any race)	0	0	0	0

*Indicates that the Dean is a full-time faculty member with tenure

Part-time faculty

Academic year: 2020–2021	PT Faculty		% Of Total	
	Female	Faculty	Male	Faculty
Black/African American	3	7.9	1	2.6
White	10	26.3	15	39.5
American Indian/Alaskan native	0	0	0	0
Asian	2	5.3	1	2.6
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	1	2.6	1	2.6
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
Two or more races	0	0	0	0
Other race	1	2.6	3	7.9
International (any race)	0	0	0	0

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 School makes a concerted effort to recruit and retain a diverse student body. Journalism faculty also collaborate closely with professionals to recruit. Prospective students are recruited in high school and offered a multicultural overnight experience. Designated staff are assigned to support first-generation

students, transfer, and low-income students as part of the recruitment process. These students are also connected with current students who serve as ambassadors. The School does work to attract first-generation students who are often from under-represented ethnic backgrounds.

The following charts show that undergraduate Hispanic/Latino students are the largest ethnic group (12.6 percent), followed by International students (8.6 percent) and African Americans (8.4 percent). The graduate student population shows African Americans as the highest diversity group (12.1 percent), followed by Hispanic/Latino (7.7 percent).

Undergraduate Student Populations

Show numbers of male, female, minority, white and international students enrolled in the unit, the percentages they represent of total journalism and mass communication enrollment, and the percentages these racial/ethnic groups represent of the total institutional enrollment.

Use figures from the most recent academic year for which complete data are available.

Group	Academic year: 2020 – 2021		% of total	% of total
	Male	Female	In Unit	In Institution
Black/African-American	13	43	8.4	7.5
White	85	297	57.4	50.4
American Indian/Alaskan native	0	0	0	0
Asian	6	36	6.3	6.5
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	19	65	12.6	11.6
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0.1
Two or more races	2	26	4.2	4.3
Other race	4	13	2.6	4.9
International students (any race)	9	48	8.6	14.7

Graduate Student Populations

Academic year: 2020 – 2021 Group			% of total	% of total
	Male	Female	In Unit	In Institution
Black/African-American	21	4	12.1	13.2
White	13	61	35.7	43.7
American Indian/Alaskan native	1	0	0.5	0.2
Asian	0	3	1.4	5.0
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	2	14	7.7	10
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0.1
Two or more races	2	6	3.9	4.7
Other race	13	61	35.7	13.1
International students (any race)	1	5	2.9	10.2

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.

AU has a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination and harassment. It operates under a policy that does not allow any form of discrimination based on color, race, religion, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and disability. It has distinct procedures for addressing any violations. Students, faculty, and staff have support at the University to file any grievances of a discriminatory nature.

SUMMARY:

(Undergraduate:)

The School has worked to move the needle with diversity within its organization, working to infuse inclusion and equity in its curriculum offered to students and the overall function and atmosphere of the School. The Dean has even set aside discretionary funds to support Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts with the organization. Greater minority representation among faculty is needed, with a more concerted effort to recruit candidates for employment who will qualify as finalists in searches. The Dean has shown promise with his first hire being an Hispanic Assistant Dean (staff). He is committed to improving the School in diversity recruitment of full-time and part-time faculty.

(Professional Master's:)

The School has done a decent job recruiting a more diverse student body to the graduate program for the master's degree. Efforts to increase faculty in this area should remain a focus for the School.

Overall evaluation (undergraduate program), compliance/noncompliance: COMPLIANCE

Overall evaluation (professional master's program), compliance/ noncompliance: COMPLIANCE

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.

Hiring for full-time faculty follows the standards and guidelines set by the School and the American University Faculty Manual. Tenure-line faculty members must meet the criteria for high-quality teaching, scholarship and service as described in “General Criteria for Evaluation of Tenure-Line and Continuing Appointment-Line Faculty” in the Manual. Appointment and reappointment of all term faculty are contingent on the relevant qualifications and performance of the faculty member, the enrollments and other needs of the unit and the instructional resources of the University. The University customarily makes initial term faculty appointments for one or two years. The University may reappoint term faculty for periods from one to five years. At the time of the site team visit, at least one member of the School faculty reported serving on a university-wide committee considering revisions to the policy on term faculty, especially for term faculty on one-year contracts. While surveys were conducted to solicit input from term faculty, no final decisions had been made on changing policies outlined in the Faculty Manual.

All faculty positions are posted and promoted across a variety of networks, including professional associations; affinity journalism groups such as NABJ, NAHJ, AAJA, and a diverse pool of academic groups. Hiring is based on teaching experience, areas of expertise, education, and interviews with hiring managers. In addition to the full-time faculty, the School continues to work to attract a diverse pool of potential part-time or adjunct faculty. Adjunct faculty interviewing is a year-round process and because of the number of sections for required classes, the program sometimes needs new instructors, especially for classes such as Communication Law. The School enjoys a uniquely rich pool of adjunct instructors because of its Washington, D.C., location. Once hired, adjuncts are governed by the Service Employee International Union contract and supervised by faculty, who oversee syllabi and serve as mentors. The adjunct faculty are encouraged to become part of the School, and encouraged to seek help, advice, guidance throughout the semester.

Faculty are evaluated yearly via student course evaluations as well as their creative, professional or scholarly work and service to the School and University. The Senior Associate Dean and Division Directors closely review the student teaching evaluations to pinpoint any problems that may need to be addressed. They look for patterns in a faculty member’s courses, such as students across the board noting deficiencies in returning work promptly. Recognizing such a pattern helps the faculty member make specific changes that can improve teaching as well as the student experience. The Dean reviews faculty performance annually, using the results of student evaluations as one part of deciding merit increases.

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

In the past three years prior to the site team visit, only 69 of the 188 Journalism core and required courses offered (or 37 percent) were taught by full-time faculty. This includes 42 percent of full-time courses both in 2020-21 and 2018-19 and 26 percent in 2019-2020. In the self-study, the unit explained their unique location in Washington, D.C., the media capital of the world, means they have an enviable stable of accomplished, loyal, committed and returning adjunct professionals who pick up core courses repeatedly. Hiring them means the unit is able to turn to full-time faculty to teach courses in critical areas of scholarship such as politics and media, emerging media, race and community reporting, investigative reporting, and news design – all courses offered every year.

Three other factors come into play:

1. The School has multiple sections of required courses and uses the same syllabi among sections. Nearly all faculty do teach core courses, but the unit cannot fill every one. At one point their entry-level writing courses had nearly two dozen sections a year. Their quantitative and communication law courses have about six sections annually each.
2. Their core Understanding Media classes are staffed by another division that also counts them as core.
3. The School staffs most of their full-time graduate journalism courses with full-time faculty.

The Public Communication Division spends a significant amount of time training and mentoring adjunct faculty. As a result, the unit leadership is very comfortable having adjuncts teach its sections of core courses. When adjuncts are hired, they are provided with sample syllabi to help structure their course. In addition, all new adjuncts are assigned a faculty mentor and their syllabi are reviewed before the start of the semester by the Division Director, the Associate Division Director and their faculty mentor to ensure consistency in course content. The Division Director and Associate Division Director also host an adjunct training before the start of the semester and a mid-semester adjunct lunch. The lunch is an opportunity to share important information, to troubleshoot any student issues and to give the adjuncts the opportunity to meet one another. As a result of the hiring freeze caused by the pandemic, the Public Communication Division is down three faculty members. The site team was given announcements for two positions for which searches were underway at the time of the visit. The positions, when filled, would help in reducing the reliance on adjunct faculty.

Members of the site team met with a group of part-time faculty, all of whom report high levels of engagement with both divisions and an intentional effort to ensure they are appropriately supported. They commended the School on how well the unique circumstances of the pandemic were handled.

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.

Of the 32 members of the full-time Journalism and Public Communication faculty in 2021/22, most have significant professional experience and all but one have an advanced degree. Both Divisions have actively sought to increase faculty who offer both professional experience and scholarly credentials.

- 8 have Ph.D.s
- 1 has both a J.D. degree and a Ph.D.
- 1 has an Ed.D.
- 22 have an MA or MS as their highest degrees.

Full-time faculty members are a mix of tenured, tenure-track, term, and professionals-in-residence. Among the full-time faculty, three are full professors, five are associate professors, 10 are assistant professors, four are professorial lecturers, seven are senior professorial lecturers, one is a Hurst senior professorial lecturer and two are senior professorial lecturers and journalists in residence.

A further breakdown of full-time faculty by race and gender shows that:

- 19 are female
- 13 are male
- 12 are white males
- 13 are white females
- 3 are Asian-American females
- 1 is a Black female
- 2 are Black males (this includes the Dean, who is a full professor with tenure)

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

In terms of evaluation, the University in 2020 implemented an initiative to move beyond the Student Evaluation of Teaching end-of-the-semester evaluations (SETs) and opted for a portfolio approach to evaluation of teaching on a recurring basis, an initiative called “Beyond SETs.” The Interim Dean for Faculty Affairs reports meeting with faculty in both the Division of Journalism and Division of Public Communication to determine their unit’s Beyond SETs criteria. Both faculties voted on the criteria for their unit.

Part-time faculty report that they are regularly encouraged to do optional informal mid-term course evaluations and then at the end of the semester, have their SETs reviewed by course coordinators/supervisors, when applicable.

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

The site team met with representatives from within and outside of the School. All praised the faculty within Journalism and Public Communication for their collaborative nature, their involvement in University programs and initiatives such as Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, as well as the strength of the students coming out of both programs.

Professional master’s program / Unit performance with regard to indicators:

f). Faculty members teaching in the professional master’s program meet the criteria for graduate instruction at that university.

All members of the School’s full-time faculty are members of the graduate faculty and can teach graduate courses. The criteria for undergraduate instruction and graduate instruction are identical.

g). Graduate faculty teach the majority of professional master’s courses.

In the three-year period prior to the accreditation site team visit, at least 67 percent of master’s courses in Journalism were taught by full-time faculty. That percentage was even higher in some semesters when as many as 81 percent of courses were under the instruction of full-time faculty. In the Public Communication full-time master’s program the percentage of graduate courses taught by full-time faculty ranged from a low of 60 percent in the Fall 2020 semester to 84 percent in Fall 2019. A decline in Public Communication faculty teaching full-time graduate courses in Fall 2020, as well as spring 2021, was due to the resignations of two full-time PC faculty, whose positions could not be filled because of the COVID pandemic.

SUMMARY:

(Undergraduate:)

The School has in place criteria for selecting and evaluating full-time and part-time faculty. While a high percentage of courses are taught by adjunct faculty, the unit leaders note hiring part-time faculty from the Washington, D.C., area means they are able to have full-time faculty teach courses in critical areas of scholarship such as politics and media, emerging media, race and community reporting, investigative reporting, and news design.

(Professional Master's:)

All members of the School's full-time faculty are members of the graduate faculty and can teach graduate courses. The majority of courses in both the Journalism and Public Communication programs are taught by full-time faculty.

Overall evaluation (undergraduate program), compliance/noncompliance: COMPLIANCE

Overall evaluation (professional master's program), compliance/noncompliance: 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 School's scholarship mission encompasses gathering, examining, interpreting and disseminating data about the all-encompassing world of communication. The mission is equally devoted to providing thought leaders and practitioners for the professional communication institutions that exist locally and serve every corner of the nation and the world. In such an environment, the School's mission necessarily encompasses traditional scholarly research and publication as well as learned contributions to contemporary and emerging work in the professional fields.

Faculty write and publish books – both scholarly and professional – as well as serve as contributors for refereed journals. They engage in thoughtful examinations of the communication industry, its needs, its effects and its future. Professional and creative work includes the design, production, distribution, and evaluation of media and human communication.

Faculty reported to the site team their excitement about joining the faculty so that they could take advantage of the School's location in connecting their research to practice. For example, one junior faculty member reported receiving a grant exceeding \$500,000 to support a research partnership with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. In another case of the faculty expertise having impact beyond the AU campus, a team of faculty published research that increased knowledge about methods of instruction in online degree programs in strategic communication.

American University and the School have a multivariate strategy for promoting a culture of excellence in scholarly, creative and professional work.

The School and University support creative, professional and scholarly research via:

- A merit-pay system that encourages professional and creative contributions as well as mainstream scholarship and publication by providing annual incremental permanent increases in faculty base salary.
- Diversity and Inclusion activity and research and professional contributions are counted in determining merit-pay increases.
- The School's Ph.D. program provides opportunities for faculty to work with doctoral students on scholarly research and professional projects.
- Communication faculty are encouraged and supported in efforts to work with the newly established Antiracist Research and Policy Center at American University, which conducts scholarly research, develops educational tools and policy suggestions in the effort to detect and dismantle racism in its many forms.

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

The School's Tenure and Promotion Guidelines – last updated in May 2017 – provide guidance for faculty in each of its four divisions on how to meet the expectation that faculty be outstanding scholar-teachers who have made original and high-impact contributions to the field of communication, whether related to a professional practice, creative endeavor or academic discipline.

Journalism faculty may achieve tenure and promotion by demonstrating substantial accomplishment and significant impact in professional, creative, or scholarly work reflecting the broad range of print, broadcast, film/video, online and emerging media. Successful research agendas may include professional, creative or scholarly work in the discipline or may reflect some combination of the three modes of research unified by theoretical or conceptual approaches.

In Public Communication, the Division embraces faculty expertise drawn from academic study, professional experience and public discourse, which means the definition of scholarship incorporates academic research, public intellectual analysis, creative production and professional work. To achieve tenure and promotion, faculty members in the Public Communication Division must attain high standards of demonstrated excellence, aggregate productivity, and impact in their scholarly, creative and professional work.

Job candidates are evaluated both on what creative, scholarly professional work already has been accomplished, as well as their potential for continuing to produce work that has an impact on the field and the profession. Candidates provide teaching presentations and updates on their scholarship during the interview process; more recently candidates also are asked about their contributions to diversity and inclusion in education. Once hired, tenure-track faculty are mentored by a higher-ranking faculty member and meet regularly to gauge progress toward tenure.

Site team members were told by multiple junior faculty of how these meetings were conducted during the unique conditions of the COVID pandemic. The Interim Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs held Zoom meetings with tenure-track faculty to ensure they were supported and on-track during the pandemic.

Tenured faculty are encouraged to continue their creative, professional, and scholarly work. Term faculty are hired as teaching faculty and do not have the same requirements, but are called on as industry experts and authors of articles in the popular media.

Faculty teaching loads are often adjusted to allow sufficient time for creative, professional, scholarly work. As a result of the pandemic, the University twice offered faculty the chance to extend their tenure clocks. But, several in the units being reviewed opted to “opt-out” of the clock extension and continued toward their original planned track to promotion.

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

All guidelines related to evaluation give equal weight to faculty members’ professional specializations as to scholarly specializations. They note that the necessary component for each is that the activities should have impact and significance.

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 are encouraged to be active in professional organizations and present their work at national and international conferences.

School faculty have several sources of funding for their scholarship, research and creative and professional activity. Each Division is given a travel budget that the Division Directors distribute to their faculty. There are two competitive processes to apply for financial support in this area. The Office of the Provost awards research grants and international travel grants, while the Dean of the School might also award research and travel grants from a discretionary fund. However, faculty and directors report that individual scholars do not typically receive enough funding to cover all costs of attending a conference out of state or overseas. Nor are researchers typically able to attend multiple conferences in one academic year.

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

The School holds a monthly faculty research forum that provides an opportunity for faculty to present their latest creative, professional, or scholarly work. The forums, which are webcast live, provide public dissemination of work, allow for direct peer review, and offer intellectually vibrant campus programming for students. Since the last accreditation review, former-Dean Jeffrey Rutenbeck instituted a faculty research and projects grant program to support original and high-impact creative, professional, and scholarly work in the communication field. All full-time tenured, tenure-track, term, and in-residence faculty in the School are eligible. Applications are peer-reviewed by an interdisciplinary committee of the faculty; the awards average \$5,000.

By all indications, the climate in the School allows for a free exchange of ideas.

SUMMARY:

(Undergraduate:)

The School supports, recognizes and rewards research, creative activity and professional activity. It has continued to provide faculty travel from limited funds and grant support for research despite the unique circumstances of a pandemic. Tenure clocks were extended to account for faculty unable to maintain the normal level of scholarly activity during this time.

(Professional Master's:)

While the projects of master's students are not reflected in this standard, many of those students have produced creative and professional work alongside School faculty.

Overall evaluation (undergraduate program), compliance/noncompliance: COMPLIANCE

Overall evaluation (professional master's program), compliance/noncompliance: COMPLIANCE

(Please include the scholarship table with this section.)

Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activities	Total from Unit*	Individuals				Totals (30)
		Full Professors (9)	Associate Professors (9)	Assistant Professors (9)	Other Faculty* (3)	
Awards and Honors	105	49	14	34	8	105
Grants Received Internal	43	15	9	16	3	43
Grants Received External	103	40	4	57	2	103
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co-authored	28	19	7	2		28
Textbooks, Sole- or Co-authored	5		2	1	2	5
Books Edited	0					0
Book Chapters	31	22	4	5		31
Monographs	2	2				2
Articles in Refereed Journals	84	61		21	2	84
Refereed Conference Papers	70	41	5	24		70
Invited Academic Papers	0					0
Encyclopedia Entries	4	3		1		4
Book Reviews	9	7		2		9
Articles in Non-refereed Publications	2	2				2
Juried Creative Works	1	1				1
Non-juried Creative Works	0					0
Other (please specify)	0					0

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.

Faculty and staff are very invested in the success of their students. From the first year through graduation, students are supported through the School of Communication with regular counseling to first retain them during the first two years and then to get them involved in experiential learning through internships and school projects that are outward facing into the community – such as covering nationally recognized elections or working on projects that affect social change. Students often land internships with media outlets that are nationally and internationally renowned. The faculty and staff also work to keep students on track through graduation. This did not slow down during COVID, as the School simply moved these operations to Zoom and online. Students use an online portal to see their academic progress with the outlined degree requirements, which allows them to track credit hours. This information is reviewed with advisors regularly.

While the faculty and staff in the School are great at providing direction, students lamented that they do not have the same success with University-level advising (within the American University Experience or AUx). It was concerning to learn that the undergraduate students must often fend for themselves because, in their view, the turnover among advisors is high and a known concern at the University.

b). Faculty are available and accessible to students.

Faculty keep regular office hours with many allowing students to pop in whenever professors are available to seek academic guidance or support. During the pandemic, visits became virtual with the School's faculty showing more appointments than pre-pandemic times. Emails among students and faculty increased over this past year during the pandemic. Professors also use surveys to gain valuable feedback from students regarding the best ways to communicate. Students felt that faculty worked to get to know their personal interests and point them in the direction of experiential opportunities that positioned them well for their professional careers.

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

Several options are used to communicate key information to students. Academic planning worksheets are used to track academic requirements and foster long-term planning. Both online and physical copies are available to students. Frequent communication is pushed to students via email to encourage them to access the information and schedule advisory meetings. Catalog links are also shared with students to help keep them aware of their course requirements. Compliance is monitored through record checking and meetings with students.

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.

The School does a wonderful job providing students with opportunities for extra-curricular activities relevant to the curriculum. A Student Media Board in the School is the collaborative effort of 10 student-run media outlets that include newspaper, magazine, and radio. The media organizations are AmLit, ATV, AWOL, The Eagle, The Blackprint, Her Campus AU, Photo Collective, Visible

Magazine, WVAU, and Second District Records. Funding for the Student Media Board comes from the student activity fee paid by students each semester. The Media Board receives 25 percent of the fee, which in AY 2019/20 was \$190,300. The advisors to these organizations are working to push collaborative projects/storytelling to reach a broader audience.

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 School recently experienced an uptick in student enrollment and also celebrates high retention rates. Advisors play a pivotal role in helping students enroll for their second year at the university, which can be a crucial time for some students to reconsider registering at AU. First-year students are heavily supported by faculty and staff. The belief is once they get them over the hump to retention in the second year, it is much easier to move them along to graduation. School retention and graduation rates consistently exceed that of the University.

- The 2017 University retention rate for the cohort that enrolled in Fall 2014 was 73.8 percent compared with 80 percent for the School.
- The University's first-to-second year registration rate for Fall 2019 was 87.7 percent, while the School's rate was 88.3 percent.

Professional master's program / Unit performance with regard to indicators:

f). The unit has appropriate admissions and retention policies for the professional master's program. The retention and graduation data are published on the unit's website.

Faculty and staff are as committed to the graduate students as they are to the undergraduates. Retention is essential to the fabric of the unit's operation and graduation is the goal. Advisors are readily available to walk the master's students through the program by being accessible to give academic guidance throughout the process. Students are reminded about grade point average requirements and supported with a number of programs, like the Care Network, an early intervention and support for students of concern. The university's career center is also a resource for advice on internships and employment opportunities. Additional opportunities for mentoring and networking are provided. The SOC and the Career Center collaborate on the Alumni Mentor Program, although during the site team's meeting with graduate students, several expressed a desire for expanding that initiative beyond the number of students currently being mentored in this way. There are also intensive opportunities held in New York and Los Angeles. In some cases, the School and the University provide funding to help subsidize student expenses. Post-graduation statistics from 2019 showed that more than 93 percent of SOC students were working, continuing their graduate education or both six months after graduation.

SUMMARY:

(Undergraduate:)

Students indicated they felt supported in the School. They applauded faculty and staff for the genuine interest and care they show toward students. "They really care about our success and work to help you get to where you want to go in your career," said one student. There appears to be an open line of communication between the school and students. Students are comfortable to raise issues of concern to staff and faculty to help improve the educational environment of the school.

(Professional Master's:)

There is clearly less hand-holding at the graduate level with students and, while they recognize the difference, students feel supported by the efforts put forth by the school and university. There is opportunity to expand the graduate mentorship program with alumni, as several students longed to have that opportunity.

Overall evaluation (undergraduate program), compliance/noncompliance: COMPLIANCE

Overall evaluation (professional master's program), compliance/noncompliance: 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.

Budget information in the self-study was confusing, but ultimately our questions were answered sufficiently, and affirmed that the allocation of resources supports the strategic plan.

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.

With an operating budget of \$12.6M and a total budget of \$16.8M, which includes the consulting contract for the School's online master's and graduate financial aid, funding is adequate to achieve the School's mission, and seems to compare favorably with peer programs. The FY21 operating budget was 8 percent over FY16, even with reductions in spending tied to the pandemic. The total budget for FY21 was even with FY16, with variations during the years in between, a trajectory that bears watching.

The conventional wisdom is that this faculty is "doing a lot with a little" and, in fact, there are areas of significant need. For example, support services were lagging at the time of the site team visit, due to open positions. However, there was general acknowledgement that filling those positions will alleviate the pressure, and the intention to fill those positions was affirmed by the Dean. Likewise, travel funds are viewed as paltry. Travel allocations are made out of limited Division budgets and are rarely sufficient to cover the total cost of attending conferences out-of-state, much less overseas.

The School appears to need more discretionary funds to address strategic opportunities, external communications/marketing, and travel to raise the School's profile and reputation. More robust fund-raising, particularly among successful alumni, could support these initiatives and offers significant potential.

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

The School's home, the McKinley Building, was completely renovated in 2016 in a \$26M project that was completed before the last reaccreditation review. It is considered "state of the art" and includes some of the best technology on AU's campus. Its showcase is the Media Innovation Lab (MIL), a flexible and highly visible space that is used for TV production, classes and events. In addition, there are four well-equipped computer labs, modern classrooms with all of the technology needed for online learning, and attractive spaces where students can study alone or confer in teams.

At 55,000 square feet, space is adequate and enables 91 percent of the School's classes to be held in McKinley, supporting a sense of community and connection. Nevertheless, the building is beginning to feel restrictive. For example, Broadcast students complained that the TV production facilities in the Media Innovation Lab are only available to two classes that are limited to 18 students. Also, some of the features brought in with the renovation, such as the video wall in the MIL, are nearing the end of their lifespan.

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

Faculty testified that equipment is adequate and available. However, there is widespread recognition that much of that equipment is reaching the end of its life expectancy and will need to be updated or replaced in the near future. There is concern that the funds to do this are elusive. The School has a \$282,000 annual budget for equipment, an allocation from the University based on the amount of student technology fees that were collected by the School before the fees were sunset.

A new inventory software package enhances management of student equipment, enabling 24/7 reservations. There are 90 HD-quality camera kits, which is ample for the classes teaching video. However, these 90 kits will need to be replaced over the next few years and the technical services director has developed a plan to do so in waves.

The tech team is given high marks in general and is sufficiently staffed at 8 full-time and 15 part-time employees, with the director getting particularly high marks for his attention to faculty and student needs. Occasionally some of the more specialized technology stretches the team beyond capacity.

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

This is deemed sufficient.

SUMMARY:

(Undergraduate:)

Budget cuts during the pandemic have been offset by the curtailment of travel and entertainment. Facilities and equipment are adequate or better, but will be cycling into deficiencies over the next two or three years, a situation that will need to be addressed before the next accreditation review.

There is a general consensus that discretionary funds to support investment in strategic initiatives and innovation are limited. This is a concern that deserves attention going forward, and there is a recognition that fund-raising, especially among successful alumni, deserves a higher priority at all levels of the institution. Since 2018, alumni have committed only \$3.2M.

Funding from tuition and University allocations support experiential learning and application in real-world settings, scholarships and financial aid for students, and the hiring of highly qualified faculty -- most with some measure of industry experience in addition to their scholarly qualifications.

(Professional Master's:)

The graduate programs are intrinsically and accordingly supported, with additional funding from the University for Work/Study support.

Overall evaluation (undergraduate program), compliance/noncompliance: COMPLIANCE

Overall evaluation (professional master's program), compliance/noncompliance: 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.

The School has an exceptional lineup of industry partnerships that capitalizes on its fortuitous location in the nation's capital. These alliances directly benefit students and keep the School in touch with the front lines of the professions -- informing curriculum changes and other programmatic updates, investments in technology, and experiential offerings. Individual faculty also have industry connections that keep the lines of communication and affinity open.

The School sends quarterly email newsletters to its alumni and is considering a monthly frequency. Separate newsletters are distributed by the Center for Environmental Filmmaking, the Investigative Reporting Workshop and the Journalism Division. Development communicates with alumni through personal emails, calls and visits. The University Alumni Relations team also distributes regular alumni newsletters.

The Journalism Division produces a newsletter at least three times a year to spotlight the work of students, faculty and alumni. In addition, the Division regularly invites alumni to speak to classes and often turns to alumni for adjunct teaching. Alums, predominantly from the Beltway, also serve on panels and often judge student work in specific courses, such as Backpack Video Journalism.

The Public Communication Division has a private LinkedIn group for alums and current students, where it shares news, job openings, and internship postings. The group was established in 2008 and has grown to more than 2,000 members.

The new Dean has plans to reinstate the School's alumni advisory council.

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.

As the long and impressive list of activities attests, faculty have made a strong commitment to professional and public service. They have served in a number of capacities for national and international organizations and volunteer their time to judge contests. They are frequent panelists and high-profile speakers through such programs as American Forum, the Investigative Reporting Workshop and the Center for Media and Social Impact. They are frequently interviewed by national media on media-related topics of strong public interest. Some have been recognized for their service with major awards such as Ida B. Wells Award for a lifetime of work supporting diversity and inclusion in the newsroom and the Nonprofit News Lifetime Achievement Award.

SOC Skills Intensives, offered between 2018 and 2020, were a series of hybrid professional development opportunities for communication practitioners and graduate students. At the other end of the spectrum, the two-week Discover the World of Communication is surely one of the largest summer

programs for high school students, with an enrollment of several hundred students each summer – prior to the pandemic, when the program had to be migrated online.

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 attend regional and national conferences, such as AEJMC and PRSA, but financial support for these endeavors is limited. Typically, each faculty member attending a conference that involves travel is given an allocation that covers some, but not all, of the cost.

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 School's commitment to professional and public service is a guiding principle and it is clear that the faculty in both the Journalism and Public Communication Divisions endeavor to involve students in public-facing service projects. This engenders a strong service ethic while affording hands-on experience in the field. For example, two professors took students to cover the New Hampshire and South Carolina primaries in the last presidential election. Another team of students covered the most recent governor's race in Virginia from Richmond. Students have traveled to disaster areas after hurricanes and to cover protests in the nation's capital.

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

Before the pandemic, 600 high school journalism students attended annual summer journalism camps and workshops hosted by the School through two programs – Discover the World of Communication and the National Student Leadership Conference. The classes were held at American University and U.C. Berkeley's campuses and during the pandemic have been online. Classes are offered in animation, broadcast journalism, filmmaking, newswriting and investigative reporting, along with leadership training and educational field trips. The classes are taught by AU SOC professors and working professionals.

Also, for more than 15 years, the School has supported The Urban Journalism Workshop, an initiative established by the Washington Association of Black Journalists that trains students in the basics of newspaper, broadcast and multimedia journalism and gives career guidance. The School provides access to its newsroom and TV production studios where students attend an eight-week program.

SUMMARY:

(Undergraduate:)

The School's outreach is impressive, capitalizing on its Beltway location and the opportunities to contribute to national conversations. The School's underlying philosophy is "turning public service into public media." The School has set service as one of its key strategic goals, noting that faculty and staff should "act on our values through social responsibility and service," which is part of the University's strategic plan.

Both the Journalism and Public Communication divisions have provided leadership in those areas and have worked with faculty and programs across the School and the University to amplify the public

service mission of the University community. These efforts are amplified by strategic alliances with industry partners that involve students and benefit communities.

(Professional Master's:)

Service and civic engagement are valuable components in the graduate programs, with student opportunities to get involved in public-facing service projects such as the elections courses, or the Investigative Reporting Workshop.

Overall evaluation (undergraduate program), compliance/noncompliance: COMPLIANCE

Overall evaluation (professional master's program), compliance/noncompliance: 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 syllabi for these courses state learning outcomes that address the values and competencies appropriate for each course?*

Assessment is handled by multiple people within the school, with a Public Communication professor as the School’s elected representative on the Senate Committee. Mostly, however, it is managed within each Division, and has changed several times since the last accreditation. Until 2018, Public Communications used exit survey data to review the curriculum, including a half-day offsite retreat in November 2017, which resulted in a full evaluation of ways to ensure that the curriculum met learning outcomes. A new assessment model was introduced in Spring 2020, which included direct measurement, assessing the six undergraduate outcomes in the Portfolio course taken by all Public Communication seniors. This enables the Division to track student learning over time (and modality). In addition, outcomes are assessed by instructors of all Public Communication courses. The indirect measure of exit surveys is still included, with students rating their own learning outcomes on a scale from Poor to Excellent, but this is now included in a University survey of graduating seniors to ensure they are not bombarded with multiple survey requests.

For Journalism, learning outcomes were updated in 2020-2021, introducing a new rubric that is provided to an outside committee of journalism professionals. They assess the final course in the program to ensure compliance with learning outcomes. This was submitted to the Senate Committee in October 2021. No data was available for review at the time of the self-study.

All courses clearly state the learning outcomes in their syllabi and on the School of Communication website, but do not explicitly link these to the ACEJMC standards. The self-study did show which courses relate to each of the 12 professional values and competencies, but there should be a clearer link for students to understand the mapping.

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 unit does not have a singular written assessment plan, but they do use both direct and indirect measures to assess student learning that, collectively, enable the School to assess ACEJMC’s values and competencies.

The primary direct assessment used in both Public Communication and Journalism Divisions is the student survey, collected either at the end of a student's time in the School, or as a 'pre/post' survey undertaken early in the curriculum and then again near the end, to assess the extent of learning. For example, students in the Journalism program are asked to evaluate their knowledge related to five learning outcomes in COMM 462 (Journalism Capstone).

Indirect measures include general questions about the overall program from which students are graduating, along with alumni feedback and employer input through the internship program.

Data are analyzed over the summer, and then presented to the faculty in the early fall. At that time, the faculty determines if adjustments should be made to the overall curriculum. The most recent changes to the Journalism program will be discussed by the faculty in October 2022.

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?*

Findings are collected primarily through student surveys. The areas that have raised concern since the last accreditation are in student mastery of research, as well as their readiness for managing new technologies. Both Divisions have responded to these issues, and taken action, including the addition of weekly quizzes for the Public Communication Research Methods class to ensure students are absorbing the material, and introducing new electives on Podcasting or Strategic Communications Analytics, or one-credit skills workshop classes related to new technologies such as social listening. Subsequent exit surveys have shown improvements in student satisfaction in both areas. Journalism revamped its COMM 504 course, Journalism Ethics, following the course evaluation in 2015 by outside professionals (the primary form of assessment at that time). They examined five midterm exams and five case studies papers in order to confirm that the course was meeting its stated learning objectives. Their recommendation, which was implemented, was that some of the case studies were outdated. Today, the cases include coverage of systemic racism, political partisanship and updated media ethics guidelines.

In conversations with faculty, each could point to specific changes made to their courses as a result of student feedback. While all of these are laudable, there is less clarity in how consistently findings lead to action taken.

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

While the School does not, at this time, have an Alumni Advisory Board, it does have extensive contact with former students. They are frequently in the classroom as guest speakers; several have returned as adjunct instructors; and, they serve as judges in capstone courses for both Public Communication and Journalism. The School would benefit from reinstating the Advisory Board to provide ongoing feedback and the Dean intends to do so.

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

In April 2021, the Journalism Division introduced an assessment rubric for outside professionals to utilize in evaluating capstone projects. This direct measure includes specific targets to determine whether each learning outcome is being met based on the work a student produces for the capstone assignment. This is a promising initiative, but no results were available at the time of the self-study.

However, there is informal involvement of professionals in assessment. The self-study noted that since the last accreditation report, at least three courses have incorporated professional panels who judge the students' final projects. One example cited was COMM 432, Backpack Video Journalism, where media professionals come in on the last day of class and are given a rubric to judge student work; they also provide feedback to both students and the faculty member.

SUMMARY:

(Undergraduate:)

Both Journalism and Public Communication programs utilize multiple forms of program assessment, including direct (exit surveys, pre/post surveys, and professionals' input). The Divisions are highly responsive to the feedback they receive, adjusting or enhancing courses as they see fit. They work to align their outcome measures to the University's requirements on assessment. In doing so, the School should coordinate across Divisions to create optimal consistency across Journalism and Public Communication assessment.

(Professional Master's:)

While many of the challenges with assessment noted for the undergraduate programs apply similarly to the Master's programs, there have been additional and noteworthy efforts introduced within the School of Communication at the graduate level to enhance its assessment of learning outcome. The main assessment for the Masters in Public Communication, introduced in 2020, includes a rubric that evaluates student learning at an early point in the graduate program (Principles of Strategic Communication) and then again at the end of the program (Capstone). Student surveys are also included, along with professionals' input when they judge student work. In some ways, the two Masters programs seem to have a more cohesive approach to assessment that should be applied to the undergraduate programs too.

For the MA in Journalism and Public Affairs, the direct measures include asking graduate students in COMM 720 and COMM 725 to use their in-depth capstone reporting project to evaluate and review the five learning outcomes established for the program. The indirect measures also include asking students more general questions about the overall program in the form of an exit survey.

Overall evaluation (undergraduate program), compliance/noncompliance: COMPLIANCE

Overall evaluation (professional master's program), compliance/noncompliance: COMPLIANCE

**PART III: Summary by site visit team
of the undergraduate program**

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

Strengths:

- A new dean who has broad support from faculty, staff, and students
- Faculty who are collegial, engaged and productive
- Access to committed and long-term adjunct faculty in a major media market
- Experiential learning opportunities that are unrivaled
- A building and facilities that are modern and professional (but equipment will need some reinvestment in the next few years)
- Internships and fellowships that place students in top-tier media and public relations organizations, often with financial support
- The caliber of students and their pride in the program

Weaknesses:

- Lack of diversity among the full-time faculty
- Assessment that is uneven and not clearly tied to ACEJMC Values and Competencies
- A diminished focus on strategic planning for the past three years
- Uneven advising at the University level
- Not enough funding to support faculty travel that would make the School more visible and influential
- Insufficient emphasis on securing major gifts from successful alumni

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 that 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.

A need to continue to more aggressively pursue private funds to provide additional support for students and the program. The School has gone through two leadership changes and continues to navigate the pandemic. The arrival of the new dean has created optimism for improvement in fundraising. Steps have

also been taken to strengthen the capacity of the central development office, and a new development officer assigned to the School should provide new momentum to the School's fundraising efforts.

A need to continue to evaluate the curriculum and adapt rapidly to the changing media landscape. Both Journalism and Public Communication have undergone numerous curriculum changes during this cycle. The students are pleased with the quality of the advanced courses and the faculty who are teaching them, both full-time and, particularly, adjuncts.

A need to continue to maintain a diverse and balanced faculty to best meet the needs of the students. The lack of diversity among full-time faculty continues to be a challenge. The new dean has a commitment to addressing this through improved recruitment as positions become available. The School effectively utilizes adjunct faculty. In the past three years, adjunct faculty have taught roughly 60 percent of all courses. Students rave about the quality of their classes that are taught by adjuncts, who are current in the profession.

7) The self-study is the heart of the accrediting process, and often the quality of that document determines the degree of success of the accrediting visit. Summarize the team members' judgment of the self-study.

The School had to postpone its visit by a year due to the pandemic. During the writing of the self-study, the main author had to step down and others had to step in. The site team appreciates all of the hard work by the team, but, unfortunately, the self-study was inconsistent and lacked continuity and clarity. The site team had to ask a lot of questions to find data and gain clarity on the information provided. Some questions could not be answered.

**PART III: Summary by site visit team
of the professional master's program**

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

Strengths:

- Dynamic and engaged faculty
- Broad range of curricular offerings that enable students to follow their passions
- Many opportunities for experiential learning that take advantage of proximity to some of the top media and public relations companies in the nation

Weaknesses:

- Insufficient advising that leads students to not know when they can graduate

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

N/A

6) If the unit's professional master's program was previously accredited, summarize the significant deficiencies noted in the previous report and the actions taken to correct them. If the master's program 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.

In the 2014-15 report, the two weaknesses cited were a confusion over the number of different Master's offerings, and the need to expand the branding of the Master's programs given the competitive offerings in or near Washington, D.C. The School has consolidated and streamlined its graduate programs, dropping from 13 in total to 5 (two of which were reviewed here). They have amplified the branding and marketing of the program through various outlets, including social media.

7) The self-study is the heart of the accrediting process, and often the quality of that document determines the degree of success of the accrediting visit. Summarize the team members' judgment of the self-study.

The School had to postpone its visit by a year due to the pandemic. During the writing of the self-study, the main author had to step down and others had to step in. The site team appreciates all of the hard work by the team, but, unfortunately, the self-study was inconsistent and lacked continuity and clarity. The site team had to ask a lot of questions to find data and gain clarity on the information provided. Some questions could not be answered.