

# Report of ACEJMC Evaluation

Undergraduate program  
2021–2022

**Name of Institution:** Marshall University

**Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer:** Dr. Jerome Gilbert

**Name of Unit:** W. Page Pitt School of Journalism and Mass Communications

**Name and Title of Administrator:** Ms. Sandy York

**Date of 2021-2022 Accrediting Visit:** October 31 – November 3, 2021

**Date of the previous accrediting visit:** January 25 – 28, 2015

**Recommendation of the previous site visit team:** Reaccreditation

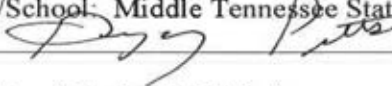
**Previous decision of the Accrediting Council:** Reaccreditation

**Recommendation by 2021-2022 Visiting Team:** REACCREDITATION

*Prepared and submitted by:*

**Team Chair**

Name and Title: Dr. Gregory Pitts, Director, School of Journalism and Strategic Media  
Organization/School: Middle Tennessee State University

Signature 

Name and Title: Ms. Judith T. Phair  
Organization/School: PhairAdvantage Communications, LLC

Signature 

Name and Title: Mr. Charles Mitchell, Associate Professor, School of Journalism and New Media  
Organization/School: University of Mississippi

Signature 

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

**On site:** Pitts, Phair, Mitchell

**Virtually:** \_\_\_\_\_

## PART I: General information

Name of Institution: Marshall University

Name of Unit: W. Page Pitt School of Journalism and Mass Communications

Year of Visit: 2021

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

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.

Marshall University is a statutory state, public institution of higher education as defined and delineated in Chapter 18B, Article 1, Section 2 of the West Virginia Code of 1931, as amended.

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: January 25 – 28, 2015

5. When was the unit or sequences within the unit first accredited by ACEJMC? 1975

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

### Mission Statement

#### **W. Page Pitt School of Journalism and Mass Communications (adopted 2001 – 2002) (amended 2008) (reviewed 2014) (amended 2019)**

As a degree-granting academic unit at Marshall University, the W. Page Pitt School of Journalism and Mass Communications pursues Marshall's general statement of purpose. Consequently, the program's overall mission is to provide an academic experience that seeks to enable graduates to:

- think logically, critically and creatively, and be able to recognize this ability in others,
- communicate ideas clearly and effectively, both in speaking and in writing,
- evaluate the influences that help to shape individuals, institutions, and societies,

- understand the values, achievements, and aesthetic contributions of past and present cultures, and
- perceive, investigate and solve problems by enlisting the most appropriate historical, comparative, quantitative and qualitative research methods available.

The W. Page Pitt School of Journalism and Mass Communications' programs and curricula are based on the conviction that future journalists and mass communicators are best prepared for life and for their careers when they are broadly educated in the liberal arts. The importance of preparing them for the demands of the workplace is also essential. Knowledge and skills essential to success in journalism and mass communications are also emphasized to prepare students for full participation – including leadership – in their professions. In addition, the School of Journalism and Mass Communications' program seeks to promote knowledge and awareness about mass communications among students who do not intend to pursue careers in one of the mass communications fields.

The SOJMC offers instruction for students seeking degrees in advertising/public relations, journalism and media production with concentrations in multimedia journalism, sports journalism, broadcast journalism, radio/television production and management, video production, advertising and public relations. To conform to the university's mission and the role and realities of the mass media industries in the USA and world, the SOJMC uses teaching, research and service to contribute to Marshall's mission and, to that end, has adopted specific goals essential to the achievement of the University's mission.

The SOJMC seeks to:

- provide journalism and mass communications instruction for students primarily from the state of West Virginia and the areas of Kentucky and Ohio that comprise the Tri-State region,
- graduate a pool of qualified employees for the advertising, magazine, newspaper, public relations, multimedia journalism, radio and television industries,
- provide assistance to high school media programs in the West Virginia and in the Tri-State region,
- provide information to alumni about the school's activities and assist alumni with career advancement,
- work with journalism and mass communications professionals on programs of mutual benefit, and
- make a special effort to provide opportunities for women and racial and ethnic minorities.

And to graduate students who:

- understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
- demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications, and
- demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
- understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- think critically, creatively and independently;
- conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;

- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- apply basic numerical and statistical concepts; and
- apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

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

Semesters of 14 weeks

Quarters of \_\_\_\_\_ weeks

Summer sessions of 5 weeks

Intersessions of 4 weeks

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

Bachelor's degree

Master's degree

Ph.D. degree

**9. List the specific undergraduate degrees as well as the majors or sequences being reviewed by ACEJMC. \*Indicate online degrees.**

Bachelor of Arts in Journalism

Advertising/Public Relations major

Advertising emphasis

Public Relations emphasis

Journalism major

Broadcast emphasis

Multimedia emphasis

Sports emphasis

Media Production major

Radio/television production and management emphasis

Video production emphasis

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

120 semester credit hours are required for graduation from the bachelor's program

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

Students are required to complete three semester credit hours of internship. They may take up to, but not in excess, of six hours of internship credit.

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

Name of Sequence or Specialty	Person in Charge
Advertising emphasis	Allyson Goodman
Broadcast emphasis	Christopher Swindell
Multimedia emphasis	Sandra York
Public Relations emphasis	Terry Hapney
Radio/television production and management emphasis	Charles G. Bailey
Sports emphasis	Charles G. Bailey
Video Productions emphasis	Tijah Bumgarner

**13. Number of full-time students enrolled in the institution: 11,962**

**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 in
Advertising emphasis	17
Broadcast emphasis	22
Multimedia emphasis	22
Public Relations emphasis	25
Radio/television production and management emphasis	7
Sports emphasis	22
Video Productions emphasis	7
Second majors	3
Total	125

**15. Number of students in each section of all skills courses (newsriting, 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 campaigns courses are exempt from the 20-1 ratio.)**

**Fall 2020**

Course	Section	Credit hours	Title	Enrollment
JMC 241	101	3	Media Design	15
JMC 241	102	3	Media Design	16
JMC 260	101	3	Digital Imaging for JMC	10
JMC 260	102	3	Digital Imaging for JMC	11
JMC 272	101	1	Practice in Radio	5
JMC 300	101	3	Reporting and News Writing	10

JMC 300	102	3	Reporting and News Writing	14
JMC 301	101	3	Beat Reporting	9
JMC 303	101	3	Sports News Reporting	8
JMC 332	101	3	Intro to Video Production	15
JMC 380	101	3	AD-PR and Continuity Writing	16
JMC 383	101	3	Content Creation	14
JMC 430	101	3	Magazine Article Writing	12
JMC 432	101	3	AD-PR Video Production	10
JMC 434	101	3	Advanced Video Production	5
JMC 451	101	3	Television Reporting	6

**Spring 2021**

Course	Section	Credit hours	Title	Enrollment
JMC 231	201	3	Introduction to Audio Production	7
JMC 241	201	3	Media Design	14
JMC 241	202	3	Media Design	15
JMC 260	201	3	Digital Imaging for JMC	15
JMC 260	202	3	Digital Imaging for JMC	15
JMC 273	201	1	Practice in Radio	3
JMC 300	201	3	Reporting and News Writing	11
JMC 300	202	3	Reporting and News Writing	8
JMC 301	201	3	Beat Reporting	9
JMC 332	201	3	Intro to Video Production	15
JMC 340	201	3	Basic Broadcast News	14
JMC 373	201	1 – 2	Practice in Radio or TV	1
JMC 380	201	3	AD-PR and Continuity Writing	15
JMC 414	201	3	Reporting Public Affairs	12
JMC 439	201	3	AD-PR Campaign Management	12
JMC 452	201	3	Advanced TV Reporting	6
JMC 465	201	3	Multimedia Reporting	9
JMC 475	201	3	Documentary Journalism	12

**16. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2021–2022 academic year: \$192,283.00**

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

2018- 2019(\$221,507) compared to 2019- 2020(\$218,257) = 1.48% decrease  
 2019-2020 (\$218,257) compared to 2020-2021 (\$134,000) = 38.6% decrease\*  
 2020-2021 (\$134,000) compared to 2021-2022 (\$192,283) – 43.49% increase

\*In a reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic, the university enacted a zero-based budget system and funds were put into central funding and quarterly requests were required for any budget needs.

**Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries: \$752,848.00**

**17. 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.**

Charles G. Bailey	Full Professor
Charles Bowen (2021-2022, full-time temp)	Instructor
Tijah Bumgarner	Assistant Professor
Allyson Goodman	Associate Professor
Terry Hapney	Full Professor
Dan Hollis	Full Professor
Christine Ingersoll	Associate Professor
Robert Rabe	Full Professor
Burnis Morris	Full Professor
Christopher Swindell (sabbatical fall 2021)	Full Professor
Sandra York	Assistant Professor

**18. 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, also provide the spring 2022 adjunct list when the team arrives for the visit.)**

**Part-time faculty fall 2021**

Christopher Atkins  
 William Bissett  
 Rick Haye  
 Ronda Moncada  
 Bethany Sergent  
 Ruth Sullivan

**Part-time faculty spring 2021**

Bethany Sergent  
 Ruth Sullivan

**19. Schools on the semester system:**

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

Year	72 or more semester hours outside of journalism and mass communications		
	Total Graduates	Number in Compliance	Percent
2020-2021 academic year	<u>32</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>100</u>
2019-2020 academic year	<u>27</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>100</u>

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

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

**a). The unit has a written mission statement and a written strategic or long-range plan that provides vision and direction for its future, identifies needs and resources for its mission and goals and is supported by university administration outside the unit. The unit annually updates its data on the ACEJMC searchable database website (<https://lookup.acejmc.org>).**

The history of the program is strong. The Marshall journalism program began in 1926 with the first course offerings. The school paper, *The Parthenon*, has been published since 1898. By 1930, W. Page Pitt became chairman of the Department of Journalism and served in that role until 1971. The program expanded to include radio and video, advertising and public relations, and sports media. The program was first accredited in 1975. In 1999, the school became *the autonomous* W. Page Pitt School of Journalism & Mass Communications. The sports journalism major was added in 2010.

The school is the administrative unit responsible for two student media operations: The Parthenon and radio station WMUL-FM. There are opportunities for students to work within student media for experience or academic credit. Additionally, MU Report, a bi-monthly news broadcast, is generated from a television studio. Seven Arrow is a student-run advertising and public relations creative services agency serving the community. Some challenges stem from overcoming COVID 19 barriers. All classes in the 2020 - 2021 academic year with the exception of first year student classes JMC 101 and 102 were remote instruction using Microsoft Teams.

As a cost saving measure in 2013 the administration consolidated the School of Journalism and Mass Communications and the College of Fine Arts to form the College of Arts and Media. Four autonomous schools operate with the college: the School of Journalism and Mass Communications, the School of Art and Design, the School of Music, and the School of Theatre. Some faculty continue to report this has been a less than ideal arrangement, as it dilutes the media impact across the institution by lessening the public face of the program. The current dean is serving his third year as interim dean of the college. Faculty note the previous JMC director operated as an associate dean for JMC. That leadership is missed by the faculty.

The unit has a written mission statement and has outlined in the self-study a series on long-range curriculum plans and program desires. The plans do not seem to be tied to a vision or direction for the program, rather they reflect curriculum and program updates that will be addressed.

### Mission Statement

#### W. Page Pitt School of Journalism and Mass Communications

**(adopted 2001 – 2002) (amended 2008) (reviewed 2014) (amended 2019)**

As a degree-granting academic unit at Marshall University, the W. Page Pitt School of Journalism and Mass Communications pursues Marshall's general statement of purpose. Consequently, the program's overall mission is to provide an academic experience that seeks to enable graduates to:

- think logically, critically and creatively, and be able to recognize this ability in others,
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- perceive, investigate and solve problems by enlisting the most appropriate historical, comparative, quantitative and qualitative research methods available.

The unit presented strategic elements for curriculum consideration to be addressed after the site team leaves. There was evidence in the self-study that the unit recognized issues identified by the previous site team and took previous strategic action to modify the curriculum. Marshall Multimedia cited as a strategic item in this self-study was identified in the previous self-study as a topic of focus; the unit has failed to close the loop on this strategic element since the previous review.

**JMC Strategic Plan  
B.A. Program  
September 2012  
(reviewed/revise September 2013, 2014, 2018, 2020)**

**Develop a Video Production certificate.** The newest area of emphasis is the Video Production major and a certificate would be an avenue for all JMC majors to access that area of emphasis to serve the growing demand for video in all professions. Timeline: Have the program ready for curriculum review 2022-2023 school year.

**Podcasting curriculum.** While WMUL-FM produces some shows and teaches audio production, a specific curriculum on podcasting would be beneficial to students. The Parthenon has a weekly news summary podcast but students are interested in developing their personal show. Timeline: Have the program ready for curriculum review 2022-2023 school year.

**Marshall Multimedia.** This plan was included in the last accreditation visit and while the programs have made some headway, more needs done to move the initiative forward. Three vibrant student media are producing news products on a regular basis and expanding their deliveries into new technologies. Marshall Multimedia would create an umbrella under which existing campus media could continue to operate independently of one another, but also cooperate in providing access to content that could be used to supply an aggregated channel of distribution. The multimedia media project would give students an opportunity to use their developing skills in digital media in a truly converged setting. Timeline: Complete a written proposal by the end of the 2021-2022 academic year. The proposal would project a two-year development process.

**Recruiting.** Need to move from broad shot gunning of all high school paper and broadcast students and focus on students who indicate genuine interest in the field and try to personalize messages more (action that was suggested in freshmen focus groups). Timeline: 2021-2022 academic year, reach out with postcards and personalized messages. Develop a long-term action plan for recruiting, summer 2022.

**Increase visibility of the program.** Being subsumed into CAM and a national reduced interest in JMC demands more effort toward visibility of the unit. Need to showcase more students work on the JMC website and in broader areas as well. Timeline: 2021-2022 academic year begin to collect student work more effectively and display on the JMC website.

The ACEJMC searchable database website contained no data for Marshall University's School of Journalism and Mass Communication, even though the template specifically requires this update to accompany the self-study.

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication's Marshall University website <https://www.marshall.edu/jmc/> is grossly out-of-date. The website is referenced in the self-study as home to advising and other materials important to the self-study and reaccreditation. Most materials on the university website reflected the 2019 - 2020 academic year. Not only was the self-study year omitted but

current students or future students wanting to learn about the program would not have found reliable information.

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

The self-study reports a committee of the whole responds to educational policies and curriculum. Recommendations may originate from an individual faculty member or task force by presenting it to the committee.

Unit committees are curriculum, management functions, personnel, diversity and graduate and research. All tenured faculty serve on the personnel/promotion-tenure committee. Only one faculty member, hired since the previous accreditation visit, is not tenured.

Student requests are brought directly to the director but students should discuss issues with faculty members. Students are required to submit a written proposal or explanation to the director.

**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.**

Leadership on this campus and in the unit is in flux. The university president is retiring in December. There is an interim provost, an interim dean—on his third year as interim—and an interim director for the JMC program, who is a tenured assistant professor. She has been serving as the newspaper adviser and a faculty member. The previous director departed in July. A new university president, a Marshall graduate and business executive, takes office in January 2022.

The three-year interim dean of the College of Arts and Media, the School of Journalism and Mass Communications is one of four units in the college, sounded less than engaged or enthusiastic about the JMC unit during the site team's meeting with the dean.

Faculty report the previous program director effectively served as unit head and associate dean in the college and represented the needs of the program. Faculty respect the current interim director but lament the absence of leadership plans for the School and a clear future for their program. Some anecdotal evidence suggests COVID fatigue among current and former faculty.

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication held its Hall of Fame induction on October 29, 2021, the Friday before the site team arrived. To the School's credit, the newly announced university president, Brad Smith, attended the event. This may bring some attention to the program when the new president takes office in January.

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

The self-study reports that school directors in the College of Arts and Media are appointed to four-year terms in accordance with established university policy. Consistent with MU BOG Policy AA-38, school directors are evaluated annually. This appears to have taken place during the year of the self-study, but that unit head has retired from the university.

The dean reports that a new director will not likely be hired until higher levels of university leadership are filled, including hiring a new provost, a new dean and then a new director. As confirmed by the dean, this could mean a new director search would not begin until the 2023 – 2024 academic year, with the director beginning service in Fall 2024.

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

Informal and formal grievance procedures are detailed in faculty and student handbooks. During an open meeting with students, they reported no issues or concerns with raising issues.

The self-study reports:

Student complaints are almost exclusively about grades, academic dishonesty or faculty performance. Students may meet with the associate dean/director to present such concerns. The director, in the matter of grades or academic dishonesty, counsels the student to talk with the faculty member and attempt to resolve the issue. If a satisfactory solution is not found, the dean has two options -- either the director may handle the appeal or may refer the appeal to the University Budget and Academic Policy Committee.

The university has an Office of Student Affairs, and students may begin their inquiry there instead of coming to the director. In such instances, an office representative contacts the dean and works to first resolve the matter by informal means and then by the formal process. The process generally involves several layers of adjudication starting at the level at which an offense occurred, documenting allegations, and hearings by panels at various levels. All matters of confirmed academic dishonesty must be reported to the Office of Academic Affairs. The full university policy is listed at <https://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/policies/#academicdishonesty>.

For complaints of sexual harassment or of racial/religious intolerance, the university has a very specific policy that is available in the Student's Rights and Responsibilities Document at <http://www.marshall.edu/student-affairs>. Any such cases reported to the director are immediately forwarded to the Office of Human Resources for further action.

Faculty and staff grievance procedures are established in West Virginia State Code, Chapter 29, Article 6A and through Higher Education Policy Commission Series 9 and Chancellor's Interpretive Memorandum 5. Faculty and staff members may come to the director to try to resolve the matter informally or may initiate a formal grievance within the guidelines of West Virginia State Code.

**SUMMARY:**

The unit operates with a Mission Statement but the strategic plan lacks a long-term visionary statement or view for the program. There is doubt within the unit about its place within the university and college, and the continuation of interim leadership in the college and interim leadership in the JMC unit. To their credit, members of the unit are powering through a difficult time, made more challenging by the interim appointments and COVID-19 challenges.

Overall evaluation of compliance/non-compliance: **Non-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.**

Undergraduates at Marshall complete 120 credit hours to earn a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism. The unit offers three majors and 7 emphasis areas. Students earn an Advertising/Public Relations major with an emphasis in advertising or public relations; a Journalism major with emphasis in broadcast, multimedia or sports; a Media Production major with emphasis in radio/television production and management or an interdisciplinary video production emphasis.

The program continues to require 72 completed hours outside the unit. Faculty expressed interest in expanding the number of internal hours.

**Number of hours/units required for graduation:** 120 credit hours

**Number of hours/units required for major degree:** 48 credit hours

#### **Core Courses for All Students in JMC Program (21 credit hours)**

- 1) JMC 101 Media Literacy
- 2) JMC 102 Media Toolbox
- 3) JMC 241 Media Design
- 4) JMC 260 Digital Imaging
- 5) JMC 345 Mass Communications Law and Ethics
- 6) JMC 361 Digital Presence
- 7) JMC 470 Practicum/JMC 490 Internship

#### **Advertising/Public Relations Major Core (18 credit hours)**

- 1) JMC 330 Ad/PR Principles and Ethics
- 2) JMC 380 Ad/PR and Continuity Writing
- 3) JMC 383 Content Creation
- 4) JMC 408 Research and Analytics
- 5) JMC 439 Ad/PR Campaign Management (Capstone)
- 6) JMC 300+ Elective

#### **Required outside of the accredited unit for Ad/PR majors (6 credit hours)**

- 1) MKT 340 Principles of Marketing
- 2) Plus three credits of any other College of Business course

#### **Advertising Emphasis (9 credit hours)**

- 1) JMC 424 Media Strategy
- 2) JMC 415 Content Strategy
- 3) JMC 300+ Elective

**Public Relations Emphasis** (9 credit hours)

- 1) JMC 300 Reporting and News Writing
- 2) JMC 437 Public Relations Planning
- 3) JMC 438 Public Relations Case Studies

**Journalism Major Core** (9 credit hours)

- 1) JMC 300 Reporting and News Writing
- 2) JMC 458 Emerging Media for Journalists
- 3) JMC 465 Multimedia Reporting (Capstone)

**Broadcast Emphasis** (18 credit hours)

- 1) JMC 301 Beat Reporting
- 2) JMC 340 Basic Broadcast News
- 3) JMC 414 Reporting Public Affairs
- 4) JMC 451 Television Reporting
- 5) JMC 452 Advanced Television Reporting
- 6) JMC 300+ Elective

**Required outside of the accredited unit for Broadcast Emphasis** (6 credit hours)

PSC 104 American National Government and Politics  
or PSC 202 State and Local Government

**Multimedia Emphasis** (18 credit hours)

- 1) JMC 301 Beat Reporting
- 2) Multimedia Emphasis Elective
- 2) Multimedia Emphasis Elective
- 3) Multimedia Emphasis Elective
- 4) Multimedia Emphasis Elective
- 5) Multimedia Emphasis Elective

**Sports Journalism Emphasis** (18 credit hours)

- 1) JMC 231 Introduction to Audio
- 2) JMC 245 Introduction to Strategic Communications
- 3) JMC 303 Sports News Reporting
- 4) JMC 321 Sportscasting
- 5) JMC 330 Ad/PR Principles and Ethics  
or JMC 390 Media Sales and Underwriting
- 6) JMC 331, 332, 272, 273, 372, or 373

**Media Production Major Core** (6 credit hours)

- 1) JMC 231 Introduction to Audio
- 2) JMC 380 Ad/PR and Continuity Writing

**Radio/Television Production and Management Emphasis** (21 credit hours)

- 1) JMC 272 Practice in Radio (1 credit hour)
- 2) JMC 332 Introduction to Video Production  
or JMC 432 Ad/PR Video Production
- 3) JMC 390 Media Sales and Underwriting
- 4) JMC 420 Electronic Media Management (Capstone)
- 5) JMC 436 International Mass Communications

- 6) JMC 450 Issues in RTV  
or JMC 455 Race, Gender and Mass Media
- 7) JMC 300+ elective
- 8) JMC 300+ elective (2 credit hours)

**Required outside of the accredited unit for Radio/Television Production and Management Emphasis (6 credit hours)**

- 1) ACC 215 Accounting Principles
- 2) MKT 231 Principles of Selling

**Video Production Emphasis (21 credit hours)**

- 1) JMC 300+ elective
- 2) JMC 332 Introduction to Video Production
- 3) JMC 432 Ad/PR Video Production
- 4) JMC 434 Advanced Video Production
- 5) JMC 475 Documentary Journalism
- 6) AM 299 Sophomore Review (0 credit course)
- 7) AM 498 Pre-capstone
- 8) AM 499 Senior Capstone Exhibit (Capstone)

**Required outside of the accredited unit for Video Production Emphasis (21 credit hours)**

- 1) ART 219 Foundations: Frame/Time
- 2) ART 325 Image Visualization
- 3) ART 423 Photographic Lighting
- 4) ART 453 Advanced Digital Media
- 5) ART 454 Designing for Multimedia
- 6) THE 437 Directing I
- 7) THE 240, 245, or 250

**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.**

Within the 21-hour core completed by all students, the unit includes conceptual courses JMC 101 Media Literacy and JMC 345 Mass Communications Law and Ethics. These two classes were identified in the previous self-study as conceptual requirements. Within the degree or emphasis areas, there is a greater presence of professional classes. Students, alumni and faculty note the presence of conceptual content as part of the professional courses that help students understand the *why* behind professional actions.

Core skills or professional classes include JMC 102 Media Toolbox, JMC 241 Media Design, JMC 260 Digital Imaging, JMC 361 Digital Presence, and a minimum of three credits of JMC 470/490 Practicum/Internship.

**c). Instruction, whether on-site or online, is demanding and current, and is responsive to professional expectations of digital, technological and multimedia competencies. Achievements in teaching and learning are recognized and valued.**

The curriculum and coursework have been mapped to student learning competencies that align with the values and competencies of ACEJMC.

Marshall faculty joined others pivoting in March 2020 from in-person to online or remote instruction teaching formats due to COVID-19. With the exception of first year student classes (JMC 101 and JMC 102) the remote format continued in the 2020 - 2021 academic year for 200-level through 400-level classes, in the year of the self-study. The number of faculty in the school has dropped from 13 during the 2014 - 2015 visit to 11 during the 2020 - 2021 self-study year. The number of faculty dropped to 10 by the time of the team visit.

Faculty in the school teach a 4-4 equivalent load with exceptions for administrative or other assignments.

Syllabi must list the JMC outcomes and explain how the course addresses the outcomes. As part of program assessment, a sample of syllabi are reviewed and audited.

Students and faculty expressed relief in having in-person classes in Fall 2021. No faculty member or students expressed a belief that remote instruction shorted students in the program during the remote year though they recognized the benefit of in-person learning.

Faculty teaching performance contributes to tenure review. The promotion portfolio includes demonstration of teaching effectiveness, includes a faculty member statement of teaching goals or aims, and the portfolio includes both student evaluations and peer evaluations of instruction.

The school meets the ACEJMC requirement regarding student-faculty classroom ratios in skills and lab classes but, as was noted in 2014 and continues to be true for the 2020 - 2021 self-study year, sections of some classes had fewer than 10 students enrolled. Six of 17 classes in fall 2020 and six of 18 classes in Spring 2021 enrolled fewer than 10 students. This may reflect the need for a further look at the curriculum and emphasis areas, especially in light of strategic plans to add additional courses to the curriculum, a reduction in the number of majors and a desire to increase the internal hours completed.

The interim provost and interim dean spoke of opportunities for the JMC faculty to develop interdisciplinary programs with other units on campus. (This sentiment was expressed by a previous provost and dean to the 2014 site team.) The only new faculty member hired in JMC teaches in an interdisciplinary program with the School of Art and Design. A faculty collaborator in the art program has left Marshall and thus all instructional assignments now fall to the JMC faculty member, including under an AM prefix. The tenure-track faculty member is teaching five classes.

Students report high expectations from their instructors. The School prides itself on teaching students contemporary information reflecting the areas of study. Alumni, most were graduates from within the last 15 years, report the program well-prepared them for careers in local media or for pursuit of graduate education.

In sum, the instruction, whether in-person or remote, is demanding and reflects a positive effort by faculty to instruct and mentor their students.

Students in the Advertising and Public Relations complete a shared core of 18 credit hours, consisting of JMC 330 Ad/PR Principles and Ethics, JMC 380 Ad/PR and Continuity Writing, JMC 383 Content Creation, JMC 408 Research and Analytics, JMC 439 Ad/PR Campaign Management (Capstone) and a JMC 300+ Elective.

Advertising emphasis students then complete 9 additional credits, two are specified advertising classes, JMC 424 Media Strategy and JMC 415 Content Strategy, followed by an additional JMC 300+ Elective.

Public Relations emphasis students complete 9 additional hours of public relations coursework, JMC 300 Reporting and News Writing, JMC 437 Public Relations Planning and JMC 438 Public Relations Case Studies.

Students in the journalism program complete 9 hours in a journalism major core, JMC 300 Reporting and News Writing, JMC 458 Emerging Media for Journalists, and JMC 465 Multimedia Reporting (Capstone). Students may then select an emphasis area: broadcast, multimedia or sport journalism.

Students in the broadcast emphasis complete 18 credit hours, including JMC 301 Beat Reporting, JMC 340 Basic Broadcast News, JMC 414 Reporting Public Affairs, JMC 451 Television Reporting, JMC 452 Advanced Television Reporting and a JMC 300+ Elective.

Students interested in a multimedia emphasis complete 18 credit hours but JMC 301 Beat Reporting is the only required course. Through both advising and student choice, five additional course electives are completed.

Students interested in the Sports Journalism Emphasis complete 18 credit hours including JMC 231 Introduction to Audio, JMC 245 Introduction to Strategic Communications, JMC 303 Sports News Reporting, JMC 321 Sportscasting, JMC 330 Ad/PR Principles and Ethics or JMC 390 Media Sales and Underwriting and hours selected from JMC 331, 332, 272, 273, 372, or 373.

Students in the Media Production program complete two core classes for six hours, JMC 231 Introduction to Audio and JMC 380 Ad/PR and Continuity Writing.

Within Media Production, students in Radio/Television Production and Management Emphasis complete 21 credit hours, JMC 272 Practice in Radio (1 credit hour), JMC 332 Introduction to Video Production or JMC 432 Ad/PR Video Production, JMC 390 Media Sales and Underwriting, JMC 420 Electronic Media Management (Capstone), JMC 436 International Mass Communications, JMC 450 Issues in RTV or JMC 455 Race, Gender and Mass Media, a JMC 300+ elective, and another JMC 300+ elective for 2 credit hours.

The Media Production area include a Video Production interdisciplinary emphasis where student complete 21 credit hours, including a JMC 300+ elective, JMC 332 Introduction to Video Production, JMC 432 Ad/PR Video Production, JMC 434 Advanced Video Production, JMC 475 Documentary Journalism, and additional interdisciplinary courses from the School of Art and Design and School of Theater.

The self-study proudly notes in Part II the reduction in majors from nine areas to three new majors but these three majors include a total of 7 emphasis areas. Some courses have new names and updated descriptions since the previous site team visit but course innovation is limited. The multimedia emphasis consists almost exclusively of student selected elective courses, suggesting perhaps that could be anything the student wanted and not a multimedia elective.

Like many universities, COVID-19, political/social impact on journalism as an area of study, and a pending 2025 drop in the number of high school graduates rests in the minds of faculty and administrators. Students and some faculty expressed a desire to add new courses and to take the program in new directions. Faculty acknowledge that changes in the programs due to retirement departures will likely spur changes but there is concern the permission process for hiring new faculty may delay or halt improvements.



**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.)**

The School did not exceed the 20:1 ratio in any of the skills courses, even during COVID-19 remote instruction. No skills course exceeded an enrollment of 16 students.

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

The School requires all students to complete a minimum of three hours of internships or practicum. Students may complete up to six hours of internship. Two student media units (WMUL and *The Parthenon*) offer student volunteer opportunities. Faculty report that practicum credit is not given for routine volunteer work but can be earned for special projects or assignments within the student media outlets. Students complete other internships at local newspaper or television stations. The unit cited specific examples of students being hired while still in school or right after graduation as a result of the local media internship.

As is true at many other colleges and universities, the need to pay additional summer tuition for internship credits is a burden for some students. Faculty report splitting internships across multiple semesters to help students with the costs but faculty are penalized on workloads when students enroll for only one or two credits and the faculty workload expectation is a three credit class.

Students arrange their own internships but faculty can and do offer assistance and ideas. The internship program is rigorous, not only through the placement assignments and responsibilities but also through systematic reporting that is required of students to earn their academic credits. The unit uses interns' supervisor reviews as one form of program assessment.

**SUMMARY:**

The unit discusses the use of program assessment later in the self-study to complete the curriculum review steps. The School has made some attempts to streamline their academic majors but likely needs to do more, if only to make room for program innovation. Students complete a maximum of 48 credits in the Bachelor of Arts in Journalism. Students speak with profound respect about their instructors and the coursework experiences, both from conceptual and skills classes.

Overall evaluation of compliance/non-compliance: **Compliance.**

## **PART II — Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness**

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

**a). The unit has a written diversity plan for achieving an inclusive curriculum, a diverse faculty and student population, and a supportive climate for working and learning and for assessing progress toward achievement of the plan. The diversity plan should focus on domestic minority groups and, where applicable, international groups. The written plan must include the unit's definition of diversity and identify the under-represented groups.**

The School's Diversity Statement and Goals was last amended in April 2019. It reaffirms the School's commitment to an environment of teaching and learning that "recognizes and welcomes diversity of race, color, culture, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, age, religion, national origin, marital status and economic, political and ethnic backgrounds." The statement emphasizes the School's commitment to developing the potential of all students by "creating and maintaining an environment that promotes and fosters understanding in a multicultural global community." It outlines practices and policies to support diversity in the areas of curriculum, research, the recruitment of personnel, faculty development, student recruitment and retention.

The School's Diversity Committee, chaired by Dr. Terry Hapney, monitors and assesses diversity issues as they arise. Recent examples include supporting the addition of gender and gender identity to the University's Diversity Statement and ensuring continued support of Unity Month and the International Festival. The Committee performed a content audit of the Parthenon and MU Report in 2019.

Marshall is located in the "heart of Appalachia" (Cabell County), with surrounding metro areas in Ohio and Kentucky. The population of this region is more than 90 percent white. School administrators point out that the University and School are both more diverse than the region they serve. They consider Appalachian students as part of the diverse community and seek to help these students fit into and contribute to global communities.

**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 curriculum includes a 15 credit-hour university diversity requirement, with regional, national, and global diversity topics integrated into several courses. All JMC syllabi contain a diversity statement. The director of the School and faculty include compliance with diversity in the assessment of programs and in other regular discussions.

The elective course JMC 455 - Race, Gender and Mass Media, focuses specifically on diversity (JMC 455 - Race, Gender, and Mass Media) and several other courses have diversity components. Among these are JMC 101- Media Literary, JMC 222 - Intro to Media Studies, JMC 300 - Reporting and News Writing, JMC 303- Sports Reporting, JMC 345 - Mass Comm Law and Ethics, and JMC 424 - Media Strategies. JMC 330 focuses specifically on global public relations and building brands globally. Students who took JMC 455 expressed satisfaction and appreciation for its content. Several students and faculty said the course should become a requirement for all.

The School's Carter G. Woodson Lyceum was created in 2016 to support programs reflecting the history and achievement of Black Americans. Dr. Woodson, a coal miner who went on to graduate from the former Douglass School in Huntington in 1896 and to become its principal, is frequently referred to as the Father of Black History. The Lyceum has renewed its contract with Cabell County for its fifth annual Institute for Black History Instruction for teachers of language arts, history, social studies, and art. Supported by a grant from the West Virginia Humanities Council, the Institute will offer a four-day graduate humanities course in 2022. The Lyceum also sponsors numerous annual Black History Month activities that strengthen connections with the community, including the Annual Black History Month Poster Contest for West Virginia Elementary School Students. The fifth event will take place in 2022.

The Lyceum has also sponsored numerous programs related to Black History, featuring such speakers as Linda Shockley, managing director, Dow Jones News Fund; Angela Dodson, New York Times; Earl Lewis, past president, Mellon Foundation, Carla Hayden, librarian of Congress, and Judge Robert Wilkins, U.S. Court of Appeals.

**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.**

Since its last reaccreditation, the School has had only one faculty hiring opportunity, and a female candidate was selected. Currently, the ranks of tenured and tenure track faculty include six men (one Black) and four women. One of these women is now the School's interim director. A white female faculty member left Marshall in December 2020 and the female faculty member who served as the School's director retired in 2021.

Six adjunct faculty members – three women and three men – taught classes in Fall 2021. Among the goals outlined in the Diversity Statement is the aggressive recruitment of women and minorities to regular full and part-time appointments, including advertising positions in media that target women and minorities.

**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 has pledged, in its Diversity Statement, to intensify efforts to recruit more minority students in coordination with both the Marshall recruiting office and Office of Intercultural Affairs. It has consistently supported the University's summer high school workshops, which have a special focus on minority students and says it will step up its recruitment of students from the workshops. The director works with the Marshall recruiting office on recruitment efforts with high minority student population districts in the District of Columbia, Northern Virginia, Ohio and Atlanta.

The Office of African American Students and Intercultural Affairs offers programs welcoming diverse students to Marshall, as well as counseling services. The Society of Black Scholars helps students conduct research and prepare public presentations.

**Table 5. Undergraduate Student Populations**

**Academic year: Fall 2020 – Spring 2021**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>% of total in unit</b>	<b>% of total in institution</b>
Black/African-American	4	5	7%	5.8%
White	53	52	80%	84.6%
American Indian/Alaskan native	0	0	0	0.3%
Asian	0	0	0	1%
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	2	5	5%	2.6%
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander	1	1	1%	.01%
Two or more race	0	0	0	3.5%
Other race	0	0	0	2.1%
International students (any race)	0	0	0	0

**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.**

Several initiatives seek to support a discrimination and harassment-free environment. All course syllabi must include policies or links to policies on affirmative action, sexual harassment, and students with disabilities. All students with disabilities are required to register with The Higher Education Learning Program (HELP) or Students with Disabilities Office, which provide assistance such as time extensions for tests. The University offers an Autism Training Center, Speech and Hearing Clinic, and Tutoring Services, along with a faculty handbook for working with students with disabilities. The campus is ADA compliant. Students and faculty may report complaints anonymously through the Office of Equity Programs.

Overall, School faculty and students describe an atmosphere where professional faculty-student relationships are frequent, and students are comfortable seeking advice from faculty. The School reports that complaints of harassment or discrimination are “extremely rare.”

**SUMMARY:**

The School has made progress in diversity and inclusion through the development of its Diversity Committee, the introduction of efforts to connect with the diverse local community, and the expansion of efforts to recruit diverse students and faculty. The focus on diverse issues in several courses is laudable, as is the continued development of the Race, Gender and Equity course. Unfortunately, the course is not a requirement. Students and faculty agree that it should be – this step would be an excellent visible example of the School’s commitment, and a strong message to current and future students.

Overall evaluation of compliance/non-compliance: **Compliance.**

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

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.)

SCHOOLS LOCATED OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED STATES should adjust the response and listing below to best represent the racial/ethnic/socio economic groups of the area’s population.

**Academic year: 2020 – 2021\* Full-time faculty**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>% of total faculty</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>% of total faculty</b>
Black/African-American			1	8%
White	6	50%	5	42%
American Indian/Alaskan native				
Asian				
Hispanic/Latino (any race)				
Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander				
Two or more races				
Other race				
International (any race)				

\*A white female faculty member left the university in December 2020 (included above)

\*A white female who served as a faculty member and Director of the SOJMC retired in June 2021 included above)

\*A white male is serving in a one-year, full-time temporary position for the 2021-22 academic year.

\*A white male is on sabbatical for fall, 2021

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

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The unit follows the University personnel selection process for filling faculty, staff and support faculty (adjunct) positions. There have been staff changes since the last accreditation visit, there has been only one faculty search which speaks well to faculty satisfaction. The faculty member selected was white/female ABD and teaches video production.

Tenured faculty review all faculty in the unit annually. They visit classrooms, review syllabi and conduct interviews to assess performance. Ratings are then provided to the director. Overall annual reviews are based on planning pages prepared by faculty at the beginning of the year, and teaching evaluations are included in that review.

Of special note is that the self-study reported that two female assistant professors, one of them serving as interim director, have been instructed that they will need to complete work on terminal degree as a condition of promotion. The study did not indicate the source or rationale or that requirement. That has not been consistent in the unit. There are two full professors with M.A.s.

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

Faculty in the unit teach a 4-4 load regardless of rank. Several mentioned that this entails four preparations per semester, although it's rare that any of the four would be new preps. There are situations that have resulted in reductions, such as a faculty member who is ABD. There are sometimes opportunities to teach outside the unit, such as an Honors course. Faculty advise entering students and, later during their program, meet with and advise students again for semester advising, as well as providing advising when the need arises. The range is from about 20 students to 40 students.

The percentage of core and required courses taught by full-time faculty:

2020-21 school year: 86.5%

2019-20 school year: 79.5%

2018-19 school year: 86%

**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 10 faculty identified in the self-study (down from 13 in the last report), there are two PhDs, two ABDs, two EdDs, one MFA. and three MAs. The unit reported faculty have an average of 22.7 years teaching experience and an average of 13 years professional experience. Only one faculty member was reported to have no professional experience. This faculty leans heavily toward service in professional organizations and presentations at professional and industry conferences. In light of their teaching and service to student loads, a light record of published research was apparent but not unexpected.

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

Annually, all faculty members (full-time, part-time and teaching assistants) in the unit are evaluated by students in every course using a standardized university-side course evaluation digital form. The forms include space for written comments. The director and individual faculty members receive the information only after semester grades are submitted, but no individual students are identified. Faculty members are encouraged to seek mentoring and advice from one another. Peer evaluations are conducted annually for all faculty members.

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

From conversations with people outside the unit, including alumni, it was clear that the student-centered focus and servant-leadership qualities of the unit's faculty are broadly recognized. Two professors have been tapped as University Hall of Fame inductees, and there were other recognitions during the past three years on campus and regionally, including:

- Sarah Denman Faces of Appalachia Fellowship Award, Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Gender in Appalachia.
- Pickens Queen Teaching Award, Center for Teaching and Learning.
- West Virginia Wonder Woman 2019, West Virginia Living Magazine.
- Marshall nominee for Faculty Merit Foundation WV Professor of the Year, Marshall University/
- Hall of Fame inductee, Marshall School of Journalism and Mass Communications.
- Hedrick Outstanding Faculty Award, Marshall University.
- Excellence in Teaching Award, National Society of Leadership and Success.
- AEJMC Trailblazer of Diversity, AEJMC.
- Distinguished Artists and Scholars Award, Marshall University Faculty Award.
- West Virginia History Hero, State of West Virginia.
- John Marshall Leadership Fellows Program, Marshall University Center for Teaching and Learning.

**SUMMARY:**

A strength of the unit is faculty stability in uncertain times for the University and, consequently, for the unit. Professors are accessible and appreciated by students who said they would not receive as much direct support of learning in a larger unit. The 4-4 load applied to all ranks essentially cancels any expectation that the faculty would heavily engage in time-consuming personal or collaborative research/publishing. More formal scholarship would be commendable, but the collective record of service is strong and recognized across the University and region. There are inconsistencies that have not been explained, notably that two female assistant professors have been told a terminal degree would be required before they can be considered by the University for promotion. There was no apparent justification or rationale for this, given that there are two full professors without terminal degrees and a faculty composed of five members with terminal degrees and five without terminal degrees.

Overall evaluation of compliance/non-compliance: **Compliance.**

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

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

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

The School follows Marshall's expectation that faculty prioritize teaching and service. At the same time, the Marshall mission statement highlights the important roles of research and creative activities, which has enabled the School to also devote attention and resources to these areas. Marshall has expanded its focus on research in recent years and was recently designated an R-2 institution.

In general, School faculty teach a 4-4 load. In keeping with the evolution of the School and University culture, they also spend significant time on service, scholarship, and creative work. The School provides support for faculty research and creative work within the scope of the limited funding available. Many faculty seek and receive grant and other support for research and community/profession-based projects and activities. A few faculty members have been granted reduced teaching loads to accommodate specific research and scholarly assignments, such as special video production or design projects, generally involving students.

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

The director meets with faculty annually, mainly during performance review, to discuss recent and planned scholarly and creative work. These activities are also part of promotion and tenure decisions. The School advises new faculty on balancing scholarly and creative work with other job responsibilities. In some cases, faculty members are allowed to reduce advising or other obligations to focus on research/creative pursuits.

The School actively seeks candidates for faculty positions (when available) who have terminal degrees and active research and creative agendas. This adoption of this emphasis in recent years has led to a "noticeable increase in the quality and quantity of faculty work," say School leaders. Since the last re-accreditation site visit, full, associate, and assistant professors have accounted for 40 awards and honors, 59 internal grants, and 17 external grants.

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

In accord with the University Faculty Handbook, assistant professors receive a progress evaluation after three years of service. The College provides performance indicators for research activities. Faculty indicated general satisfaction with this process. Current faculty CVs indicate a wide range of research focuses and specializations, including Appalachian culture, the history of women in journalism, the role of ethics in crisis communications, the Black migration, the Black Press and war reporting.

#### **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.**



Since the last re-accreditation, faculty have refereed 40 conference papers, written articles in 285 non-refereed and five referred journals, and made 61 professional presentations. They've accounted for 23 video productions and 180 radio-TV activities, including serving as on-air personalities and handling production work. The University and School offer many options for travel funding for research and presentation purposes. Most awards are given on a competitive basis. These include the annual Quinlan Award (\$500) and the International Nickel Company Grant. Faculty members may receive grants of up to \$1,200 a year, not to exceed \$3,000 over five years. Most faculty members get one \$500 travel grant a year. In the current economic climate, faculty note that the current grant limit limits presentation and education opportunities.

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

The University and School offer several opportunities for faculty scholarly and creative activities that create a strong intellectual community on campus. Faculty are eligible for sabbatical after six years in rank, and additional sabbaticals are available after at least seven more years of full-time employment. The school encourages eligible faculty to apply for sabbatical leave and to pursue on and off-campus funding opportunities for academic/creative endeavors. Four faculty members have taken sabbaticals since the last accreditation report:

- Dr. Terry Hapney led a research grant-funded project to examine public attitudes toward West Virginia public media.
- Dr. Chris Swindell studied media coverage and public relations responses to the Elk River chemical spill in Charleston.
- Dr. Robert Rabe did research for a continuing book project on newspaper columnist Marquis W. Childs.
- Christine Ingersoll studied the discovery and testing of unconventional digital publishing and teaching tools for non-traditional publications.

All of these efforts have led to several presentations and additional research. In 2018, the School hosted a day-long research seminar on the History of Mass Media in 1968, featuring research presentations by several faculty members and an invited speaker. The Woodson Lyceum, as indicated elsewhere, sponsors many community and scholarly activities.

**SUMMARY:**

The School has made progress in developing increased support to scholarly and creative activities, which have generated greater visibility for the unit and faculty. However, the 4-4 teaching load that almost all faculty carry makes this very difficult to achieve in practice.

Overall evaluation of compliance/non-compliance: **Compliance.**

Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activities	Total from Unit*	Individuals				Totals (11)
		Full Professors (7)	Associate Professors (2)	Assistant Professors (2)	Other Faculty** (0)	
Awards and Honors	40	32		8		40
Grants Received Internal	59	34	12	13		59
Grants Received External	17	11	3	3		17
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co-authored	1					1
Textbooks, Sole- or Co-authored	1		1			1
Books Edited						
Book Chapters	2	1		1		2
Monographs						
Articles in Refereed Journals	5	5				5
Refereed Conference Papers	40	23	14	3		40
Invited Academic Papers	21	17	4			21
Professional Presentations	61	35	12	14		61
Encyclopedia Entries						
Book Reviews	3	3				3
Articles in Non-refereed Publications/ Media Outlets	285	274		11		285
Radio/TV Production or On-Air Personality	180	180				180
Video Production	23	20		3		23
Ads/Promotional Content Created	12	4		7		12
Presentation of Creative Work	17	13		4		17
Juried Creative Works	3	2	1			3
Non-juried Creative Works						
Other (doctoral dissertation)	1		1			1
Other (design consultation)	2		1	1		1

## **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.**

The unit as well as the University provide guidance and support to students toward their degrees. Students interviewed during the visit expressed that there were no “traps” or surprises.

There is a formal orientation week, and all students have an assigned faculty adviser. Faculty members are required to post five office hours per week, but most post more and several provide their cell numbers.

Incoming and sophomore students have advising holds placed on their academic records and may not register until consulting with their advisers. Juniors and seniors, while not required to meet with an adviser often do, both for class and for career and life advice.

The University also uses an Education Advisory Board Student Success Collaborative that tracks student performance and alerts advisers to students who are “at risk” according to the EAB metrics. The Student Services Specialist in the College of Arts and Media is charged with routinely contacting students who exhibit behaviors that have been identified as markers that signal pending problems. A note of such contacts is stored in the system that advisers can review. Undergraduate students whose overall or Marshall GPA drops below a 2.0 are placed on Academic Probation and must meet with the unit director or the college-level Student Services Specialist to develop an Academic Improvement Plan (AIP). The plans are binding on the student.

All students and advisers have access to DegreeWorks, a degree-auditing and tracking tool. DegreeWorks tracks students’ academic progress and compares where a student stands in regard to requirements for the individual major. It tells the students what degree requirements have been completed, which ones are in progress, which ones are near completion and which ones remain to be completed. When approaching the 90<sup>th</sup> credit hour, students are instructed to have a graduation audit or “grad check.” This is an additional review of courses completed and of courses still needed for graduation, and it is typically made in person. Both parties sign the check sheet, a spreadsheet that lists all requirements and tallies required credits.

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

Students were uniform in reporting they never experienced undue delay in meeting with a faculty member after class, by appointment or “drop in.” Class sizes are almost universally in the single digits or teens, which translates into a level of informality.

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

The unit director maintains a list of student email addresses in order to alert them to special events. There is also a website that offers complete information and promotes noteworthy accomplishments of students and faculty. Noted here and elsewhere is that the website contains some dated information that needs to be removed. Again, students expressed no dissatisfaction concerning the rules and policies. A healthy level of student comfort was apparent during the visit.

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

There are curricular and extra-curricular opportunities for students. Where relevant to the major within the school, participation in student media is required, graded and awarded academic credit. Broadcast students are not paid, but do travel to sports events. Print (digital) students are compensated in small amounts.

Notably, the unit has lined several halls with display cases with hundreds of student media awards (especially for radio), perhaps as inspiration to current majors. The school also supports, at least in part, student travel to awards ceremonies in the region.

- WMUL-FM is a 24-hour campus and community radio station offering music, news, public affairs programs, sports, entertainment, and public service announcements. Many sports and news events are also livestreamed and archived online at <https://www.marshall.edu/wmul/>. It is the oldest non-commercial radio station in the state, obtaining its FCC license Nov. 1, 1961.
- The Parthenon newspaper publishes content online continuously at <https://marshallparthenon.com> and circulates a print edition available to campus on Wednesdays. Students cover news beats, write articles, take photographs, and edit and design pages.
- MU Report is a student-produced television news show that has been shown on West Virginia Public Television and at the time of the visit was being produced for social media outlets.

Smaller and apparently less-active extra-curriculars include:

- PRSSA, Public Relations Student Society of America, offers interaction with professionals, represents local non-profit clients and works with the campaigns class to stage a major fund-raising event for various local charities that have included Ronald McDonald House Charities and River Valley Child Development.
- AAF, American Advertising Federation or MUAAF, also known as Ad Club, competes in regional and national ad competitions, offers interactions with professionals in the field, tours agencies, and attends career conferences.
- NBS, National Broadcasting Society, provides production competition and interaction with professionals in the field.

**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.**

<https://www.marshall.edu/jmc/facts-and-stats/>

From the site:

**Unit Retention Rates**

Retention rates are a reflection of student persistence in a program. The W. Page Pitt School of Journalism and Mass Communications rates are calculated regularly through Institutional Research. The school's retention rates consistently rank among the top in the university.

Entering cohort	Retained . . .		
	to second year	to third year	to fourth year
2005	73%	70%	58%
2006	80%	77%	69%
2007	75%	61%	61%
2008	76%	63%	61%
2009	82%	73%	73%
2010	70%	66%	57%
2011	80%	76%	72%
2012	90%	83%	75%
2013	85%	71%	69%
2014	79%	64%	62%
2015	81%	74%	71%
2016	85%	77.55%	59%
2017	73%	61%	77%
2018	61%	58%	*
2019	54%***	*	*
2020	*	*	*

\* Data not yet available

\*\*\* Reflects COVID-19 effects

#### Graduation rates

Students who accelerate their programs of study and those who transfer into the program after their freshman year may graduate in fewer than four years.

Entering cohort	Graduated	Graduated in . . .			
		< 4 years	4 years	5 years	6 years or +
2005	64%	6%	24%	22%	12%
2006	73%	3%	29%	26%	15%
2007	56%	1%	29%	18%	8%
2008	53%	6%	18%	19%	10%
2009	69%	2%	30%	27%	10%
2010	86%	2%	48%	25%	11%
2011	66%	8%	39%	14%	5%
2012**	90%	4%	49%	36%	1%
2013**	64%	3%	48%	10%	3%
2014**	71%	20%	37%	14%	9%
2015**	88%	31%	43%	19%	to come
2016**	63%	19%	44%	to come	to come
2017**	to come	37%	to come	to come	to come
2018**	to come	7%	to come	to come	to come

\*\* A number of students who entered the program in any given year may still be in the pipeline and making progress toward graduation. The completion percentages for five years for six or more years may increase as the remaining students in a cohort matriculate.

## Job Placement

Job placement is assessed through an annual survey of graduates immediately following matriculation conducted by the university Assessment Office, and through a periodic survey of graduates conducted by the School of Journalism and Mass Communications. On average, about one quarter of the school's graduates continue employment in a job they originally had as an intern while the remainder go on to other employment in the field, employment in other areas or continue their academic careers. Generally, about 30 percent of journalism and mass communications majors continue in master's programs. In the most recent survey of alumni 75 percent reported full-time employment directly in the field or in a closely related field and 20 percent reported full-time employment in an unrelated field.

NOTE: This data from the site is believed to be trustworthy, but the school's site does contain some information that is dated and no longer accurate.

### **SUMMARY:**

The unit faculty is clearly student-centric. Overall, there are many challenges including resources for more student travel and more active faculty involvement in student extra-curricular activities. Declining enrollment is a major challenge to obtaining the resources, but the unit faculty remain committed to serving their majors and other students enrolled in their classes at a high level of availability, openness and clearly have the confidence of students who were interviewed. As a group, they stress core values and adhere to a policy of encouraging student success.

Overall evaluation of compliance/non-compliance: **Compliance.**

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

**Unit performance with regard to indicators:**

**a). The unit has a detailed annual budget for the allocation of its resources that is related to its long-range, strategic plan.**

There is very little clarity regarding budgeting for the unit. Some of this may be attributed to COVID-19 impacts. Some may be attributed to the recent realignment of programs that placed the unit under a new College of Arts and Media. Some may be attributed to evolving methods of University distribution of funds. Some may be attributed to the changing status of administrators at the time of the visit (interim director, interim dean, interim provost and a new president expected Jan. 1, 2022). There may be other factors as well. Lines of purchasing authority were unclear as were resources for the director and faculty. It appeared faculty in the unit at times went to the dean and/or to the chief financial officer with requests. The interim director did not express confidence in her authority to make budgetary decisions. She confided she had never met the interim provost in person. It appears the budget numbers submitted with the report were based on actual experience. There was no evidence of spending plans tied to strategic goals.

From the report:

<b>Budget Item</b> (Self-study year)	<b>2018- 2019</b>	<b>2019 - 2020</b>	<b>2020 - 2021</b>
<u>Administrative salaries</u>	<u>\$131,205</u>	<u>\$136,054</u>	<u>\$127,494</u>
<u>Teaching salaries (full time)</u>	<u>\$744,023</u>	<u>\$733,791</u>	<u>\$776,305</u>
<u>Teaching salaries (part time/adjunct)</u>	<u>\$42,717</u>	<u>\$24,806</u>	<u>\$29,457</u>
<u>Teaching assistants</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Clerical salaries</u>	<u>\$53,251</u>	<u>\$62,192</u>	<u>\$62,192</u>
<u>Equipment</u>	<u>\$81,468</u>	<u>\$13,209</u>	<u>\$26,196</u>
<u>Equipment maintenance</u>	<u>\$964</u>	<u>\$1,881</u>	<u>\$472</u>
<u>Supplies</u>	<u>\$6,870</u>	<u>\$5,629</u>	<u>\$7,026</u>
<u>Library resources</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Databases, online information services</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Travel</u>	<u>\$27,657</u>	<u>\$36,622</u>	<u>\$12,343</u>
<u>Research</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Other (please list)</u>			
TOTAL ANNUAL JOURNALISM/ MASS COMMUNICATIONS BUDGET	\$1,088,155	\$1,014,184	\$1,031,485

**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.**

Again, this is an unstable time. University administrators voiced support for the unit inasmuch as its programs bring visibility to the University, but it was not clear the unit was seen as contributing to the academic status of the University. The University appears to be at a crossroads as to how to blend degrees, if at all, and how or whether to use majors or student credit hours or a formula involving both and perhaps other factors in allocating funds. None of this should be read as evidence of administrative indifference. Administrators indicated a desire to follow the best path possible, but the University is facing declining state funding, a declining regional recruiting pool and declining enrollment. Administrators were not prepared to speak with a high degree of specificity or certainty due to the myriad variables the institution faces.

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

Overall, classrooms were comfortable and equipped for efficient instruction. Hallways and restrooms were bright and clean. No student collaboration areas were observed in the classroom/office area but were seen in the library and other nearby buildings on campus.

**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.**

Student comments about the lack of equipment needed to produce class assignments were validated by faculty who teach in areas where cameras and other recording equipment are essential. Student media workers, on the other hand, felt as if the equipment needed was adequate. A specific example is that TV students have access to a new, state-of-the-art switcher (\$35,000) while items such as HD video cameras and SD cards were in short supply or broken and in need of repair.

Students were grateful that the University provides the best available software, but most seriously opposed a new University requirement that students start providing their own hardware (laptops). None, however, said that requirement would have changed their decision to enroll at this University.

It was somewhat alarming to see the current level of travel funding (presumed to include student travel) reduced two-thirds in the self-study to \$12,343 as well as the wide swings in equipment funding (\$81,468, \$13,209, \$26,196).

From the self-study (edited for length):

“A \$110 fee is collected from JMC students each semester to support computer labs that are used in instruction and that are made available for students to complete work out of class. When these fees were first collected the sums were made available as part of the school's budget. Planned buildup of journalism and mass communications student fee money allowed for regular rotation of lab equipment every three years, replacement of cameras and limited studio repair. Several years ago, the student fees were extracted from unit budgets and managed centrally. (*underlining added*)

“The Marshall University Foundation manages 13 separate accounts for the school that total roughly \$103,400. Eleven of the accounts are established to serve specific purposes such as the United High School Media Workshop, the Summer High School Journalism Workshop and the Carter G. Woodson



Lyceum, and, therefore, the uses of those funds are restricted. Two accounts are discretionary, and they can be used for any needs within the school. Typical uses of the discretionary funds are faculty travel for conference presentations, emergency equipment replacement and recognition events. The Gannett Professor account also typically generates about \$3,000 in discretionary funds annually.

One of the discretionary accounts maintained by the Foundation is the Journalism Alumni Association. The account generally is replenished each year with the Hall of Fame Induction ceremony fund raiser staged by the JMC Alumni Advisory Board. The event generates between \$6,000 and \$10,000 annually. Recognizing that state support is likely to continue to be limited next year, that fund is being earmarked to cover expenses related to the upcoming accreditation process.

“Student media budgets for *The Parthenon* and for WMUL-FM are managed by the faculty advisers of each medium. Budgets have decreased steadily. Advisers have responded to smaller pools in their operating budgets by reducing the number of print editions of the paper to one a week (the campus paper continues to publish daily online), downsizing away from campus sports coverage, limiting contest entries, contracting attendance at conferences, workshops, training and events and delaying modernization of equipment.

“Cost cutting tactics have been in place for several years. Seven majors were collapsed into three and the number of sections offered per semester has been reduced by nearly 20 percent. The special topics and non-required courses that faculty find enriching and recharging have been phased out of the course schedule over a five-year period. A retired faculty member has not been replaced and a recent resignation is not likely to be filled. Adjunct positions have been reduced from the typical four or five a semester to a single online course that is taught by someone other than full-time faculty and that generates its own funds. Budget restrictions already have pushed stagnation where modernization is appropriate.”

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

The university has a modern library facility with ample spaces for individual and collaborative student work and campus-wide wi-fi.

**SUMMARY:**

The University administration did not hesitate to express pride in the value of a competitive School of Journalism and Mass Communication, especially the good reputé it brings to the institution, yet the unit has experienced reductions in financial and other support that appear to be disproportionate to the decline in unit enrollment. A new University-wide strategic recruitment plan and expected stability in the many campus leadership positions now staffed by interim appointees hold promise. There was ample evidence of a dedicated, effective faculty and quality students. Measures should be undertaken to bring stability and vision to counter the current disconnects.

Overall evaluation of compliance/non-compliance: **NON-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 now uses the Alumni Facebook page as its primary venue for immediate communication with alumni, Alumni use the page for communication among themselves, as well as with the School. All events are posted on the site, and it also serves as a jobs message board and discussion forum. Faculty say it is the most reliable source for locating and contacting graduates of specific programs. While this seems effective with many alumni, it requires a proactive approach on their part, and may not be as effective with some alumni audiences, including graduates in different age groups.

The Alumni Advisory Board has one formal meeting each semester and may meet more frequently for special projects. The Board includes former students and professionals and frequently provides advice and counsel on such issues as curriculum and technology issues, among others, It holds an annual Hall of Fame banquet, which honors outstanding alumni and raises funds for the School.

Faculty members have been active with many professional associations, such as the Public Relations Society of America, the National Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Society of Professional Journalists, the National Broadcasting Society, the American Advertising Society, and many others. Faculty members Dr. Allyson Goodman and Dr. Terry Hapney advise student groups of AAF and PRSSA, respectively.

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

The Carter G, Woodson Lyceum has brought special speakers and programs to campus, including most recently, Angela Dodson of *The New York Times*. Also it is involved with developing and advising local, regional, and national Black History Month activities and working closely with area schools on diversity issues and programs.

Ethics is a strong component in several courses. Several activities, from guest speakers to symposia, also address ethical and related issues. The student newspaper, The Parthenon, published daily online and weekly in print, covers on and off campus news. The student radio station, WMUL-FM, broadcasts 24/7 and offers programming ranging from public affairs to sports and entertainment. The twice a month televised MU Report covers news and public interest stories. United High School Media brings high school students to campus annually for a conference and awards program.

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

Faculty members receive limited institutional support for involvement in several regional, national and international associations and activities. They have organized and presented at high school journalism workshops, served as officers in PRSA, the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, and other organizations and served as faculty advisers to student organizations of PRSSA and AAF. Limited travel

funding -- generally \$500 per year -- is available. The School has also helped faculty develop other sources of support as necessary.

**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 Woodson Lyceum sponsors many community-based events and programs throughout the year, with special focus on Black History Month. Seven Arrow, the student-run public relations/advertising agency, has conducted *pro bono* campaigns for Habitat for Humanity, the Ronald McDonald House Charities, and River Valley Child Development Services, among others. Student internship assignments may also support special community projects and services.

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

Since 1927, the School has hosted United High School Media, a day-long program for high school students in the region. Judges, including professionals within and outside the state, review student entries of their work in advertising, newspaper, yearbook, and electronic media. The program also features seminars and workshops, concluding with a banquet and awards ceremony,

The School's annual journalism workshops, held each summer, provide three to four days of special training for high school students in such areas as writing, photography, design, sports, ethics, and law. Admission is competitive, with approximately 15 students selected. All expenses, except travel, are covered by the School.

School faculty participate in the University's Search Committee Recruiting Excellent Students program for students from West Virginia, Kentucky and Ohio. The School presents competitions in advertising design and copywriting, public relations cases, broadcast news, radio programming, photography and news and editorial writing. Faculty members also visit local high schools to speak and present on special communications issues. Faculty members in the School indicated strong support of existing involvement and expressed interest in strengthening community connections, especially with area schools.

## **Summary**

The faculty support and welcome involvement with the community and general public. They value connections with alumni and are willing to spend time with alumni groups and individuals. "Community" as a strong value was evident in interviews in conversations with the faculty and students.

Overall evaluation of compliance/non-compliance: **Compliance.**

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

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

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

Now retired School director and associate dean Janet Dooley was charged with administering the assessment program. Appendix 1 included details of the assessment plan, procedures and timelines. Faculty report that with previous self-studies and the most recent self-study, the School director served as assessment leader. Faculty were involved in portfolio reviews but the director assumed the responsibility for most program assessment.

Provided with the self-study was a multi-colored chart establishing the role of courses in the unit in meeting the ACEJMC professional values and competencies. Dr. Dooley, as a retired faculty member, did not meet with the site team. The Standard 9 portion of the self-study was completed before her departure on July 31, 2021.

The unit conducts a syllabus review and audit of learning outcomes compliance with Board of Governors, university, School and ACEJMC requirements. The self-study assessment report notes an improvement in compliance across multiple objectives from 77% compliance to 95% compliance.

Direct and indirect assessment measures are detailed below.

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

Direct measures include:

- Annual reviews of graduation portfolios, reviewed by faculty and professionals.
- Completion of an exit exam by graduating seniors.
- Internship supervisor feedback and assessment of student performance.

Indirect measures include:

- Student focus group interviews. Annual reviews during the university’s assessment month, where a group of freshmen and sophomores and a group of juniors and seniors participate in focus groups to assess their perception of their experience in the program and school.
- Alumni surveys conducted on a three-year cycle by the School and conducted annually by the Office of Assessment and Quality Initiatives.
- Periodic discussions with internship supervisors about students and the program.
- Monitoring of overall grades and GPAs in the major for performance trends.

These measures appear to be effective in helping the program assess whether the educational experience is meeting ACEJMC’s professional values and competencies.

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

The unit uses “Six Degrees of Education” to track program effectiveness. Rubrics with traits that identify what students should be able to do to reflect successful performance of individual outcomes are part of the assessment procedures. Faculty and selected alumni review portfolio artifacts and rate the work as introductory, milestone, capstone or advanced. Results are tabulated and reported to the faculty and to the university assessment office.

The unit has used finding from assessment to close the loop to improve student experience and thus improve the program.

Among other things, the School notes it listened to the previous site team and used program assessment to collapse seven previous majors into three, and add an interdisciplinary video production emphasis to the new media production major. The next year the print and online emphases were combined to create a more relevant multimedia emphasis. In the fall of 2019 three sports emphases, sports print, sports broadcast and sports PR, were joined and new sports course requirements were added to create a single robust sports program. The new majors have been in place for about two years. Future assessment will review the effectiveness of these changes.

The revamped JMC core curriculum requires digital literacy of all majors as well as media literacy, information gathering, media design, digital imaging, ethics and law and internship. A majority of upper division courses were updated as they were revised to accommodate the combinations of fields.

Assessment has confirmed a perennial problem with spelling, punctuation, grammar, composition and thought processes. The Language Skills Exam (*The Grammar Slammer*) has been used assesses spelling and grammar. JCM 103 was introduced as a means of assisting students who found the exam challenging. A task force of three faculty members examined the language skills exam issues. The exam was redeveloped to focus on more essential questions and moved to self-administered Blackboard modules. Students may take the test once a month during the academic year to ensure more opportunities to achieve an acceptable score. Poynter Institute’s News U Language Skills Primer is being suggested for student language and grammar review but is not yet required.

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

The alumni survey was halted as the COVID pandemic pushed back many activities for at least a year. However, results from the most recent survey of graduates parallel those produced by the university’s assessment office with the majority finding employment in their fields or in related fields, the majority rating their education in the school as useful and helpful. The last survey clearly indicated graduates would have found a greater emphasis on digital appealing and the revised curriculum responded with greater digital emphasis in the core requirements.

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication maintains an active alumni group. The Friday prior to the arrival of the site team, the School held an in-person Hall of Fame event, inducting 10 alumni into the program. More than 140 persons attended. These inductees and other alumni are asked by the unit to participate in assessment, especially student portfolio reviews. Portfolios are available as online links for alumni to review and score.

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

The unit includes alumni who are working as journalism and mass communication professionals and professionals who are not graduates of Marshall University. Professionals from local TV stations, local newspapers and PR/AD organizations participate in the assessment process but it does appear that the majority of the professionals do have Marshall degree connections. That is partly an artifact of the size and history of the program and the mixture of media professionals in the area.

**SUMMARY:**

The School uses both direct and indirect measures to assess program outcomes for compliance with ACEJMC values and competencies and required university assessment. There is evidence the unit has used assessment data for decision making--to close the loop. Assessment findings resulted in curriculum revisions, measuring graduates' readiness to enter the workforce through portfolio review and refocused efforts to improve student writing and assess writing effectiveness. The former director single-handedly carried the assessment responsibility. The unit will need to review assessment plans to ensure a coherent assessment procedure.

Overall evaluation of compliance/non-compliance: **Compliance.**

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

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

##### **STRENGTHS**

A dedicated group of faculty committed to student education and students who respond well to the faculty.

A strong reputation in the tri-state area, including a network of alumni in media leadership.

An over-achieving student FM radio station and student newspaper, both providing professional opportunities for students.

A very positive attitude among a student body facing a number of challenges.

##### **WEAKNESSES**

A missed opportunity to have already added the Race, Gender class to the program core.

A curriculum that has been improved but still lacks vision.

Leadership uncertainty in the unit and college due to administrator transitions.

Resources, facilities and equipment that require more university investment.

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

Standard 1 and Standard 7.

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

The university should address leadership and faculty needs within the unit, at least by establishing a clear and timely approach for filling the director position.

The university should address resource needs to ensure that students can complete courses dependent on equipment and other needs. They are thus retained by the program and prepared for career success.

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

These were noted in the 2014 visit:

- 1. A curriculum that lacks vision, currency, and integration.**

As explained in Part II Standard 2, the curricula of the School's programs were revisited following the last accreditation report. However, it appears some of the revision was mostly providing new

names and descriptions and little other substantive change. There should be room for innovative classes, but without further reduction of theoretical and conceptual courses. The School will be expected by administration to develop collaborative work or courses with other disciplines. The multimedia emphasis needs better definition.

**2. Limited capability to support seven different majors.**

This has been addressed, but continued awareness that trying to do too much with too few and limited assets sacrifices quality.

**3. An assessment protocol that emphasizes data collection over visionary analysis that contributes to meaningful change.**

This has been addressed. It appears assessment is informing curricular decisions.

**4. Lack of vision to realize the School's potential within the College of Arts & Media and within the broader university.**

As detailed, this is a challenge that this School continues to face for reasons almost completely outside its direct control. Developing and maintaining a clear focus is a continuing challenge.

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

Faculty reported the former director completed previous self-studies. This document included much more faculty involvement than previous self-studies. Faculty were aware of their contributions and were cooperative during the team's visit.