

Report of ACEJMC Evaluation

Undergraduate program

2021–2022

Name of Institution: University of Connecticut

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Dr. Andrew Agwunobi, President

Name of Unit: Department of Journalism, 468 Oak Hall, 365 Fairfield Way, U-1129, Storrs CT 06269-1129

Name and Title of Administrator: Marie Shanahan

Date of 2021-2022 Accrediting Visit: Oct. 10-13, 2021

Date of the previous accrediting visit: Oct. 12-15, 2014

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: Kristin Gilger, Reynolds Professor of Business Journalism

Organization/School: Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Arizona State

University

Signature:

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Team Member

Name and Title: Sonny Albarado

Organization/School: Freelancer; retired investigations editor

Signature:

DocuSigned by:

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11/10/2021

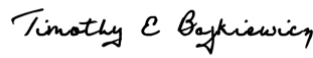
Team Member

Name and Title: Timothy E. Bajkiewicz, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Broadcast Journalism

Organization/School: Richard T. Robertson School of Media and Culture, Virginia Commonwealth

University

Signature:

DocuSigned by:

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

On site: Kristin Gilger & Sonny Albarado

Virtually: Tim Bajkiewicz

PART I: General information

Name of Institution: University of Connecticut

Name of Unit: Department of Journalism

Year of Visit: 2020 (*postponed to 2021 due to pandemic*)

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

Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools

New England Association of Schools and Colleges

North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

Western Association of Schools and Colleges

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

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

Private

Public

Other (specify)

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

Connecticut General Statutes, Sec. 10a-102

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: Oct. 12-15, 2014

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

Spring 2003

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

Adopted in 2002

Journalism Department Mission Statement

The primary goal of the Journalism Department is to prepare students to become intelligent, responsible and articulate journalists. The department is committed to the belief that the best journalism education combines a strong professional program with a thorough education in the liberal arts and sciences. It believes that such an education helps students to hear, understand and tell the stories of people whose circumstances or backgrounds are unlike their own.

The department subscribes to the definition of journalism education given by Edward W. Barrett, former dean of the Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University:

“The primary aim of education for journalism is the development of disciplines, arts and attitudes of mind: the discipline of giving attention to the distasteful as well as to the appealing; the discipline of learning to gauge one's best effort to fit an allotted time span; the discipline of continuing self-education; the art of expression that is lean, direct, precise and deft; the art of grappling with a complex new subject, extracting information from inarticulate specialists, and synthesizing the finds faithfully and coherently; the art of recognizing fine points of accuracy and subtle gradations of meaning; the attitude of approaching new problems with the open-mindedness and imagination that makes solutions possible. Above all, one seeks the attitude of ruthless fairness, of reporting what he dislikes as honestly as what he likes – in short, true intellectual integrity.”

The department occupies a unique position within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. It is the only department whose primary mission is to prepare students for a particular career. The department should not, however, be viewed as being isolated or separated from the rest of the college or its mission. The department values the research, teaching and service of its colleagues in other departments. It values these things for their own sake, and also for the educational depth that they provide to our students. We remain committed to the idea that our majors need a strong liberal arts background to understand the world, and a strong journalism background to report on it. The department encourages its students to study other fields in depth, and to complete second majors in other departments in the college. It also encourages students from other departments to complete a second major in journalism, enhancing their educational and career opportunities. The department also contributes to the college by offering instruction to a substantial number of non-majors who seek to improve their writing, interviewing and research skills, or to learn about the news media.

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Semesters of 14 weeks

Quarters of ___ weeks (N/A)

Summer sessions of 4-12 weeks

Intersessions of 3 weeks

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

Bachelor's degree

Master's degree

Ph.D. degree

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

Bachelor of Arts in Journalism

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

120 semester hours

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

Three semester hours within the Journalism Department.

The university accepts a maximum of 15 semester hours toward graduation.

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
News/Editorial

Person in Charge
Marie K. Shanahan

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

32,333

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 Journalism
Pre-majors	50
Majors (News/Editorial)	76
Total	126

15. Number of students in each section of all skills courses (newswriting, reporting, editing, photography, advertising copy, broadcast news, public relations writing, etc.). List enrollment by section for the term during which the visit will occur and the preceding term. Include a separate list for **online skills courses**, which also must meet the 20-1 ratio. (The Council has ruled that campaign courses are exempt from the 20-1 ratio.)

Fall 2021: *The modality for all JOUR courses are in-person.*

JOUR 2000W (Newswriting I)

Lecture: 65

Section 1 lab: 16

Section 2 lab: 16

Section 3 lab: 17

Section 4 lab: 16

JOUR 2001W (Newswriting II)

Section 1: 11

JOUR 2065 (Mobile Storytelling)

Section 1: 14

JOUR 2111 (Portfolio I)
Section 1: 9
JOUR 3005 (Online Journalism)
Section 1: 7
JOUR 3030 (The Editor's Craft)
Section 1: 11
JOUR 3035 (Podcasting)
Section 1: 11
JOUR 3040 (Audio & Video Reporting & Writing)
Section 1: 3
JOUR 3045 (Specialized Journalism-Sports Writing)
Section 1: 11
JOUR 3046E (Environmental Journalism)
Section: 1: 15
JOUR 3065 (Visual Journalism)
Section 1: 8
JOUR 3111 (Portfolio II: Content Development)
Section 1: 6
Section 2: 7
JOUR 4091: Internship
Section 1: 1
JOUR 4111 (Portfolio III: Professional Presentation)
Section 1: 13

Spring 2021: *All of these courses are normally in person. Changes were required due to COVID-19.*

Journalism 2000W (Newswriting I)
Lecture: 32 – *lecture distance*
Section 1 lab – 9 – *hybrid/blended*
Section 2 lab – 8 – *hybrid/blended*
Section 3 lab – 15 – *hybrid/blended*
Journalism 2001W (Newswriting II): 13
Section 1 – 5 – *hybrid/blended*
Section 2 – 8 – *distance*
Journalism 2065 (Mobile Storytelling)
Section 1 – 14 – *distance*
Journalism 2111 (Portfolio I): 8
Section 1 – 4 – *distance*
Section 2 – 4 – *distance*
Journalism 3005 (Online Journalism)
Section 1 – 4 – *hybrid/blended*
Journalism 3012W (Feature Writing)
Section 1 – 6 – *hybrid/blended*
Journalism 3030 (The Editor's Craft)
Section 1 – 13 – *distance*
Journalism 3031 (Online & Print News Design)
Section 1 – 7 – *distance*
Journalism 3035 (Introduction to Podcasting)
Section 1 – 16 – *distance*
Journalism 3040 (Audio & Video Reporting & Writing)
Section 1 – 13 – *hybrid/ blended reduced (only in class to get equipment)*
Journalism 3041 (Reporting & Editing TV News)

Section 1 – 12 – *hybrid/ blended reduced (only in class to get equipment)*

Journalism 3065 (Visual Journalism)

Section 1 – 7 – *hybrid/blended*

Journalism 3111 (Portfolio II): 13

Section 1 – 8 – *distance*

Section 2 – 5 – *distance*

Journalism 4091 (Field Internship): 2

Section 1 – 1 – *distance*

Section 2 – 1 – *distance*

Journalism 4111 (Portfolio III): 21

Section 1 – 15 – *distance*

Section 2 – 6 – *distance*

Fall 2020: *All of these courses are normally in-person. Changes were required due to COVID-19.*

Journalism 2000 (Newswriting I) lecture: 35 – *lecture distance*

Section 1 lab – 16 – *in person*

Section 2 lab – 8 – *in person*

Section 3 lab – 11 – *in person*

Journalism 2001(Newswriting II): 17

Section 1 – 8 – *hybrid/blended*

Section 2 – 9 – *distance*

Journalism 2065 (Mobile Storytelling)

Section 1 – 4 – *hybrid/blended*

Journalism 2111 (Portfolio I)

Section 1 – 14 – *distance*

Journalism 3005 (Online Journalism)

Section 1 – 11 – *distance*

Journalism 3030 (The Editor's Craft): 13

Section 1 – 9 – *distance*

Section 2 – 4 – *distance*

Journalism 3035 (Podcasting)

Section 1 – 12 – *hybrid/blended*

Journalism 3040 (Audio & Video Reporting & Writing)

Section 1 – 6 – *hybrid/blended*

Journalism 3045 (Sports Writing)

Section 1 – 10 – *hybrid/blended*

Journalism 3046E (Environmental Journalism)

Section 1 – 13 – *in person*

Journalism 3065 (Visual Journalism)

Section 1 – 8 – *in person*

Journalism 3111 (Portfolio II): 21

Section 1 – 15 – *distance*

Section 2 – 6 – *distance*

Journalism 4016-01 (Publication Practice/Election Coverage)

Section 1 – 5 – *hybrid/blended*

Journalism 4035 (Investigative Reporting)

Section 1 – 8 – *in person*

Journalism 4091 (Supervised Field Internship): 3

Section 1 – 1 – *distance*

Section 2 – 2 – *distance*

Journalism 4111 (Portfolio III): 19

Section 1 – 14 – *distance*

Section 2 – 5 – *distance*

Online Skills Courses: Not Applicable

Spring 2020:

In Spring 2020, the campus shut down in March due to the pandemic and all classes went online

Journalism 2000 (Newswriting I) lecture Storrs: 48

Section 1 lab – 16

Section 2 lab – 16

Section 3 lab – 16

Journalism 2000 (Newswriting I) lecture Avery Point: 14

Section 1 lab – 14

Journalism 2001(Newswriting II) lecture: 22

Section 1 lab – 10

Section 2 lab – 12

Journalism 2111 (Portfolio I): 25

Section 1 – 16

Section 2 – 9

Journalism 3005 (Online Journalism)

Section 1 – 10

Journalism 3030 (Copy Editing)

Section 1 – 16

Journalism 3031 (Online & Print News Design)

Section 1 – 13

Journalism 3040 (Audio & Video Reporting & Writing)

Section 1 – 13

Journalism 3041 (Reporting & Editing TV News)

Section 1 – 10

Journalism 3045 (Sports Writing)

Section 1 – 5

Journalism 3065 (Visual Journalism)

Section 1 – 7

Journalism 3098 (Introduction to Podcasting)

Section 1 – 4

Journalism 3111 (Portfolio II): 20

Section 1 – 9

Section 2 – 11

Journalism 4016-01 (Publication Practice/Community Journalism)

Section 1 – 8

Journalism 4016-02 (Publication Practice/News Program Production)

Section 1 – 8

Journalism 4065 (Advanced Visual Journalism)

Section 1 – 14

Journalism 4111 (Portfolio III): 19

Section 1 – 14

Section 2 – 5

16. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2021-2022 academic year:

Budget for FY22 is \$1.805 M. That is a 2.5 percent decrease from FY21, which is consistent with decreases across the college in response to university-wide losses caused by COVID-19.

Salaries of full-time faculty are budgeted at \$1.485 M in FY22, compared to \$1.483M in FY21, a negligible increase.

Give percentage increase or decrease in three years:

FY20: \$1.643 M +4 %

FY19: \$1.581 M +6 %

FY18: \$1.493 M – 4%

FY17: \$1.553 M

17. List name and rank of all full-time faculty in the accredited unit in Fall 2020. (Full-time faculty refers to those defined as such by the university.) Identify those not teaching because of leaves, sabbaticals, etc.

Fall 2021:

Associate Professor Marie K. Shanahan (department head)

Professor Steven G. Smith

Professor Mike Stanton

Professor-in-Residence Gail MacDonald

Associate Professor-in-Residence Julie Serkosky

Associate Professor Scott Wallace

Assistant Professor Amanda Crawford

Assistant Professor Martine Granby (not teaching, course release)

Instructor-in-Residence Steve Kalb

Spring 2021:

Professor Maureen Croteau (department head)

Professor Steven G. Smith

Professor Mike Stanton

Associate Professor Marie K. Shanahan

Associate Professor Scott Wallace (not teaching; UConn Humanities Institute fellow)

Assistant Professor Amanda Crawford (not teaching; UConn Humanities Institute fellow)

Professor-in-Residence Gail MacDonald

Associate Professor-in-Residence Julie Serkosky

Instructor-in-Residence Steve Kalb

Visiting Instructor-in-Residence Christine Woodside

Fall 2020:

Professor Maureen Croteau (department head)

Professor Steven G. Smith

Professor Mike Stanton

Professor-in-Residence Gail MacDonald

Associate Professor Marie K. Shanahan

Associate Professor-in-Residence Julie Serkosky

Associate Professor Scott Wallace (not teaching; UConn Humanities Institute fellow)

Assistant Professor Amanda Crawford (not teaching; UConn Humanities Institute fellow)

Instructor-in-Residence Steve Kalb

Visiting Instructor-in-Residence Christine Woodside

18. List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in Fall 2020. Also list

names of part-time faculty teaching Spring 2020. (If your school has its accreditation visit in Spring 2021, please provide the Spring 2021 adjunct list in the updated information.)

Fall 2021:

Christine Woodside / freelance journalist, historian (Avery Point, Stamford, Hartford)
 John Ruddy / The Day of New London
 Sean Elliot / The Day of New London
 Carlos Virgen Cruz / The Day of New London
 William Leukhardt / former Hartford Courant reporter

Spring 2021:

John Ruddy / The Day of New London
 Sean Elliot / The Day of New London
 Shoun Hill / AP
 Michael Fountain / ESPN
 Mitchell Pearlman / lawyer
 William Leukhardt / former Hartford Courant reporter

Fall 2020:

John Ruddy / The Day of New London
 Steve Buckheit / ESPN
 Sean Elliot / The Day of New London
 Mitchell Pearlman / lawyer
 Carlos Virgen Cruz / The Day of New London

Spring 2020:

Steve Buckheit / ESPN
 Sean Elliot / The Day of New London
 John Ruddy / The Day of New London
 Greg Stone / Retired, The Day of New London (Avery Point campus)

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	Total Graduates	Number in compliance	Percent
2020-2021 academic year	26	25	96%
2019-2020 academic year	29	29	100%
2018-2019 academic year	50	49	98%

PART II — Standard 1: Mission, Governance and Administration

Overview:

The University of Connecticut is a public land-grant research university based in Storrs, Connecticut, with a student enrollment of 32,669 (2021), 18,917 of whom are undergraduates.

The Journalism Department is part of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS), whose 25 departments include 789 faculty members (including regional campuses) and just less than half (46 percent) of the students at the university. The Journalism Department is one of the smallest departments in the college and the only one that does not have a graduate program.

University management has undergone major changes since the department's last reaccreditation in 2015. It has had two new presidents, with the last stepping down after conflicts with the governing board. It currently has an interim president. CLAS worked under interim deans from 2017 to 2019, when the current dean was appointed.

The Department of Journalism was founded in 1965, although a journalism major was not established until 1979. The unit was first accredited in 2003 and was reaccredited in 2015. It is the only nationally accredited journalism program in New England. The department offers one concentration, in journalism.

The department has a history of remarkably stable leadership. There have been only three department heads in the program's nearly 60-year history. The last chair served for 38 years before retiring in August 2021. The new chair is an alumna of the unit and has been on the faculty for 10 years. Six of the nine current faculty members have been with the department for six years or longer.

The number of journalism majors and pre-majors declined significantly during the reporting period, going from 222 in 2015 to 126 in fall 2021 – a 43% decrease. The number of students graduating from the program dropped accordingly – from 55 in 2015-2016 to 25 in 2020-2021.

The decline in journalism majors was in part offset by enrollment in journalism courses. The unit offers several courses that count for general education credit, and non-journalism majors can enroll in most journalism courses as long as they have the pre-requisites or instructor permission. Overall, enrollment in journalism courses dropped 17.5% during the accrediting period. During the pandemic in fall 2020 and spring 2021, some classes were as small as four students. Enrollment rebounded somewhat for fall 2021, with strong numbers in beginning journalism courses and an additional 10 students declaring majors.

The pandemic has affected the unit in other ways. Throughout spring 2020 and the 2020-2021 academic year, instructors had the option of teaching entirely remotely or teaching in a hybrid modality, with some students in the classroom and others participating remotely. Students also had the option of attending in-person or online. Almost all classes during the 2020-2021 academic year ended up being taught entirely remotely. Students were not required to go into the field to do reporting or capture visuals, although some elected to do so. Equipment was checked out for the entire semester rather than for the usual week at a time. Additionally:

- Implementation of a new dual degree program with the Department of Applied and Resource Economics in the College of Agriculture,
- Health and Natural Resources, developed just before the pandemic, was delayed.
- A weekly student television newscast was cancelled.
- Student reporting was curtailed, including the cancellation of what had been regular coverage of

high school and college sports.

- Some student internships were cancelled, and other internships were converted to remote experiences.
- Sponsorship of a summer program for students interested in investigative journalism was cancelled.
- Recruitment open houses were cancelled and other recruiting efforts were severely curtailed.
- Satisfaction rates dropped on a survey of graduating students that measures the quality of advising and job placement assistance, among other items.
- Efforts to start new student clubs and a professional mentorship program were delayed.
- A new program designed to help journalists around the state update their skills in areas such as use of data and spreadsheets was put on pause.
- A new departmental policy requiring each course be reviewed by a colleague at equal or higher rank each semester was delayed.

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 primary mission of the Journalism Department is to prepare students to become intelligent, responsible and articulate journalists and clear, effective communicators in all forms of media.

The department has long embraced the view that journalism is a multidisciplinary endeavor and that a journalist's education should reflect that. Thus, the unit seeks to combine a strong professional program with a thorough education in the liberal arts and sciences for journalism majors and takes seriously a mission to educate students beyond the major.

The department has a strategic plan that was adopted in 2006 and has undergone multiple revisions. It was last updated in 2020. The plan aligns with college and university goals and establishes priorities ranging from diversity and student support to assessment and faculty hiring. The unit carefully tracks whether goals have been met – and most have, either in part or in whole. Over time, however, the plan has become largely an historical document. The new department head has made it a priority to revisit the plan to make it more forward-looking.

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

The department operates under governance documents that were last updated in 2019. The governance documents are approved by the department faculty and reviewed within the dean's office.

All full-time faculty and staff are invited to participate at regular department meetings, usually held monthly during the school semesters. During the pandemic, meetings were held virtually. Anyone may submit an agenda item.

There are five standing faculty committees: Curriculum and Courses; Admissions; Diversity and Inclusion; Assessment; and Promotion and Tenure. Others, such as committees to oversee awards, equipment and communications efforts, are established as needed. Committees are usually filled by volunteers. The chair of the Curriculum and Courses Committee also serves as the department's delegate to the College Curriculum and Courses Committee. All unit curriculum decisions are made by the faculty as a whole.

c). The unit's administration provides effective leadership within the unit and effectively

represents it in dealings with university administration outside the unit and constituencies external to the university.

The current Journalism Department chair was appointed by the CLAS dean to the position Aug. 23, 2021, after being unanimously recommended by a department search committee. She replaced a faculty member who had been chair for 38 years and who was highly regarded within both the department and the college.

The previous chair was widely admired for her clear direction, decisiveness and support. Faculty said she was an effective advocate for the department and handled many administrative and governing tasks on her own, freeing up faculty to focus on teaching and creative activities.

The new chair is seen within the department as a strong and collaborative leader who understands the program and where the industry is going and will push the unit forward. The faculty is in agreement that new leadership will be invigorating for the department as it tries to rebuild enrollment, keep its curriculum current and put diversity front and center. As one advisory board members said, “She’s the right person for the moment.”

The dean of the college expressed confidence in the department’s leadership, although she said the previous chair, who was in place during the accrediting period, “did everything herself,” making it more challenging for a new person to take over.

External to the university, professional journalists who are members of the department’s advisory board, many of whom have hired student interns or graduates, said the department has a reputation for turning out graduates who are ready for the workforce. They said the program has a long record of producing quality journalists who are equipped with journalism basics (writing, reporting, editing and critical thinking skills) and are prepared with the digital media skills required to succeed in today’s rapidly changing media landscape. They are supportive of the department’s focus on a broad liberal arts education, including dual majors, and believe the new chair, with her multimedia expertise and global perspective, is the right choice for the department. These external constituencies are quick to point to the unit’s standing as the only accredited journalism program in New England and said its small size is, in many ways, an advantage in that students get a high level of personal attention and mentoring.

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

Department chairs within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences are appointed for terms of five years and serve 10-month annual appointments.

Chairs are reviewed annually, along with all other university faculty, as called for in the university’s AAUP collective bargaining agreement.

Once every five years, the college dean conducts a review of each department head, seeking input from faculty, to determine whether the department head should be reappointed. Faculty members also may ask for such a review once every five years if they question whether the department head should remain. Additionally, the dean can conduct such a review at any time if she or he has concerns about the department head’s performance.

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

Students or employees who feel they have been victims of harassment or discrimination, or have witnessed such behavior, may report it to the Office of Institutional Equity. Reports may be anonymous.

The office advises complainants of their rights, investigates and makes a determination. Supervisors, faculty and staff who are told of complaints must notify either OIE or their department head.

Faculty, staff and students are encouraged to bring complaints to the dean of the college. The dean's office investigates, prescribes action as needed, and makes a report to the complainant. If the complainant is not satisfied, he or she may request that a Committee of Three be appointed by the provost to review the complaint.

Additional grievance procedures for faculty members are detailed in the university's AAUP contract. These include specific processes for faculty involved in the promotion and tenure review process.

Grievance procedures for staff members are specified in the University of Connecticut Employees Association contract with the university.

There is a clear and detailed process established by the University Senate for students to make grade appeals. The final determination rests with a college-level faculty Grade Change Review committee.

SUMMARY:

The Department of Journalism has a clear and consistent mission to prepare students for the journalism and communications professions within the construct of a strong liberal arts education. It is well respected within the university and by external constituencies. Its leadership has been remarkably stable for many years, and the new chair appears well positioned to tackle challenges, particularly with regard to declining enrollment. Faculty members actively participate in governance and have avenues for redress of grievances. Goals defined in a long-standing strategic plan have largely been achieved and are in need of updating.

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

PART II — Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

Overview

Students enter their journalism studies as pre-majors and apply to the Journalism Department to become majors, typically mid-way through their sophomore year. The requirement for admittance is at least 39 credits with a GPA of 2.6, although honors students may apply after completing 23 credits. There is a process in place to consider students who do not meet the GPA requirement. A student who is not accepted initially may reapply in subsequent semesters.

About a quarter of all pre-majors begin their studies on branch campuses of the University of Connecticut, where the department offers the required beginning course, “The Press in America,” and occasionally offers beginning newswriting courses.

The required curriculum consists of 30 credits, plus 12 credit hours in a related area outside the department, which can be within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences or any other college on campus as long as approved by the adviser. Students may use a minor, a double major or a dual degree to fulfill the related area requirement.

Students are encouraged to pursue a second major beyond journalism, and 80% are reported to do so. The second major may be within CLAS or another college on campus, such as Business, Agriculture or Fine Arts.

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.

Students must complete 30 hours for a degree in journalism as well as 12 hours in a related area outside the department. The total hours required for graduation is 120 credits. A check of transcripts did not reveal any violation of the 72-hour rule.

In fact, in reporting on the 72 semester credit hours for the self-study, the unit included both journalism credits and the required 12 hours of credits in a related program. Calculating the hours in this way, the unit reported that 96% of graduates in 2020-2021, 100% in 2019-2020, and 98% in 2018-2019 met the 72-hour rule requirement. However, if only journalism courses are counted, the unit is 100 percent in compliance with the 72-hour rule.

Students have access to a university system that tracks their progress toward graduation and meeting the requirements of their major(s). Individual faculty advisers also check to ensure that students are on track to graduate with the appropriate number and distribution of hours.

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

The core journalism curriculum consists of 30 credits, beginning with the introductory “The Press in America” course, which counts as a university general education credit. Students go on to take

beginning and advanced newswriting, journalism ethics, journalism law, an editing course, and a three-part (one credit each) portfolio series. Students select journalism electives for the remaining required 9 hours, at least three of which (one course) must be at the advanced level. A for-credit internship is not required.

The core curriculum has remained largely unchanged since 2015 when a series of portfolio courses and a requirement that students take at least one advanced skills journalism elective were added.

A review of syllabi, as well as interviews with students, alumni and faculty and class observations reveal a balanced curriculum consisting of conceptual and skills courses that help achieve clear student learning goals

Among the three required conceptual courses, “The Press in America” course, which students take as pre-majors, focuses on the history and practice of journalism in this country, with segments on race, class and gender as well as news literacy and partisan bias. The “Journalism Ethics” course introduces students to historical and current ethics cases and helps them develop strategies for reaching ethically sound decisions. The “Journalism Law” course employs case studies and discussions to explore modern media law, including libel, slander, privacy and obscenity, as well as how restrictions on free expression have historically targeted some groups.

In the two required newswriting courses, the emphasis is on reporting and interviewing, clear and concise writing using AP style, news judgment, accuracy and basic numeracy. In addition to basic editing and headline writing, the required editing course covers accuracy and verification, and layout and design for print, web, mobile and social media.

Students also take three electives, most of which are skills-oriented, as well three portfolio classes (described below) that help them develop multimedia, visual and CMS skills.

For such a small unit, the department offers an impressive number of electives, including “Sports Writing,” “Environmental Journalism,” “Investigative Reporting,” “Visual Journalism,” “Mobile Storytelling,” “Public Affairs Reporting,” “Podcasting,” “Audio and Video Reporting & Writing,” “Feature Writing,” “Magazine Writing,” “Reporting and Editing, TV News,” “Design for Digital Journalists” and “Journalism in the Movies.” Elective courses typically are offered once a year.

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 department has updated core courses to include more multimedia instruction and practice and new courses have been added. The core copy editing course was renamed “The Editor’s Craft” and re-cast to include information on verification, search engine optimization, visuals (including data visualizations) and digital (as well as print) design. The required “Newswriting II” course was updated to include a greater emphasis on information verification, social media and visual skills. Much of the multimedia instruction, however, takes place in elective rather than core, required courses.

To ensure students get basic multimedia training, the school revamped its first 1-credit portfolio course to focus on multimedia skills. In the course, students are introduced to WordPress, create video, audio, photo galleries, add hyperlinks and design pages. In the second portfolio course, students add content to their portfolios, receive a critique of their portfolio-in-progress and learn to present themselves

professionally on social media. In the third and final portfolio course, restricted to seniors, students refine the content and appearance of their portfolios and resumes based on their career interests. These final portfolios are used for departmental assessment purposes.

Several elective courses also were updated during this review period. “Newswriting for Radio and Television” was reintroduced as “Audio and Video Reporting and Writing,” with an emphasis on cross-platform applications. A “Publication Practice” course, which previously paired students and faculty to research, write, edit and produce for print publication, now includes options for students to work on a weekly broadcast news show, weekly email newsletters, or documentary filmmaking. The course “Online Print News Design” was renamed “Design for Digital Journalists” with a shift in emphasis from print to digital design.

New elective courses with a multimedia focus include “Podcasting,” “Mobile Storytelling,” “Visual Journalism” and “Advanced Visual Journalism.”

The department is considering further efforts to ensure students have advanced digital skills. One proposal would revamp the required editing course, removing teaching of InDesign and adding what is now taught in an “Online Journalism” elective – specifically, online production, multimedia storytelling, news literacy and audience engagement.

The department makes an effort to get student work published for public consumption. Outlets include local news organizations, the university website and Vimeo platforms, a departmental podcast channel, social media, newsletters and standalone websites.

For example, a “Publication Practice” course project, “Crash Course: Election 2020” targeting first-time voters and college students in Connecticut, was distributed via a newsletter to more than 600 subscribers and shared on social media. Two of the stories were republished by The Connecticut Mirror and the Connecticut Health Investigative Team. Students in a reporting course teamed up with The Day of New London for a series of stories, “Spirit of the City,” about the city’s faith community.

The department hosts a podcast channel that features work from students enrolled in the podcasting course. A student-produced documentary, which was submitted and selected for the 2020 Toronto Lift-Off Film Festival, was featured on a standalone website created for that purpose.

Prior to the pandemic, students in a sports reporting course regularly covered local high school and university sports for publication in the Willimantic Chronicle. Also prior to the pandemic, students produced a weekly student TV newscast uploaded to the department’s website and shared on Vimeo. That class is to be offered again in spring 2022.

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.)

Class sizes are small. The largest course is the pre-major “Press in America” lecture-style course, which typically enrolls from 40 to 90 students.

The required “Newswriting I” course is taught as a combination lecture/lab course, with students attending one lecture a week and then breaking into lab sections for hands-on practice. From fall 2020

through spring 2021, enrollment in the lecture portion of this course ranged from 32 to 45, and no lab section exceeded 16 students.

The department reported that no skills courses exceeded the 20-1 student-teacher ratio during this same time period. Several courses had enrollment as small as four students.

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

The department does not require students to do internships, but it encourages them to do so. Students interested in finding an internship fill out an application that includes a transcript, a letter of intent and an application form and consult an internship page on the department website for local, state and national openings.

Applications are reviewed by two faculty members who serve as internship coordinators; one approves and manages digital and print internships, and the other does the same for broadcast internships. The two frequently work with students to find appropriate internships, and they review resumes, cover letters and choice of work samples and offer interviewing advice.

Once students are placed, they sign a contract agreeing to work 195 hours over the course of the semester, act professionally and meet the requirements of the position. Students may earn 1, 2 or 3 credits for an internship, depending on the total number of hours worked in the internship. Students are allowed a maximum of 3 internship credits.

Students submit weekly reports as well as links to their clips and a final essay reviewing their internship experience. Internship supervisors are asked to evaluate students at mid-semester and at the conclusion of the internship. While the department does not aggregate the numerical scores evaluators give interns, a review of individual student evaluations showed consistently high marks for everything from training and preparation to professionalism and initiative. Most employers said their journalism interns from the University of Connecticut were better prepared than interns they have had from other universities or colleges.

The department has gained an exemption from the university policy that internships are to be graded on a pass-fail basis. Letter grades, the department believes, provide more levers to manage student performance and more flexibility to, for example, downgrade a student for things like occasional tardiness, which may not warrant a failing grade in the course.

Over the review period, students have completed internships at major media outlets such as ESPN, MSNBC, “NBC Nightly News,” “The Today Show,” the Boston NPR affiliate and The Hartford Courant as well as a number of local television and radio stations. Internship credit is not given for work at student media outlets, where they would not benefit from professional supervision.

While the department grants for-credit internships in fall, spring and summer, summer internships, which were once popular, have dropped to almost none – the result of more news organizations declining to pay their interns, combined with the cost (\$1,878) of a three-credit internship. Some students elect to do summer internships for zero credit and a small fee through a program offered by university Career Services, or they complete internships on their own.

The number doing internships for credit is small – fewer than two dozen since 2018. Internship supervisors contacted for this report were positive about the performance of the journalism majors they have supervised. Supervisors said their interns have come to them with a good baseline of skills and are able to quickly pick up new skills, which, as two remarked, is an indicator of a good educational foundation.

“I’m very satisfied with the preparation that UConn students receive through the journalism department,” said one employer. “The interns have been eager to do work; showed extra initiative for assignments; understand the ethics of news reporting and journalism; and meet deadlines. They’ve also been able to express their viewpoints in interactions with fellow colleagues.”

Said another, “One of the strengths from UConn journalism students and recent graduates is that they tend to have well-rounded, practical experience in different media platforms. It’s not unusual for them to have had experience working with audio editing software, for example. This helps in evaluating their potential and learning curve when we review intern applications, for example. Another strength is the interest in investigative reporting and the UConn professors’ emphasis – at least for some stories and projects – on interviewing everyday people outside of the university bubble. I’ve also been encouraged by the diversity of the interns and recent grads from UConn Journalism, and the unique perspectives they bring to the newsroom.”

In terms of improvement, supervisors suggested that students could be stronger in storytelling and narrative development; in digital strategies, such as audience engagement tools and approaches; and in covering communities of color.

Because so few students do for-credit internships, the department has begun using student portfolios to track students’ professional activities as a way to measure whether students are getting adequate professional experience and professional publication.

SUMMARY:

The curriculum is balanced between theoretical and skills courses, with the emphasis on skills development. Most students do double majors and minors, consistent with the unit’s strong liberal arts emphasis. A number of courses have been updated and new courses added in an effort to keep up with digital developments in the reporting and delivery of news and information. Relatively few students do internships for credit, but many do internships on their own, and they have multiple opportunities to gain practical experience and get work published through project-oriented course work. Class sizes are small.

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

PART II — Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The department adopted its diversity plan in 2001-2002 and incorporated it into its strategic plan in 2012. The plan defines diversity thusly: “There are many ways in which people differ, including race, ethnicity, poverty, language, physical and mental health, appearance, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, education and political views.” The journalist’s role is “to listen to the many voices of our world” and tell those stories, the plan adds.

The plan’s goals include diversification of full-time and part-time faculty, the curriculum and the student body. The unit reviews the plan annually and updates goals as needed. The unit has made significant progress since 2014 toward its goal of achieving a racial/ethnic diversity of students at least equal to the diversity of the university overall, with only the percentage of Asian students still lagging the university’s. The unit has made some progress in achieving more racial diversity in its full- and part-time faculty but the diversity of the faculty lags well behind that of the student body..

The department demonstrates a commitment to the importance of covering diverse communities in its required courses. Several courses require students to develop sources and produce journalism that put them outside their comfort zones and student reporting projects frequently have diversity as a theme. For example, students worked with two professors in 2020 to produce a documentary telling the story of undocumented residents in Connecticut and the people who help them.

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 university requires all students to complete at least two general-education diversity courses, one of which must deal with diversity outside the U.S. Rather than institute its own diversity course, the Department of Journalism’s faculty agreed in 2019 to incorporate diversity elements in all of the unit’s core courses, “so that students understand that diversity is central to all that we do, not something a student journalist should consider for a semester and then ignore.” Students told the evaluators that their classes incorporate diversity and inclusion and noted that it is a point of emphasis in reporting classes that students develop diverse sources.

The self-study and some syllabi reflect a commitment to the importance of covering diverse communities. This starts in the earliest course, “The Press In America,” which includes discussion of early female reporters like Nelly Bly; the importance of the Black press, including the anti-lynching

campaign of Ida B. Wells; and newspapers' complicity in U.S. propaganda and support for internment of Japanese-Americans in World War II. In reporting and writing courses, the grading standards for written assignments include an assessment of how diverse a student's sources are. A journalism ethics course advises students to develop their own code of ethics with an "awareness of personal biases, privileges and blind spots." A review of course syllabi showed that some, but not all, contain a diversity statement as well as the university's discrimination and sexual harassment policy and links for reporting harassment and sexual assault.

Faculty say they choose guest speakers and make story assignments with an eye to widening students' appreciation of diversity and its importance in society. In 2020, this included a former executive producer at Persian Voice of America/Radio Free Europe who spoke to two classes about growing up in Iran without a free press, and a deputy editor at ESPN International about covering sports in other countries, especially those with different views about public information. Speakers on domestic diversity and journalism included a Black female investigative reporter from The New York Times, an independent multimedia journalist who covers immigrant communities and deportation issues, and an author of a book showing the relationship between political party affiliation and denial of climate change.

Students are encouraged to create their own diversity plan in early courses and to inculcate the unit's diversity statement: "Journalism requires many skills, one of which is the ability to hear, understand and tell the stories of people who are unlike you. That skill, like others, must be learned and practiced. ... To a journalist, these differences are interesting, not intimidating. It is up to you to choose journalism assignments, courses and experiences that will develop your ability to listen to the many voices of our world."

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.

A woman headed the department for 38 years until her retirement in August 2021. Her successor is a multi-racial woman of Asian descent who has been on the faculty for a decade and until this fall was the only non-white faculty member. Including the department head, the unit's nine-member faculty is 55.5% female as of fall 2021.

The unit had four opportunities to further diversify faculty during the self-study period. Two hires, in 2018-2019 and in 2020-2021, were women, one white and one Black. The Black woman significantly boosted the faculty's racial diversity; as of fall 2021, persons of color now account for 22% of the full-time faculty. The other two hires were white males.

The faculty is diverse in other ways. It includes, for example, a female first-generation college student from Appalachia with expertise in gender issues and a trilingual male environmental journalist who works with the university's Institute of Latino/a, Caribbean and Latin American Studies and has covered indigenous populations in Central and Latin America.

However, administrators, faculty and students recognize the need for further diversity in the faculty ranks. One student commented that she had yet to have a journalism course taught by someone "who looks like me."

The newly hired Black woman doesn't start teaching until spring of 2022 but is on board as she develops the courses she will teach. She was a cluster hire that resulted from a competitive proposal led by the Department of Journalism in partnership with the departments of History and Communications. She has a joint appointment in the university's Africana Studies Institute and is affiliated with the university's Women, Gender and Sexual Studies program, but the Department of Journalism is her tenure home.

Three of the hires since 2016 are tenure-track positions for which the unit conducted national searches, including advertising the openings with organizations and publications aimed at audiences with a high probability of reaching diverse candidates. The fourth full-time position was filled in-house without a search by a white male who had been a long-time part-time broadcast instructor. The department argued for creating the full-time role as a result of the last site team review, which noted that there was no full-time broadcast instructor.

The dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences considers the hiring of the Black woman, a documentary filmmaker, the only "new" hire. She characterized the others as openings created by retirements or departures.

Women made up 43% and 49% of applicants for openings in 2018-2019 and 2020-2021, respectively. Minorities made up 23% of the applicants in the 2018 academic year and 43% in the 2020 year. Two minority candidates were considered in 2018 and four in 2020, and one minority candidate was offered a position – in 2021. Women were offered and accepted positions in both years.

"We've made a conscious effort" to diversify the faculty," one professor said. "We've learned that it takes full-out recruiting. We're in a good spot, but we can be positioned better." He added that mentoring minority students is an important critical step for increased diversity among students and faculty.

The new Black female professor said: "I don't think I'd be here if I didn't feel I had the support of the faculty." It was obvious that the department and the university "had been thinking a lot about DEI work."

What drew her to the university, she said, was the potential for helping the Africana Studies program develop its anti-black racism initiative and the openness of the Journalism Department "to what journalism can be." Another consideration, she said, was that she didn't feel the responsibility for diversity teaching would rest solely on her shoulders.

All of the hires were or recently had been professional journalists, which is the unit's practice.

With regard to adjunct faculty, the self-study says the unit has "so few opportunities to diversify our adjunct staff, that we created two openings for minority instructors whom we recruited informally." One was a Black male photography instructor who ended up being hired full time elsewhere; the other was a Hispanic male who teaches podcasting. The self-study says the unit for many years was able to hire women for these positions, but in 2020-2021 all seven adjuncts were men —four white, two Black and one Hispanic, making the part-time faculty 57% white, 29% Black and 14% Hispanic.

The self-study says the hiring pool for part-time faculty is overwhelmingly white because candidates are drawn from counties within commuting distance of the university. The unit also cites dwindling candidate pools in the area because of the shrinking of the news industry. Except for the intentional hiring of two minority adjuncts, the part-time teaching staff has been unchanged for several years.

The former department head noted that the budget for adjuncts decreased sharply as the university faced financial straits. The unit hires fewer adjuncts than it did six years ago and most of those currently employed have been with the department for more than 10 years.” The exception has been hiring that helped diversify the adjunct faculty, which needed support of the CLAS dean. Over the past six years, the unit has attracted at least five Black or Hispanic adjuncts.

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.

Since 2014, the unit has maintained a percentage of Black students higher than that of the university and comparable to the state college-eligible population. Over the past six years, the percentage of Black students in the journalism program rose from 9.3% to 11%, while the percentage in the university grew from 5.6% to 8%.

The percentage of Hispanic journalism students lagged the university’s from 2014 through 2019, hovering between about 4% and 4.5%, but the unit’s Latino/Latina population jumped dramatically in 2021 to 29%, about 2 points higher than the university and 7 points higher than the state. A faculty member who keeps track of demographic data said the large increase in the percentage of Hispanic students is hard to explain, although it may be partially due to a larger proportion of students reporting their ethnicity than in the past. Another contributor to the increase could be a recent faculty hire’s affiliation with the Latina/Latino and Latin American studies institute, she said.

The percentage of Asian students in the program has remained flat, increasing by less than one point since 2014 to 6% this year, about 13 points lower than the university’s Asian student population and on par with the state. The self-study says the lopsided statistic may be due to the university’s strong recruitment of native Chinese students in the STEM fields.

One student said she was surprised at how much diversity there is among journalism students -- something she didn’t expect coming to a university located in such a rural area.

The self-study attributes some of the unit’s success in diversifying the student body over the review period to the university’s efforts to diversify incoming classes and to the unit’s own outreach efforts to regional campuses and community colleges, which have more diverse student populations than the main campus.

An 8-year-old high school journalism summer camp co-sponsored with the nonprofit Connecticut Health Investigative Team seeks to recruit students of color but could not be held in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions. Similarly, an outreach program to community colleges that offer journalism courses began

in 2019 but was derailed by the pandemic. Both programs are being re-started this academic year.

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.

The Department of Journalism adheres to a university-wide policy that governs harassment and discrimination. Some, but not all, syllabi include those policies and links to report violations. Faculty and staff are required to participate in annual compliance training and in discrimination and harassment training when offered by the university. Faculty and staff also are encouraged to take advantage of other training opportunities at the university and elsewhere. Employees include their participation in annual merit raise reports.

Women and non-white faculty said they are treated with respect and fairness. Students from racial/ethnic minorities say the faculty create a welcoming environment for them. Unit administrators and the CLAS dean reported no harassment or discrimination complaints over the review period.

SUMMARY:

The department, in policy and practice, treats diversity as integral to journalism's mission. The curriculum reflects a commitment to making sure a new generation of journalists has the ability to hear, understand and tell the stories of people and communities different from themselves. The unit's outreach and recruiting efforts for students and faculty make that commitment clear. The diversity of the student body is in most instances better than that of the university and the state. The faculty included one person of color during the review period, but diversity improved this fall when a Black woman joined the faculty, the result of a cluster hire with other units on campus intended specifically to improve diversity.

Overall evaluation, 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/socioeconomic groups of the area's population.

Academic year: 2020 – 2021 Full-time faculty

Group	Female	% of total faculty	Male	% of total faculty
Black/African-American	0	0	0	0
White	5	50%	4	40%
American Indian/Alaskan native	0	0	0	0
Asian	1	10%	0	0
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	0	0	0	0
Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
Two or more races	0	0	0	0
Other race	0	0	0	0
International (any race)	0	0	0	0

Academic year: 2020 – 2021 Part-time/adjunct faculty

Group	Female	% of total faculty	Male	% of total faculty
Black/African-American	0	0	2	29%
White	0	0	4	57%
American Indian/Alaskan native	0	0	0	0
Asian	0	0	0	0
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	0	0	1	14%
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
Two or more races	0	0	0	0
Other race	0	0	0	0
International (any race)	0	0	0	0

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.

UConn's Department of Journalism has two types of full-time faculty: 1) tenure-track and tenured; and 2) non-tenure-track (instructors, visiting and in-residence).

For selecting full-time faculty, the department follows detailed policies and procedures set forth by the University's Office of Institutional Equity. The department's bylaws do not include language about faculty recruitment and/or selection. According to the self-study and the previous unit chair, the department chair is a member of all search committees, typically as committee chair. Other members are chosen from among full-time faculty, sometimes with a member(s) from outside the unit. Committee training, including about diversity, is required. This committee writes the job description and the advertisement and devises the ad strategy. Typical advertising is with leading mass communications websites and organizations, such as AEJMC and Poynter, as well as diverse organizations, such as the National Association of Hispanic Journalists and the Association of LGBTQ Journalists. Applicant pools do not move forward in the process until they are adequately diverse. After screening interviews with applicants who meet minimum requirements, the search committee chooses finalists for campus visits. Since the department chair is typically the committee chair, this person forwards the choices, which require approval by the college's associate dean for diversity, the dean, the Office of Institutional Equity, the Human Resources Department, and the provost.

The unit brings finalists to campus for a day-long visit and a presentation. Since the pandemic, visits, which include a departmental tour, have been virtual. Each finalist meets with the department head, the search committee and a gathering of all department faculty. The search committee uses the stated minimum and preferred requirements to rank the candidates and select the top choice. Previously mentioned administration approval is required before an offer can be made.

The unit had two full-time faculty searches in 2020-2021: one internal to replace the outgoing department head who served for 38 years, and the second external for a tenure-track assistant professor specializing in documentary journalism.

The internal search committee for the department chair was chaired by a journalism full professor and included all full-time unit faculty (except the outgoing chair). It included two external people: the chair from the communications department (with full voting rights); and a college associate dean (without voting rights). It began as an internal-only search that could have transitioned to an external search if there was no suitable internal candidate. Only one faculty member (the current chair) applied for the position and was interviewed. Besides participating in two interviews, the candidate held a virtual, public presentation for community members, faculty, college administration and students about her vision for the department.

The second, external faculty search in 2020-2021 was considered unique because it was part of a diversity cluster hire. The committee was chaired by a full-time faculty member and included three other journalism faculty members, one of the college institutes (El Instituto) and a representative of the Department of Digital Media and Design in the College of Fine Arts with expertise in documentaries. That search had 23 total applicants, of which 11 were female and 10 were minorities. Five females, four of them minorities, were considered, with an African-American female being hired.

If an “emergency” faculty hire is required, non-tenure-track, temporary faculty are hired through an expedited process called an “audit search.” This occurred in 2020-2021 to cover teaching responsibilities for two faculty who earned UConn research fellowships. The final hire requires the approval of the college’s associate dean for diversity, the dean, the Office of Institutional Equity, Human Resources, and the provost.

The self-study notes that “the university does not specify a particular process for hiring adjuncts” (part-time faculty) and the unit’s bylaws do not outline a process. Because of this flexibility, the unit says it uses adjunct hiring to diversify its teaching faculty.

Policies for evaluating tenure-track faculty and non-tenure-track faculty are outlined in the unit’s bylaws and on the provost website. For tenure-track faculty, the department chair is to meet once a year to discuss scholarship, teaching and professional activities. There is a seven-year probation period for new tenure-track hires; a shorter period is negotiable for incoming faculty with previous experience in a tenure-track position.

Departmental bylaws outline criteria for tenure-track faculty regarding acceptable scholarly publications: “They are expected to publish well-written, well-researched journalism or work that advances the knowledge or practice of journalism.” For non-tenure-track faculty, the department chair meets annually to review performance. Non-tenure-track faculty are on year-by-year contracts until the seventh year, when they must complete the same process for promotion and tenure as tenure-track faculty.

Written criteria for evaluating teaching are in the unit’s bylaws for non-tenure-track faculty and for promotion from associate to full professor, but such criteria do not exist in the bylaws for tenure-track faculty. The faculty annual report form and the promotion, tenure and reappointment form include sections for student evaluations of teaching (SETs), innovations, and academic advising (since faculty serve as advisers to students). In early spring 2020, just before the pandemic, the university mandated that departments create what is called the SET+ policy. It has rubric-based criteria for evaluating teaching and details on collecting and archiving teaching portfolios from all full-time faculty annually. These include student evaluations, professional development and mandated peer observations. The unit does not have written criteria for evaluating adjunct instructors, although the recent previous chair says SET scores were used.

The unit does not appear to have written criteria for evaluating faculty service, although service is a major category on both the annual report form and the university’s promotion, tenure and reappointment form. The former department chair says criteria for service are not well defined but that it is expected service should increase with faculty rank.

According to the provost's website, tenure- and non-tenure-track faculty both use the same form for promotion and tenure, if applicable. For a tenure-track faculty member, the process includes reviews, recommendations and votes from the departmental committee, department head, dean's advisory council and dean. The department head and dean may meet with the provost to discuss a case. The provost makes a recommendation to the university president, who then makes a recommendation to the university's Board of Trustees for final approval. According to the department's bylaws for non-tenure-track faculty, the departmental committee makes a recommendation to the department chair, who then makes a recommendation to the dean, who decides the case. Faculty members are kept informed of the process and have opportunities at every step to discuss substantive negative findings.

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

The department takes teaching very seriously, as reflected in the first sentence of its mission statement, "to prepare students to become intelligent, responsible and articulate journalists, and clear communicators in all forms of media."

The unit reports that 63% to 79.2% of courses from fall 2018 through spring 2021 were taught by full-time faculty members. These figures count journalism teaching at all UConn campuses. According to the unit chair, about 90% of all journalism instruction takes place on the main campus.

Teaching loads are set by units rather than by the university and vary by appointment and activity level, according to the department's teaching load policy, which was last updated in May 2020. A course is considered a class section worth three credits per regular (fall/spring) semester; team-teaching takes a fraction of that. Tenure-track faculty recommended for another year during their probationary period teach two courses per semester. Faculty not engaged in research teach three courses per semester. In-residence faculty (who have 100% teaching responsibilities) teach seven courses per academic year, but are eligible for course releases for research, significant service or outreach activities and/or course development.

Full-time faculty with publication expectations (full, associate and tenure-track assistant professors) produced 93% (138 out of 149) of the unit's total research/creative activity, not counting awards, honors and grants.

Tenured and tenure-track faculty are expected to engage in various types of service as detailed on their annual report form, such as departmental/college/university service, membership in professional and voluntary organizations, and community service. In-residence and visiting faculty do not have service expectations. All faculty, including in-residence faculty, serve on departmental committees. During the review period, department faculty served on a number of college and university committees, including the University Senate, the board for student media, and the college dean's Tenure Advisory Committee, which reviews and makes recommendations on tenure cases.

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.

Full-time faculty pride themselves on their extensive professional journalism experience, which ranges from 12 to 41 years. The average is about 27 years. For the 10 faculty members listed for spring 2021, nine had earned master's degrees and one had earned a bachelor's degree. Part-time (adjunct) faculty members and the one visiting full-time faculty member also have dozens of years of professional experience. No faculty member holds an earned Ph.D., and there is no scholarly work for an academic audience.

The unit has its own full-time instructional developer who conducts personalized and small-group faculty training for relevant software. Faculty also may attend software and instructional training at the UConn Institute for Teaching and Learning. Many faculty have taken advantage of professional development opportunities through the Poynter Institute and graduate courses in media production, among others. Faculty members belong to relevant professional organizations, such as the Society of Professional Journalists and the Online News Association, and one is a member of AEJMC.

Teaching faculty at all levels, including visiting and adjunct instructors, have won awards for high-quality teaching and/or been given grants and other support for curriculum development.

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

All full-time faculty, including tenure-track, tenured and in-residence (the latter with only teaching responsibilities), complete annual reports and review them with the unit chair. Student Evaluations of Teaching (SETs) are primary to this, and are mandated and administered by the university. A new "SET+" policy mandates annual teaching portfolios with SETs, professional development, a statement on teaching and peer observations. Faculty with exceptionally high SET scores receive a congratulatory letter from the provost.

According to the previous chair, adjunct faculty are primarily evaluated by SETs which are reviewed by the chair and provost. Adjuncts with high SET scores also receive a provost letter; those with low SET scores receive a letter suggesting UConn teaching resources for improvement and are monitored by the department the next time they teach. If evaluation scores do not improve, they are not asked to return.

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

Within the university, the department is seen as pulling well above its weight. More than a dozen faculty members from other departments reported that the journalism faculty has a reputation on campus for interdisciplinary collaboration and for a high level of expertise in their fields. Journalism faculty, one said, "are doing some of the best work in the college." Several commented on the range and quality of journalism's contributions to the university, which they said is especially remarkable given the small size of the unit. They said they welcome journalism students in their own classes, where they are "invaluable" as leaders and exemplars of both writing skills and the ability to "make order out of chaos."

The dean of the college described the journalism program as a "gem" with a faculty that is sought after for its ability to provide an "applied perspective" on a wide range of issues being studied and taught at

the university and whose professional work is admired. She commended the faculty, in particular, for nurturing students and giving them individualized attention.

A member of the site team visited a beginning newswriting course to find students questioning university officials about COVID measures for an assignment. The officials included the president of the university and the athletic director – an indication of the attention the department receives within the university.

SUMMARY:

The unit prides itself on its professionally oriented and experienced faculty, which, conversely, means no faculty have scholarly credentials, experience or aspirations. The unit adheres to, and is familiar with, university hiring policies and procedures. The unit has written criteria for almost all relevant faculty groups, but it had none for evaluating tenure-track faculty teaching until a year ago when the new university-wide policy mandating teaching portfolios and evaluation rubrics was instituted. No written criteria exist for evaluating faculty service or adjunct instructors. Full-time unit faculty have taught the vast majority of core and required classes for the past three years. Teaching loads and the use of student course evaluations are determined by written policy and are within best practices.

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

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The department requires tenure-track faculty – and expects tenured faculty – to “publish journalism, or articles, books or digital work about journalism for a professional audience.” In-residence faculty are not required to publish, but almost all do. There is no expectation of scholarly publication.

Eight full-time faculty members have earned master’s degrees and one has earned a bachelor’s degree, so the emphasis is on professional, not academic, scholarship. During the review period, 10 faculty members (five tenured, two untenured and three in-residence) published 151 pieces of professional activity, including 129 newspaper/magazine stories, eight books, five awards, and 39 grants (six external). A professor authored one refereed journal article.

The unit actively supports professional activity. New faculty members typically receive \$10,000 in startup funds over the five-year probationary period; the most recent hire in documentary journalism received four times that for startup and equipment. The provost’s office provides funding for conference travel and projects, and a new fund will generate \$24,000 annually for faculty and student research—called a “game changer” by the department.

Faculty receive reduced teaching loads to complete projects. An associate professor (who was promoted to full professor just before retirement) was co-PI with two UConn biologists on a three-year, \$500,000 grant with the National Science Foundation researching better science communication with STEM graduates. The unit supported him with reduced teaching loads and allowing trial courses, including initial co-taught courses that were counted as full courses. The unit’s full-time instructional designer was asked to help out, and computer and media labs were made available to participating faculty and students. A small portion of the grant came back to the unit, which was invested in lab support and to pay for some science journalism research projects.

In 2020-2021, two tenure-track faculty members each earned internal University of Connecticut fellowships with one-year leaves for book projects, a tenured associate professor earned a Fulbright Fellowship to the Philippines (COVID-delayed), and a full professor was given a course reduction to take a Boston Globe Spotlight Fellowship (the first ever awarded to a journalism program faculty member).

The College granted two faculty members sabbaticals: one for a book project and the other for the previously mentioned Fulbright Fellowship (which, under a new policy, will not require a sabbatical, so that faculty member may request another later). Almost all faculty received awards and funding to support professional activity and teaching, with three faculty members each receiving in excess of \$10,000 during the review period.

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

Faculty are hired through a process defined by the university and the American Association of University Professors that include national searches advertised in typical online mass communication job listings, such as AEJMC, the Chronicle of Higher Education, and the National Association of Black Journalists. Job ads from 2017, 2018 and 2021 include clear publication expectations.

The department's promotion and tenure guidelines say that new tenure-track faculty members receive publication expectations in writing when hired and that the department chair meets with them annually to review progress. That document also includes publication standards: "well-written, well-researched journalism or work that advances the knowledge or practice of journalism. Publications may include books, articles in newspapers, magazines, subscription trade publications or journals, articles and other productions in online publications, broadcast journalism, and documentaries. Publication in academic journals is also acceptable." The standards do not mention other types of academic publishing outlets (e.g., monographs).

All faculty members are expected to complete annual reports, which are then reviewed and discussed in an annual meeting with the department chair. Non-tenure track faculty (i.e., lecturers and in-residence) are not expected to publish, although many do.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the provost's office allows anyone who was on tenure-track during the 2019-2020 academic year to request a one-year extension to their probationary tenure clock.

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

Department bylaws regarding scholarship say the promotion and tenure committee take several criteria into consideration, including the work's complexity, research quality and publication outlet (which are discussed extensively; there is no mention of academic journals).

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.

Tenured and tenure-track faculty are expected to publish, while non-tenure track faculty (e.g., in-residence) are not; however, many do.

Nearly all of the creative/professional activity by faculty is journalism aimed at a general audience and not scholars, educators or practitioners. A few faculty have published in outlets such as Nieman Journalism Lab, Chronicle of Higher Education, and Columbia Journalism Review, with one of those faculty members publishing a book on digital discourse. Work for general audiences included some national outlets (e.g., National Geographic and High Times) and many regional outlets (e.g., The Hartford Courant), as well as photo exhibitions at various Midwest museums and in Los Angeles. Almost all faculty participated in local and/or regional presentations to general audiences.

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

Faculty said the climate of the department and the college is conducive to questioning and free expression. They said they have frequent opportunities to provide input and their views are valued. Disagreements are handled respectfully, and there appears to be a high level of congeniality among faculty members.

During class visits, students were engaged and frequently spoke up to offer their views or ask questions without being urged to do so. Those attending a student session with the site team said they feel challenged by their professors but, even more so, they feel supported. As one student said, “These professors are unlike any others I’ve had (outside the department). They truly care about you and will do everything they can to help you.”

SUMMARY:

Faculty are expected to publish for a general audience; there is no expectation of scholarly publication. Faculty have produced an impressive amount of professional journalism, with most being newspaper and magazine articles. Expectations regarding publication are clear for hiring and for promotion and tenure. The unit provides generous support for professional scholarship and for faculty pursuing fellowships and awards. The environment encourages free discourse and intellectual engagement.

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

Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activities	Total from Unit*	Individuals				
		Full Professors (4 during this period)	Associate Professors(2)	Assistant Professors(1)	Other Faculty**(3) Lecturer-in-residence, associate professor-in-residence, professor-in-residence.	Totals (10) Includes one professor who has since retired
Awards and Honors	5	3	2			5
Grants Received Internal	33	3	17	4	9	33
Grants Received External	6	2	1		3	6
Scholarly Books, Sole- orCo-authored	8	5	1		2	8
Textbooks, Sole- orCo-authored	0					0
Books Edited	0					0
Book Chapters	1	1				1
Monographs	0					0
Articles in Refereed Journals	1	1				1
Refereed Conference Papers	0					0
Invited Academic Papers	0					0
Encyclopedia Entries	0					0
Book Reviews	0					0
Articles in Non-refereed Publications***	129	75	43	2	9	129
Juried Creative Works	0					0
Non-juried Creative Works	4		1	3		4
Other (please specify) Play adaptation of book	1	1				1
Photojournalism exhibits	4	2	2			4
Documentary video	3	2	1			3
TOTAL	195	95	68	9	23	195

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.

Pre-majors are advised by a staff member who meets individually with them, advises them about department requirements, and helps them prepare a plan of study. When admitted to the major, students are assigned a faculty adviser with whom they must meet and complete a plan of study before registration. Students are encouraged to meet one-on-one with faculty before registering for each subsequent semester in case of problems with study plans, but even before COVID-19, these were often done via email if no significant issues were evident.

Departmental surveys of graduates consistently show high or very high ratings of advising quality (77% in AY 2019), although the percentage of high and very high ratings dipped to 73% during the AY 2020 COVID-19 semesters when the university was operating hybrid classes. In interviews, students gave high marks for the quality of advising, both academic and career-related. One student, an independent studies major, said that of her three advisers, the journalism faculty adviser is the one most concerned about her personally. Complaints about advising are rare: there were three in the past six years, all involving credits and handled at the departmental level.

Faculty also offer students career guidance and help finding internships. The department keeps students apprised of job openings and internships through emails, its website and other forms of notice. Students told the site team that although internships are not required, faculty push them to obtain internships and provide guidance in finding opportunities.

The unit also works with the university's Career Services Department to provide resume instruction and critiques of resumes as well as mock interview experiences.

Among 2019 graduates, 71% reported being employed and 21% reported continuing education. That compared to 54% employment and 33% continuing education for College of Liberal Arts and Sciences graduates.

b). Faculty are available and accessible to students.

Faculty are available and accessible. Students are enthusiastic about the accessibility of faculty members and their commitment to student success. "They're so dedicated and want to help us a lot," said one student. Students said professors were accommodating and flexible during the pandemic. About the faculty generally, one student said they showed "a level of personal caring I never thought I'd experience in college." Students also said faculty are quick to provide them with recommendations for jobs when asked.

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

The department keeps advising materials on its website. Faculty also are encouraged, but are not required, to keep individual student advising records on the university's recently adopted proprietary advising platform. One faculty member said that a separate system run by the registrar allows students and their advisers to keep track of their interactions and progress toward graduation. That system trumps paper records or the new advising platform, he said.

The unit uses an email list to inform students about speakers and other program activities in addition to jobs and internships. Twitter, the department's website and printed material also keep students informed. Students said they are given packets of information about internship openings.

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

The student newspaper, radio and TV stations – The Daily Campus, WHUS-FM and UCTV – operate independently of the department and are completely student-run. Faculty and students estimate about 80% of journalism majors work for at least one of those outlets. Students said they often apply what they learn in class directly to their work for student media.

The unit has made no progress since the last site visit in establishing student chapters of major journalism organizations, such as the Society of Professional Journalists, National Association of Black Journalists, National Association of Hispanic Journalists or Asian-American Journalists Association. It did revive a chapter of the Radio Television Digital News Association. In its diversity plan, the unit notes that until recently its student population has been too small to support an AAJA or NAHJ chapter and that Connecticut no longer has an NABJ chapter. The Boston NABJ chapter president has offered to work with UCONN students, and an alumnus has met with students to encourage formation of a chapter. The new department head, an SPJ member, plans to revive a student SPJ chapter, noting that other, smaller state universities have them.

Regardless, students reported that faculty encourage them to join national journalism organizations, including IRE, and to attend conferences, which they said they do. The unit maintains a list of professional organizations on its website with dues and other membership information and encourages students to join.

Internships are not required but are strongly encouraged. The unit offers up to three credits per semester for internships that meet its requirements. Students said they avoid these supervised internships because they have to pay for those credit hours, so they often seek internships outside of the school's direct oversight. The faculty internship adviser acknowledged that weakness but said colleagues do refer students to her for consultation regarding programs, like the Dow Jones News Fund, that she works with.

e). The accredited unit must gather, maintain and analyze enrollment, retention, graduation rates and other aggregate information for improving student services and reducing barriers to student

success. The unit annually publishes retention and graduation information on its website.

The unit regularly publishes graduation information on its website. Of 54 students admitted in 2016-2017, the unit reported 98% graduated from UCONN, compared with an 83% rate for the university overall. Of the 53 graduates, 92% graduated as journalism majors and 80% completed a second degree.

Minority retention among declared majors is high. For example, only 1.7% of declared majors who were Black or Hispanic failed to graduate with the 2016-2017 class, either because they left the university or graduated in other majors. The percentage of Black/Hispanic journalism majors who didn't graduate in 2020 and 2021 crept upward to 3% in both years, but the pool of graduates was much smaller (29 and 25, respectively).

SUMMARY:

The unit provides strong academic advising and suitable career advising for students. Faculty and the department administration demonstrate commitment to helping students succeed. Students were effusive in their praise of faculty for their personal care, willingness to share expertise and career advice. The unit could benefit from the creation of more student journalism organizations, but students said their access to work experience at independent student media and conferences of professional organizations helps with networking.

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

PART II — Standard 7: Resources, Facilities and Equipment

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

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences determines an annual budget for the Journalism Department that includes salaries and basic operating expenses. That budget was \$1.796 million in 2021, up from \$1.3 million at the end of the last review period, an increase of 27%, despite a decline in number of majors and enrollment.

The increase can be attributed to salaries – in particular, contractual salary increases and benefits for full-time employees as negotiated by employee unions. Overall, salaries represent more than 80% of the budget.

The department is allocated a small amount each year for general operations, such as supplies and travel. This allocation has remained steady at about \$13,000 each year of the review period. The college also provides annual funding for temporary labor, such as paying adjuncts and student workers. That funding totaled about \$46,000 in the current fiscal year, about half of what it was at the beginning of the review period. The drop was due in part to less demand for adjuncts as enrollment has dropped.

The department relies on its own fundraising to cover a range of expenses, including some faculty projects, events and special equipment purchases. It currently has about \$40,000 in un-endowed funds and \$1.35 million in endowed funds.

About half of the spin-off from endowed funds supports scholarships and about half is available to meet current needs as determined by the department. The department has used these funds to purchase equipment, such as high-end video cameras, a drone and microphones for student use; to augment grant money for faculty projects; and to bring in speakers and host events. In addition, the department gets a small percentage return on summer school revenues, typically about \$2,000 a year, which is used to augment the operating budget.

Endowed funds grew by almost half recently as the result of an estate gift from an alumnus. The spin-off from that endowment gives the department an extra \$24,000 to \$25,000 a year in discretionary spending – a significant amount when considering the size of the operating budget.

The unit's strategic plan identifies additional faculty and a new building with current technology as its most important budgetary need. Because those needs have been largely met, the unit is in the process of updating its strategic plan to identify new spending goals.

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

The University of Connecticut, like most state schools, has faced budget problems caused by decreased state support over time. It faces a projected deficit of \$76 million for fiscal year 2021, of which it hopes about \$28 million will be offset by a one-time COVID bridge allocation from the state legislature and a wave of employee retirements, spurred by a new retirement package. Complicating the budget situation

is the fact that contracts for the university's two major labor unions – AAUP and the UConn Professional Employees Union – expired this past summer and have not yet been resolved.

Despite the pandemic and a decline in the number of international students, enrollment university-wide rose slightly in 2020, spurred by strong numbers at the regional campuses, especially among first-year students. In fall 2021, the university enrolled its largest ever incoming class of first-year students.

The university has reduced budgets to colleges by 1 to 2 percent a year and expects that level of cuts to continue for the next several years. As described above, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has reduced support to departments in response, but rather than employing across-the-board cuts, college administrators have made cuts commensurate with the size and resources of departments. According to the dean of the college, there is a recognition that because journalism is a small department with a small operating budget it does not have as much flexibility as other departments, and, therefore, it has not been cut as much as other units within the college. Several positions that came open during the review period were filled, and the number of faculty remained unchanged.

The college has supported the Journalism Department in other ways. For example, when the department lost a part-time academic adviser in 2018, the college assigned responsibility for advising journalism pre-majors to one of its staff members. That person works in the Journalism Department once or twice a week. The college also provides funds to maintain and update faculty and lab computers and to purchase major studio equipment. Computer labs are updated about every three years.

The department reports in its self-study that it is satisfied with the support and resources it has received from the college, although there is concern that reductions in college-level support for adjuncts and to fill temporary vacancies could become increasingly problematic as enrollment in courses begins to grow.

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

Since 2012, the department has been housed in Oak Hall, a building designed in part with the needs of the journalism department in mind. Journalism shares the fourth floor with the Department of Political Science.

The space includes a reception area, administrative and individual faculty offices, conference room, kitchen, equipment room and two small breakout rooms for student use. A separate office is set aside for adjunct faculty use.

Skills courses are taught in two labs equipped with teaching stations and 16 Mac computers each for student use. A video studio has a green screen, two teleprompters, two Sony cameras, a large monitor and lighting. A third camera, typically used for field reporting, is brought in when students are recording newscasts. The studio is connected to a control room with a TriCaster video switcher and several editing stations.

The space allotted to the department also has a small photo studio with lights and backdrops that was converted from an office and a sound studio with sound proofing and external mics. The “Publication Practice” classes use a small multimedia studio as a newsroom for collaborations on special reporting projects or documentaries. It is equipped with five workstations.

Classrooms, other than labs, are assigned by the university registrar's office. About 90 percent of all journalism classes are taught in Oak Hall. They range from lecture halls to smaller seminar-style classrooms.

Students have access to the building 24-7 and access to labs and studios during business hours.

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.

Mac computers in the departments' two labs are up-to-date with the Adobe Creative Suite. All the Macs have been replaced within the past two years.

Students check out equipment for class use for a week at a time. During the past year, when many students were studying remotely, they were able to check out equipment for the entire semester. Equipment includes 10 Canon Camcorder kits, seven Orca camera kits and nine DSLR kits, eight podcasting recorders, 15 various types of microphones, 21 mini tripods and 25 full-sized tripods.

Students interviewed were satisfied with the range and availability of equipment and said the department works to ensure that equipment is equitably distributed.

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

The department displays textbooks, journalism monographs and other material in its conference room, but students and faculty primarily utilize the university library for resource materials. A librarian is specifically assigned to assist the department, and he has frequently visited classes to share information about data resources and other materials available to students.

SUMMARY:

Space allocated to the department is modern, well-kept and adequate to its needs. Technology is up to date and students have access to sufficient equipment. While the department has absorbed some budget cuts, they have been commensurate with its size and resources, and the college has provided support in other ways, including advising and technology. The size of the faculty has not been affected, despite a decline in the number of students. The department has had some success raising outside funds to support special initiatives and projects.

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

PART II — Standard 8: Professional and Public Service

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

Alumni contacted for this report enthusiastically commend the school's faculty for their support and professional counsel. They confirmed that the unit communicates regularly with them via an annual newsletter, a dedicated Facebook page (800+ followers) and Twitter (2,000+ followers). The Twitter account seems most active and includes updates about internships, jobs, journalism, students and alumni. The department's website contains short profiles of alumni along with other information relevant to alumni.

Alumni stay involved with the department, many through direct contact with professors and staff and through speaking engagements in classes. Recent speakers include Sabrina Herrera of the Hartford Courant, Daniela Marulanda of ESPN, Charlie Smart of The New York Times' graphics team, Cheyenne Haslett of ABC News and Annie Pancak of Law360. Alumni also participate in a "Careers in Media Night" sponsored by UCONN's Department of Career Services. Several professors continue to mentor graduates years after they land their first jobs.

Eight of the 13 members of the unit's Professional Advisory Committee are alumni. The role of the committee, in the words of one member, is largely to help the department assess how well prepared students are for the professional world. Committee members evaluate a sampling of the portfolios of graduating seniors each year and assess whether students demonstrate the skills required for entry-level jobs as journalists. One committee member said almost all the students he has evaluated meet that level of competence, and many exceed it. "What keeps me engaged is the department does a great job teaching kids the fundamentals of journalism," another member said.

A couple of advisory group members want the committee to be involved beyond the assessments. One said he plans to meet with the new department head to discuss ways to "invigorate" the advisory committee.

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

In 2019-2020, the unit created an advisory board of state news executives to help plan programs for their newsrooms that would align with needs and budgets. The initiative also helped inform the unit's strategic planning by revealing what state media see as priorities. The effort produced two workshops on data journalism before newsrooms shuttered due to the pandemic. During the pandemic, the unit sponsored an online workshop with the DART Center on the personal toll on journalists covering the pandemic. The unit plans to reconvene this advisory group in 2021-2022.

Faculty have served as judges of journalistic work for the Sigma Delta Chi Awards, Online Journalism Awards, National Press Photographers Association, Eppy Awards and Livingston Awards. In addition, they have been speakers at local, national and international gatherings on the role of the press and the First Amendment.

Faculty also serve as directors on the boards of such nonprofits as the New England First Amendment Coalition, ecoRI News, CTMirror.org, the Connecticut Foundation for Open Government, and the Connecticut Health Investigative Team.

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 are involved in professional and academic organizations, including Asian American Journalists Association, Online Journalism Association, Investigative Reporters & Editors, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Journalism and Women's Symposium, National Press Photographers Association, Society of Environmental Journalists, Overseas Press Club and Explorers Club, Society of Professional Journalists, New York Press Club, College Media Association, and Radio Television Digital News Association. A recently created endowed fund by an alumnus will generate annual revenue that will be used in part to support faculty membership in such organizations, the new department head said.

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 unit touts multimedia publications produced with students as its signature public service. Among the projects produced since the last review:

- A 2016 report by an "Environmental Journalism" class that traveled to Louisiana to examine its post-Hurricane Katrina landscape, the long-term effects of the BP Oil spill, and the state's disappearing coastline.
- A 2016 report by students in an advanced "Publication Practice" class and three faculty members that examined the difficulties families in Hartford face getting nutritious food.
- A 2020 website and weekly newsletter and accompanying podcast for first-time voters produced by "Publication Practice" students.
- A weekly newsletter of top Connecticut news published from 2017-2019 that also had an accompanying podcast, which continues today.
- A 2020 short documentary film about undocumented immigrants in Connecticut and the activists who help them, produced by "Publication Practice" students and two faculty members. The film was selected for the Toronto Lift-Off Film Festival and was a Hearst Award finalist.
- A 2020 project about faith communities and social change affected by demographic shifts in New London, Connecticut. The pandemic short-circuited a planned written and visual package for publication in The Day of New London. Although students were unable to complete the visual part of the project, some worked through the summer to produce a series of stories published in October 2020.

This fall, two faculty members are leading a student FOI project in coordination with the New England First Amendment Coalition (NEFAC). Students in a "Newswriting I" class and a "Journalism Law" class are submitting public record requests to 85 police departments in Connecticut, Rhode Island and

Massachusetts. “There have been issues regionally about police departments not releasing arrest narratives, so our project seeks to quantify agency compliance. NEFAC will be publishing the results,” one of the project leaders said.

The department frequently partners with other departments and institutes to sponsor speakers on topics such as the environment and human rights. In 2018, it co-sponsored a university-wide event proposed, organized and moderated by Associate Professor (now department head) Marie Shanahan. The panel, “Confronting Racism as Journalists,” featured minority journalists from The Washington Post, the Philadelphia Daily News and NBC Asian America.

Each holiday season, the department works with local social services agencies to provide a family with holiday gifts.

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

The unit hosts a one-week residential journalism camp for high school students each summer in tandem with the nonprofit Connecticut Health Investigative Team. High school journalists report and write each day with guidance from professionals. In an effort to increase outreach, two faculty members joined the Journalism Education Association and contacted Connecticut teachers who are members. COVID-19 caused the camp to be cancelled in 2020 and 2021. The unit expects to resume the workshop in 2021-2022.

Faculty also are called on to speak at high schools and middle schools.

SUMMARY:

The unit contributes to the profession and the community through alumni and professionalities. Alumni engagement is high, if not organized. Alumni expressed strong support for the department’s commitment to training in journalism basics while exposing students to a variety of platforms and ways of storytelling. Faculty are involved in their communities as speakers at public events, service on boards and volunteer work. With students, faculty have produced exemplary work for publication by area newspapers and online outlets.

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

PART II — Standard 9: Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

• Who is in charge of the assessment program (e.g., administrator, sequence coordinator or faculty committee)?

For almost all of the review period, the department chair (who just stepped down after 38 years) and an emeritus journalism faculty member (who retired in 2017 after 28 years) handled assessment. In spring 2019, an associate professor in-residence was named assessment coordinator and given a course release for this service.

• How has the unit verified that core and required courses cover all 12 of ACEJMC’s professional values and competencies?

The unit did not present a curriculum map mapping courses to learning outcomes and/or the 12 ACEJMC professional values and competencies. In discussing curriculum, the self-study lists each of the 12 ACEJMC values and competencies and the courses in which students would encounter them: for example, that the unit’s Diversity Plan incorporates diversity into all courses and that the topic of ethics is covered in the introductory newswriting course and a standalone ethics course.

The written assessment plan gives the 12 PV&Cs as goals that are addressed in part by the one direct measure, a portfolio assessment. The one indirect measure provided was a survey of recent graduates.

The one direct measure in the assessment plan, a portfolio assessment, assesses eight unit-created categories that are medium-oriented (e.g., still photo, video, audio). Each has multiple evaluative questions like, for still photo, “Is composition good?” and for resume, “Is work history complete?” and a scored rubric (except diversity, which has only one question):

- Written journalism
- Still photography
- Video
- Audio
- Slide shows
- WordPress use
- Resumes
- diversity

A generous mapping finds correspondence with seven of the 12 PV&Cs. The five with no measures and no mention in the rubrics are:

- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions.
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles.
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others.
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.

One of the assessment plan’s indirect measures, a survey of recent graduates, used scaled questions about all 12 PV&Cs (collapsing diversity into one question) except writing.

• How has the unit ensured that the syllabuses for these courses state learning outcomes that address the values and competencies appropriate for each course?

Syllabi review for learning outcomes is not mentioned in the assessment plan, the self-study or any of the questions or requested materials received by the site team (of which there were many regarding assessment, including the three completed portfolio reports and several narratives). A check of syllabi found inconsistent listing of learning outcomes.

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

The unit has a written assessment plan that was approved just before the last accreditation visit in fall 2014 and mentions a new portfolio review assessment tool. The plan appears not to have been revised since then. Faculty meeting minutes show discussion about “fine-tuning” the new portfolio review rubric in fall 2017, the first time a review was completed.

• What direct measures of assessment does the unit use, where in the curriculum and when?

The portfolio assessment is the unit’s single direct assessment measure. The self-study says: “In 2013-14, we established a new assessment plan that is based around three one-credit portfolio courses that we developed for this purpose. The courses are taken between sophomore and senior year. The end result is a professional portfolio, which we use as a type of capstone assessment. The courses became a departmental requirement in the 2015-16 catalog year.”

These courses are Journalism 2111 (Multimedia Skills), Journalism 3111 (Content Development) and Journalism 41111 (Professional Presentation). Both faculty members and volunteers from the unit’s Professional Advisory Committee evaluate the portfolios.

The assessment plan also calls for students in the final portfolio class to take an exit assessment test, which the department says was not implemented. The unit conducts surveys of for-credit internship providers, but the assessment coordinator said they are not aggregated or used for assessment purposes. The unit said that is because so few students take internships for credit.

• What indirect measures does it use, where and when?

The assessment plan mentions continuing to use a survey of graduates; however, there is no information in the assessment plan about survey contents or administration. The former unit head said that until 2018 the university insisted on conducting these surveys. There were a number of questions about students’ majors, but since most journalism students double-major, the findings were not useful. The university also took a long time releasing results. The unit began its own survey of recent graduates in 2018-2019.

The assessment plan also says the unit uses graduation and retention rates as an indirect measure. The unit indicated that these did not identify any weaknesses in the program that needed to be addressed.

• Are these measures effective for assessing ACEJMC’s professional values and competencies?

Student portfolios are used to assess some ACEJMC values and competencies, but not all, and they are not mapped to the 12 PV&Cs in a meaningful way. Analyzing the direct measure, student portfolios, would require matching existing categories, like “audio,” to a PV&C. As previously mentioned, a generous mapping excludes five PV&Cs.

The indirect measure, the survey of recent graduates, asks about all 12 PV&Cs. Analysis and discussion are limited to faculty meetings and there is no report generated.

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

• How does the unit collect and analyze the findings and identify unsatisfactory learning of specific values and competencies?

The unit began collecting and analyzing data for the direct measure, student portfolios, in the third year of the accreditation review period. The unit said this was to allow students to build their portfolios through the newly added series of one-credit portfolio courses. Data collection occurred three times: 2017-2018, and springs and summers of 2019 and 2020.

Assessment reports exist only for the direct measure, student portfolio reviews, and dates correspond to data collection: 2017-2018, and the springs and summers of 2019 and 2020. Reports contain detailed data breakouts and recommendations using the unit-termed categories (that exclude five of the 12 PV&Cs).

Regarding one of the indirect measures, the survey of recent graduates, the unit relied on the university-mandated survey until 2018. The university's survey did not ask any questions regarding student learning and was difficult to apply to the unit's graduates. The unit began its own survey of recent graduates in 2018-2019. Because of the pandemic, the survey was not conducted for 2019-2020, but was for 2020-2021.

The self-study did not include reports analyzing the surveys of recent graduates. However, at faculty meetings in fall 2018 and fall 2019, the former department chair provided the faculty with an overview of the findings of the 2016-2017 university graduate survey and the 2018-2019 departmental survey, which were largely favorable. Minutes of the latter meeting reference a discussion about alumni concerns related to learning numerical skills and career advising and potential remedies. Faculty plan to discuss the results of the 2020-2021 survey at the November 2021 faculty meeting.

Separate from its formal assessment efforts, a faculty-oriented exercise led to positive curricular changes. In 2015-2016, the unit head requested a faculty member lead a review of the writing and reporting courses, prompted by information from the 2014 reaccreditation process. The review included two faculty surveys, an overview and analysis of the department's two core writing/reporting courses, and meetings with course and lab instructors. Recommendations and adopted changes included a new textbook, more unified learning goals, specific assignments, the collection and analysis of grade distribution data, and a decision to include ungraded assignments to increase writing opportunities.

• What specific values and competencies had graduating classes not mastered satisfactorily?

It is difficult to say, given the deficiencies described above.

• How does the unit decide how to address these areas of concern and what actions did it take to do so?

The unit did not present a report or evidence for decisions or actions regarding assessment findings. A handful of faculty meeting minutes mention related discussions.

• How does the unit evaluate whether its actions overcame the weaknesses in student learning and what were the results?

The unit did not present a report or evidence addressing these.

• Was the program of data analysis and action effective for identifying and overcoming unsatisfactory student learning?

The unit did not present a report or evidence addressing these.

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 survey of recent graduates does not ask respondents to put their experience in the unit in the context of working in professional media. The survey asks about the quality of instruction, academic and career advising, whether they feel writing and reporting skills were improved and there is a section that asks scaled questions reflecting the 12 professional values and competencies. The survey does not include questions about providing suggestions for improving curriculum and instruction. The unit did not present other evidence of alumni contact for assessment purposes.

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

Six members of the department's Professional Advisory Committee were asked to volunteer to evaluate portfolios in 2017-2018, and springs and summers 2019 and 2020. Their input (and in the last two reports, comments) are part of the portfolio reports. One committee member said, "Portfolios were rich in their variety and subject matter."

SUMMARY:

The unit's assessment program, as currently executed, is insufficient to measure student learning of the Council's 12 professional values and competencies and does not provide evidence that assessment findings have desired curricular and learning impacts. Direct assessment efforts did not begin until the third year of this accreditation cycle's review period, which the unit says was necessary to examine results from their newly implemented three-course portfolio sequence. Student portfolios are a meaningful assessment tool, but the evaluated, medium-based categories do not correspond well to the 12 PV&Cs and miss five entirely. The unit's indirect measure, the survey of recent graduates, provides useful information but the unit did not show that it analyzed findings in any meaningful way or take actions as a result. Likewise, the unit has internship provider survey data but does not aggregate it or use it as a direct measure (which is allowed by the Council).

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

PART III: Summary by site visit team

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

STRENGTHS:

- A program that produces students and graduates who are well prepared for the profession
- A faculty that shows extraordinary commitment and concern for students and their success
- A faculty with extensive professional experience and connections that benefit students in and out of the classroom
- A department that is highly respected within the university for the expertise of its faculty and the quality of its students
- A department-wide collaborative mindset that has led to rich interdisciplinary activities and initiatives
- A department that is well supported by the college and the university
- Stable leadership over many years that has positioned the department well
- A new leader who is well equipped to move the program forward

WEAKNESSES:

- Assessment practices that lack depth and rigor and do not map closely to all ACEJMC professional values and competencies
- Enrollment declines that could impact the future strength of the unit
- A faculty that lacks the diversity of the student body

2) List the standards with which the unit is not in

compliance.Standard 9, Assessment of Learning Outcomes

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

The current program for the assessment of learning outcomes has some useful elements, but needs to be reorganized and overhauled to yield meaningful, manageable, actionable and documented information. Faculty could begin by revising the assessment plan to clearly map courses to the Council's 12 professional values and competencies and to outline the entire assessment process. Measures should outline student learning outcomes that clearly correspond to those values. Documentation should include details about each measure, how it was executed, the results, recommendations for curricular change, faculty discussions of those recommendations and the outcome(s) of student learning regarding those changes.

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

The unit was found in compliance on all nine standards in 2014. However, the site team report lists two weaknesses -- the lack of a full-time broadcast professor and insufficient fundraising. Both have been addressed, and the current site team does not consider either a current weakness.

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

The self-study contained significant gaps, errors and inconsistencies and omitted some important supporting material. Site team members spent considerable time asking questions and requesting documentation in order to produce an accurate and complete report. Unit administrators were responsive and helpful in filling in gaps.