



**ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY**  
*School of*  
**Media & Journalism**

Multimedia Journalism Program

2016-2021

Accreditation Self-Study

Accrediting Council on Education  
in Journalism and Mass Communication



# Self-Study Report for Accreditation in Journalism and Mass Communications

For an undergraduate program site visit in 2020-2021  
(updated for 2021-2022 site visits)

Submitted to the  
Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications

**Name of Institution:** Arkansas State University

**Name of Journalism/Mass Communications Unit:** School of Media & Journalism

**Address:** PO Box 1930, State University, AR 72467


**Date of Scheduled Accrediting Visit:** November 28-December 1, 2021

We hereby submit the following report as required by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications for the purpose of an accreditation review.

Journalism/mass communications administrator:

**Name:** Dr. Brad Rawlins

**Title:** Director

**Signature:** 

Administrator to whom journalism/mass communications administrator reports:

**Name:** Dr. Carl Cates

**Title:** Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Communication

**Signature:** 

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION .....	3
PART II: SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION.....	7
PART II: STANDARD 1. MISSION, GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION.....	18
PART II: STANDARD 2. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION.....	34
PART II: STANDARD 3. DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVENESS.....	46
PART II: STANDARD 4. FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME FACULTY.....	65
PART II: STANDARD 5. SCHOLARSHIP: RESEARCH, CREATIVE AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES .....	74
PART II: STANDARD 6. STUDENT SERVICES. ....	80
PART II: STANDARD 7. RESOURCES, FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT .....	90
PART II: STANDARD 8. PROFESSIONAL AND PUBLIC SERVICE .....	99
PART II: STANDARD 9. ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES .....	110

**PART I: General Information**

This general information section will be included in its entirety in the site team's report, and it must present the most current information available. Before the site visit, the unit should review its responses to the questions below and update them as necessary. The unit then should provide a copy of this updated section for each team member when they arrive on campus. A digital copy in **Word document format** of the updated responses also must be provided to the team chair to be included in the digital team report sent to the ACEJMC office.

In addition, if any significant changes not covered in this section have occurred since the original self-study report was submitted, the unit should describe and document those changes and present this new material to the team when members arrive.

Name of Institution: Arkansas State University

Name of Unit: School of Media & Journalism

Year of Visit: 2021 (originally scheduled for 2020 but postponed due to COVID-19)

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 (Higher Learning Commission)
- ☐ 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.

Arkansas State University "was founded in Jonesboro in 1909 by the Arkansas Legislature as a regional agricultural training school. It began offering a two-year college program in 1918, then became "First District Agricultural and Mechanical College" in 1925. A four-year degree program was begun in 1930, and A & M College became "Arkansas State College" in 1933. The Arkansas Legislature elevated the college to university status and changed the name to Arkansas State University in 1967."

—2019-2020 Undergraduate Bulletin, p. 19.

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

☒ Yes

☐ No

If yes, give the date of the last accrediting visit:

January 20-23, 2015

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

1978

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

**Mission**

The School of Media & Journalism provides students with an education that enables them to gather, organize, synthesize and communicate information professionally in a democratic, multicultural society. By stressing critical and creative thinking and providing access to multiple platforms of communication, we prepare students with the professional standards required to perform today's jobs and the versatility to assume leadership in meeting tomorrow's challenges.

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Semesters of 16 weeks

Online course session of 7 weeks

Summer sessions of 5 weeks

Intersessions of 2 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 Science in Multimedia Journalism

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

120 credit semester-hours for Bachelor of Science

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

3 semester hours

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**

Multimedia Journalism

**Person in Charge**

Lillie Fears (Program Coordinator)

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

12,863 Total Headcount      8474.8 FTE      (Fall, 2021)

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

Multimedia Journalism

Total: 31

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

Enrollment Numbers for Fall 2021

MDIA	2043	BASIC DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY	J	TR	13
MDIA	2313	DIGITAL MEDIA PRODUCTION	J	TR	18
MDIA	2313	DIGITAL MEDIA PRODUCTION	J	TR	12
MDIA	2323	REPORTING WORDS	J	TR	5
MDIA	3093	PHOTO STORYTELLING I	J	TR	5
MDIA	3603	TV REPORTING	J	TR	4
MDIA	4103	DATA JOURNALISM	J	TR	6

Enrollment Numbers for Spring 2021

MDIA	2043	BASIC DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY	J	TR	17
MDIA	2323	REPORTING WORDS	J	TR	6
MDIA	3013	MULTIMEDIA REPORTING	J	TR	7
MDIA	3063	EDITING FOR PUBLICATIONS & WEB	J	TR	5
MDIA	3203	AUDIO STORYTELLING	J	TR	7
MDIA	3383	NEWS IN SOCIAL MEDIA	J	TR	17
MDIA	3603	TV REPORTING	J	TR	1
MDIA	4053	CIVIC REPORTING	J	TR	4

16. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2021–2022 academic year: \$1,440,199  
Give percentage increase or decrease in three years: 14.9%

2020-2021: \$1,451,516

2019-2020: \$1,435,350

2018-2019: \$1,262,249

Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries: \$951,995 (includes benefits)

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

Name	School	Emphasis	Rank
Armstard, Terrance	Media & Journalism	Multimedia Journalism	Instructor, Adviser to Delta Digital News Service
Combs, Sandra	Media & Journalism	Multimedia Journalism	Associate Professor, Adviser to The Herald
Fears, Lillie	Media & Journalism	Multimedia Journalism	Professor, Program Coordinator
Rawlins, Brad	Media & Journalism	Strategic Comm	Professor, Director
Roberts, Larz	Media & Journalism	Multimedia Journalism	Instructor
Sitton, Ron	Media & Journalism	Multimedia Journalism	Assistant Professor

18. List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in fall 2021. Also list names of part-time faculty teaching spring 2021. (If your school has its accreditation visit in spring 2021, please provide the spring 2021 adjunct list in the updated information.)

N/A

#### 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.

72 or more semester hours  
outside of journalism and mass communications

Year	Total Graduates	Number in Compliance	Percent
2020-2021 academic year	__6__	__6__	100
2019-2020 academic year	__5__	__5__	100

## **PART II: Supplementary Information**

1. Complete and attach here in the main body of the self-study report the following tables:

Table 1, “Students”

Table 2, “Full-time Faculty”

Table 3, “Part-time Faculty”

These are found on the next three pages.



**Table 1. Students**

List below each of the separate programs of study in the unit. These may be called emphases, concentrations, sequences, or majors; please identify each program with a separate set of requirements.

Give the number of students by class (year in school) in each of these programs at the end of the 2020–2021 academic year. If all of your students technically come under one major but you subdivide those majors into sequences or tracks, please list students by those sequences or tracks. Please be sure to list separately all subsidiary

programs of study, even if not formally identified by computer or register codes.

Show the number of undergraduate degrees conferred during academic year 2020–2021. Please include all semesters or quarters. If the unit has a formal pre-major status, list the number of such students.\*

Add or delete lines as needed.

Undergraduate programs of study	<u>Number of Students</u>				<u>Degrees Conferred 2020-21</u>
	<u>frsh</u>	<u>soph</u>	<u>jr</u>	<u>Total sr</u>	<u>bachelor's</u>
1. Multimedia Journalism	6	5	7	13	31
Total students					6
					31

\* Students who have declared their intention but have not completed the requirements for admission to the major.

**Table 2. Full-Time Faculty**

List names of full-time journalism and mass communications faculty members assigned to the unit and provide requested information for the quarter or semester **immediately preceding** the accreditation visit. Add or delete lines as needed.

(As part of the updated General Information Section, faculty lists will be updated to reflect the academic term when the visiting team is on campus. For more information, see the “General Information” section of the Self-Study report form.)

**Semester or Quarter: Fall, 2021**

	years full-time professional experience	years full-time college teaching	years on this faculty	years at present rank	highest earned degree	tenured (y/n)	credit hours% of time taught per semester	tchg.	rsch.	svc.
<b>Unit Administrator</b>										
Brad Rawlins	3	29	9	9	PhD	Y	6	40	5	55
<b>Professors</b>										
Lillie Fears	3	32	30	12	PhD	Y	9	40	20	40
<b>Associate Professors</b>										
Sandra Combs	20	24	13	6	M.A.	Y	6	40	20	40
<b>Assistant Professors</b>										
Ron Sitton	2	15	6	2	PhD	N	9	60	20	20
<b>Instructors/Lecturers</b>										
Terrance Armstard	12	2	2	2	M.A.	N	12	80	0	20
Larz Roberts	6	23	16	16	M.A.	N	12	80	0	20

**Table 3. Part-Time Faculty**

List names of part-time faculty paid from journalism and mass communications funds and provide requested information. List should include personnel, including laboratory instructors and teaching assistants, who taught any regular course **during the two semesters or quarters before the accreditation visit**. Present the names in groups by semester or quarter. Put an X under the appropriate teaching responsibility. Add or delete lines as needed.

**Semester or Quarter: Fall, 2021**

	years full-time professional experience	years teaching experience	highest earned degree	now working full-time as professional (y/n)	working toward degree (y/n)	credit hrs. teaching this semester	<u>teaching responsibilities:</u>			
							in charge of course	lectures	assists in lab	assists teacher in charge
<b>Name and Rank</b>										
Name										
Rank	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

**Semester or Quarter: Spring, 2021**

Name										
Rank	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

## 2. Describe the history of the unit in no more than 500 words.

What began as instructional classes in the English Department in the 1930s evolved into a degree program in journalism in 1941. In 1967, Arkansas State College received university status and was reorganized. The academic and production areas of journalism, printing, radio and television became an independent division within the university. In addition to its academic programs, the division administered the university's news bureau, public radio station (KASU), printing plant, student newspaper (*The Herald*) and yearbook.

The division became the College of Communications in 1973. The college's divisions of Journalism and Printing and Radio-Television became departments in 1978. The news bureau left the college in 1976 and became part of the university's public relations office. Responsibility for the yearbook was moved to Student Affairs. In AY 2000-2001, the Department of Speech Communication moved to the college from the College of Fine Arts.

Just prior to the previous re-accreditation, AY 2012-2013, the college restructured to bring the journalism emphases closer together, create a separate identity for the strategic communications emphases and bring communication studies closer to the JMC programs. The three departments were collapsed into two departments, Department of Media and Department of Communication, to accommodate the changes in degree programs. The college changed its name to the College of Media and Communication to reflect these changes and continued to operate KASU and Printing Services. The changes achieved the intended goals and enrollment in the college grew 13%.

Since the last re-accreditation visit, the JMC programs have gone through several major changes. In AY 2015-2016, Arkansas State University decided to reduce the number of colleges in the university and collapsed smaller colleges into larger units. The College of Media and Communication was merged with the College of Fine Arts and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences to create the College of Liberal Arts and Communication. The Department of Media and the Department of Communication reported to a dean's office that administered nine academic departments. The two non-academic units, KASU and Printing Services, also became independent units within the new college.

In AY 2018-2019, the Board of Trustees voted to create the School of Media & Journalism that would comprise the two academic programs found in the Department of Media, Multimedia Journalism and Creative Media Production, along with the non-academic units of KASU and Printing Services. This was done to give greater recognition and identity to programs that had built a strong legacy at A-State. In AY 2020-2021, the school had 198 students enrolled in its undergraduate and graduate programs: 116 in the B.S. in Creative Media Production; 31 in the B.S. in Multimedia Journalism; and 51 in its two graduate programs.

ACEJMC has accredited JMC programs at Arkansas State since 1978. Previously, programs in print journalism, broadcast journalism, audio/video production, printing, advertising and public relations were accredited within the college. Since the merging of colleges, separating of departments and re-aligning of programs since the last re-accreditation site visit, only one program has decided to continue to seek re-accreditation: Multimedia Journalism. Multimedia Journalism revised its curriculum in 2018-2019 and collapsed its three emphasis — broadcast journalism, photojournalism and news editorial — into one program: multimedia journalism.

The Creative Media Production program decided to expand its program beyond the allowable 48-hours and the Strategic Communication program is currently housed in the Department of Communication. Neither program is seeking re-accreditation at this time. Other academic programs in the school that are not being considered for accreditation are a Master of Science in Mass Communications and an online Master's in Media Management.

**3. Describe the environment in which the unit operates, its goals and plans, budgetary considerations, and the nature of the parent university.**

**Nature of Parent University**

Arkansas State University (A-State) is a public state university located in Jonesboro Arkansas and is the flagship university of the Arkansas State University System. The other campuses in the system are two-year colleges and include ASU-Beebe, ASU-Newport, ASU-Mountain Home, ASU Mid-South and starting in January 2020, ASU Three Rivers (formerly College of the Ouachitas). Joining the ASU System in 2021 is Henderson State University, a 4-year university.

Degrees offered by A-State include Associate, Bachelor, Master's, Specialist and Doctoral levels with more than 75 undergraduate fields and 60 graduate fields to meet the diverse interests of its students. The university is made up of seven academic colleges (Agriculture, Griffin College of Business, Education & Behavioral Science, Engineering & Computer Science, Fine Arts and Communication, Nursing & Health Professions, and Science & Math,) and two support colleges (Honors College and University College). The university has a faculty of 583 full-time and 136 part-time and a staff of 1,695. The current FTE student to faculty ratio is 14:1.

Arkansas State has historically been a regional comprehensive university with a commitment to high quality teaching as its primary emphasis. Located in Northeast Arkansas, the university carries with it the responsibility to play a meaningful role in the Arkansas Delta, a region of the state and country that has special economic and social needs. Two good examples of addressing this regional need are the Delta Center for Economic Development and the Arkansas Biosciences Institute that are located on the campus. In 2019, Arkansas State University was reclassified as an R2 university in the Carnegie classifications, reaching one its long-time strategic goals.

As a public institution, A-State provides accessibility to all possible types of students regardless of race, socioeconomic class or background. Historically, A-State's admission standards were not very selective, and a series of gradual changes were made to reach the current admissions standards of ACT 21 and HS GPA 2.75 implemented with the Fall 2013 entering class. The current incoming freshman class has an average ACT of 22 and GPA of 3.59. Being more selective has shown a gain in the 6-year graduation rates of first-year cohorts since 2009 (2009-2015 40.1%, 2010-2016 45.4%, 2011-2017 46.5%), and enrollments in the Honors College has increased 85% since 2009, but it has negatively impacted our student diversity, particularly that of students of color. In 2009, 69% of students reported as White American and 15.8% as African American. In 2020, 74.2% of students reported as White American and 13.2% as African American. As part of the Chancellor's Commission on Completion, A-State initiated a more holistic admissions approach that is not solely based on ACT/SAT score and high school GPA starting in the fall of 2021 (this was approved by shared governance in spring 2021). The Office of Diversity has initiated an ACT Prep Camp to help with test score improvement. Development of an academically based leadership program to enhance the preparation and success of students who may be test-performance or

academically disadvantaged began in Fall 2018.

More than 60% of students are female. While 69.8% of students originate from Arkansas, 25.6% enroll from other U.S. states and 4.6% from at least 62 countries. In keeping with the university's role and mission to serve the Delta region of Arkansas, about 40% of the students come from the local and neighboring counties. The Delta Region is characterized by low socio-economic status and limited education (median household income around \$39,000; 75% of residents with high school diploma, 20% with some college and 11% with bachelor's degree). Overall, more than 67% of all Arkansas State students receive some form of financial aid.

One of the biggest developments with the university is the creation of a campus in Queretaro Mexico, which began offering classes in September, 2017. The primary emphasis of the campus is STEM and business programs, with the addition of a strategic communication program. Neither of the programs in the school are currently offered in Queretaro.

### **Budgetary Considerations**

The University's revenues for fiscal year 2020 totaled \$274,523,711. Tuition and fees comprised 34% of this total; State Appropriations 25%; Grants and Contracts 19%; Auxiliary Revenues 11%; and all Other Sources 11%. The State of Arkansas' Revenue Stabilization Act ensures the University's appropriation is relatively protected from sudden significant changes in economic activity. The Arkansas State University System and the University employ conservative budgeting practices and careful monitoring to ensure financial operations are prudent, effective, efficient, and responsive to changing economic conditions.

The state has moved toward a performance-based funding model that rewards institutions based on the number of degrees awarded, the percentage of students progressing toward degrees, the amount of grants and external funding received and meeting regional economic needs. Minority and non-traditional students are given additional emphasis in the funding formula. Each institution must demonstrate growth in these areas to retain its current level of funding. This model does not promise additional resources to support growing enrollments.

Arkansas State has managed its budgets by keeping costs down. For example, faculty members are paid less than their colleagues at peer institutions (faculty average about \$12,000 less than other ASJMC programs in our Carnegie classification and region), staff are paid comparatively low salaries (\$22,000 to \$30,000) and part-time faculty are paid only \$2,000 per course, which has not increased since 2014.

While there is no capital revenue for building construction and maintenance, the university has done well to keep facilities up-to-date, particularly with classrooms. Most classrooms are equipped with smart board technology, Apple TV, video conferencing capability and other recent technology. Faculty computers are replaced every four years and most faculty have iPads or other tablet devices.

The budgets for academic units are fairly centralized. Annual operating budgets distributed to colleges include salaries and benefits for full time faculty and staff, student wages, supplies and services, and travel. A 1% merit raise was given in AY 2019 and another 2% was approved for AY 2022 that included bonuses at the end of AY 2021. Additionally, several tenured faculty in the school have benefitted from salary equity adjustments over the last six years. Supplies, services

and travel budgets were cut 5% in spring 2020 and by 20% in FY 2021 and FY 2022 in response to low enrollments possibly impacted by COVID-19. Professional development funds are allocated annually to colleges from Academic Affairs. The college equally distributes the professional development funds to each unit. The school also has to request off-budget funds to pay for part-time faculty each semester.

Equipment updates and maintenance are paid for by students and assessed through technology fees, course fees, and infrastructure fees. These amounts vary each year depending on the fees collected and the proposals approved for infrastructure improvements. Differences in infrastructure funding from year to year explains most of the variance in Table 10.

Some of the colleges have additional funds that are generated by tuition differentials (business and the STEM programs), facilities and administration fees (F&As) from grants, and other services provided. The College of Liberal Arts and Communication does not have differential tuition and the grants received by faculty in the last five years have not produced F&A funding. However, the school does collect some additional funding from video projects and revenue earned through Printing Service. Overall, there is little flexible spending for the school.

### **Goals and Plans**

Arkansas State University spent most of the last two years developing a five-year strategic plan entitled Discover 2025. It has five pillars: Student Success, Teaching & Learning, Research & Creative Activities, Community Engagement, and Campus Culture & Shared Values. The plan was approved by the Board of Trustees on Dec. 4, 2020. The university community is now engaged in making the plan a reality.

The College of Liberal Arts and Communication develops a strategic plan with the college leadership team, which is made up of chairs and directors of the college's units. Each unit leader shares the plan with the faculty of their unit to get feedback and approval. Each unit then develops its own goals and strategies to meet the strategic plan. In a spring retreat, the faculty of the Multimedia Journalism program looked specifically at how the strategic plan pertains to its program and discussed specific goals and strategies.

#### **4. Describe any recent major changes in the mission, goals, or programs and activities of the unit.**

The primary story over the last six years has been one of disruption. As outlined in the brief history of the program, the Multimedia Journalism program was one of three programs reviewed under the College of Media & Communication in the last accreditation visit. Since then, the college was merged with two other colleges, the Department of Media and the Department of Communication became two of the nine units in the new college and experienced some sense of separation. The college core curriculum that held several of these programs together dissolved over the span of three years and the departments have drifted apart since they have not been under the direction of a unified college. In AY 2018-2019, the university established The School of Media & Journalism and brought the NPR affiliated radio station, KASU, and Printing Services under the umbrella of the school along with the academic programs of Multimedia Journalism and Creative Media Production. Strategic Communication remained an academic program in the Department of Communication. As the date for re-accreditation approached, two of the previously accredited programs, Creative Media Production and Strategic Communication decided to not

participate in the review. The Multimedia Journalism faculty voted in favor of seeking re-accreditation.

In 2019, the Multimedia Journalism and Creative Media Production programs introduced major curriculum changes. The programs no longer share common core courses and each program teaches a more specific curriculum directed at the development of student skills and knowledge in each program. Each program used assessment and advisory boards to guide the curriculum changes. In Multimedia Journalism specifically, the emphasis areas of Broadcast Journalism, News Editorial and Photojournalism were eliminated in favor of a single multimedia journalism curriculum that also allowed flexibility for students to take additional electives in broadcast, news editorial and photojournalism.

Of course, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected academic units everywhere and the MMJ program was no exception. Faculty quickly adjusted to teaching online and hybrid courses (most of which had never been taught this way). They took professional development courses in best practices for teaching their courses with available technology and pedagogical tools and pivoting across the different teaching platforms was taxing on everyone's time and energy. In essence, teaching hybrid courses has taken on the load of requiring almost double the work for teaching each course.

Another significant addition to the MMJ program is the operation of the Delta Digital News Service (DDNS). While the student newspaper, *The Herald*, remains an independently operated publication from the curriculum, the DDNS is incorporated into the curriculum with multimedia, photojournalism and other reporting classes. Students reporting for DDNS cover stories from the Arkansas Delta communities and make the stories available to news outlets throughout the region. The stories are free to these outlets provided they attribute the story to DDNS. The lab began operations in 2016 and continues to adapt new ideas to its operation. More information on the lab is provided in Standard 6.

5. **If the unit was previously accredited, summarize each deficiency noted in the most recent accreditation report that the site team said should be addressed (Part 3 of site team report), followed by a response to each, explaining actions taken to address the problems and the results. If the unit was in noncompliance in the same standard(s) on the previous two visits, identify the standard(s), the reasons cited, and how these problems have been addressed.**

The previous site team identified the following weaknesses:

- An assessment program that is well-led and well-designed and that “closes the loop” but needs to function more consistently in gleaning information from student work.

Assessment at Arkansas State University has become much more formalized across all units on the campus. The university has an assistant vice chancellor responsible for campus-wide assessment. The School of Media & Journalism has been singled out as one of the best on campus and its measures and reports have been used as examples for training other departments. The assessment includes direct and indirect measures that involve students, faculty and outside professionals to evaluate program outcomes and these results are reported and discussed by faculty to address improvements in student learning. To address the need to look at student work, the program added portfolio reviews with its advisory board. This source of assessment data has been the most useful



for evaluating program quality and making changes.

- The College does not have adequate support staff for its complex missions and responsibilities.

Since the College of Media and Communication was merged with two other colleges to become the College of Liberal Arts and Communication, this deficiency no longer applies. The School of Media & Journalism has one administrative assistant to the director, two engineers for the broadcast facilities and has a resident computer technician from IT in the building. Additional support staff assigned to KASU and Printing Services is adequate considering the budget constraints.

- Development staffer is shared with three other Colleges, not optimal for a College with aspirations to remodel space to improve teaching and production opportunities.

This situation has not changed since the last visit. In fact, Development resources are slimmer than before. Even with fewer colleges, the College of Liberal Arts and Communication shares a development officer with three other colleges. And, at one point during 2021, there was only one development officer for the entire university.

**6. Describe the process used to conduct the self-study, including the roles of faculty members, students and others. Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the program discovered during the self-study process, and describe any changes undertaken or planned as a result.**

Multimedia Journalism faculty were assigned a couple of standards to write the first draft. For this self-study, a full-day retreat was held in the spring of 2021 to go over the drafts and what was still needed to complete the self-study. The retreat also allowed everyone to discuss particular areas of need such as the strategic plan, updates to the diversity plan, and assessment.

The following standards were assigned to each faculty member:

*Section I*

Part I: Description of the School (Rawlins)

Part II: Supplementary Information (Rawlins)

*Section II*

Standard I: Mission, Governance and Administration (Rawlins)

Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction (Sitton)

Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness (Fears)

Standard 4: Full-Time and Part-Time Faculty (Sitton)

Standard 5: Scholarship (Combs)

Standard 6: Student Services (Combs)

Standard 7: Resources, Facilities and Equipment (Roberts)

Standard 8: Professional and Public Service (Armstard)

Standard 9: Assessment (Fears)

*Overall Editor (Rawlins)*

After all of the drafts were completed, Rawlins edited the final edition to give it a singular voice and to fill in any gaps.

The following strengths and weaknesses were discovered during the process:

### Strengths

- Despite major disruptions to the unit, including several reorganizations and the COVID-19 pandemic, Multimedia Journalism faculty maintain a strong collegial and collaborative climate that supports each other and the students.
- Additional student media outlets have been added and curriculum has been adjusted to give students more multimedia reporting experience.
- One of the most diverse units in the university.
- Assessment process collects data from multiple sources, involves alumni and professionals, and has been used to make improvements to teaching and learning in the MMJ program. It has been showcased by the university.
- Despite the heavy teaching load, MMJ faculty remain productive with scholarship and professional development.
- Although the building is showing its age, the equipment and facilities supporting instruction and student media are still impressive.

### Weaknesses

- Low enrollments in MMJ threaten the program.
- Coronavirus pandemic affected major recruiting initiatives for the last two years.
- Dissolution of the College of Media & Communication created disruption and some divisions between academic units and programs.
- Some of the assessment measures used in the capstone course were not completed when Multimedia Journalism and Creative Media Production created more autonomous curricula.

**7. Provide the web links to undergraduate catalogs and other publications that describe the mission and scope of the unit, its curriculum, administrative and graduation requirements.**

Undergraduate Bulletin (School of Media & Journalism begins on page 284)

<https://www.astate.edu/a/registrar/files/bulletins/21-22-UG-Bulletin-Final-1-Page.pdf>

School of Media & Journalism Website

<https://www.astate.edu/college/liberal-arts/departments/media/>

## Part II, Standard 1. Mission, Governance and Administration



Multimedia Journalism students at work in the Delta Digital News Service lab.

**BEFORE THE VISIT:** As part of the self-study process, the unit should self-report data directly into ACEJMC’s searchable database, <https://lookup.acejmc.org>, by the time of the site visit. Instructions are at <http://www.acejmc.org/resources/acejmc-database-instructions-2>.

**During the visit,** the unit should provide the following in the workroom or access to:

- internal reports on curriculum, educational policy, etc.
- files related to searches and hiring decisions regarding administrators
- files related to concerns and complaints expressed by faculty, staff or students

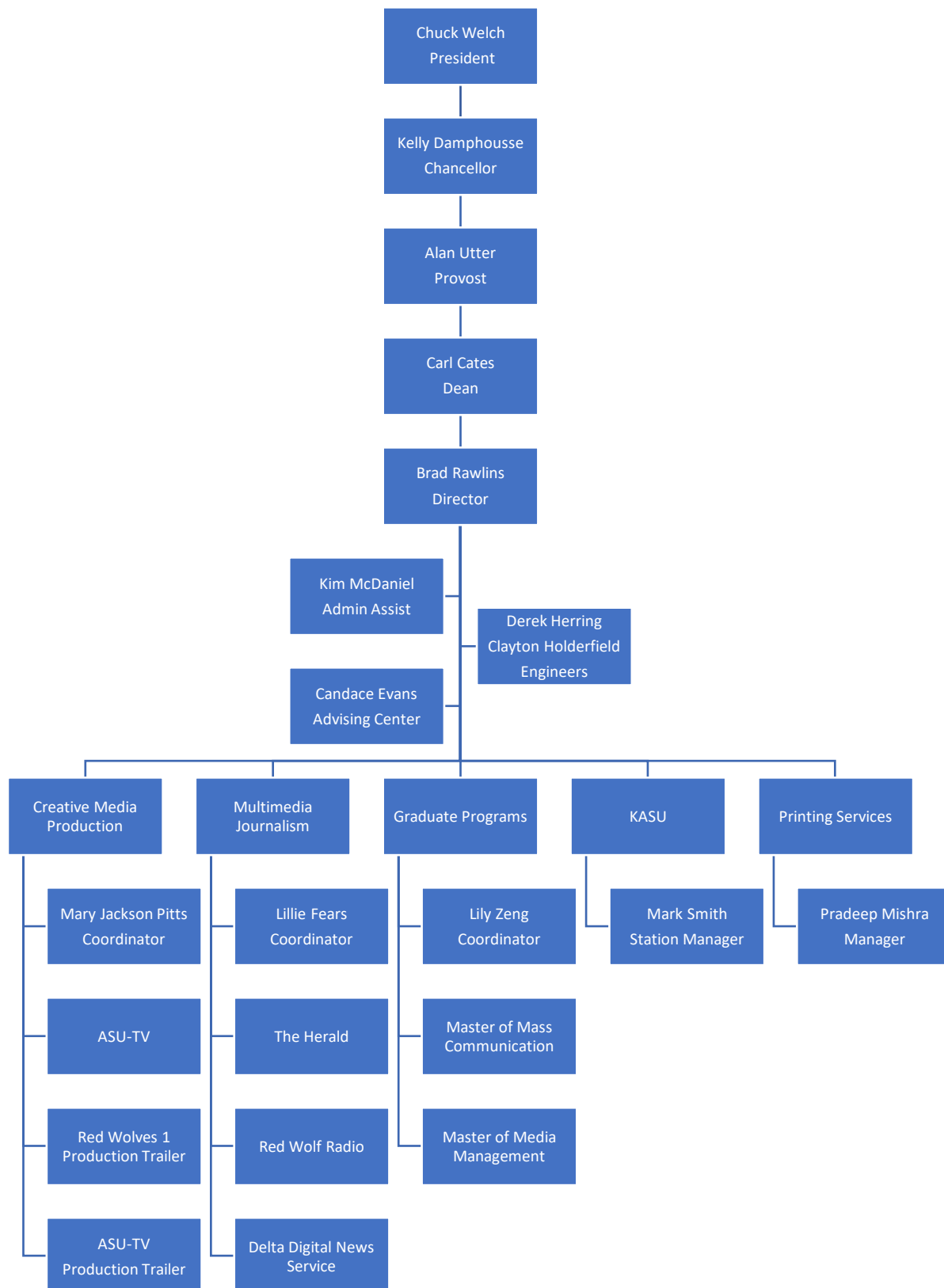
### Executive summary:

The School of Media & Journalism is one of eleven academic units in the College of Liberal Arts & Communication (CLAC). The director reports to the dean of CLAC. The school’s leadership team includes faculty coordinators for the three academic programs, the manager of KASU and the manager of Printing Services. The school has a mission statement and adopts the college strategic action plan with specific actions for the school. These are updated periodically by faculty and administration.

Governance procedures follow A-State's Faculty Handbook. Faculty members participate in curriculum recommendations that are initiated in departments and work their way through chairs, a college curriculum committee, dean and the university curriculum committee. Other school committees are elected in accord with the handbook or on an ad hoc basis. Administrators are selected as specified in the Faculty Handbook. They are evaluated annually by supervisors with advice from faculty, which is collected annually with a survey. Issues of concern and grievances are addressed according to procedures described in handbooks for faculty, staff and students.

- 1. Describe the administrative structure of the unit, including to whom the unit administrator reports to within the university. Include names and titles. The information should extend from the lowest level of administrative responsibility within the unit to the institution's chief executive officer.**

See the organizational chart on the next page. What follows is a description of administrative responsibilities for everyone on the chart.



### Administrative responsibilities

All of the descriptions of the administrators comes from section I.G. of the Faculty Handbook, pages 16-22.

The chancellor, Dr. Kelly Damphousse, “is the chief executive officer of the Arkansas State University-Jonesboro campus and is responsible to the president (Dr. Charles Welch) of the Arkansas State University system.”

The position of provost and executive vice chancellor for academic affairs and research, Dr. Alan Utter, “represents the academic interests of the faculty and is responsible for the development and administration of the teaching, research, scholarship and creative activity and service programs” of the campus. “All colleges and academic programs report to the vice chancellor.” The deans report to the provost. Other vice chancellors are the executive vice chancellor for finance and administration (Dr. Len Frey), the vice chancellor for student affairs (Dr. Martha Spack) the vice chancellor for university advancement (Dr. Erika Chudy), the vice chancellor for Intercollegiate Athletics (Tom Bowen), the vice chancellor for enrollment management & global outreach (Dr. Thilla Sivakumaran), and the vice chancellor for diversity and community engagement (Dr. Lonnie Williams).

Dr. Carl Cates is the dean of the College of Liberal Arts & Communication (CLAC). There are eleven units in CLAC: Art + Design; Communication; Criminology, Sociology & Geography; English & Philosophy; Heritage Studies; History; Media & Journalism; Music; Political Science; Theatre; and World Languages & Cultures.

Deans of the various colleges are responsible to the vice chancellor for academic affairs and research for representing their college, departments and faculty to the administration. Deans organize administrative activities, scholarly and instructional programs, and the service activities of their respective colleges and departments, including administration of all instructional and clerical personnel. They provide leadership for and support of faculty within their colleges, give academic direction to their respective colleges, and oversee development of college curricula. They administer the course offerings, prepare and administer budgets, and maintain equipment and supplies for their colleges. They evaluate and recommend employment decisions pertaining to faculty members and department chairs to the vice chancellor for academic affairs and research, and they supervise department chairs and other personnel within their colleges.

The school director, Dr. Brad Rawlins, has responsibilities similar to a department chair (the definition for school directors is being reviewed in the shared governance process for the Faculty Handbook).

Department chairs are responsible to their respective deans for the general management and operation of their academic areas. They represent their departments to the deans and university administrators, support faculty in their professional development and work with faculty to improve instructional programs and to develop programs that are

responsive to changing needs of students. They are responsible for evaluating and recommending faculty members to the dean of their college for employment, retention, promotion, tenure, non-renewal and dismissal; for the preparation and administration of budgets for the departments; for the recommendation of course offerings to the dean; for the supervision of the academic advisement of students majoring in the department; and for the acquisition, use and care of departmental equipment. Department Chairs play a particularly important role in encouraging and sustaining scholarship, research, and participation in professional activities by members of their faculty. They also supervise other personnel in the department.

The school is made up of two academic programs, Creative Media Production and Multimedia Journalism, and two non-academic units, KASU and Printing Services. Assisting the director is one administrative assistant, two engineers for the broadcast facilities and a full-time advising coordinator who also assists the Department of Communication.

The undergraduate and graduate academic programs have faculty serving as coordinators of the programs: Dr. Mary Jackson-Pitts (Creative Media Production), Dr. Lillie Fears (Multimedia Journalism) and Dr. Lily Zeng (Graduate Programs). They have the primary responsibilities of scheduling, recruiting, advising, assessment and curriculum recommendations in the programs.

The engineers, Derek Herring and Clayton Holderfield, maintain equipment in the broadcasting facilities (including two remote production trailers), manage the checkout room, assist students and faculty using the broadcast facilities, serve on the technology committee to recommend new equipment.

The coordinator for the Advising Center (Candace Evans) is responsible for ensuring that students have an excellent advising experience. While all students have a faculty adviser, she helps facilitate the paperwork required for advising. On the advising side of the center, she keeps records of students, helps students advance toward graduation and ensures that graduate check sheets are completed and meeting accreditation requirements prior to graduation.

The director of Print Services, Pradeep Mishra, is responsible for overseeing the financial and operational success of the university's print shop. Printing Services is a full-service print shop with a four-color, two-color and one-color offset printer. It regularly prints the university's materials as well as materials from other universities and state government agencies. The shop is self-sustaining. The appointment is allocated as 75 percent instructor and 25 percent director.

The KASU station manager, Mark Smith, is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the public radio station, maintaining relationships with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the general public generating external income through grants and public fund drives.

*The Herald* adviser, Sandra Combs, is a full-time faculty member with 50 percent of her assignment assigned to *The Herald*. She has these responsibilities:

- Serve as an ex-officio member of the Student Publications Policy Committee, which appoints the editor of *The Herald* each semester.
- Provide advice, counsel and criticism to *The Herald*'s student managers and news and advertising staff.
- Oversee expenditure for scholarships, supplies, equipment and professional development of student staff members.
- Assist the editor and advertising manager in selection of the staff for each semester.

The ASU-TV studio coordinator, Galen Perkins, coordinates the scheduling of the television studio and use of television equipment and is the primary contact for external and internal clients wishing assistance from the television resources of the department. The studio coordinator serves as the adviser to the student cable access channel, ASU-TV, channel 18 on Jonesboro and Bay cable systems. The station manager also coordinates the use of two production trailers: Red Wolves 1 is used for A-State sports production and ASU-TV Trailer is used for other productions. The coordinator is a full-time faculty member who has reassignment time for two courses.

The Red Wolf Radio faculty adviser, Larz Roberts, is an MMJ instructor who also supervises ASU-TV News operation. He hires the program manager and recruits and trains students to produce content for the station. The station streams over the internet and does not broadcast over the airwaves.

Terrance Armstard is the faculty adviser for Delta Digital News Service, which is a new addition to the program since the last accreditation visit. DDNS is a multimedia journalism lab that focuses on issues and stories from the Delta Region of Arkansas. Multimedia stories are produced by students in classes and independently to be shared with professional news media outlets.

- 2. Describe the unit's process for strategic or long-range planning. Provide a copy of the unit's written strategic or long-range plan. This plan should give the date of adoption/revision and any timeline for achieving stated goals. Discuss how the plan provides vision and direction for the unit's future and how it has encouraged and contributed to quality and innovation in the unit.**

The strategic plan is included at the end of this section. The School of Media & Journalism adopts and applies the strategic plan of the College of Liberal Arts and Communication. This plan is developed every five years with the college's dean and chairs. The chairs share the drafts of the strategic plan with faculty for input and feedback. Once the plan is approved, the School of Media & Journalism adapts the plan to fit its needs. The school's adaptation of the plan was last reviewed during a retreat with the Multimedia Journalism faculty in May 2021.



The strategic plan provides priorities for the school's efforts and budget. For example, the top priority for the school is recruiting quality students. In the last year, the school reinstated the recruiting committee, provided reassignment time to a faculty member for recruiting, increased its recruiting spending by 300%, and increased time spent recruiting significantly to include giving tours of the facilities, frequent email contacts, social media promotions, sending out recruiting packages, etc. A student internship for social media management is also planned.

Another example is the use of advisory boards to enhance the educational experience of our students. In addition to helping with assessing student portfolios, our advisory boards also meet with students to give feedback about how to improve the work represented in the portfolios.

The objective to increase interdisciplinary collaboration has led to discussions to create a student media lab that would include students from departments of Art + Design, Communication, Marketing & Management and Media & Journalism. It also led to collaborations between the Creative Media Production program and Theatre to produce a live streamed performance.

To be candid, it was difficult to implement much of the plan over the last two years because of the Coronavirus. Faculty time, energy and focus was on adjusting to online and hybrid teaching and taking care of their health.

**Strategic Plan**  
**Effective 2017-2022**  
Update, Spring 2021

**College Mission:** To provide innovative educational opportunities that will enable lifelong learning, professional leadership, and engaged lives.

**School Mission:** The School of Media & Journalism provides students with an education that enables them to gather, organize, synthesize and communicate information professionally in a democratic, multicultural society. By stressing critical and creative thinking and providing access to multiple platforms of communication, we prepare students with the professional standards required to perform today's jobs and the versatility to assume leadership in meeting tomorrow's challenges.

**Strategic Plan**

- 1) Recruit, retain, and graduate a quality, diverse student body and prepare them for roles as leaders in a global society.
  - a) Recruiting
    - i) Quality students
      - (1) High School
        - (a) Social media
        - (b) H.S. visits/recruiting fairs
        - (c) SMJ tours
        - (d) School counselor relations
        - (e) Sponsored competitions/Communications Day

- (i) Skills USA
      - (ii) ASPA
      - (iii) Photography Summer Workshops
    - (f) Send welcome package with program information
      - (i) Update program materials
    - (g) DDNS “Report for A-STATE” recruiting H.S. journalists to report for DDNS
  - (2) College Transfers
    - (a) Social media
    - (b) Transfer agreements
    - (c) College visits/recruiting fairs
    - (d) Involvement with ACMA
    - (e) Send welcome package with program information
  - (3) Diverse students
    - (a) High School (in addition to above)
      - (i) Diversity in recruiters
      - (ii) Minority scholarships
      - (iii) Diversity represented in recruiting materials
      - (iv) Callaway Program (SE Arkansas)
      - (v) DDNS “Report for A-STATE” recruiting H.S. journalists to report for DDNS in diverse communities
- b) Retaining
- i) Quality students
    - (1) Quality advising by faculty and advising center
    - (2) Constant communication
    - (3) Personal relationships with students
    - (4) Scholarships and paid student media positions
    - (5) Mentoring by faculty and alumni
  - ii) Diverse students (in addition to above)
    - (1) Minority retention scholarships
    - (2) Provide minority mentors
    - (3) NABJ Chapter
- c) Preparing
- i) Leaders
    - (1) Provide leadership opportunities in student media
      - (a) Build student media experiences into curriculum
      - (b) Paid positions for leaders
    - (2) Encourage independent actions
      - (a) Students develop own shows, programs, businesses, media outlets, etc.
    - (3) Student professional organizations, such as SPJ, NABJ
  - ii) Global Society
    - (1) Bring in guest speakers representing different countries
    - (2) Recruit internationally (graduate program)
    - (3) Provide annual study abroad options
- 2) Enhance the educational experience of our undergraduate and graduate majors.
- a) Use assessment to improve curriculum, instruction and co-curricular experiences to prepare students for their careers
    - i) Use advisory board to give feedback on curriculum and evaluate student portfolios on their thinking, communication and professional preparation.

- ii) Use feedback from internship providers to evaluate student preparation and program outcomes.
  - iii) Use feedback from graduating students and alumni to evaluate learning experience and preparation for their careers.
- b) Meet bi-annually with advisory boards.
- c) Hold annual assessment meeting in each program to report assessment efforts and make recommendations for improvement.
- d) Use program reviews and accreditation processes to evaluate programs and revise as necessary.
- 3) Fulfill the University's liberal arts mission through the general education core.
  - a) Continue to revise and update CMAC 1003 as a vital course contributing to the social sciences
  - b) Participate in the revisions of Gen Ed to ensure that media literacy is a vital component
- 4) Enhance and promote excellence in faculty scholarly, creative, and professional development.
  - a) Enhance faculty scholarship
  - b) Enhance faculty creative works
  - c) Enhance faculty professional development
- 5) Increase interdisciplinary collaboration.
  - a) CMP
    - i) Advertising/marketing and corporate communication
      - (1) AAF advertising competition
      - (2) Student Media Production Agency
    - ii) Entertainment
      - (1) Theater
        - (a) Collaborate on productions
      - (2) Music
        - (a) Produce shows on performances/concerts
      - (3) Sports
        - (a) Collaborate to provide opportunities for sports media students to produce programs for ESPN3 and ESPN+
  - b) MMJ
    - i) Specializations for certificates
      - (1) Sciences
      - (2) Arts & Entertainment
      - (3) Business
      - (4) Agriculture
      - (5) Health
- 6) Expand diversity and global awareness.
  - a) Review, revise and enhance School's diversity plan
- 7) Extend the outreach of our College's programs.
  - a) Communications Day
  - b) Red Wolves 1
  - c) Delta Digital News Service
  - d) Student Production Agency
  - e) E-sports
- 8) Stabilize and make best use of institutional funding, space, and facilities.
  - a) Budget planning
  - b) Prioritize needs

- c) Increase resources
    - i) Media Production
    - ii) Printing Services
  - 9) Develop and strengthen the pursuit of external funding.
    - a) Fundraising and development
      - i) Scholarships
      - ii) Faculty chairs
      - iii) Facilities
    - b) Grants and sponsored research
  - 10) Create transparent processes for determining funding priorities and allocation of resources.
    - a) Travel and professional development
    - b) Facilities & equipment
    - c) Personnel
- 3. Describe the unit's policies and procedures for faculty governance. Provide in a digital format or make available in the site team workroom a print copy of faculty policy manuals, handbooks or other documents specifying policies, procedures, and the roles of faculty and students in governance and in development of educational policy and curriculum. (Note the passages and pages specific to the directive.)**

The unit's policies and procedures for faculty governance follow A-State's policies and procedures in the Faculty Handbook, which was heavily revised and approved by the A-State Board of Trustees in 2018 and most recently amended on June 4, 2020. The handbook addresses personnel policies, academic policies, procedures and services, promotion, retention and tenure policies and procedures and faculty grievance. Pages of the handbook relevant to this standard are noted in each section. The handbook is online at:

<https://www.astate.edu/a/academic-affairs-and-research/files/official/Faculty-Handbook.pdf>

The shared governance policy and descriptions of shared governance committees is found in the Book of Committees, which can be found here:

<https://www.astate.edu/a/shared-governance/shared-governance-committees/MikeMcDaniel-BookofCommittees1.3.18.pdf>

The student handbook can be found here:

<https://www.astate.edu/a/student-conduct/student-standards/STUDENT%20HANDBOOK%20122%20FINAL.pdf>

The staff handbook can be found here:

[https://www.asusystem.edu/about/handbooks/ASU\\_System\\_Staff\\_Handbook\\_Updated\\_Aug%2031%202021.pdf](https://www.asusystem.edu/about/handbooks/ASU_System_Staff_Handbook_Updated_Aug%2031%202021.pdf)

In summary, educational policies regarding undergraduate curriculum and graduation arise from a school curriculum committee, whose members include representatives from the two degree programs. The school committee makes recommendations to the school director, who makes recommendations to the college curriculum committee, which makes recommendations to the dean. The college curriculum committee consists of one elected faculty member from each department. The dean makes recommendations on behalf of the college to the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC). The chair of the college committee is the college representative to the UCC.

Each year the school meets to select committee members. This includes school, college and university committees. Faculty serving on shared governance committees serve a three-year term. Faculty members can volunteer for, be elected to or appointed to a committee. (See #5 for department and college committee memberships.)

#### **4. How often did the faculty meet during the most recent academic year?**

The school met with all faculty on the following dates:

1. Aug. 20, 2020
2. Sept. 24, 2020
3. Oct. 22, 2020
4. Jan. 9, 2021
5. Jan. 27, 2021
6. April 29, 2021

The Multimedia Journalism faculty met on these dates:

1. Sept. 17, 2020
2. Oct. 15, 2020
3. Nov. 5, 2020
4. Dec. 3, 2020
5. Feb. 4, 2021
6. Feb. 18, 2021
7. Mar 4, 2021
8. April 1, 2021

The Multimedia Journalism faculty also had a day-long retreat on May 17, 2021.

#### **5. List faculty committees and chairs. List any ad hoc committees in operation at the time of the self-study.**

School Committees (names in **bold** are MMJ faculty)

- Promotion, Retention & Tenure (PRT)
  - Lily Zeng, Chair
  - Mary Jackson Pitts
  - Mike Bowman
  - **Lillie Fears**

- **Sandra Combs**
- Curriculum
  - **Ron Sitton, Chair**
  - **Lillie Fears**
  - Mary Jackson Pitts
  - **Larz Roberts**
  - Galen Perkins
- Technology
  - Galen Perkins, Chair
  - Dustin Sullivan
  - Pradeep Mishra
  - **Terrance Armstard**
  - Derek Herring
  - Clayton Holderfield
- Assessment
  - Brad Rawlins, Chair
  - **Lillie Fears**
  - Mary Jackson Pitts
  - Mike Bowman
- Recruiting
  - Brad Rawlins
  - **Lillie Fears**
  - Mary Jackson Pitts
  - Dustin Sullivan
  - **Larz Roberts**
  - Pradeep Mishra
  - **Terrance Armstard**
- Graduate Programs
  - Lily Zeng, Chair
  - Mike Bowman
  - **Sandra Combs**
  - **Lillie Fears**
  - Mary Jackson-Pitts
  - **Ron Sitton**
- Scholarships
  - All faculty

**6. Describe the faculty’s contributions to the administration and governance of the university.**

Page 13 of the Faculty Handbook, states: “The faculty of the university includes all persons holding the rank of instructor or above and all professional librarians. The faculty is the intellectual core of the university. They deliver instruction, carry out research, perform service for their respective professions and community, and participate in the management of the university through shared governance.”

Faculty members serve on shared governance committees, which can create, review and approve policies and practices in the university. Of particular importance is the Faculty Senate, which represents faculty interests and votes on shared governance proposals.

As you can see from the list below, faculty from the school are very involved in college and university governance and administration. Names in **bold** are MMJ faculty.

#### College Committees

- College Chairs Council
  - Brad Rawlins
- College Curriculum
  - **Ron Sitton**
- College PRT
  - Lily Zeng
- College Assessment
  - **Lillie Fears**
- College Hearing Committee
  - Pradeep Mishra
  - **Larz Roberts**
  - **Ron Sitton**
- College Faculty Achievement Awards Committee
  - Lily Zeng

#### Faculty Governance Committees

- Admission Appeals Committee
  - Pradeep Mishra
- Faculty Achievement Awards
  - Lily Zeng
- Undergraduate Graduation and Appeals Committee
  - **Larz Roberts**
- Calendar Planning Committee
  - **Sandra Combs**
- Faculty Senate
  - Pradeep Mishra
  - **Lillie Fears**
- General Education Committee
  - **Lillie Fears**
- Undergraduate Enrollment and Academic Policy Committee
  - **Sandra Combs**
- Recruiting Committee
  - **Terrance Armstard**
- Safety Committee
  - Pradeep Mishra
  - Brad Rawlins

- Scholarship Committee
  - Mary Jackson Pitts
- Technology Planning
  - Galen Perkins
- Faculty Handbook Committee
  - Brad Rawlins
  - Mary Jackson-Pitts
- University Chairs Council
  - Brad Rawlins (Co-Chair)
- Shared Governance Oversight Committee
  - Brad Rawlins

**7. Describe the process for selecting, appointing and evaluating unit administrators.**

The following description is a summary from the Faculty Handbook, section V, pages 118-120:

“When a department chair or dean position becomes vacant it will be filled either through an external search or an internal appointment. Determination of whether an external search will be conducted or an internal appointment will be made will be determined by consultation between the Dean, the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research in the case of a department chair vacancy or in the case of a dean vacancy consultation between the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research and the Chancellor.

“When a department chair or college dean position becomes vacant, procedures similar to those set forth for faculty selection will be followed. A search committee will be formed (by the Dean for a chair position; by the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research for a dean position). Care should be taken to ensure that the search committee is broadly representative of the department or college. The appropriate department or college committee will screen applicants. When screening has been completed, the committee should consult with the Dean or Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research for chair and dean positions to determine which candidates should be invited for interviews. Candidates will reflect racial, ethnic and gender diversity. Faculty members should be given the opportunity to meet with candidates, evaluate their credentials and express their opinions to the committee. The search committee will make its recommendation to the appropriate administrator before the final selection is made. In most instances, a consensus will have emerged regarding the acceptable candidates. The Chancellor has final responsibility for academic administrative appointments subject to approval by the President and Board of Trustees.

“When an internal appointment is to be made, the Dean or Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research, as appropriate, will conduct a modified search, consulting with the appropriate groups. Such a search may include:

- Announcement of the vacancy and solicitation of interest in the position by faculty in the department or college.



- Interviews of the faculty exhibiting interest in the position with the department or college faculty.
- Interviews of the faculty in the department or college by the Dean or Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research.
- Private interviews of the faculty exhibiting interest in the position by the dean or Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research as appropriate.”

Brad Rawlins, who was serving as interim director for AY 2019, was hired after an external search was conducted in AY 2020.

The dean annually reviews the chairs. The review includes data from teaching evaluations, professional activities report and faculty members' evaluations of their chair's performance. In some cases, the dean conducts personal interviews with faculty members to clarify information in the evaluations. The dean shares the results of the review and a written evaluation with chairs and with the provost in March.

**8. Describe the unit’s process for timely and equitable resolution of complaints and concerns expressed by faculty, staff or students.**

The university defines a procedure for dealing with complaints when they reach a grievance stage. Most complaints in the college from students to chairs or the dean reflect a student’s perception of unfair treatment in grading or involve advising issues. Typically, a student consults the department chair about the problem, and the chair, after determining whether the student has discussed the problem with the faculty member, will try to resolve the situation informally and quickly. If it hasn’t been discussed with the faculty member, the chair recommends the student first contact the faculty member. If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the student has an option of filing a formal grievance. Chairs make students aware that they may file a formal grievance if they are not satisfied with informal resolution.

The formal procedure requires chairs to gather relevant information and discuss alternative solutions with the student filing the grievance and with the faculty member who is the target of the complaint. The process allows students who are not satisfied with the chair’s resolution of the grievance to appeal the chair’s decision to the dean and the dean’s decision to a college hearing committee. The committee ultimately makes a recommendation back to the dean for final resolution. The dean makes the final decision. The student grievance procedure can be found on pages 20-22 of the Student Handbook.

Department chairs and the dean’s office are required by university policy to maintain complaint files. Files are held in a department or dean’s office depending on who receives the complaint. No formal grievances have been filed by students in the last three years.

Resolving faculty complaints generally follow the same pattern as the student process. Complaints may be directed to the department chair or the dean. An attempt will be made to resolve the complaint impartially and constructively. If the resolution is not achieved, a

faculty member has an option to pursue a grievance. The grievance procedure can be found in Section IV, pages 87-114, of the Faculty Handbook.

Departments and colleges are expected to maintain grievance committees consisting of at least five tenured faculty members. In the School of Media & Journalism, this is an ad hoc committee that is formed depending on the party making the grievance in order to provide the most impartial and balanced evaluation of the complaint. If a grievance is not resolved at the departmental level, it is referred to the dean, and if the dean does not resolve the grievance in 10 days, it is referred to the college committee. Ultimately, if the grievance is not resolved within the college it moves to the chair of the Academic Hearing Committee, which consists of 21 university faculty members. A grievance over a tenure and promotion decision goes directly to the Academic Hearing Committee if a faculty member remains dissatisfied with the decision after discussion with the vice chancellor of academic affairs and research. No formal grievances have been filed by faculty in the last three years.

The grievance procedure for staff, found in the Staff Handbook, pages 33-43, suggests that informal discussions can often resolve complaints arising from staff members. A formal grievance process specifies that the staff member with the grievance should discuss it with the immediate supervisor. If it is not resolved, a formal written complaint may be filed with the Department of Human Resources. A staff hearing committee (10-21 members) will review the case and make a recommendation. Ultimately, the chancellor makes the final decision in faculty and staff grievances. No formal grievances have been filed by staff in the last three years.

## **Part II, Standard 2. Curriculum and Instruction**



Larz Roberts teaching in the Multimedia Lab.

**Make the following documents** available in a digital format and in the workroom during the visit:

- a complete set of syllabi for all courses offered by the unit at the time of the site visit, the immediate past regular term, and the immediate past summer and special session (including interim terms and courses offered by correspondence, online or distance education).

Course Syllabi can be found in this Dropbox Folder:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/32b27mrkb8kw6ci/AADTbshAeJ3XLZswdBBwy9IIa?dl=0>

### **Executive summary:**

When programs at Arkansas State were last reaccredited, they were part of a College of Media & Communication (CMAC). The three B. S. programs were accredited at that time—Creative Media Production, Multimedia Journalism and Strategic Communication—while

the B.A. in Communication Studies was not. At this time, only the Multimedia Journalism program is seeking reaccreditation.

When the College of Media & Communication (CMAC) was merged with two other colleges to become the College of Liberal Arts and Communication (CLAC), many changes to program curricula in multimedia journalism, creative media production and strategic communication occurred. With the CMAC organizational structure no longer in place, faculty members in the School of Journalism & Communication and the Department of Communication chose to eliminate college core classes in program curricula and rebuild their programs from the bottom up. Two programs, creative media production and strategic communication, decided to forego accreditation in favor of building curricula that were not constrained by the 72-hour rule. When the programs rebuilt their curricula, there were no common core courses and they, therefore, become more siloed and steeped in their disciplines.

Multimedia Journalism rebuilt its curriculum to stay within the accreditation guidelines, including the 72-hour rule and the professional values and competencies. It eliminated its previous sequences—broadcast journalism, news editorial and photojournalism—in favor of an integrated multimedia journalism degree that encompassed all areas and that allowed students to choose electives that would build on skills in a certain area without declaring an emphasis. So, students interested in broadcast journalism can still choose the courses that were required for that emphasis or mix and match them with other multimedia skills courses. It adds some flexibility for students to add to the skill and knowledge sets they need in a dynamic media landscape.

Please respond to each of the following instructions:

1. **Use the following format to provide an outline of the curriculum required for the major and for each of the unit's specializations. Add lines for courses and categories as needed. (Please see example provided separately with this template.)**

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

**Number of hours/units required for major degree: 48 from 2016-2020; 49 in 2021**

---

**Core Courses for All Students in Multimedia Journalism = 40 hours**

- 1) MDIA 1003 Mass Communication in Modern Society
- 2) MDIA 1013 Principles of Journalism
- 3) MDIA 2043 Basic Digital Photography
- 4) MDIA 2201 News Practicum I
- 5) MDIA 2313 Digital Media Production
- 6) MDIA 2323 Reporting Words
- 7) MDIA 3013 Multimedia Reporting
- 8) MDIA 3063 Editing for Publications and the Web
- 9) MDIA 3201 News Practicum II
- 10) MDIA 3363 Modern Media Inquiries
- 11) MDIA 4003 Media Law and Ethics

- 12) MDIA 4053 Civic Reporting
- 13) MDIA 4202 News Practicum III
- 14) MDIA 4323 Diversity and Media
- 15) MDIA 4603 Internship

**Elective courses that must be taken within the program = 9 hours**

Students choose from the following

- 1) GCOM 1813, Introduction to Digital Publishing
- 2) GCOM 3673, Desktop Publishing and Publication Design
- 3) MDIA 1001, Media Grammar and Style
- 4) MDIA 2053, Introduction to Visual Communications
- 5) MDIA 2223, Video Production I
- 6) MDIA 3003, Feature Writing and Freelancing
- 7) MDIA 3053, Sports Reporting
- 8) MDIA 3083, History of the Mass Media
- 9) MDIA 3093, Photo Storytelling I
- 10) MDIA 3203, Audio Storytelling
- 11) MDIA 3383, News in Social Media
- 12) MDIA 3603, Television Reporting
- 13) MDIA 4013, Photo Storytelling II
- 14) MDIA 4023, Public Opinion, Propaganda and the Mass Media
- 15) MDIA 4103, Data Journalism
- 16) MDIA 4113, Specialized Reporting
- 17) MDIA 4123, Media Management and Entrepreneurship
- 18) MDIA 4340, News Production and Performance Laboratory
- 19) MDIA 4343, News Production and Performance
- 20) MDIA 4552, Photojournalism Practicum and Professional Development

**Required outside of the accredited unit**

- 1) A minor consisting of at least 18 credit hours.
2. **Explain how requirements for the major do not exceed the maximum credit hours allowable under the 72-credit hour rule and how students comply with the minimum of 72 hours they must take outside journalism and mass communications. If a minor is required, include these details.**

Prior to Fall 2021, the required curriculum for Multimedia Journalism was 48 hours with a required minor of 18-24 hours outside of the media and communication fields. When ACEJMC announced changes to the 72-hour rule starting in 2021, the faculty revised the curriculum to add an hour to the News Practicum III class to accommodate a portfolio requirement. This requirement is used as part of the program's assessment plan. This bumped up the required hours to 49 beginning Fall 2021. The faculty also voted to eliminate the requirement of a minor but to continue to strongly encourage students to minor in a complementary field of study.

All graduation applications are reviewed by our academic adviser to ensure they have met the 72-hour rule. All students who have graduated in Multimedia Journalism the last six years have met this standard.

**3. Describe how the core and required courses instruct majors in all of ACEJMC's 12 professional values and competencies with a balance of theoretical and conceptual courses and skills courses.**

In 2013, the College of Media & Communication published program learning outcomes that encompass the 12 ACEJMC professional values and competencies in three categories to improve awareness of the foundational purposes of these outcomes: Think, Communicate and Be Professional (TCB). We found students embraced three foundational outcomes but struggled with memorizing 12 values and competencies. The Multimedia Journalism program continues to emphasize the outcomes in its syllabi as articulated thusly:

**THINK**

We promote problem solving by enhancing students' ability to:

- think critically, creatively and independently;
- think analytically by conducting research and evaluating information using appropriate methods, including applying basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- understand and respect others in a diverse and global society, which includes diversity of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, culture, and national origin.
- understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of messages, images and information;

**COMMUNICATE**

We promote strong communication skills by demanding students:

- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world;
- communicate effectively using words and images for multiple platforms, ranging from interpersonal communication to digital media.

**BE PROFESSIONAL**

We promote professional conduct and integrity by requiring that students:

- understand the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press and how they are applied nationally and internationally;
- understand the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- demonstrate integrity and trustworthiness through ethical and legal application of communication, independent decision-making and responsible behavior.

The ACEJMC values and competencies are taught conceptually and as skills in the following ways:

- ***Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, for the country in which the institution ant invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for a redress of grievances.***

Students are introduced to the principles and laws of free speech and press in MDIA 1003 Mass Communication in Modern Society and MDIA 1013 Principles of Journalism. Then the principles are reinforced in nearly every class while being applied most rigorously in the required Media Law and Ethics course, MDIA 4003.

Students practice the balancing act between the principle of free speech and legal constraints in the news practicums where they are required to work in student media outlets such as *The Herald*, *Red Wolf Radio*, *ASU-TV News*, and the *Delta Digital News Service*.

- ***Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.***

MDIA 1003 Mass Communication in Modern Society introduces students to main historical figures, professional developments and current institutions shaping current communications practice. MDIA 1013 Principles of Journalism narrows the scope to journalism's necessity in a democratic society. Historical developments in visual communication are taught in MDIA 2053 Intro to Visual Communication. Students can take a deeper dive into the history and professional roles of their more specialized fields through the MDIA 3083 History of the Mass Media elective.

- ***Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications.***

The school's diversity plan requires that diversity be taught in every course and faculty members report how they teach diversity in their courses as part of their annual review. Additionally, all MMJ students take MDIA 4323 Diversity and Media. Here are some examples of how faculty include diversity in required courses:

- **MDIA 1003 Mass Communications in Modern Society**, SMJ's general education requirement, is taught by multiple instructors. Lillie Fears' classes watch embedded videos in their Blackboard account and on YouTube. Fears also assigns supplemental readings for students to learn about the various stereotypes that are associated with African, Asian, Hispanic and Native American groups as well as religious minority groups (e.g., Muslims). Brad Rawlins' classes use a group exercise examining African American portrayals

in television from the 1970s to the 2010s by watching a few segments from different shows from these decades to look at stereotypes, story types, and inclusion of African Americans in different TV genres. Rawlins' classes also watch a panel entitled "Changing the Narrative: Reflecting Race on Screen," sponsored by the Aspen Institute, and students complete a video worksheet and write about why the need for more diversity in the entertainment industry is relevant. Ronald Sitton's classes discuss innovations and contributions to various media by individuals of various backgrounds. Sitton's classes spend extra time discussing the minority press when talking about newspapers; "covered" music when discussing audio/radio; as well as the Arkansas connections in different media, (e.g. John H. Johnson, founder of *JET* and *Ebony* magazines, hailed from Arkansas City, Arkansas).

- Reporting courses (**MDIA 2323 Reporting Words**, **MDIA 3013 Multimedia Reporting**, **MDIA 4053 Civic Reporting**) require students to consider diverse audiences and seek out diverse sources when producing news tips and assignments for publication. Special attention is given to the Associated Press' handling of various words for age, gender, ethnicity, disability, religion, group names and other descriptors such that students abide by style and avoid demeaning language. Course discussion focuses on how good reporting means providing voices for nontraditional sources, e.g. rather than covering an administrative framing of a situation, reporters should seek out those affected, which often provides diverse sourcing.
- **MDIA 2043 Basic Digital Photography**—Terrance Armstard required students to attend "For All the World To See" Civil Rights Movement visual exhibition at the Arkansas State University Museum. Students took photos of 5 things that stood out to them and produced a presentation-lecture.
- **MDIA 3363 Modern Media Inquiries**—Fears uses the Arkansas Department of Corrections inmate database for analyzing statistics about the incarceration percentages for people of color groups in the state compared to people of color actual population.
- **MDIA 4003 Media Law & Ethics**—Sitton uses diverse examples when discussing legal issues, including but not limited to:
  - The civil rights advertisement that led to the *New York Times v. Sullivan* libel decision;
  - The 2020 dismissal of Karen McDougal's defamation lawsuit against FOX News' Tucker Carlson;
  - A 97-year-old Arkansas resident's \$1 million damage award against Globe International Publishing for false light (privacy tort);
  - The Supreme Court decision in *R.A.V. v. St. Paul*, that overturned a hate speech conviction.



- **MDIA 4323 Diversity and Media**—The subject of diversity comes under deeper scrutiny in the popular required course. The entire course is dedicated to this learning outcome.

Elective courses also include content meant to reach this professional value.

- Larz Roberts' broadcast-centric courses (e.g. **MDIA 3203 Audio Storytelling**, **MDIA 3603 Television Reporting** and **MDIA 4343 News Production and Performance**) provide examples from his experience covering diverse topics and people. Roberts has students defend story pitches that include diversity requirements. He also uses the “outside your bubble challenge” to promote the identification of people who the students have never seen covered during their news consumption.
- **MDIA 2053 Intro to Visual Communication** teaches visual communication theory by having students learn about stereotypes that are reinforced through visual cues. Larz Roberts instructs students to design a visual communication campaign to address the stereotypes.
- **MDIA 3083 History of the Mass Media** students watch and write essays on documentaries about the Black press, Ida B. Wells-Barnett and Frederick Douglass.
- Fears' **MDIA 4023 Public Opinion, Propaganda and the Media** class also researches how propaganda and persuasion techniques were used behind the scenes of the 1968 Memphis Sanitation Workers Strike that culminated with the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- *Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.*

Theories related to media messages and images are introduced in **MDIA 1003 Mass Communication in Modern Society** and reinforced in all of the principles and skills classes. As part of the general education curriculum, the Mass Communication class requires students to write a Media Literacy essay applying theories to prompts focused on current events and media use.

Multimedia journalism students learn the basics of using visual and verbal messages to communicate important stories to their audiences. They all must take a multimedia production course. Several capstone courses require visual storytelling elements. Theories of images and information are applied in multiple upper-level skills courses where students are evaluated on their choice of messages and images.

- *Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.*

Ethics are taught across the curriculum. Students confront ethical challenges and professional principles of media and communication in **MDIA 1003 Mass Communication in Modern Society** and reinforced in all of the principles and skills classes. MMJ students must take **MDIA 4003 Media Law and Ethics**, where they learn moral philosophy as well as professional norms and ethics, then apply those principles through case studies to teach professional ethics. Some courses teach moral theory behind making ethical choices while the majority teach the professional norms, codes of ethics, and best practices that promote truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.

- ***Think critically, creatively, and independently.***

Thinking is a foundational learning objective for the school and includes thinking creatively, critically, analytically and independently. Students are taught to think critically about media and society in **MDIA 1003 Mass Communication in Modern Society**, and gather research and create messages in their upper-level courses. Core courses provide a balance of critical thinking with theory and principles courses and creative and independent thinking with applied courses in reporting and production.

- ***Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.***

The formal teaching for research methods and data analysis takes place in **MDIA 3363 Modern Media Inquiries**, which is required for all MMJ majors. Additionally, students conduct research and evaluate information for a variety of senior-level projects, such as enterprise stories in advanced reporting courses.

- ***Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.***

Writing is taught throughout the curriculum but is the primary emphasis in several required and elective courses. Students must complete at least two writing courses across the core and program before graduating. The following are writing intensive courses:

- MDIA 2323 Reporting Words
- MDIA 3013 Multimedia Reporting
- MDIA 3063 Editing for Publications and the Web
- MDIA 3303 Feature Writing and Freelancing
- MDIA 3053 Sports Reporting
- MDIA 3603 Television Reporting
- MDIA 4053 Civic Reporting
- MDIA 4113 Specialized Reporting

- ***Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.***

Statistical analysis is taught in **MDIA 3363 Modern Media Inquiries**, which is required of all MMJ majors. Quantitative data analysis also occurs in advanced courses such as **MDIA 3053 Sports Reporting**, **MDIA 4053 Civic Reporting**, and **MDIA 4123 Media Management and Entrepreneurship**. An elective course, **MDIA 4103 Data Journalism**, places a particular emphasis on statistics and data visualization.

- ***Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.***

Students evaluate their own work and the work of others very early in the program and continue throughout the curriculum in most classes. For example:

- Students in **MDIA 2323 Reporting Words** evaluate their writing and that of other students.
  - Students in MMJ courses evaluate their work and that of other students, e.g. in **MDIA 3603 Television Reporting**, students critique each other every week for grammar, visual techniques, editing skills and performance skills.
  - In **MDIA 4003 Media Law and Ethics**, students evaluate and critique ethics memos produced by their classmates.
- ***Apply tools and technologies appropriate for communications professions in which they work.***

Students take skills courses in labs equipped with the latest versions of industry software and technology: four Mac labs and the newsrooms for *The Herald* and *Delta Digital News Service* are equipped with Adobe Creative Cloud (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Acrobat Pro, Premier, Bridge, Media Encoder, AfterEffects); the video post-production lab and the broadcast newsroom are equipped with Adobe Premier; and the radio labs have Audacity, Adobe Audition and Apple Garage Band.

Students produce a newscast and other television shows in one of the largest broadcast studios in the region. Until 2021, students produced newscasts using the Associated Press ENPS package. Due to budget cuts, the school found an alternate software that provided news rundowns and content management for about one tenth of the cost. *The Herald*, *ASU-TV News* and *Delta Digital News Service* feature online sites that disseminate multimedia stories gathered, edited, and produced by students.

MMJ students learn the basics of print, audio, video, photography, digital media and social media before concentrating on a particular format. The curriculum overhaul in 2019-2020 placed more emphasis on providing depth to multimedia stories posted to multiple platforms. Multimedia elements include audio, video, photo slideshows, and relevant linked materials that provide audiences additional context to the news.

Here are some examples of what faculty are requiring in their classes:

- Students publish a WordPress portfolio for MMJ courses to prepare for media outlets already using the platform. Although they may also use Wix, Weebly or Adobe Spark, knowledge of the predominant content management system gives them a boost with employers.
- Starting in MDIA 1013 Principles of Journalism, students select a personal brand to be used across multiple professional and social media outlets, e.g. LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.
- Students post video content online using YouTube, Vimeo and other multimedia channels.
- Journalism students learn backpack reporting techniques and are required to tweet stories they are covering and record audio and video using cellphones.

**4. Explain how instruction, whether on-site or online, responds to professional expectations of current digital, technological and multimedia competencies.**

Students benefit from instruction from faculty who are constantly engaged in professional development to learn the latest technologies and techniques used in the profession. Faculty have participated in Teachapalooza and other in-person or online professional development opportunities offered by the Poynter Institute, Knight Foundation, Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas, College Media Association, AEJMC annual conference, faculty development courses offered at the university, and others. The school expects all faculty members to enhance their teaching by participating in professional development. Additionally, faculty attended multiple professional development courses to assist with effective online teaching and learning in order to adjust to hybrid and hyflex courses.

Students must build an online portfolio, use Adobe Creative Suite and Microsoft Office for their submissions, and use social media (e.g. Twitter, Facebook, etc.) to promote their stories and their brands. Faculty connect with students on social media to mentor the appropriate uses for a multimedia journalist. Students get introduced to Twitter in the Principles of Journalism course.

MMJ faculty also reach out to practicing professionals to learn about cutting-edge technologies used in the industry: Brad Rawlins, Sandra Combs, Ronald Sitton and Terrance Armstard have attended the Arkansas Press Association's annual SuperConference to meet with industry editors and publishers: Rawlins and Larz Roberts attend the Arkansas Broadcasters Association annual conference for professional development and to connect and listen to industry experts; Sandra Combs, Ron Sitton and Terrance Armstard regularly attend SPJ conferences and competitions to keep up with professional practice. Each year, four guest professionals visit classrooms to provide information about the latest practices in their respective professions as part of the Joel Gambill and Professional-in-Residence speakers series. In 2020, 10 guest speakers spoke to classes on topics ranging from current professional practices to diversity matters.

**5. Explain how the accredited unit ensures consistency in learning objectives, workload and standards in courses with multiple sections.**

In the MMJ program, very few classes have multiple sections. For those that do, faculty members derive specific instructional objects for their courses from the broad course descriptions provided in the university bulletin, the professional values and competencies matrix, and the role of the course in the overall curriculum. In courses with more than two sections, a faculty member or administrator is designated course coordinator and is expected to convene instructors in the course for consultations on a biannual basis. In many cases featuring multiple sections of the same course, the same faculty member teaches both sections, thereby ensuring consistency. Where two or more separate faculty members teach different sections, they are expected to consult with each other about the direction and content of the course. When a full-time or adjunct faculty member teaches a course for the first time, they meet with faculty who have previously taught the course to gain insight into the expected outcomes and successful pedagogy.

Textbooks in multi-section courses are the same, assignments are similar, and student learning objectives are consistent across syllabi. Syllabi are expected to cover the same material across sections, but the timetable may vary. The SMJ director or an assessment coordinator examines course syllabi to assess consistency across sections and communicate their conclusion with appropriate faculty members. For example:

- For the general education course MDIA 1003 Mass Communications in Modern Society, faculty meet together to discuss using similar assignments and pedagogy to meet the course outcomes then an assessment committee meets annually to evaluate an essay required of students on their understanding of basic media theories and application to given scenarios.
- Previously, MDIA 2323 Reporting Words required multiple sections. Faculty teaching the course would meet before and after the semester to discuss approaches and share materials to maintain consistency.

**6. Describe the methods used to select sites for internships for credit in the major; to supervise internship and work experience programs; to evaluate and grade students' performance in these programs; and to award credit for internships or work experiences. In a digital format, provide the unit's internship policy, questionnaires and other instruments used to monitor and evaluate internships and work experiences. Provide examples of recent internship sites.**

Students choose internship sites with the help of the internship coordinator, which is a course assignment given each semester to a faculty member. The internship coordinator keeps a list of several internship sites from previous internships or current providers looking for interns. The MMJ faculty can also assist students with their professional connections. The school gets several requests per semester from organizations seeking interns. To qualify for an

internship site, the internship must have work responsibilities tied to journalism, must have an experienced supervisor, and should promote learning and reinforcing professional skills.

Students complete an internship application with the provider before registering for the class. Once students have the contract, and prerequisite courses are checked, they are cleared to register for the internship course. Students complete 150 hours to satisfy the requirements. They must submit weekly reports about their internship, photos from their internship site, and a final evaluation paper at the end of the internship. The internship coordinator visits internship sites at least once every semester, either in person or via video conferencing.

Internship providers complete an evaluation of the intern at the end of the internship. The evaluation includes questions pertaining to the student's preparation, professionalism and demonstration of the values and competencies found in our program outcomes.

Internship materials can be found in this Dropbox folder:

[https://www.dropbox.com/sh/227z1oj3kgv9bjz/AACj\\_s\\_0L5K-bxErAY1NsrY0a?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/227z1oj3kgv9bjz/AACj_s_0L5K-bxErAY1NsrY0a?dl=0)

#### Recent Internships:

Arkansas Business Publishing Group (Little Rock)  
Arkansas State University Athletics Media Relations  
City of El Dorado (El Dorado, AR)  
Davis Broadcasting (Columbus, GA)  
East Arkansas Broadcasters (Jonesboro)  
Jonesboro City Hall  
Jonesboro Radio Group (Jonesboro)  
KAIT Region 8 News (Jonesboro)  
KARK/KLRT-TV (Little Rock)  
KJNB-TV (Jonesboro)  
KTHV-TV (Little Rock)  
KYTV (Springfield, MO)  
RoyalTee Magazine (Online)  
Think Media Studios (Cleveland, OH)  
Vowell Publishing (Little Rock)  
WKNO FM (Memphis)  
WMC-TV (Memphis)  
WREG-TV (Memphis)  
WTTL & WWKY (Madisonville, KY)

## **Part II, Standard 3. Diversity and Inclusiveness**



Lillie Fears recruiting students for Multimedia Journalism at Pack Preview Day.

### **Executive summary**

The school maintains and updates annually its written plan for achieving diversity and inclusiveness in its curriculum, its faculty composition, and its student populations. The school is one of the most diverse units on the A-State campus in terms of people of color, women and international faculty; the school's percentage for minority or people of color student enrollment is higher than the percentage for minorities at the university, the state and the region. Diversity and inclusiveness are taught generally across the curriculum and specifically in a required course, MDIA 4323 Diversity and Media. Students are also encouraged to take courses on diversity and inclusiveness throughout the university. The unit reports its progress and activities on diversity and inclusiveness to the university annually. Faculty members describe curricular attention to diversity in their annual productivity reports. Scholarships provided by the school's Hearst Minority Scholarship endowment assists in recruiting and retaining minority students. A Callaway endowment from the AT&T Foundation supports the school's efforts to improve the training of student journalists in the Arkansas Delta region. One of our faculty members is the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Engagement's faculty liaison for diversity at the university.

Please respond to each of the following instructions:

**1. Complete and attach the following tables:**

Table 4, “Area Population”

Table 5, “Student Populations”

Table 6, “Faculty Populations”

Table 7, “Full-time Faculty Recruitment”

Table 8, “Part-time/Adjunct Faculty Recruitment”

**Table 4. Area Population**

**Service Area:** Describe here the unit’s geographic service area as far as student enrollment is concerned (region, states, state, counties, etc.).

State of Arkansas

Based on the most recent Census figures, what percentages do the following groups represent of the population of the unit’s geographic service area as described above?

Demographics for Arkansas according to U.S. Census

<b><u>Group</u></b>	<b><u>% of population</u></b>
<u>Black/African American</u>	<u>15.7%</u>
<u>White</u>	<u>72%</u>
<u>American Indian/Alaskan native</u>	<u>1%</u>
<u>Asian</u>	<u>1.7%</u>
<u>Hispanic/Latino (any race)</u>	<u>7.8%</u>
<u>Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander</u>	<u>.4%</u>
<u>Two or more races</u>	<u>2.2%</u>
<u>Other race</u>	<u></u>
<u>Female</u>	<u>50.9%</u>



**Table 5. Undergraduate Student Populations**

Show numbers of male, female, minority, white and international students enrolled in the unit, the percentages they represent of total journalism and mass communications enrollment, and the percentages these racial/ethnic groups represent of the total institutional enrollment. Use figures from the most recent academic year for which complete data are available.

**Academic year: 2020 – 2021**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>% of total in program</b>	<b>% of total in institution</b>
Black/African-American	2	4	19.3%	13.2%
White	10	9	61.3%	74.2%
American Indian/Alaskan native	0	0	0	0.3%
Asian	0	0	0	0.9%
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	0	1	3.2%	3.9%
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0.06%
Two or more races	1	1	6.4%	2.2%
Other race	0	0	0	0
International students (any race)	0	3	9.8%	3.6%

**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.)

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

<b>Group</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>% of total faculty</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>% of total faculty</b>
Black/African-American	2	33.3%	2	33.3%
White	0	0	2	33.3%
American Indian/Alaskan native	0	0	0	0
Asian	0	0	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**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>% of total faculty</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>% of total faculty</b>
Black/African-American	0	0	0	0
White	0	0	0	0
American Indian/Alaskan native	0	0	0	0
Asian	0	0	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

**Table 7. Full-time Faculty Recruitment**

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

<b>Academic years:</b>	<b>2018 - 2019</b>	<b>2019 - 2020</b>	<b>2020 - 2021</b>
Openings	1	0	0
Total applicants in hiring pool	6	0	0
Females in hiring pool	3	0	0
Female finalists considered	2	0	0
Offers made to females	0	0	0
Offers accepted by females	0	0	0
Minorities in hiring pool	1	0	0
Minority finalists considered	1	0	0
Offers made to minorities	1	0	0
Offers accepted by minorities	1	0	0
International faculty in hiring pool	1	0	0
International faculty considered	0	0	0
Offers made to international faculty	0	0	0
Offers accepted by international faculty	0	0	0

**Table 8. Part-time/adjunct Faculty Recruitment**

Provide the following information for any searches for part-time or adjunct faculty members conducted by the unit within the past three academic years.

We did not hire any part-time faculty in the last three academic years.

<b>Academic years:</b>	<b>2018 - 2019</b>	<b>2019 - 2020</b>	<b>2020 - 2021</b>
Openings	NA	NA	NA
Total applicants in hiring pool			
Females in hiring pool			
Female finalists considered			
Offers made to females			
Offers accepted by females			
Minorities in hiring pool			
Minority finalists considered			
Offers made to minorities			
Offers accepted by minorities			
International faculty in hiring pool			
International faculty considered			
Offers made to international faculty			
Offers accepted by international faculty			

- 2. Attach to this report a copy of the unit's written plan for achieving an inclusive curriculum, a diverse faculty and student population, and a supportive climate for working and learning. This plan should give the date of adoption/last revision, any designated timelines for reaching goals, the unit's definition of diversity and the under-represented groups identified by the unit. Describe how the unit assesses its progress toward achieving the plan's objectives.**

What follows is the current diversity plan for the School of Media & Journalism as a whole, last revised in 2014-2015, when the school was the former College of Media and Communication, and updated in 2020-2021, three years after the school was created to include two programs: Multimedia Journalism, and Creative Media Production. Although only the MMJ Program is seeking re-accreditation this time, the plan covers the School of Media & Journalism. While the school's plan for diversity and inclusiveness predates the university's plan, it has been revised to include elements of the university's plan.

The school currently adopts the definition of diversity used by the university:

At A-State, diversity isn't something we "do." Diversity is a reality. We have a wonderful mix of faculty, staff, and students on our campus who hail from a variety of regions both within and outside the U.S. In fact, our student body represents a total of 68 counties throughout the world. Taking a look inside those groups will reveal still other differences in terms of personality, culture, religious beliefs, and functional background. In order to leverage our diversity, we must be intentional about creating a supportive environment - one where everyone is treated fairly and with respect; one where everyone has equal access to resources and opportunities; and one where everyone feels they are valued and that they belong despite differences in race, ethnicity, color, gender, religion, sexual identity, or socio-economic status.

Our diversity makes us better - better problem solvers, better communicators, better thinkers, and better citizens. We understand the positive effects that challenging our existing values, beliefs, and assumptions will have on our ability to meet the demands of a changing world. We firmly believe that being better is making sure that our student body has individuals they can look to as consistent and meaningful reflections of themselves and to their limitless possibilities. We understand that while all faculty and staff are expected to serve as positive role models for our students, the fact remains that many minority students and students in general, are drawn to those with whom they feel familiar and comfortable. We are committed to designing and implementing programs, and processes that allow our students to have such role models.

Diversity is a reality on our campus. When we accept each person on our campus as an equal and valued member of our community, we will be successful in leveraging our diversity. It is important that we are known by our commitment to diversity as evidenced by our inclusive work and learning environment, our acceptance of differences as positive and enriching and our ability to attract, retain and advance a diverse faculty, staff, and student body. This is our vision.

The school is careful to consider the following under-represented groups as part of its diversity plan: females, Black/African-Americans, Native Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders and those of international origin. It also considers sexual orientation as part of the plan to include faculty and students who identify as LGBTQ+. All of our faculty have received Safe Zone training to be a resource to our students.

**Multimedia Journalism Program  
School of Media & Journalism  
Arkansas State University  
Diversity Plan 2020-2021**

Arkansas State University's affirmative action policy commits the institution and its units to "the goal of equal opportunity for all" and gives responsibility for implementing this goal to administrators and other personnel "responsible for hiring employees and recruiting students." In the School of Media & Journalism, all of us are responsible for supporting the goals and carrying out the components of this plan. This plan itself uses the university plan as a starting point — but adds to it in scope and procedure. The plan has three parts: recruiting and retaining employees; recruiting and retaining a diverse student population; and communicating the value and increasing importance of diversity and multiculturalism in the media and the world at large.

### **Employees**

The school's recruiting and retention goal for faculty members will be consistent with the standards established by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications. Our first goal is to have at least 50 percent of our faculty be female or minority. A second goal is that the percentage of minority faculty be consistent with the percentage of minorities in the region, which in 2021 was 28 percent. In 2020-2021, 54 percent of faculty at Arkansas State were female and 12 percent were minority. In the school, 31 percent of faculty are female and 54 percent are minority/international. Overall, 8 of 13 faculty (61.5 percent) were women and/or minority in the school.

### **Strategies for Accomplishing Employment Goals**

1. All administrative and faculty positions will be advertised in national publications that reach women and minorities. In addition, the school will disseminate announcements in the following ways:
  - a. Send announcements to affirmative action resume banks.
  - b. Send announcements to all college and universities with graduate programs appropriate to the position.
  - c. Send announcements to appropriate academic programs at colleges and universities with significant minority enrollment.
  - d. Contact alumni, academic, and professional sources personally to identify possible female and minority candidates for positions.

2. In any search, qualified female and minority applicants will be identified and at least one will be invited to interview.
3. It is appropriate to identify and hire exceptional minority and female candidates from the alumni of the school's master's degree program. Faculty members employed in this fashion will be encouraged to work toward a terminal degree. African American candidates working on a terminal degree historically have been eligible for support equal to 50 percent of salary for two years of study if they have three years of service at the university. African American candidates may also apply for support from a state-supported program. The school will assist female and minority candidates in identifying financial support for study toward a terminal degree and will work with the university to increase the length of support when appropriate. Employees who receive such support must return to the university for an amount of time equal to the compensated leave.
4. The hiring of part-time and adjunct faculty will be consistent with the goals of the full-time hiring strategy.
5. Annual evaluations of chairs and other administrative personnel will include consideration of success in achieving affirmative action goals.

### **Students**

It is the goal of the School of Media & Journalism to enroll a percentage of female and minority students at least equal to the percentage of enrollment in the university and preferably at least equal to the percentage of female and minority students in A-State's service area. For students, the target is for 28 percent of the majors to be minority. The percentage of minority students in the school in 2020-2021 was 39 percent.

### **Student Recruitment Strategies**

1. The school will work with the Admissions Office, which has primary responsibility for undergraduate recruiting, to identify and communicate with all prospective students via mail, telephone, and personal contact. The school will work to support the work of the Admissions Office by assisting in identifying and recruiting prospective minority students participating in university sponsored events like Strong-Turner Honors Day, Preview Day, Select-A-Major Fair, and Communications Day.
2. The school will work with the Graduate School in its recruiting of minority students and particularly in maintaining communication with historically black institutions in and near the service area, particularly University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, Philander Smith College, Lemoyne-Owen College, Rust College, Alcorn State University, Tugaloo College and Mississippi Valley State University.
3. The school will assist female and minority students in identifying potential sources of financial aid and will use its own William Randolph Hearst Endowment to provide scholarship support for minority undergraduates and graduate students.
4. The school will develop mentoring relationships with high schools and community colleges that have communications programs and a relatively high proportion of minority students.

5. The school will use the James Callaway/AT&T Endowment to generate interest and improvement in journalism among disadvantaged junior and senior high schools in the Arkansas Delta region.
6. The school will continue to support the campus chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists to promote interaction with journalists of color and to develop a sense of commitment to professionalism among minority journalism and media production majors.
7. Progress toward achieving the goals will be assessed annually by the program coordinators, school director, and dean and reported to faculty, staff and the Office of Academic Affairs and Research.

### **A Diverse Environment**

1. The school should maintain a learning environment that places value on diversity and communicates the increasing implications for communications. Its strategy includes taking the following actions.
  - a. Offering a course dedicated to diversity (Diversity and Media).
  - b. Teaching multi-cultural and diversity issues across the curriculum.
  - c. Sponsoring extracurricular opportunities focused on diversity (speakers, seminars, workshops, etc.).
  - d. Inviting professionals-in-residence who can provide an understanding of diversity issues.
  - e. Providing periodic workshops on teaching about diversity and the changing demographics of society.
  - f. Asking faculty to report annually on their diversity initiatives.
  - g. Asking students on course evaluations about the inclusion of diversity issues in classes.
2. The school should encourage minority and female students to pursue professional development that will enhance the likelihood that they will enter communication. The school pursues this goal by taking these actions:
  - a. Identifying and promoting applications for scholarships arising from the school (particularly Hearst Minority Scholarships), and other places on campus or off campus.
  - b. Encouraging participation and the assumption of leadership roles by minority and female students in professional organizations and campus media.
  - c. Adding the National Association of Black Journalists to the student professional organizations on campus.
  - d. Providing financial support for participation in regional and national professional organizations.
  - e. Provide financial support for participation in regional minority job fairs.

This Diversity plan was written in 1988 and updated in 1990, 1993, 1994, 1995, 2000, 2002, 2005 and 2010. It was reviewed and slightly revised in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014. It was updated in 2021 to reflect the changes implemented since the School of Media & Journalism was established in 2018.



The School of Media & Journalism assesses and reports its progress towards achieving the objectives of its diversity and inclusiveness plans as follows:

- The school undertakes an annual review of goals for a racial mix of faculty and students, when preparing its annual minority retention progress report for the university.
- The school director reviews course syllabi for curricular attention to issues of diversity and inclusivity.
- The school reviews the student responses in course evaluations regarding diversity taught in the course.
- Faculty members provide examples of methods used in classes to teach diversity and inclusivity with updates to the university's Interfolio Faculty Activity Reporting (Faculty180) interface used in annual merit review.
- Exit surveys of graduating seniors ask how well their classes covered diversity.
- Alumni surveys ask a similar question three years after students graduate.
- The director prepares a self-assessment annually for the vice chancellor for academic affairs and research that includes the component of diversity.
- The university's diversity office monitors searches for faculty to ensure that applicants include appropriate representation of minorities and women in its pool. If the representation is inadequate, the search is extended during the current year or resumed in the following year.

**3. Describe the unit's curricular efforts to foster understanding of issues and perspectives that are inclusive in terms of gender, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation.**

The school teaches diversity and inclusiveness across its curriculum and also offers a required course on diversity and the media. Classes also share speakers of diversity who visit the school and the campus. School meetings emphasize annually the importance of teaching about issues of diversity and inclusiveness.

Many faculty members serve in various capacities in support of the Office of Diversity and Multicultural Center's vision and mission. For example, one faculty member assists the Diversity Office with minority and international faculty retention. Faculty members have served as mentors and guest speakers for the Multicultural Center's mentoring initiatives for underrepresented students.

In short, all School of Media & Journalism faculty members are encouraged to promote diversity in their courses. While all faculty members strive to do this, several faculty members are to be commended for the unique emphasis they place on diversity and globalism in their courses. For example, faculty members have accompanied students on diverse learning experiences to the following worship and community service centers in the city: Islamic Center of Jonesboro; Temple Israel; Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church; and Hispanic Community Services, Inc.

A description of course content related to diversity and inclusion is provided in Standard 2. The examples were reported by faculty members in response to an item in the Faculty 180

interfolio database used to report on faculty productivity. The examples are focused on gender, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. Course evaluations are also reviewed for the question: “The instructor in this course discusses diversity and multicultural issues as part of this class.” The average for all Multimedia Journalism courses on this question were 4.41 in Fall 2019 and 4.24 in Fall 2020 on a scale of 1-5 with 5 representing strongly agree.

**4. Describe the unit’s curricular instruction in issues and perspectives relating to mass communications across diverse cultures in a global society.**

The diversity of the increasingly global and multicultural society is also addressed in many of the classes. Faculty report the following ways in which they incorporate the understanding of different people and cultures:

- Many faculty report inviting international students to comment and report in class on how media practices are different in their countries.
- CMAC 1003, Mass Communication in a Modern Society, introduces students to diverse models of media and of the press in different countries.
- The instructor for visual communication and photojournalism classes used visual content, such as photographs, cartoons and videos to demonstrate how people from different cultures view things differently using anthropological and cultural theory from Geertz and Weber.

**5. Describe efforts to establish and maintain a climate that is free of harassment and discrimination, accommodates the needs of those with disabilities, and values the contributions of all forms of diversity.**

The faculty in the MMJ program take pride in the climate of diversity and inclusion they have tried hard to foster. They are examples of the climate as they are respectful and inclusive in their dealings with each other. In a recent school meeting exercise that asked the faculty to rank how collegial and inclusive they were as a program, they ranked themselves a 10 out of 10. They fiercely protect the climate of inclusiveness of all forms of diversity with each other and their students.

- To help ensure a climate free of discrimination, several faculty members have been active participants in Safe Zone Training Workshops, which train faculty and staff about how to create a safe and supportive campus environment for LGBT students, faculty and staff. As a result, most School of Media & Journalism faculty members are now able to designate their offices as safe zones for members in the LGBT community on campus.
- All School of Media & Journalism faculty members and staff have participated in online sexual harassment training workshops.
- Before purchasing any new technology, computer hardware or software, it must be evaluated as ADA compliant.
- The school purchased *How to be an Anti-Racist* by Ibram X. Kendi for every faculty member to open up conversations regarding diversity and inclusion in light of the Black Lives Matter movement.
- A ramp was purchased to give access to our mobile production unit to those with disabilities.

- The multimedia journalism faculty attended a training session on Title IX in August 2021, with the new director of Title IX and Institutional Equity.

**6. Describe the unit's efforts to recruit and retain a student population reflecting the diversity of the population eligible to enroll in institutions of higher education in the region or population it serves, with special attention to recruiting under-represented groups.**

The unit's student population exceeds the diversity of the student population in the service region and in the university. The state's population is 72 % white, 15.7% Black and 7.8% Latino/Hispanic, with another 4.5% representing other minority groups. The university's student population is 74.3% white, 13.9% Black, 13.7% Latino/Hispanic with another 8.1% representing international and other minority students. The school's percentage of white student enrollment is 61.6%, while its Black student percentage is 22.2% and its Latino/Hispanic is 7.1%, with other minority and international students representing another 9.1%. Specifically, the MMJ program is made up of 61.3% white, 19.3% Black, 3.2% Latino/Hispanic, with other minority and international students representing the final 16.2%.

The unit collaborates with other university offices in recruiting and retention efforts. The unit's success to some extent depends on the success of university efforts. However, the unit has taken additional steps. A description of unit actions follows:

- Providing faculty members and students as speakers and mentors for high school communications programs and job fairs.
- Participating in Strong-Turner and other special recruiting efforts to bring under-represented students to campus. (The Strong-Turner is the black alumni chapter of the A-State Alumni Association. The group takes its name from A-State's first two black graduates.)
- Using scholarships for recruiting a diverse group of students, including scholarships funded by the William Randolph Hearst Minority Endowment (approximately \$12,000 per year).
- Recruiting undeclared majors on campus through annual A-State major fairs.
- The school was awarded the James W. Callaway/AT&T Faculty Fellowship in fall 2010 to focus on the state of journalism in the lower Arkansas Delta. Under the program a faculty fellow has been providing mentoring for Delta region high school students that would provide a foundation leading to more minority students choosing journalism and A-State for their academic studies.
- Identifying and offering faculty and student assistance to high schools with significant minority enrollments, particularly the Arkansas Delta Region. This effort is enhanced by the James W. Callaway/AT&T Faculty Fellowship.
- Linking all students in the school with professional student organizations as early as possible in their academic careers. A chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) was started in 2007-2008 and has been active since then.
- Inviting minority professional communicators as guest speakers.

**7. Units in which admission is selective or varies from general university admission requirements should describe considerations given to the effects of selective requirements on minority enrollment.**

The unit's admission criteria are consistent with general university admission requirements. The programs in the school are open enrollment and there is no additional selective admission process.

**8. Assess the unit's effectiveness in retaining minority students from first enrollment through graduation. Describe any special program developed by and/or used by the unit in the retention of minority students. Note the role of advising in this process.**

The School of Media & Journalism retention and graduation rates for minority students are at or above the university's rates. The university keeps year-to-year retention rates for first-year and second-year students. According to the data provided by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning, the school's retention rates of minority students was considerably above the university's from 2016-2019.

Year	University	School
2016	69.7%	78.2%
2017	76.7%	83.5%
2018	67.7%	74.2%
2019	74.9%	79.0%

The university defines graduation rates as the percentage of a cohort that graduates within six years. The Office of Institutional Research and Planning provided the graduation rate for the most recent 6-year cohort, 2014, which showed that the university had a minority graduation rate of 36.1% and the school's rate was 36.3%.

On the whole the School of Media & Journalism appears to be doing better than the university in retention and about the same with graduation of minority students. Nevertheless, the school would like to see significant improvements to both indicators, particularly the graduation rates. The graduation rate for all students in the university in 2014 was 51.1% and in the school programs it was 72%. The school wants to improve the minority retention and graduation rates by taking the following steps:

- Working closely with University College in the teaching of Making Connections, a class designed to assist in integrating all first-year students into university academic and social life. The first-year experience class, MDIA 1013 recently changed its prefix so that it would be more strongly identified with the school's programs. The school links these sections with specific sections of CMAC 1003, Mass Communications in Modern Society, so that students share at least two classes with the same classmates in their first semester.
- Participating in "Gathering on the Green," a social event hosted by the College of Liberal Arts & Communication that is focused on giving our students information about our degree programs and student organizations.

- Mandatory and careful advising of all students, including matching students as soon as possible with a faculty adviser.
- Providing additional advising opportunities and options through the school's Advising and Career Center.
- Using the Advising and Career Center to track majors who do not register for classes in the school. The registrar's office provides a list of students who were enrolled the previous semester who have not enrolled in the next semester. The Advising and Career Center coordinator and the school director contact these students to determine the reasons why they are not registered and help those who may need assistance getting into courses.
- Encouraging minority students to participate in and take leadership roles in professional organizations and student media.
- Promoting and financing participation of minority students – and other students –to attend professional meetings.
- Assisting in locating and securing scholarship support, including those funded by the unit's Hearst endowment for minority scholarships.

In addition, the School of Media & Journalism took several steps to mentor and support faculty, staff and students from under-represented groups:

- The school created an advising center as a way to improve retention and graduation rates of students, particularly first-generation college students who struggle the most with the formal processes of a university. The first director of the advising center was an African-American female who really connected with all of our students, but especially our minority students. When she resigned to take another position at the University of Arkansas, we hired another African-American female. Both received the highest service award given to staff at the university for their excellent support for students.
- Two faculty members serve as co-advisers for the school's National Association of Black Journalists chapter, which encourages professional interaction between students and journalists in NABJ and helps to develop professional identities of students. To help facilitate these efforts, the school provides financial support for travel and lodging to the NABJ regional and national conferences, which in turn, exposes students to successful role models while pursuing their journalism careers.

**9. Describe the unit's efforts to recruit women and minority faculty and professional staff (as enumerated in Table 7, "Full-time Faculty Recruitment").**

Consistent with its diversity plan, the school has been proactive in recruiting, hiring and retaining minority faculty. Following guidelines set by the ACEJMC, the goal has been: 1) that 50% of faculty will be minority and /or women, and 2) that the percentage of minorities will be consistent with the percentage of minorities in the region. After one of our minority faculty members left to take another position at Ball State University, we were successful in hiring another African American into the vacant position. As Table 7 above shows, of the 6 total applications in the pool for the one position available in 2018-2019, 4 (67%) were females and minority. Two females and one minority candidate were the finalists for the

position. The position was offered to and accepted by Terrance Armstard, an African-American male.

The school has been more successful in recruiting diverse faculty than the rest of the campus. To ensure success in achieving its goals, it emphasizes and commits to recruiting and hiring minorities and women. The recruiting efforts follow:

- The responsible search committees contact professional and academic groups, alumni and other individuals who might know of promising candidates.
- The search committee solicits nominations and applications from specific professionals and academicians.
- The search committee identifies promising professionals and faculty members who may not yet possess appropriate terminal degrees or professional credentials for a tenure-track position but who may be excellent prospects for non-tenure positions or who may in the future possess tenure-track credentials.
- The search committee works with Academic Affairs and Research to increase compensation packages to compete successfully for female and minority candidates as well as for all candidates.
- The search committee requires that all searches have minorities and women in the pool and extending or renewing the search if the pool is insufficient.

Additionally, the school demonstrated its commitment to diversity in its faculty and staff by making the following positive personnel changes:

- An African-American female was tenured and promoted to associate professor.
- An African-American female was selected by the MMJ faculty as the coordinator of the MMJ program.
- An African-American male was hired as an instructor (effective August 15, 2019). He replaced a male assistant professor who was also African-American.
- An African-American female was hired as the coordinator for the new Academic Advising Center (effective July 1, 2017). She replaced the previous coordinator who was also an African-American female.

**10. Describe the unit's efforts to provide an environment that supports the retention, progress and success of women and minority faculty and professional staff.**

The school took the following actions to support the retention, progress and success of women and minority faculty members:

- Providing financial support for faculty members to participate in at least two scholarly or professional conferences a year (see lists in the section on curriculum and the section on scholarship).
- Encouraging faculty members to utilize reassignment opportunities for research, scholarly and professional activities (see faculty list in the section on scholarship).
- Providing opportunities to interact with mentors in the school on formal and informal bases.

- Pooling resources with the Office of Diversity to support faculty members attending professional and scholarly conferences and workshops.
- Ensuring that female and minority faculty are receiving equitable salaries, which includes petitioning the university for equity adjustments in several cases.

**11. If the unit hires adjunct or part-time faculty members, describe the unit's effort to hire minority and female professionals into these positions (as enumerated in Table 8, "Part-time/Adjunct Faculty Recruitment") and list those who are minority and female professionals.**

As Table 8 shows, the school did not conduct any searches for part-time faculty during the last three years. Adjunct faculty members are recruited from among known professionals in the area and from alumni.

**12. Provide examples of professionals, visiting professors, and other guest speakers invited or sponsored by the unit during the past three years whose background or expertise served to introduce students to diverse perspectives. (Five examples a year are sufficient and those examples should include the name, title, subject area/expertise, race, gender of speakers to provide context. The unit has the option of providing a complete list in a separate digital file.)**

The list below presents the professionals, visiting professors and other guests School of Media & Journalism have invited for the MMJ program in the last three years. The list shows a varied list of individuals, cutting across a variety of personal and professional backgrounds.

**2021, Spring**

Distinguished Joel Gambill Speaker Series guest speaker Scott Mitchell (white male), Ernst & Young, Dallas, spoke to Mass Communications in Modern Society

Dr. Adam Long (white male), ASU Heritage Sites, spoke to History of Mass Media; and Public Opinion, Propaganda & Mass Media

Penny Toombs (white female), Dyess Colony and Southern Tenants Farmers Union Heritage sites, spoke to History of Mass Media; and Public Opinion, Propaganda & Mass Media

Brittany Williams (Black female) of the Jonesboro Sun spoke to the MDIA 3013 Multimedia Reporting class about working with diverse skillsets and technology.

**2020, Fall**

Distinguished Joel Gambill Speaker Series guest speaker Brandi Hinkle (white female) of Entergy Arkansas spoke with multiple classes via Zoom.

KASU news director Jonathan Reeves (white male) spoke to Delta Digital News Service

student workers about professional audio capture.

A-State's Title IX coordinator Stephanie Lott (white female) spoke with the Principles of Journalism course.

### **2020, Spring**

Distinguished Joel Gambill Speaker Series guest speaker Photographer Kevin Pieper (white male) of Marvelous! Magazine spoke to multiple classes.

Nichol Andrews (white female), ASU School of Nursing and Health Professions, spoke to the Science, Journalism & Society Honors class.

Dr. Tom Risch (white male), Vice President for Research and Technology Transfer, spoke to the Science, Journalism & Society Honors class.

Perry Boxx and Bill Evans (white males), WPSD, Paducah, KY, spoke to multiple classes

University Photographer Travis Clayton (white male) spoke to MDIA 3043 Reporting with Images class about working as a professional marketing and advertising photographer.

Terrance Armstard (Black male) spoke with the multimedia reporting course about photography

KASU news director Jonathan Reeves (white male) spoke with the multimedia reporting course about interviewing and radio notes

### **2019, Fall**

Distinguished Joel Gambill Speaker Series guest speaker Wesley Brown (Black male), writer, *Talk Business & Politics*, Little Rock, Ark., spoke to multiple classes

Hatton Weeks (white male), General Manager, *KAIT, Channel 8*, Jonesboro, Ark., spoke to Mass Communications in Modern Society

Quentin Winstine (Black male) of The Jonesboro Sun spoke to MDIA 3043 Reporting with Images class about being a professional photojournalist.

Glynn Wilson (white male) of *The New American Journal* spoke to the multimedia reporting course about Mojo Journalism via Skype.

KASU news director Jonathan Reeves (white male) spoke with the multimedia reporting course about writing and editing audio



### **2019, Spring**

Distinguished Joel Gambill Speaker Series guest speaker Lattice Bacon (Black female), of University of New Orleans, spoke to multiple classes

Jim Johnson (white male) of PBS’ “Currently Speaking” discussed international reporting with the Mass Communications in Modern Society course.

### **2018, Fall**

Distinguished Joel Gambill Speaker Series guest speaker Lici Beveridge (white female), Breaking News & Growth reporter, *Hattiesburg American*, Hattiesburg, MS, spoke with multiple classes

Alex Gray (white male) discussed the ballot issue of casinos in Arkansas with DDNS students

Craig Rickert (white male) of Jonesboro Unlimited discussed working in broadcast with DDNS students

Author Jeff Haws (white male), formerly with the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, discussed alternative uses for a journalism degree with DDNS students via Skype

KASU news director Jonathan Reeves (white male) discussed writing and editing audio with DDNS students

## **Part II, Standard 4. Full-Time and Part-Time Faculty**



Multimedia Journalism Faculty at the Hemingway-Pfieffer Home Heritage site for spring retreat.

Make the following documents available in a digital file:

- curriculum vitae of each full-time faculty member  
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/pa0cdoi77s3vpc7/AADlKsmTJYu3QZ2LJTpaC2wja?dl=0>
- résumés of adjunct or part-time faculty, and of graduate students serving as teachers of record, teaching during the fall 2021 semester  
NA

Print copy in the workroom only:

- records on faculty promotion and tenure

### **Executive summary:**

The school is composed of full-time faculty in two classifications: tenure-track/tenured professors and non-tenured instructors (renewed on annual contracts). Adjunct or part-time faculty occasionally teach in the Multimedia Journalism program, but not since 2018. In the

past six years, one senior faculty member moved from the Multimedia Journalism faculty to the Creative Media Production faculty and one instructor died while one assistant professor left the university. One assistant professor and one instructor were hired.

Searches for faculty members follow university requirements. Searches usually seek candidates with terminal degrees and professional experience. However, the role to be played by the faculty member may dictate the balance of credentials. According to Board of Trustee policy, exceptional professional experience in communications may be substituted for a terminal degree.

All faculty members have varying degrees of professional experience. The faculty members comprise a balanced mix of tenure-track faculty and professional non-tenure instructors.

All faculty members are expected to maintain a record of scholarly, creative and/or professional activities. Faculty members undergo annual merit reviews based on student evaluations, productivity reports and review of syllabi. The school promotion, retention and tenure (PRT) committee conducts three-year and final year reviews for tenure-track faculty members. Promotion and tenure recommendations arise from evaluations by the school PRT committee, director, college PRT committee and dean. The university PRT committee and Provost make the final recommendations. Tenure and promotion are recommended to the Board of Trustees by the Chancellor. The Board votes on the final decision. Excellence of teaching and promise of excellence in scholarship, creative and/or professional activities are required for promotion.

Please respond to each of the following instructions:

**1. Describe faculty balance in terms of degrees, professional experience, gender, race and rank.**

Appropriate faculty balance has been an aspiration of the unit for a long time. The unit (then the College of Communication) established goals in the early 1990s to shift the preponderance of its faculty positions to tenured or tenure-track from non-tenure positions while maintaining an appropriate mix of professional and academic credentials. In 1992-93 only a third of the faculty was in tenured or tenure-track positions. The others were instructors, occupying positions that historically have been used to hire faculty members with strong media experience but without the terminal-degree credentials necessary for tenure-track appointments. The unit achieved a majority of tenure-track faculty in the early 2000s and has continued that proportion since then. Currently, 54% of the school and 67% of Multimedia Journalism faculty members are in tenure-track positions.

The program has six faculty members, four of whom are in the tenure track or tenured. Three of the six have terminal degrees and the fourth was hired in a tenure-track position due to extensive experience; the two non-tenure-track faculty members hold Master's degrees.

The faculty's professional background includes experience in print and broadcast journalism, photojournalism, public relations, audio and video production. This table provides a

breakdown of the Multimedia Journalism faculty in the School of Media & Journalism.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Degrees</b>	<b>Professional Experience</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Armstard, Terrance	M.A., Communication, University of Louisiana at Monroe	12 years as photojournalist, digital media coordinator, editor for newspapers and public relations	Male	Black/African American	Instructor, Adviser to Delta Digital News Service
Combs, Sandra	M.A., Journalism, Michigan State University at East Lansing	23 years as reporter, editor, editorial writer for newspapers	Female	Black/African America	Associate Professor, tenured, Adviser to Herald
Fears, Lillie	Ph.D., Journalism, University of Missouri-Columbia	4 years in newspapers, public relations	Female	Black/African American	Professor, tenured
Rawlins, Brad	Ph.D., Mass Communication, University of Alabama	3 years in public relations	Male	White	Professor, SMJ Director, tenured
Roberts, Larz	M.A., Journalism, University of Mississippi	6 years in broadcast news, production	Male	Black/African American	Instructor, Adviser to ASU-TV News and Red Wolf Radio
Sitton, Ronald	Ph.D., Mass Communication, University of Tennessee	2 years in newspapers, ~15 years freelancing	Male	White	Assistant Professor, tenure-track

**Summary:**

**Rank**

2 instructors  
 1 assistant professor (tenure-track)  
 1 associate professor (tenured)  
 2 full professors (2 tenured)

**Sex**

4 males  
 2 females

**Race/Ethnicity**

2 White

#### 4 Black/African American

- 2. Describe how the unit selects full-time and part-time faculty and instructional staff. Provide in digital format examples of published advertisements for faculty openings since the last accreditation review that show required and preferred qualifications of candidates.**

The search processes and criteria for “permanent” and “part-time” faculty are consistent with university policies as depicted on pages 116-118 of the Faculty Handbook (<https://www.astate.edu/a/academic-affairs-and-research/files/official/Faculty-Handbook.pdf>). The description below summarizes the search process.

To oversee the hiring process, a search committee is formed that is responsible for adhering to university search guidelines for securing qualified candidates for a position. The committee is chosen from faculty in the respective program and reflects racial, ethnic, and gender diversity. The committee develops qualifications, conducts the search from the initial screening through the interview process and ultimately makes recommendations to the school director who makes recommendations to the dean.

A search may begin after approval from the Office of Academic Affairs and Research. Currently, the university is under a hiring freeze and so a Hiring Freeze Justification Form has to be submitted to AAR. If the position is approved, the search committee develops qualifications for the open position and develops strategies to ensure diversity of background, race, ethnicity, and gender are represented among applicants. The position description and advertising copy are submitted to Human Resources and are also reviewed by the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. Once these are approved, the school works with HR to advertise the position. The university will advertise in the Chronicle of Higher Education, Higher Ed Jobs, Inside Higher Ed, Insight to Diversity and on nine different diversity websites with Job Target. The school targets other publicity channels depending on the position.

The search committee reviews the candidate’s materials (application letter, CV, reference letters, transcripts, etc.) and formulates a “short list” of candidates to recommend to Academic Affairs and Research (AAR) and the Academic Diversity Initiatives office to interview. These persons on the short list are normally interviewed via videoconferencing such as Zoom. The committee decides which applicants to bring to campus for interviews and submits the names to AAR and Diversity to approve. Campus interviews include meetings with students, faculty, staff in AAR and HR as well as classroom and seminar presentations to students and faculty and campus/community tours. Based on feedback from the search committee, a recommendation is made to the school director who makes a recommendation to the dean, who in turn makes a recommendation to AAR.

Appointment to tenure and tenure-track positions normally requires a doctorate. However, an act from the Board of Trustees allows significant professional experience to count in lieu of a doctorate and thus an individual with significant professional experience but no doctorate may be appointed to a tenure-track position. The School of Media & Journalism has one example of a tenured, associate professor who does not have a terminal degree but does have

significant professional experience (23 years as reporter, editor, and editorial writer for newspapers).

The school had one opening for a faculty position in Multimedia Journalism since the last accreditation site visit. The position was for a 12-month instructor position to teach multimedia and photo journalism and to advise the Delta Digital News Service lab. The position description and job advertisements are located in this Dropbox folder:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/8d2n4o48jodwnw2/AACzOKVhNzmp2LQkGIulu5ona?dl=0>

**3. Describe the unit's expectations of faculty members in teaching, research, creative and professional activity, and service and its process for the award of tenure, promotion, reappointment and salary. (Provide digital access to relevant faculty handbook sections and any supplementary promotion and tenure criteria and procedures adopted by the unit. Please provide specific page numbers.)**

All faculty members are expected to teach effectively, maintain a program of scholarly, creative and/or professional activities, advise students and provide service to campus committees, scholarly and/or professional organizations and the public at large. Effective teaching has the greatest emphasis. Evidence of teaching effectiveness is measured by evaluations of students, peers and supervisors and other anecdotal evidence related to teaching achievements.

Scholarly, creative and/or professional activities are critical for attaining tenure and promotion and are expected of every pre-tenure, tenured or non-tenured faculty member. Scholarly, creative or professional productivity (as defined in the school promotion, retention and tenure criteria) includes “publication in peer-reviewed and professional media, formal presentation to academic and professional audiences, primary involvement in the creation of films, audio or video productions, radio or television broadcasts, photography or graphic exhibits, brochures and other mass communications media and publication of meritorious articles, reviews and commentaries in popular media.” Non-tenure-track faculty members tend to focus more heavily on professional or creative activities, and tenure-track or tenured faculty members focus on scholarly activities.

Service includes participation and providing leadership on campus and contributing professional and scholarly expertise to the public, the media or the academy.

The school's criteria for tenure and promotion are included in this Dropbox folder:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/8d2n4o48jodwnw2/AACzOKVhNzmp2LQkGIulu5ona?dl=0>

**4. Describe professional development programs, workshops in teaching, or other methods used to stimulate and encourage effective teaching.**

The school strongly encourages faculty to continue professional development activities to ensure that the instruction in courses is current and relevant. Faculty are required to report

their professional development activities in Faculty180, the university's faculty productivity software, and professional development activities contribute to merit evaluations. Annual reports indicate that MMJ faculty take advantage of several opportunities offered through the university, professional organizations and academic associations.

The university offers professional development courses through the Instructional Technology and Teaching (ITTC) Faculty Center, which recently changed its name to the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. The center offers courses all year round with more intensive courses offered in the summer. Prior to 2020, the summer institute courses provided a small stipend to the participants, increasing the incentive to participate. In 2020 and 2021 the center offered several courses focused specifically on enhancing teaching and learning in online platforms and hybrid formats. Most of these courses were offered online and did not include a stipend.

The MMJ faculty also regularly participate in professional development offered by academic and media associations at the state, region and national levels. They regularly attend meetings of the Arkansas Press Association, Arkansas Broadcasters Association, Arkansas College Media Association, College Media Association, Society of Professional Journalists, Southwest Education Council for Journalism and Mass Communication, national and regional meetings of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, to name a few.

Several of the faculty also attend webinars and workshops hosted by professional organizations such as the Poynter Institute, Knight Foundation, Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas, Scripps Howard Foundation and others.

A full list of professional development activities is provided in this Dropbox Folder:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/8d2n4o48jodwnw2/AACzOKVhNzmp2LQkGIulu5ona?dl=0>

**5. Describe the normal workload for a full-time faculty member. Explain how workloads are determined. If some workloads are lighter or heavier than normal, explain how these variations are determined.**

In accord with university policy, tenure-track faculty workload normally includes 12 hours of teaching per semester plus scholarly/professional activities, advising and service. The 12 hours represent approximately 70 percent of a faculty member's workload. The remainder of the load is usually described as 20 percent research and 10 percent service depending on course assignments and other duties. They are also expected to advise students. Percentages for the load distribution are adjusted to reflect faculty members' other assignments.

Instructors are expected to teach 15 hours and do not have expectations to produce scholarship or creative works, although the school does expect them to engage in professional practice to keep current on industry trends and standards. Instructors also contribute service on committees and advising students.



Faculty members who have active research programs may apply for a one-course reduction each semester to pursue a specific project. Faculty members who seek reassignment normally submit proposals to chairs early in the preceding semester. Faculty members who receive reassignments are expected to show substantial progress on the projects and must report their progress by the beginning of the following semester. Currently, these reductions are only awarded to pre-tenure faculty.

Four positions have continuing appointments that have administrative assignments and reduced teaching loads. Teaching loads for these positions are 12 hours for the ASU-TV News and Red Wolf Radio adviser (Roberts) and Delta Digital News Service Adviser (Armstrong), six hours per semester for *The Herald* adviser (Combs), and nine hours for the Multimedia Journalism Coordinator (Fears).

The director (Rawlins) is expected to teach three hours per semester. However, as is the case with most faculty in the school, he has taught overloads each semester to help meet curriculum needs.

- 6. Demonstrate that full-time tenured, tenure-track and fixed-term faculty have taught the majority of core and required courses for the three years before the site visit. If full-time faculty have not taught and are not teaching the majority of core and required courses, the unit should explain how its staffing plan accomplishes the goal of reserving the primary responsibility for teaching to the full-time faculty.**

Percentage of core and required courses taught by full-time faculty in the Multimedia Journalism program:

2020-21 school year: 100%

2019-20 school year: 100%

2018-19 school year: 100%

- 7. Describe the unit's processes and criteria for evaluating the performance of full-time and part-time faculty and instructional staff. Use a digital format to provide any course evaluation forms, peer review forms or other documents used in evaluations.**

Annual performance reviews are mandatory as per the state of Arkansas and are based on a review of student evaluations and syllabi as well as annual productivity reports. Student evaluations are reviewed by the school director and figure into the merit increase worksheet (a sample course evaluation form is included in the Dropbox link provided at the end of this question). Evaluations are discussed in the annual review process and play a role in faculty promotion and retention. Information from the student evaluations, syllabi review, and annual productivity reports are figured into a merit worksheet that determine merit raises.

The school director conducts a review of syllabi in terms of course objectives, topics covered, readings assigned, grading policies, etc. to ensure quality and current instruction and pedagogy. Evaluations of syllabi are discussed with individual faculty and in group faculty meetings.



Productivity reports are extracted from Faculty 180, the university's productivity repository. Faculty are asked to be sure their Faculty 180 reports are up to date prior to January 1 of the upcoming year. The report contains annual achievements in teaching, research, creative, and professional activities, and service. The report also asks faculty to address professional development, teaching of diversity and names of invited lecturers in classes.

The director uses a merit rating form which awards points for various categories of productivity. The total number of points figures into merit increases. The director provides faculty a letter of review summarizing conclusions about quality and quantity of productivity. The director then meets individually with faculty to discuss the letters, addressing faculty strengths as well as areas that could use improvement and ways to improve those areas. The form is included in the Dropbox link below:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/8d2n4o48jodwnw2/AACzOKVhNzmp2LQkGIulu5ona?dl=0>

**8. List selected achievements in teaching since the last accreditation review: awards or citations for high-quality teaching; grants or other support for development of curriculum or courses; publications and papers on teaching; etc. (Five citations each year are sufficient, but the unit has the option of providing a full list in a separate digital file.)**

2016

- Sandra Combs, ITTC/Faculty Center Summer Institute Fellow, Arkansas State University.
- Lillie Fears, ITTC/Faculty Center Summer Institute Fellow, Arkansas State University.
- Lillie Fears, Fellow, 2016 Scripps Howard Journalism Entrepreneurship Institute, Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

2017

- Sandra Combs, ITTC/Faculty Center Summer Institute Fellow, Arkansas State University.
- Lillie Fears, ITTC/Faculty Center Summer Institute Fellow, Arkansas State University.
- Lillie Fears, Recipient, 2016-17 Scripps Howard Foundation Visiting Professors in Social Media Program Grant; Externship: Dallas Morning News.
- Lillie Fears, finalist, in the Great Ideas for Teaching (GIFT) 2017 Poster Contest Presentation, for the submission, "From Colored to African American," AEJMC, Chicago, August 2017.
- Lillie Fears, "Tweet This: Two Weeks on the Social Media Frontlines", panel presentation featuring 2016-17 class of Scripps Howard Foundation Visiting Professors in Social Media, AEJMC, Chicago, August 2017

2018

- Sandra Combs, ITTC/Faculty Center Summer Institute Fellow, Arkansas State

University.

- Lillie Fears, ITTC/Faculty Center Summer Institute Fellow, Arkansas State University.
- Larz Roberts, grant to develop MDIA 2053 Intro to Visual Communication for online instruction.

2019

- Sandra Combs, ITTC/Faculty Center Summer Institute Fellow, Arkansas State University.
- Sandra Combs, College Media Advisors Honor Roll for 4-year Newspaper Adviser.
- Lillie Fears, ITTC/Faculty Center Summer Institute Fellow, Arkansas State University.

2020

- Terrance Armstard, grant to develop MDIA 2043 Basic Digital Photography for online instruction.

## **Part II, Standard 5. Scholarship: Research, Creative and Professional Activity**



Sandra Combs receiving the 2020 Unsung Hero Award from the Craighead County NAACP for spearheading the effort to name a street after Dr. Martin Luther King.

### **Executive summary.**

Faculty members in the Multimedia Journalism program are expected to maintain an active record of research, creative and/or professional activities. The nature of the activities varies with the academic position and professional background of the faculty member. Tenure-track faculty focus more on research, and nontenure-track faculty members tend to engage in professional activities, which sometimes have a dual purpose that involves teaching or service learning. The expected level of productivity varies with teaching load and the nature of the faculty member's appointment. Considering the high teaching load (12 hours per semester for tenure-track and 15 hours for nontenure-track), the faculty continue to produce scholarship at an admirable pace. The MMJ program has averaged four tenure-track faculty positions over the review period. This group produced 33 publications and 43 presentations, or an average of 8 publications and 10 presentations each, over that period. The university, college and school invest in promoting scholarship with generous funding for expenses for presentation of papers and pursuit of research grants. The school can provide course

reassignment time for scholarship, but recently that is only available to pre-tenure faculty or grant-funded research.

**1. Describe the institution’s mission regarding scholarship by faculty and the unit’s policies for achieving that mission.**

Arkansas State University desires to move to a more research-intensive status. This means that the expectations for published scholarship and sponsored research are increasing. The most current Faculty Handbook indicates that faculty members should “continue to promote the transformation of A-State into a research-intensive institution” (p. 11). The College of Liberal Arts and Communication and the School of Media & Journalism have a Promotion and Tenure document that promotes and rewards scholarship and creative works. The university also provides course reassignment time to faculty actively engaged in scholarship, although in recent years that has been primarily available to grant-funded research that provides teaching buy-outs. Funds are provided annually to the college from Academic Affairs and Research for faculty development “to build and sustain a culture of academic excellence characterized by teaching, scholarship, creative activity, and service supportive of the acquisition of knowledge skills, and abilities necessary for personal fulfillment, successful careers, and responsible citizenship in an increasingly diverse and global society.” Part of the funds are used to assist faculty attendance at research conferences.

**2. Define the group of faculty whose work is included in this section and state time restrictions used to incorporate activities of faculty who were not employed by the unit since the last accreditation review (for example, new faculty and retired faculty).**

The School of Media & Journalism has seven full-time faculty represented in this report section. Faculty members who have been in the MMJ program during the period since the last reaccreditation visit are included in this report. Combs, Fears, Rawlins and Roberts were faculty at A-State during the last review. Since then, Sitton joined the faculty in July 2015, Tait left in December 2018 and Armstard joined in August 2019. Sitton was originally hired as an instructor and moved to a tenure-track position in August 2019, therefore his academic scholarship only covers the last three years. Rawlins, whose scholarship is in public relations, was appointed interim chair in 2019 and chair in 2020, but has been a faculty member at A-State during this review period and his scholarship is included. The unit’s productivity report is shown in the grid in the section below and only reports research and creative works produced by faculty members when they were a part of A-State. This is reported as such to indicate the productivity of the unit.

**3. Using the grid that follows, provide counts of the unit’s overall productivity in scholarship since the last accreditation review by activity; first the totals for the unit as a whole and then for the individuals who produced these totals, broken down by academic rank. The chart should provide a snapshot of scholarship activity within the unit since the last accreditation review. Therefore, the grid should capture relevant activity by all full-time faculty only while at the accredited unit. Provide the total number of individuals in each rank in place of the XX. Adapt the grid to best reflect institutional mission and unit policies and provide a brief narrative.**

The university and school tenure and promotion (PRT) documents state that faculty must demonstrate “continuing promise of scholarly, creative or professional productivity.” The school defines “Continuing promise” as long term, regular and recent scholarly activities that include peer-reviewed publications, peer-reviewed presentations, judged creative works and publication of meritorious articles, reviews and commentaries in popular media. The school document describes a successful candidate for tenure and promotion to associate professor will have “two significant publications” and at least a significant scholarly activity each year. To retain graduate faculty status, scholars must demonstrate regular and recent scholarship. Generally, this is considered to be at least a conference presentation each year and a publication every two years.

The table below demonstrates that, despite the high teaching expectations, faculty in the MMJ program remain active in their scholarship and creative works.

Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activities	Total from Unit*	Individuals				Totals (6)
		Full Professors (2)	Associate Professors (1)	Assistant Professors (2)	Other Faculty** (2)	
Awards and Honors	4	4	2		2	
Grants Received Internal	1			1		
Grants Received External	8	7		1		
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co-authored	0					
Textbooks, Sole- or Co-authored	1	1				
Books Edited	0					
Book Chapters	1		1			
Monographs	0					
Articles in Refereed Journals	15	7	4	7		
Refereed Conference Papers	27	17	3	10		
Invited Academic Papers	16	10		6		
Encyclopedia Entries	9	2	1	6		
Book Reviews	3		1	2		
Articles in Non-refereed Publications	4	1	1	2		
Juried Creative Works	0					
Non-juried Creative Works	5				5	
Other (please specify)						

\*Co-authored work should be counted as a single publication in the unit totals. However, if, for example, two members of the faculty are co-authors on the same journal article, it would be reported as a publication for both authors. \*\*Includes all full-time faculty who do not hold listed ranks, such as instructors and others on term appointments. Many faculty in this category may hold teaching appointments without significant scholarship, research or creative requirements.

4. **List in a digital file the scholarly, research, creative and professional activities of each member of the full-time faculty since the last accreditation review. Limit to 10 per faculty member through the review period. The unit has the option of providing a complete list in a separate digital file. (Full-time faculty refers to those defined as such by the unit.) If including faculty who have since left the unit, please note. Professional service activities should be reported in Standard 8.**

A list of activities is found in this Dropbox folder:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/xjpyo8vbde84aih/AAB57QQvMG2C323nHdpilmWra?dl=0>

5. **Describe the institution’s policy regarding sabbaticals, leaves of absence with or without pay, etc. List faculty who have taken sabbaticals or leaves during since the last accreditation review. Give one-sentence descriptions detailing the academic achievements of each sabbatical.**

The University grants “compensated faculty leave” (which is called sabbatical leave at many institutions) and “leave without pay.” According to the policy found in the Faculty Handbook on pages 131-135, compensated leave may be granted for research, writing, and other/professional creative activities. It may also be granted for graduate study and retraining. After six years without a leave, a faculty member may receive one semester leave at full salary or a full academic year at half salary. Faculty members with three or more years of service at A-State may receive up to 50 percent of a salary for an academic year’s leave of absence for graduate study. A similar leave may be granted to faculty members for retraining.

Faculty members seeking compensated leave submit proposals to A-State’s Faculty Research Committee. Letters of evaluation and support from the director and the dean assessing resource implications must accompany proposals. The committee ranks campus proposals by merit and forwards the proposal to the VCAAR to determine in consultation with the appropriate deans with proposal require financial support. Faculty members who receive support are required to return to A-State for at least one academic year.

- Rawlins received a one semester compensated leave when he returned from setting up the A-State campus in Queretaro Mexico. During that leave he published a second edition of a book, edited a journal article for resubmission and retrained to teach social and digital media in strategic communication.

6. **Describe travel funding, grant support, or other methods or programs the unit uses to encourage scholarship, research, and creative and professional activity.**

There are several ways the university and unit encourage scholarship, research, creative and professional activity.

- Reassignment time: Faculty may apply for reassignment time to work on a particular project or set of projects. Reassignment usually provides three hours of release time

from teaching. In order to apply, faculty must submit a proposal to the school director the semester prior to the reassignment. If granted reassignment time, faculty must submit a progress report following the semester of reassignment. Pre-tenured faculty are usually granted one course reassignment to help them start their research agenda. Tenured faculty in the school have been given research reassignment time in the past, but, because of increased pressure for faculty to teach a full load, no tenured faculty member in Multimedia Journalism has had a research reassignment since 2015.

- Graduate assistants: The graduate school provides graduate assistants to the school. The Director of Graduate Studies, Dr. Lily Zeng, divides up the time among the graduate assistants to support faculty members engaging in scholarship, creative, or professional projects. Currently, there are five graduate assistants within the school.
- Professional development funds: Faculty development funds are allocated from Academic Affairs to colleges annually to be used to support faculty members traveling for scholarly or professional activity. This money is evenly split among the nine academic units in the college. Last year, the School of Media & Journalism received \$2,770 from this fund. This amount is added to the travel and professional development budget in the school.
- School travel funds: The school has an annual budget allocation for travel in the amount of \$6,632. This budget was automatically cut by 20% each of the last two academic years, so in effect it has been \$5,305. After adding the professional development funds to the travel funds, this averages out to \$621 per faculty member for the 13 faculty in the school. Fortunately, the school has access to additional resources to support scholarship and as a rule the school has been able to fully fund at least one trip per year to encourage scholarship, research and professional development. The school fares much better with travel support than the other units in the college.
- For several years, the Office of Research and Technology Transfer offered to help faculty write research grants after participating in a four-week workshop. At the end of the workshop, faculty members were paid a stipend and expected to have a grant proposal ready to submit. In the last three years, the program changed to no longer include a summer institute and stipend. It currently offers periodically scheduled seminars and workshops and assists faculty with finding and managing grants.

## **7. List faculty who have taken advantage of those programs since the last accreditation review.**

### **Research Reassignment Time**

- Gabriel Tait was given one course reassignment time for each semester to help start research agenda required for tenure from fall 2013 to fall 2019.
- Ron Sitton has been given one course reassignment time for each semester to help start research agenda required for tenure from fall 2019 to current semester.

However, it should be noted that he has also taken on additional independent study courses to help students graduate.

#### Graduate Assistants

- All of the tenure-track faculty members have had a graduate assistant for at least 10 hours a week every semester since the last review.

#### Professional Development and Travel Funds

- Using financial data going back to 2016, faculty members have received the following support for professional development and travel from fall 2016 to spring 2021. Most of the scholarly and professional development events in the last 18 months have been virtual and have not cost as much.
  - Terrance Armstard has been funded for primarily online professional development such as Teachapalooza and other Poynter workshops over the last two years.
  - Sandra Combs was funded for 20 scholarship and professional development events for a total of \$26,424 over the last five years for an average of five trips and \$5,385. Her travel has been supplemented by the Herald budget.
  - Lillie Fears was funded for 14 scholarship and professional development events for a total of \$14,647 over the last five years for an average of three trips and \$2,929. Her travel has been supplemented by the Callaway grant.
  - Larz Roberts was funded for 17 scholarship and professional development events for a total of \$26,015 over the last five years for an average of 3.5 trips and \$5,203. This includes taking students on some student competitions and awards trips and was supplemented by student awards budget.
  - Ron Sitton was funded for 14 scholarship and professional development events for a total of \$6,314 over the last four years for an average of 3 trips and \$1,578.
  - Gabriel Tait was funded for 9 scholarship and professional development events for a total of \$10,763 over three years for an average of 3 trips and \$3,587. His travel was occasionally supplemented by the Office of Diversity.

#### Grant Writing Workshops

- Lillie Fears and Brad Rawlins attended a two-day grant/funding workshop in 2019.



## Part II, Standard 6. Student Services



Herald Staff preparing for the next edition of the student newspaper. The paper is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in November, 2021.

During the visit, the unit should make the following accessible to the team:

- advising records
- other files related to student services

### Executive summary:

Students are advised by faculty with the assistance of an Advising Center that was one of the first on campus in 2013 (other units in the college now have advising centers as well). Faculty are assigned advisees and are responsible to advise them prior to registration and to help them keep on track toward graduation. Faculty have regular office hours (including virtual office hours that started during the pandemic) and hold extended hours during the advising period leading up to online registration. They must sign off on the student's planned schedule before the student can register for classes. The Advising Center, under the direction of Candace Evans, assists students when faculty are not available (summers for example), works with faculty to adjust student schedules, lifts advising holds, prepares and submits course substitutions, works with students with graduation applications and assists the school director with retention efforts. The registrar's office has recently implemented new

online degree evaluation software, Degree Works, to help with advising. The quality of advising has received very good evaluations from exit surveys with seniors.

Student media have offices adjacent to the department areas and have faculty who serve as advisers. Three of the media outlets—ASU-TV, Red Wolf Radio and *The Herald*—are student-managed and operated. They are not “lab media” per se but students in Multimedia Journalism register for three News Practicum courses that require their participation in one or more of the student media outlets. However, these media outlets are not limited to students majoring in Media & Journalism programs and students from a variety of majors write for the student newspaper or have a program on the student radio station. A relatively new student media outlet, Delta Digital News Service (DDNS), operates more like a lab, is tied to MDIA 3013 Multimedia Reporting and is generally limited to students majoring in the school.

Placement statistics for MMJ majors are very good. Of the recent graduates (last three years) on whom we have current information, all are employed or are in graduate school. Half are employed in media positions, 25% are in graduate or law school and the other 25% are in communication-related positions.

Please respond to each of the following instructions:

**1. Complete and attach Table 9, “Student Aid.”**

**Table 9. Student Aid**

Provide information for each of the two academic years preceding the accreditation visit.

	2019 - 2020	2020 - 2021
<b>SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED TO UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN THE UNIT</b>		
<b>(Multimedia Journalism Students)</b>		
Total amount of scholarship dollars from funds controlled by institution	\$408,738 (\$102,587)	\$353,768 (\$82,206)
Number of students receiving scholarships from funds controlled by institution	122 (30)	104 (20)
Median individual scholarship from funds controlled by institution	\$3,350 (\$3,419)	\$3,402 (\$4,110)
Total amount of scholarship dollars from funds controlled by unit	\$65,555 (\$14,325)	\$65,075 (\$14,550)
Number of students receiving scholarships from funds controlled by unit	38 (11)	43 (13)
Median individual scholarship from funds controlled by unit	\$1,725 (\$1,302)	\$1,513 (\$1,119)
<b>UNDERGRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS OR WORK-STUDY APPOINTMENTS</b>		
Number of students holding appointments	19	19
Range of stipends	Minimum Wage	Minimum Wage

- 2. Describe how the unit informs students of the requirements of the degree and the major, advises them on effective and timely ways to meet the requirements, and monitors their compliance with the requirements, including the 72-hour rule. Provide digital files of advising guides, manuals, newsletters or other internal communication with students. Provide a print copy in the workbook.**

All incoming freshman go through New Student Orientation and Registration the summer before they enter the university. In their first semester, they take a 3-credit First Year Experience course (taught by a school faculty member) where they get an orientation to the school's programs along with a standardized curriculum that teaches them about other university policies and practices and how to transition successfully to being a college student.

All undergraduate Multimedia Journalism students are assigned to a faculty adviser. Incoming freshman are automatically assigned to the MMJ coordinator, Lillie Fears. During the first faculty advising session, students are encouraged to discuss course requirements,

academic concerns, and to create a curriculum map to follow. Students and advisers use Degree Evaluation, an online tool developed by the registrar's office and found in Banner, to keep track of degree requirements and plan schedules. Degree Evaluation is being replaced by an off-the-shelf degree management tool, Degree Works, and is still working through some of the kinks. But, this program is more intuitive and easier to track degree requirements.

While advising occurs throughout the semester, students are responsible for scheduling an appointment with their faculty adviser each semester prior to registration. Advisers are expected to schedule longer office hours than usual during "advising week" prior to the beginning of enrollment each semester. All students must be advised before they enroll for classes for the following term. Students prepare to meet with their faculty adviser by preparing a list of the courses they anticipate taking the next semester (assisted by Degree Evaluation or Degree Works). The students then meet with their faculty advisers to go over this list.

Faculty and students use Starfish (branded as Pack Support on the A-State campus), a retention solutions software program that allows faculty to set up office hours and students to schedule advising appointments. The program also allows faculty members to record attendance, flag students who are missing classes or not turning in assignments, give kudos to students who are doing well, and refer them to student support centers, such as the writing center, career services or counseling center. The purpose of the program is to keep students better informed of their academic performance and to alert others who might be able to assist them.

The full-time Advising and Career Center assists students in the School of Media & Journalism and the Department of Communication. The director of the center, Candace Evans, is available to students when they cannot reach their academic adviser. She also monitors student progress toward graduation, assists with course substitutions that can occur when curriculum requirements change, files graduation intent forms and assists with retention by reaching out to students who are not registered to determine the reasons and offer assistance. The center keeps all student records and ensures that students meet the graduation requirements, which, until this year, included the 72-hour rule.

Students learn about the school's activities, requirements and policies through the online ASU Bulletin, group e-mails to students in specific classes, e-mails to majors via distribution lists, the school website, postings on bulletin boards, announcements in classes and in student professional groups and Blackboard (a course management system used in classes). Some faculty members also use social media such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to communicate with students. *The Herald*, ASU-TV, Red Wolf Radio, Delta Digital News Service and KASU also provide periodic information.

Materials used for advising are found in this Dropbox folder:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ekh9odnzzg929mss/AABDVMtNA7weJSwxQQjKIUmja?dl=0>

**3. Describe the unit's process for evaluating its advising and counseling services. Include measurements of the accuracy of academic advising, student and faculty opinion of the quality of advising, or other indices of the effectiveness of advising. Discuss the results of these assessments.**

An exit survey is administered to graduating seniors to evaluate their experience with the media and journalism programs. Four items are directly related to the student's advising experience:

- I have been well advised in my academic major
- My adviser provided good advice in planning my degree completion
- My adviser has been readily available for consultation
- My adviser has been up-to-date on academic requirements

From 2015-2018, the exit survey was administered to all students in, what was then, the Department of Media. During those four years, 96% of the students responded that they strongly agreed or agreed with the statements above regarding the quality of advising.

When the two programs revised their curricula, they became more autonomous and the vehicle that was used to collect the exit surveys, a capstone course now only offered in Creative Media Production, was not longer available to MMJ students. So, for the last two years, the collection of the senior exit survey was not conducted with MMJ students. To address this shortfall, the MMJ built the exit survey into a recently revised course, News Practicum III. To gather recent data to evaluate the advising experience for the self-study, a survey was sent to current students in 2021. Because several of the students who completed the survey were new freshman, some expressed that they hadn't met much with their adviser. Therefore, the results were adjusted to reflect opinions of sophomores, juniors and seniors.

- I have been well advised in my academic major (87.5% agreed or strongly agreed)
- My adviser provided good advice in planning my degree completion (92.3% agreed or strongly agreed)
- My adviser has been readily available for consultation (93.1% agreed or strongly agreed)
- My adviser has been up-to-date on academic requirements (96.5% agreed or strongly agreed)

The school also uses retention and graduation rates and retention data as a measure of quality advising. If these numbers are below the university average, we try to evaluate potential causes. Each year, students who do not register for classes the following semester are contacted by the advising center director or the school director or both to determine the reasons and to provide assistance. This personal approach has helped the school's programs have a higher success rate than the university.

In 2020-2021, the school had a first-year to second-year retention of 83.3% compared to the university rate of 74.2%. One hundred percent of the MMJ students returned. For the overall success rate (retention plus graduation), the school has a 5-year average of 87.4% and a three-year average of 84.6% across all programs and the MMJ program has a 5-year average of 76.8% and a three-year average of 80%. The 6-year graduation rate of the first

class admitted to the new MMJ program is 72.4% compared to the university's graduation rate of 53% for the same class.

**4. Describe student media, student professional organizations or other extra-curricular activities and opportunities provided by the unit or the institution that are relevant to the curriculum and develop students' professional and intellectual abilities and interests.**

For students majoring in MMJ, the school operates four student media labs, hosts a professional public radio station and sponsors two professional journalism student organizations. The school recruits student participation with an organizational fair hosted by the College of Liberal Arts and Communication, entitled "Gathering on the Green." Students also are required to work in one of the labs when enrolled in one of the three Journalism Practicum classes.

- ***The Herald***, the independent student newspaper celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in November 2021, publishes print and online editions, including blogs and podcasts. Students volunteer or work in paid positions in news and advertising. No academic credit is granted, but some classes provide news stories that are selected by editors for the weekly print edition or the online edition. The annual budget for the newspaper comes from Academic Affairs. The School of Media & Journalism provides a faculty member who serves as adviser to the paper that is housed on the second floor of the Communications Building. *The Herald* is not a lab paper, but most of the students who work for the paper are majoring in multimedia journalism or other communication programs. Herald staff members have opportunities for professional development at the Arkansas College Media Association, College Media Association, National Association of Black Journalists and the Society of Professional Journalists national, regional and state conferences. As a result, the staffers have won many journalism awards from those professional organizations and other regional conferences.
- **ASU-TV** is the student-run 24-hour cable operation on Apogee channel 4-1 in Jonesboro. The School of Media & Journalism provides an adviser and underwrites the cost of the operation, which uses equipment and studios within the school. Students in the Creative Media Production program enroll in Experiential Media courses that require them to participate in media productions, including ASU-TV News. School funds provide some pay for the student managerial staff. Advanced news classes produce a bi-weekly live newscast, although some adjustments were made during COVID and the show was taped in 2019-2020. Students interested in sports media also help produce ESPN coverage of A-State sporting events.
- **Red Wolf Radio (RWR)**, a student-operated, online radio station, went live with on-air student talent in 2014. Over the years, RWR has had a number of specialty and podcast-style shows covering independent artists, sports, international music, international issues, award-winning documentaries and alternative music genres. The station has won national and regional awards from Intercollegiate Broadcast System, College Broadcasters Inc., Arkansas College Media Association and the SPJ Diamond Awards. RWR continuously expands its programming to include as many

points of view, cultures, and voices as there are students willing to add their voices to RWR. The station is open to any student enrolled at A-State to contribute to meeting programming needs and opportunities for students. RWR is set for automation when the students are not programming shows.

- **Delta Digital News Service (DDNS)** was established in August 2016 to provide a working lab for undergraduate students that feeds content to news organizations of all sizes and types. The lab serves as an outlet for the Multimedia Reporting class and as a capstone experience in News Practicum III. Students gain real-world experience in a laboratory setting by having the opportunity to pitch story ideas, research issues, interview subjects and compose projects in a variety of multimedia formats. The work they create prepares them in a highly competitive job market. Regional news outlets can utilize any work with proper attribution. Due to operating limitations, DDNS primarily serves Northeast Arkansas. DDNS received \$30,000 in grants from the Fred Darragh Foundation to establish and expand its capacity to better serve news outlets in the Delta region, help recruit high school students for careers in journalism, and provide professional-level experience for A-State journalism students. The program has won numerous awards, including the 2020 Diamond Journalism Awards sponsored by the Arkansas Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists.
- In addition to the student-run media, the school also hosts **KASU-FM 91.9**, the university's 100,000-watt public media service, offering news and programs from National Public Radio (NPR) as well as local news and unique music programs. As part of the School of Media & Journalism, KASU has opportunities for internships and often employs students in work-study or part-time positions, offering real world experience in a variety of aspects of station operations, such as audio editing, production, graphic design, marketing and promotion. The station manager and professional staff of seven are committed to expanding opportunities for students, and they often work with faculty to share lessons and experiences with students so they can learn about broadcast news and station operations.
- Professional organizations within the School of Media & Journalism include student chapters of the National Association of Black Journalists and Society of Professional Journalists. A faculty adviser volunteers for, or is appointed to, each organization. When possible, the school or *The Herald* help underwrite student membership fees and expenses to attend state, regional and national meetings of the organizations. The student organizations have hosted on campus professionals from various organizations and careers.

Other extra-curricular activities sponsored by the school include the endowed Dr. Joel T. Gambill Distinguished Speaker Series and the Professional-in-Residence program. Both activities invite distinguished alumni and professionals to spend a few days on campus to guest lecture in courses, meet students and provide mentoring opportunities. Advisory boards for both programs also schedule portfolio-reviews and networking opportunities for the students.

Through these media outlets and other activities, the school has supported student travel to student competitions at the state, regional and national levels, helping them bring home dozens of awards each year that brings honor and distinction to the program and the students,

**5. Describe the unit's career counseling and placement strategy for assistance in students' searches for employment. List placement statistics for the three most recent years before the self-study year for which accurate information is available.**

The formal services of helping students with career counseling and placement is offered through the university's Career Services Center. The center offers a wide range of services to current students and alumni to assist them in career decisions and job searches. Services include workshops (résumé writing, interviewing skills, and business etiquette), job referrals, career information center, computerized matching of employers and registrants and a twice-annual job fair. Since the last reaccreditation, the Career Services Center has created a few specific career and job fairs tailored for communications and business students. The center also offers a service to students and alumni called Handshake that connects job providers with job seekers. Students register for the service and it allows employers to review their resumés and contact them for interviews. The school has a very good working relationship with Career Services and students actively participate with the services.

The school also uses the Media & Communication Advising Center as a resource in assisting career counseling and internship and job placement. Candace Evans often discusses career choices with students and helps promote internship and job opportunities with all of our students.

Because of the relatively small and intimate size of the program, a lot of the career counseling and job placements occur with faculty and their professional connections. Part of the annual advising includes career advising in addition to academic advising. The school has alumni in many, if not most, of the media outlets in the state and region and excellent relationships with newspaper and broadcast outlets around the state. They regularly request interns and graduates for open positions. This information is widely shared with students, but faculty also reach out to specific candidates that they think are a good fit. This past year, media outlets from Arkansas, Tennessee and Missouri requested more graduates in the spring than what we produced.

All of the students that we can account for over the last three years have found employment. School alumni who graduated 3 years ago (survey reported in Standard 9) also report that 75% are currently employed in communication positions, and 70% had media jobs right after graduation or went to graduate school.

**2018**

Seth Cleveland	Co-Founder & Media Producer, Make Every Media, Austin TX
Tucker Crain	Law School, University of Alabama
Madison Gomez	Mortgage Consultant, American Financing, CO
Sidney Hickerson	Recruiter, Arkansas State University
Destini Latimore	Graduate Student, Academy of Art University, Little Rock, AR
Christopher Lee	Reporter, Clay County Times-Democrat, AR
Miranda Reynolds	Assistant Director, Downtown Paragould, AR
Keith Turner	Librarian, Springfield-Green County Library District, AR



Katie Woodall Reporter & anchor, KAIT Region 8 News, Jonesboro, AR

## 2019

Jessica Ladd Digital Content Producer, KFSV-TV, Cape Girardeau, MO

## 2020

Yu Bai Returned to Japan, don't have information  
 Ana Baquero Reporter, KAIT Region 8 News, Jonesboro, AR  
 Brooke Buckner Multimedia Journalist, KFSV-TV, Cape Girardeau, MO  
 Crystal Carter-Harrell Freelance Blogger, Nashville, TN  
 Chase Gage Reporter, KAIT Region 8 News, Jonesboro, AR  
 Molly Hilburn No information  
 Colby Sigears Graduate School, MS in Information Law and Policy, A-State

## 2021

Tristan Bennett Law School, University of Arkansas Little Rock  
 Krishnan Collins Reporter, Hot Springs Sentinel-Record  
 Maddison Smith Bank Teller, Jonesboro, AR (offered position with Jonesboro Sun)

- 6. Discuss the processes in place to collect, maintain and analyze enrollment, retention and graduation rates within the major and in comparison to university' rates. Discuss the findings of the analysis. Provide the URL where the unit shares its most recent retention and graduation data with the public.**

The school director requests the Office of Institutional Research to update the tables used to publicly report enrollment, retention and graduation using the most recent complete data, which is the previous academic year. For example, the current report on the school's website reports data from 2020.

These data points are under increased scrutiny at the university as it has launched a Program Viability study. These data along with credit hour production, cost per student, DFW rates and others related to cost efficiency are now being used to score the viability of each program on campus. As noted previously in this standard, overall, the school does better than the university with regards to retention. The declining enrollment numbers in MMJ are of particular concern to the faculty and director. While the Coronavirus limited much of the recruiting efforts over the last two years, the school has increased its efforts in social media and giving personalized tours of our facilities. It is encouraging that new freshman enrollment increased by 50% in MMJ for fall 2021, but the numbers are still below what they were 3-4 years ago.

Anecdotal evidence gained by talking with our students suggests that some of them are being told not to major in journalism by family, high school counselors and other faculty at the university. The declining trust in news media and the reports of shrinking news rooms and disappearing newspapers leads some outside of our field to believe that the discipline is endangered. The school has reached out to the Arkansas Press Association and the Arkansas Broadcasters Association to collaborate on a campaign to disabuse this notion.

The report on enrollments, retention and graduation can be found here:

<https://www.astate.edu/college/liberal-arts/departments/media/files/public-accountability/Public-Accountability-2020.pdf>

## **Part II, Standard 7. Resources, Facilities and Equipment**



ASU-TV students producing the ASU-TV News live broadcast.

### **Executive summary.**

The School of Media & Journalism has state-of-the-art classrooms, labs and equipment that are updated regularly. Although it is housed in a 40-year-old building that is beginning to show its age, the school boasts of having one of the largest broadcast studios in the region, equipped with a recently updated control room, two mobile production units, spaces for all student media and four computer labs.

Supplies, library resources, course fees and travel funds have decreased since 2019. Supplies and travel budgets were cut 20% across the university due to declining enrollment in AY 2020-21 and AY 2021-22. Library budgets and course fees are generated by student fees and also affected by lower enrollment. However, compared to other departments in the College of Liberal Arts and Communication, the school has a much more robust budget. Overall, equipment needs, professional development travel, paid student positions and other needs are met.

Instructional labs and faculty offices have up-to-date computers: Faculty computers are updated every 3-4 years depending on the model and lab computers are updated every 4-5 years. Recent renovations to computer labs and student media outlets have improved the aesthetics of these instructional environments. The addition of two mobile production units, primarily used by ASU-TV and the sports media program, provide unique opportunities for

all students in the program.

# 1. Complete and attach Table 10, “Budget.”

**Table 10. Budget**

Show below the annual unit budget for each of the three years preceding the accreditation visit. “Annual budget” refers to funds directly under control of the unit for the entire year (12 months). Budget figures should not include expenditures for building maintenance, retirement allowances, scholarships, prizes or student aid. List student newspaper budget only if it is under control of unit and is used in instruction.

<b>Budget Item</b>	<b>2018- 2019</b>	<b>2019 - 2020</b>	<b>2020 - 2021</b> (Self-study year)
Administrative salaries & benefits	\$147,219	\$160,040	\$160,040
Teaching salaries & benefits (full time)	\$850,488	\$838,558	\$951,995
Teaching salaries (part time/adjunct)	\$33,000	\$71,100	\$72,000
Part-time Student Workers (student media)	\$52,704	\$53,438	\$53,438
Staff salaries	\$100,800	\$105,642	\$113,518
Equipment (infrastructure)	\$0	\$55,851	\$48,992
Equipment maintenance (course fees)	\$19,094	\$18,666	\$14,737
Supplies & Services	\$87,890	\$83,495	\$70,312
Library resources	\$23,150	\$17,795	\$14,448
Databases, online information services	(included in library resources above)		
Travel	\$11,428	\$6,528	\$9,142
Research	(included in travel above)		
Other (please list)			
Capital Equipment		\$83,941	
<b>TOTAL ANNUAL JOURNALISM/ MASS COMMUNICATIONS BUDGET</b>	<b>\$1,325,773</b>	<b>\$1,495,054</b>	<b>\$1,508,622</b>

**2. Describe the process through which the unit develops its budget, including preparation of the budget request and spending plan, review and approval, and the role of faculty in the process.**

The University Planning Committee establishes the formulation policy for the Arkansas State University budget – subject to approval by the Board of Trustees. The committee holds hearings where vice chancellors present budget priorities for their units. The provost/vice chancellor for academic affairs and research obtains recommendations from deans and directors regarding budget priorities, particularly priorities requiring “new money.” Deans submit priority needs that fit their strategic plan. The dean formulates recommendations based on the college’s strategic priorities, following consultation with the college’s leadership council that includes the department chairs and school director.

In reality, budget allocations follow a historic model or incremental budgeting model at Arkansas State University. Operating budgets for academic units are allocated based on the previous year’s budget unless there are cuts such as those that occurred in FY 2020-21 and the current fiscal year (in the last seven years there have been no operating budget increases). Unit administrators then formulate their plans with the budget that is available. Therefore, most planning with the budget occurs after the new budgets are published on July 1.

The director develops annual spending plans after consultation with faculty members, particularly in the areas of professional development, research and equipment needs. Plans are expected to support strategic plans, teaching and learning requirements and professional and scholarly development for faculty, staff and students. Annual allocations are reviewed with faculty at the beginning of the academic year in a school meeting and at other times when opportunities or crises arise. Certain functions are allocated their own budget to manage, such as the technology committee and the student media organizations.

**3. Describe the adequacy of resources for the unit and the sources of revenue for those resources (university funds, fees, private funding, other). Describe how the unit will supplement its annual budget from other sources or reallocate resources to reach its strategic goals.**

The unit’s operating budget is allocated by the university from education and general (E&G) funds generated by state funding and student tuition. These funds do not carry forward at the end of the fiscal year. Additional sources of revenue are generated for academic support by a variety of student fees, to include course fees, infrastructure fees, technology fees, deferred maintenance fees, and academic excellence fees. The school also uses its foundation discretionary accounts and revenue generated by media production and printing services. Each is explained in more detail below.

- **Course fees** are allocated to units that have expensive operational costs for instruction. The fees can only be used on “consumable” items such as paper, ink, software licenses and other items that need to be replaced frequently. The funds cannot be used to purchase major equipment or furniture. The school has used this

fee to maintain equipment and supplies used in classrooms, pay for software and service provider licenses and purchase replacements for some technology, such as batteries. The funds have decreased incrementally over the last three years.

- Equipment purchases are financed primarily from **infrastructure fees** and secondarily from **technology fees** and academic capital funds. Infrastructure funds, which are generated by student fees (\$4 per credit hour) finance most of the school's instructional equipment. By policy, infrastructure funds are used for "things students see and use in classrooms." Students are chosen to represent each unit in the college infrastructure committee. In our school, the students meet with the technology committee to discuss equipment needs. Once a list is compiled, the students meet with the director to go over the requests and prioritize needs. The students then present unit requests to the college infrastructure committee, which evaluates and determines the final college requests. A student representative from the college presents the requests to the provost and the president of student government. The student government president and Academic Affairs and Research collaborate to set equipment allocations for each college. Approximately \$1 million per year is distributed across campus. In the last three years the School of Media & Journalism has received:
  - 2019-2020: \$55,851
  - 2020-2021: \$48,992
  - 2021-2022: \$55,675
- The **information technology fee** is used to pay for the technology infrastructure but also assists with some software needs on the campus. Thanks to the school's working relationship with Information and Technology Services (ITS), software licenses in Adobe Creative Cloud and LinkedIn Learning are available on computers in campus labs. During the pandemic, these critical platforms were available to students on their own computers at no cost to the student. The fee also defrays costs of faculty and staff desktop computer replacements and classroom upgrades. The dean's office distributes computer upgrades on a rotating basis to faculty and staff depending on the age and uses of the computers. Classrooms were upgraded in 2020-2021 to accommodate cameras and microphones for teaching hybrid classes.
- **Deferred maintenance fees** are used for "the upkeep and maintenance of the university's buildings, grounds and infrastructure." Deferred maintenance funds can be requested by each college to improve and renovate space in their buildings. These funds were used to improve a classroom lab in 2021.
- Fundraising revenue is managed by the **ASU Foundation**. The school has several foundation accounts for its scholarships, endowed speaker series, student media and other restricted discretionary funds. The majority of the funds are in scholarship endowments, but the school has some discretionary funds to support initiatives tied to its strategic plan.
- Other revenue generation comes from entrepreneurial efforts of the school. For example, ASU-TV and the sports media program charge fees for some productions and this money goes into a carry-forward account that is used to purchase and maintain equipment. In 2016, the College of Media & Communication negotiated with the provost to keep a portion of the revenue generated from Printing Services. This revenue was used in part to help purchase a \$350,000 production trailer for the

sports media program to broadcast A-State sports on ESPN channels. The college restructuring and the creation of the school have complicated how these funds are currently distributed, but Printing Services and the school have priority for using revenue generated from this service.

With recent cuts to the operating budget, these additional funding sources have been critical for the school to meet its strategic goals. For example, recruiting students is one of the top goals of the plan but the university provides no additional funding to compensate for faculty travel, promotional materials, recruiting swag, social media advertising, etc. Another example is our assessment efforts. The keystone to our assessment is our advisory boards, which we bring to campus twice a year (although the meetings during the pandemic were virtual) to meet with students and conduct portfolio reviews. Other initiatives, such as the Delta Digital News Service and mobile production are primarily funded from sources outside of the operating budget.

**4. Describe how the resources provided by the institution compare with similar units on your campus.**

School of Media & Journalism resources compare very favorably to other units in the College of Liberal Arts & Communication. All academic units are equally affected by austerity measures taken by the university in recent years. However, the school appears to benefit from many of its additional sources of revenue compared to other units in the college. In general, the faculty have more travel resources for scholarship and professional development than their peers in the college. While nearly all travel requests have been fully funded in the school, other units in the college limit travel support to \$500-\$800 per faculty annually. Media instruction tends to require expensive equipment and constant replacement and maintenance of said equipment. The school does well in that regard.

Four colleges on the campus—Business, Engineering & Computer Science, Nursing & Health Professions and Sciences & Mathematics—have college support assessment fees, sometimes called differential tuition, that generates additional revenue not available to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. These fees were approved by the Board of Trustees and are restricted to these four college because they are considered to have higher delivery costs. These funds can be used by the colleges to supplement faculty salaries and offset other costs. Some of the other colleges also benefit from more funded research grants that go toward course release time, graduate student assistants, and summer stipends.

**5. Describe the unit's classrooms, offices, computer labs or other building spaces. If the unit administers university media or student publications, include a description of equipment and facilities devoted to those operations.**

The School of Media & Journalism shares a building with the College of Education and Behavioral Science (CEBS). The school occupies the first floor and shares the second floor of the south wing of the building with the Department of Communication. Faculty offices and the Advising Center are on the third floor. The building was constructed in 1982 and underwent extensive space reallocation and renovation in 2013-2014. The building is

beginning to show its age, but is in relatively good condition and provides spaces for classrooms, instructional labs, a reading room, faculty and staff offices, administrative offices and facilities for KASU radio, Red Wolf Radio, ASU-TV, Delta Digital News Service, *The Herald* and Print Services. The director's office is on the first floor, as are most of the media outlets and Printing Services. *The Herald* is on the second floor.

All offices are equipped with Dell or Macintosh desktop or laptop computers and Internet access. Some have cable television access. All classrooms and labs are equipped with Smart classroom technologies that include instructors' control podiums with Mac mini desktop computers, SmartBoard projectors, AppleTV, Internet and cable access. Cameras and microphones were added to the classrooms in 2020 to facilitate hybrid teaching. Following is a list of classrooms, labs and studios:

- Four multimedia-equipped classrooms include a seminar room, an executive briefing room, two lecture rooms with a capacity of 30 each and another seating 45.
- The school has four computer labs. Each lab is equipped with 15-18 iMac stations and is accessible to students after hours with a key card door lock. All of the labs have Microsoft Office, Adobe Creative Cloud and the video editing labs include Final Cut Pro, Adobe Premiere and After Effects. All of the labs are shared with the Department of Communication. The classes are designed to address specific needs, but writing and other courses use them as well.
  - A multimedia lab houses 18 iMac stations. Each of the iMacs has an external hard drive to store digital video files, a microphone and headphones. The lab is used for multimedia and digital productions and instruction for classes in video editing, multimedia storytelling and multimedia production.
  - A digital photojournalism lab has 15 iMac stations plus an assortment of digital imaging technology, seminar table and small portrait studio. The lab also has a photo server and two Epson R2000 photo printers.
  - The graphic communication lab has 15 iMac stations. This lab specializes in prepress and desktop publishing classes and has a variety of printers, including an Epson Stylus Pro 7880 printer for wide format color printing projects and a sublimation printer.
  - A social media computer lab is used to teach digital and social media and is equipped with 18 Macintosh computers, instructor workstation, laser printer, Apple TV and a large TV screen composed of four 70-inch monitors to allow projection of a single image or four images simultaneously.
- The television studio has four high-definition cameras to complement the entirely digital control room and audio booth. The large studio allows multi-set configuration and has enough space for a live studio audience (50-100 people). The 20-foot high lighting grid is equipped with broadcast quality LED lighting that is energy efficient, programmable, and dimmable. The attached control room and engineering room can accommodate in-house or external production teams for most live or recorded productions.



- ASU-TV's student staff offices are in space adjacent to the television studio and multimedia lab, and include 6 workstations to create, edit, and distribute content. Students also use the space to program cable channel 18 in Jonesboro on a 24-hour basis.
- The school also has two fully functional mobile production trailers with switcher, graphics station, audio board, 3play replay systems, cameras and cables. Red Wolf 1 is used primarily to produce A-State Red Wolf games for ESPN channels, while the ASU-TV trailer is used for a variety of off campus events, including music, theater and high school sports.
- Three audio labs (K-Labs 1, 2 and 3) offer the latest in audio production hardware, with new audio mixers installed in 2019, and software, with iMac computers using Audacity, Adobe Audition, and Apple GarageBand. It has a two-mic setup for interviews and two Marantz CD players, Denon SD Recorder, and SLA1 Audio DA for audio input. All three rooms have been engineered to work and communicate with each other to expand the recording capacity.
- Red Wolf Radio is the student radio station that streams over the internet. Its staff office and studio is located adjacent to K-Lab 1. The station was established to address the desire of students to have a laboratory radio station where they can acquire professional competencies. Its production booth has an Dell Computer, audio mixer, two Numark MP3/USB/CD players and Gemini DRP-1 digital recorder for audio input, and two-mic setup for interviews.
- KASU-FM operates at 100,000 watts and is the oldest non-commercial, educational station in Arkansas. Its four studios and staff offices are adjacent to the school's main office. It has a newsroom, three production rooms, a live production studio and four offices, two of which are also equipped for radio production.
- Virtual Reading Room – A traditional reading room with five computer stations. The room was updated in fall 2014 and includes five iMacs, a printer, study tables and traditional printed material.
- *The Herald* news, advertising and production suite is adjacent to the Department of Communication. The space includes Macintosh computers, still and video cameras and appropriate software to allow students to produce the newspaper through pre-press. The staff produces a printed version of *The Herald* weekly and publishes an online version with periodic updates.
- Delta Digital News Service is located next to KASU and is equipped with seven iMacs, white boards, conference table, large screen TV and shelves for area newspapers.
- For field photo/audio/video production, students have access to the equipment below. The equipment is stored in a secured checkout room and students can check out the equipment for up to 72 hours using a mobile app that also shows what equipment is available at any time.
  - 2 Behringer Audio Mixers
  - 3 Boom Poles
  - 4 Canon C100 Kits
  - 9 Canon PowerShot G-Series Kits
  - 7 Canon SL1 Kits
  - 4 Canon T6 Kits

- 8 Canon XA15 Kits
- 15 Canon XA30 Kits
- MacBook Pro
- Nikon Accessory Kit
- Nikon D800 Kit
- 13 Digital Recorder Accessory Kits
- 30 DJI OSMO Mobile Kits
- C-Stands
- Digital Juice Flag Kit
- 3 Grip Accessory Kits
- 2 Large Tripod Dolly
- 3 Plate Clamps
- 3 Pop-Up Background Stands
- 3 Pop-Up Reversible Background
- 6 Sand Bags
- 2 Small Tripod Dolly
- 11 Steel Spring Clamps
- 11 LED Light Kit Batteries
- 3 Dracast LED Light Kits
- Large IKAN LED Light Kit
- mini20 LED Light Kit
- 10 Small IKAN LED Light Kits
- 8 Halogen Light Kits
- 4 Magna Carts
- 6 Microphone Flags
- 9 Mobile Accessory Kits
- 19 Nikon Lenses
- 12 Olympus Recorders
- Rodecaster Kits
- Shoulder Rigs
- 13 Monopods
- 9 3-Way Head Tripods
- 8 Large Tripods
- 7 Medium Tripods
- 15 Small Tripods
- ATEM mini
- 8 Wired Microphones
- 5 Wireless Microphone Kits

**6. Describe the unit's most urgent needs for space or equipment, if any, and the plan to address these needs.**

For the most part, the school is in very good shape with equipment and space. Since the last reaccreditation visit, the school has renovated two computer labs, replaced all computer equipment, updated the studio control room and audio labs, purchased a lot of equipment to facilitate backpack reporting and mobile production, including complete kits that provide tripods, mics, flash and gimbles. It has added a new student media lab and two mobile

production units.

One need identified by faculty is the addition of more entry-level photo equipment including EOS Rebel T7 24.1MP DSLR Cameras to address moving the photojournalism course to a basic photography class that is taken by more than MMJ students. The instructor is hoping to add 15 new cameras and lenses. This will go before the technology committee and will be considered as an infrastructure request, but the school might be able to meet some of the need before the site visit.

There are a few areas in the building that have been neglected in favor of improving areas of high student impact, such as classrooms and media labs. The main office and KASU suite need updating and renovations that would help with recruiting efforts. The estimated costs are in the neighborhood of \$80,000-100,000. The bathrooms need renovation. The school has requested that deferred maintenance funds be used on this as soon as possible, but we've been told that there are more urgent needs on campus.

### **Part II, Standard 8. Professional and Public Service**



Alumnus Bill Evans and News Director Perry Boxx lecture about the importance of the First Amendment and freedom of the press to students in Mass Communication and Modern Society class. Evans is the Vice President of West Kentucky operations of Paxton Media and General Manager of WPSD Local 6 and Publisher of the Paducah Sun.

#### **Executive summary.**

The school and faculty members contribute their expertise to the public, their professions and the academy through individual endeavors and team efforts. The school provides university and community outreach through its public radio station (KASU-FM), its student-managed cable television station (ASU-TV), the campus newspaper (*The Herald*), its student-run online radio station (Red Wolf Radio), and its multimedia journalism lab (Delta Digital News Service).

The expertise of faculty and professionals-in-residence is shared with the community in public meetings and as part of the programming for ASU-TV, channel 18 on Jonesboro cable. The college promotes student journalism by hosting the oldest high school competition in the state, Communications Day, since 1937. The James Callaway/AT&T

faculty fellowship, awarded in 2010, helps promote improvement of high school minority journalists in the Arkansas Delta.

Since the last reaccreditation visit, Multimedia Journalism faculty have provided professional and academic service at the state and national levels to include president of Arkansas College Media Association, secretary of the national College Media Association, secretary of the Central Arkansas Association of Black Journalists, president of the Southwest Council for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication and president of the Association for Schools of Journalism And Mass Communication. Faculty are active in judging student competitions and reviewing peer scholarship for conferences and journals.

Interaction between alumni and the college is facilitated by updates posted on the school Website, the school's [LinkedIn](#) group page, social media such as [Facebook](#) and Twitter (@Astatesmj), email, letters, consulting with professional advisory committees and periodic communication between individual alumni and faculty members. Participating in a homecoming tailgate event and school's spring honors banquet bring alumni to campus to reconnect with faculty and each other and to meet students. A college alumnus is typically the banquet speaker. Two speaker series, the Joel Gambill Speaker Series and the Professionals-in-Residence speaker series have brought several distinguished alumni back to campus.

- 1. Summarize the professional and public service activities undertaken by the unit. Include operation of campus media if under control of the unit; short courses, continuing education, institutes, high school and college press meetings; judging of contests; sponsorship of speakers addressing communication issues of public consequence and concern; and similar activities.**

Public service activities are undertaken with four underlying purposes: to contribute to public and scholarly understanding of media and society; to provide communications instruction and services to public and media organizations; to enhance knowledge of the university and its resources; and to create learning opportunities for students in a service context.

The school supports four student media organizations and a professional public radio station that produce news, views, arts and information for the A-State campus and Northeast Arkansas. The four student media organizations, which were described in Standard 6, produce print, radio, television and multimedia news and information that serve students, faculty, staff and campus administration. *The Herald*, celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in fall 2021, reports on events, issues and opinions unique to the campus. The paper is independent of the MMJ curriculum, but it is advised by an MMJ faculty member, Sandra Combs. ASU-TV produces a bi-weekly newscast and other programs that are completely produced by students under faculty supervision. Two courses support the ASU-TV newscast. Red Wolf Radio produces news and information programs as well as music and entertainment segments.

The newest of the student media outlets is the one that perhaps provides the most service to the profession and public. Established in August 2016, the Delta Digital News Service

provides a working lab environment for undergraduate students that feeds content to news organizations of all sizes and types. The lab serves as the anchor project for the Multimedia Journalism Program. Students gain real-world experience in a laboratory setting by having the opportunity to pitch story ideas, research issues, interview subjects, and compose projects in a variety of multimedia formats. The work they create prepares them in a highly competitive job market. Regional news outlets can utilize any work with proper attribution. DDNS primarily serves Northeast Arkansas and originates around four main goals:

- Providing an educational experience while striving to capture the essence of the region's culture and character, and candidly discussing under reported issues and subjects.
- Promoting community discourse in the Arkansas Delta Region by telling insightful stories reflecting the concerns, diversity and culture of the area.
- Investigating the effects of policy upon the lives of Delta residents.  
Building partnerships with regional outlets.

The Delta Digital News Service helps students publish their work in professional outlets and provides the outlets with more content of interest to their audiences while their staffs have been downsized over the last few years. For example, the Jonesboro Sun published several feature photos on the front page produced by one of the DDNS staff. A story about the anniversary of the Westside High School shootings was published in several outlets and won an Arkansas SPJ Diamond award. The latest effort of DDNS is to address the news deserts in the Delta Region by recruiting and training high school students in smaller towns to report the meaningful events of their communities. Small grants allow DDNS to pay these students for published work. Terrance Armstard, the faculty adviser for DDNS, is working with high school journalism teachers and professional media outlets to help address these needs through DDNS. At the same time, it will help the school recruit future A-State students passionate about journalism.

The 100,000-watt public radio station, KASU, reaches communities from the bootheel of Missouri to West Memphis and towns north of Little Rock. The station is a National Public Radio affiliate and broadcasts syndicated shows such as Morning Edition, Marketplace, Fresh Air and All Things Considered. It also produces local "music, news, arts and views" (KASU's catchphrase) and several Media & Journalism students complete internships or part-time jobs working on these programs. This station has also provided essential news and information about the Coronavirus to the region, including regular broadcasts of the governor's weekly press conferences.

In addition to these constant efforts of providing our community valuable and useful information, the school also provides professional and public service in the following ways (this is a representative but not comprehensive list):

- The school hosts Communications Day, the oldest student media and journalism competition in the state, each spring. The competition invites students from across the state and Missouri to compete in newswriting, broadcasting, video production,

advertising and public relations campaigns, photojournalism, and social media reporting. A-State students judge the events and individual and school winners are presented medallions and certificates in an awards ceremony at the end of the day. It was last held in 2019 with about 130 students in attendance.

- In 2020, the Arkansas Scholastic Press Association chose to hold its annual convention on the Arkansas State University campus for the first time. Since the event occurred during the same month as Communications Day, the school opted to suspend Communications Day in favor of hosting the competitions and presentations of the ASPA convention. However, the ASPA convention was canceled due to COVID-19 and rescheduled for Jonesboro in 2021. Once again, the school chose to suspend Communication Day to host the ASPA convention and again, the in-person convention was canceled in favor of a virtual convention. The ASPA convention has been scheduled for April 2022 in Jonesboro and we look forward to finally hosting it.
- Documents about Communication Day and ASPA can be found in this Dropbox folder: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ck60g12u112y0xk/AADPWa-TwoIU3yeyD1aMfNtla?dl=0>
- The school often receives requests from on-campus and off-campus entities to provide production services while sharing news content with local media outlets. For example photography students documented the following events that were covered by media:
  - The United Way of Northeast Arkansas allocation check presentation event, July 13, 2021
  - The College of Engineering and Computer Science alumni Induction Ceremony, July 16, 2021
- ASU-TV helps broadcast and live-stream the Craighead County Spelling Bee. The event annually brought hundreds of participants and audience members to the ASU-TV studio and is shown live on ASU-TV channel 18 on Jonesboro Cable. Because of the large crowds, the event is now broadcast from a larger facility on campus, but remains an ASU-TV production.
- KAIT 8 in Jonesboro broadcasts an annual United Cerebral Palsy Telethon from the school's television studio. Students, faculty and staff of ASU-TV collaborate with KAIT 8 personnel to produce what has become a significant fundraiser for UCP in Northeast Arkansas. The one-day event raises more than \$100,000 a year to support UCP.
- The studio is occasionally used to broadcast political debates with local and regional candidates. In fall 2020, the mayoral debates for Jonesboro and Paragould were broadcast from the school's television studio through a cooperative effort between ASU-TV and KAIT 8.
- In November, 2019, the school co-sponsored with the Arkansas Municipal League an Arkansas FOIA Training Symposium for journalists and public officials. A panel of Freedom of Information experts provided an overview of FOIA requirements and answer questions about fulfilling FOIA requests to more than 100 participants.
- The school director and several faculty regularly attend the Arkansas Press Association and Arkansas Broadcasters Association annual conferences. This has allowed us to build and maintain good relationships with our professional colleagues and to hear how our programs can help meet their needs.

- Since 2017, the multimedia journalism faculty and students have participated in National News Engagement Day. Students, with the support and encouragement of faculty, have had a booth on campus each year where they have shared with their fellow students the importance of the First Amendment and the Fourth Estate. In the last two years they have also shared handouts about “How to Spot Fake News.” Students stopping by are encouraged to take photos and tweet about NED. One of these photos was featured on the AEJMC website in 2017.
- 2. In a digital file, list examples of professional and public service activities undertaken by members of the faculty since the last accreditation review. Limit to five examples per faculty member. The unit has the option of providing a complete list in a separate digital file. Do not include service to the unit or institution; this information should be presented in Standard 1, Question 6.**

The MMJ faculty members have served and continue to serve in key leadership positions for professional and academic organizations. Below are highlights of this service.

**Terrance Armstard (Hired 2019)**

Professional Service

1. Consultant/Contributor Poynter Professor Pass, 2020-2021
2. Associated Press Judge-New York State Associated Press Association Broadcast Contest for college contestants, 2020
3. Photographer Contributor to Baton Rouge Advocate

Public Service

4. Tai-chi instructor for Arkansas Area Agency on Aging, 2021
5. Volunteer Photographer United Way Allocation Event

**Sandra Combs**

Professional Service

1. Secretary of the College Media Association Board (January 2021-present)
2. Secretary of the Central Arkansas Association of Black Journalists (2011-present)
3. College Media Association Critique Adviser at National Conventions (Spring 2016-Spring 2020)
4. Lillian Lodge Kopenhaver Center for Advancement of Women in Communication Fellow (AEJMC), Aug. 5, 2020

Public Service

5. City of Jonesboro Unity Coalition Advisory Committee for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street Naming

**Lillie Fears**

Professional Service

1. Paper reviewer, History Division and Minorities and Communication Division, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (1994 – Present)
2. Judge, AEJMC Scripps Howard Emerging Scholars Grant Competition (2019-2020)
3. President, Southwest Education Council for Journalism & Mass Communication (2016-2017)



Public Service

4. Chair, Arkansas Early Learning Board (Head Start), 2014-2017; Member since 2013
5. Chair, Delta Cultural Center Advisory Board (Governor's Appointee), 2015- 2018; Member since 2009

**Brad Rawlins**

Professional Service

1. President, Association for Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication (2015-2016)
2. Accrediting Committee Member, Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (2012-2018)
3. Board Member/Emeritus Board Member, Commission on Research and Measurement, Institute for Public Relations (2004-present)
4. Council Member, World Journalism Education Council (2015-2016)

Public Service

5. Executive Board Member, Rotary Club of Jonesboro, Rotary International (2015-2017)

**Larz Roberts**

Professional Service

1. President, Arkansas College Media Association, (2021-present)
2. Chair, Television News Competition, Skills USA
3. Host/producer, Rhythm & Grooves, KASU-FM (2009-present)
4. Moderator, "Reimagining the Black Male Narrative," CAABJ Black Male Media Project (June 12, 2021)

Public Service

5. Youth Basketball Coach, YMCA Jonesboro (2016-2019)

**Ronald Sitton**

Professional Service

1. Paper reviewer, Southwest Education Council for Journalism and Mass Communication (2016)
2. Conference planner, Arkansas College Media Association (2020-2021)
3. Member, Arkansas Press Association (2017-present)
4. Member and former board member, Society of Professional Journalists (2015-present)

Public Service

5. Vice President, Kiwanis Club of Jonesboro (2021)

**Gabriel Tait (2013 to 2018)**

Professional Service

1. Vice Head Visual Communication Division, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (2018-2019)
2. Chair, Visual Communication Division, 2018 Southeast Colloquium, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (2017-2018)

Public Service

## 3. Jonesboro Citizen Police Academy, Jonesboro Police Department, (2015)

- 3. Describe the unit's contact with alumni, professionals and professional organizations to keep curriculum and instruction, whether online or on-site, current and to promote the exchange of ideas. Contact may include alumni and professional involvement in advisory boards, curriculum development, guest speaking, placement, internships, and fundraising. Provide advisory board members' names and contact information.**

Alumni and professionals serve on the professional advisory boards for each of the degree programs in the college. The School of Media & Journalism has an advisory board for the Multimedia Journalism program. They meet twice annually to assess student capstone work, provide feedback on the program's curriculum and to make suggestions for improvements. Board members also meet with a selection of graduating students to evaluate their readiness to enter the workplace and to provide advice and counsel on finding jobs. Professionals and alumni are invited regularly to appear in classes, meet with students informally and exchange ideas with faculty concerning the changing face of media. (See below for a list of advisory board members.)

Multimedia Journalism Advisory Board		
<b>Tammy Arnett Phillips</b> Director of Talent Acquisition <i>WMC-TV – Memphis</i> <a href="mailto:TPhillips@nexstar.tv">TPhillips@nexstar.tv</a> 901-485-7903	<b>Josh Harvison</b> News Director <i>WBGN-TV &amp; Binghamton CW</i> <a href="mailto:jharvison@ksla.com">jharvison@ksla.com</a> 607-584-7227	<b>Chris Bahn</b> Publisher <i>Arkansas Business Publishing Group</i> <a href="mailto:cbahn@abpg.com">cbahn@abpg.com</a> 501-455-9317
<b>Douglas Criss</b> Digital News Curator <i>Facebook</i> <a href="mailto:dougricss88@gmail.com">dougricss88@gmail.com</a> 803-728-0953	<b>Craig Rickert</b> Communications Director <i>Jonesboro Unlimited</i> <a href="mailto:crickert@jonesborounlimited.com">crickert@jonesborounlimited.com</a> 870-336-3035	<b>Hatton Weeks</b> General Manager <i>KAIT8</i> <a href="mailto:hattonweeks@gmail.com">hattonweeks@gmail.com</a> 870-919-5211
<b>Lici Beveridge</b> Breaking News Reporter <i>Hattiesburg (MS) American</i> <a href="mailto:LBeveridge@hattiesburgamerican.com">LBeveridge@hattiesburgamerican.com</a> 601-584-3104	<b>Suzi Parker</b> Freelance Journalist <a href="mailto:suziparker13@gmail.com">suziparker13@gmail.com</a> 501-326-2551	<b>Littice Bacon-Blood</b> Communications Manager <i>University of New Orleans</i> <a href="mailto:lbacomb@uno.edu">lbacomb@uno.edu</a> 504-280-6832
<b>Kristal Kuykendall</b> Owner <i>Sparkle &amp; Sing, Inc.</i> <a href="mailto:kristalkstar@gmail.com">kristalkstar@gmail.com</a> 479-244-5026	<b>Kim Blackburn</b> Digital Producer <i>WOWK13 News</i> <a href="mailto:kblackburn@wowktv.com">kblackburn@wowktv.com</a> 681-208-2561	

The former Journalism Department and Radio-Television Department established speaker series in the early 2000s. The Department of Journalism created the Joel Gambill Distinguished Speaker Series in honor of its long-time journalism chair. The series, funded by an endowment from many alumni, typically brings 2-3 alumni to campus each year, to visit with students inside and outside of classes. These speakers included alumni from public relations and advertising, which were emphases in the Journalism degree. The former Radio-Television Department created the Professional-In-Residence speaker series that also invited 2-3 alumni back to campus each year, including those working in broadcast journalism. The School of Media & Journalism now manages both speaker series and brings in 1-3 alumni speakers each semester.

Speakers over the last six years:

2015

**Spring**

W. Warren Byrd II, Instructor, Defense Information School.

**Fall**

Lori Webb Freeze, News Editor, Stone County Leader

Bill Evans, Vice President for the West Kentucky Media Division of Paxton Media Group, WPSD-TV

2016

**Fall**

A.K. Barnes, Instructor, Highland High School, Hardy, Arkansas

Ross Lewis, Photographer, Fine Art Photographs

**Spring**

G. Keith Pinchback, Chancellor, Phillips Community College

2017

**Spring**

Chris Bahn, Publisher, Business Special Pubs at Arkansas Business Publishing Group

**Fall**

Aaron Sadler, Media Relations Director, Ghidotti Communications

2018

**Spring**

Jeff Reed, Publisher, AStateNation.com

**Fall**

Lici Beveridge, Reporter/Editor, Hattiesburg American

2019

**Spring**

Littice Bacon-Blood, Communications and Publications Manager, University of New Orleans Publications and Communications

**Fall**

Wesley Brown, Senior Political and Business Reporter, Talk Business & Politics

2020

**Spring**

Kevin Pieper, Independent Photojournalist, Kevin Pieper Photography  
David Hughes, Manager of Video Production Services, St. Jude Hospital  
David Hershey, VP of Creative Services, CBS 11, Dallas

**Fall**

Brandi Hinkle, Communications Specialist, Entergy Arkansas

2021

**Spring**

Scott Mitchell, Content Services Team Manager, Ernst & Young LLP (EY)

Alumni are active in the life of the school/program. Faculty members remain in contact with graduates, staying up-to-date with their achievements and experiences. Alumni surveys are conducted every year with those who graduated three years previously. Thus, feedback is gathered about alumni, their jobs and their opinions about A-State. These contacts sometimes lead to information about potential jobs and internships for students and to recommendations for curriculum changes.

Alumni have been critical in helping establish several scholarship funds and other funded projects for the college.

- The following scholarships have been endowed by alumni;
  - Charles Rasberry Scholarship
  - Whitehead/Kimball Journalism Scholarship
  - Robert Hoskins Scholarship
  - Palmer/Beard Scholarship
  - Ruff-Miller Scholarship
  - Cleat Stanfill Scholarship
  - Nancy Everitt Entrepreneur Scholarship
  - Roy and Pat Ockert Herald Scholarship
  - Troutt Brothers Memorial Scholarship
- The Plunkett Rasberry Circle includes alumni and friends who have committed to donating \$2,500 or more over five years to the school. The Circle was named in honor of Tex Plunkett, who established the journalism program at A-State, and Charles Rasberry, who was long-time head of the radio-television program.

- Alumni donated or assisted in arranging more than \$50,000 in funding to convert the college's traditional reading room into a digitally equipped reading room.
- The Joel Gambill Speakers Series is funded through donations by alumni.

The school works with the alumni association to identify and nominate distinguished alumni from its programs. The A-State Alumni Association has recognized 107 alumni as distinguished alumni. Of those, 14 are from the School of Media & Journalism (Formerly College of Communication). In parentheses is the year they were recognized.

1. Anas Al-Rasheed (2007), Communications '91
2. Betty Stanley Beene (1998), Communications '68
3. Bobby Caldwell (2005), Communications '70
4. Richard Carvell (2018), Radio Journalism '66
5. Darrel Cunningham (2013), Communications '60
6. Gene C. Foreman (1990), Communications '56
7. Joel T. Gambill (2010), Communications '65
8. Gary W. Jones (1991), Communications '67
9. Harry Truman Moore (1997), Communications '69
10. Roy Ockert (2013), Communications '67
11. James W. Pardew Jr. (1996), Communications '66
12. Charles L. Rasberry (2004), Communications '56
13. Beth Smith (2017), Communications '82
14. Millie Caldwell Ward (1994), Communications '76

In a new recognition category developed by the Alumni Association in 2019, three of the inaugural class of Emerging Young Alumni were graduates of the school. The next year two more from the school were selected. Out of the 10 recognized young alumni, half are from the School of Media & Journalism.

1. Graycen Colbert Bigger, Photojournalism (2009)
2. Cale Block, Journalism (2004)
3. Laura Choate Nick, Journalism (2002)
4. Kat Scroggin, Journalism (2003)
5. Ali Sugg, Radio & Television (2004)

**4. Describe the unit's methods for communicating with alumni, such as newsletters or other publications. Provide the web link for communication during the previous academic year or provide print copies in the workroom.**

Over the last seven years, the school has communicated regularly with alumni through email, letters, an electronic newsletter, the college Website, college and department social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.), a college LinkedIn group, phonathons, thank-you cards for donations, invitations to special events and tailgate event during homecoming and periodic receptions and other gatherings. Alumni updates are posted and shared on Facebook and LinkedIn.

As noted previously, alumni are also frequently brought in to classrooms through the Joel

Gambill Speaker Series, Professional-in-Residence series, and through invitations by faculty to be guest speakers.

**5. Describe the unit's support of scholastic (high school) journalism, including workshops, visiting lectures, critiques of student work, etc.**

In addition to Communications Day, which is described above, the school supports scholastic journalism in the following was:

- MMJ faculty regularly participate in judging student work outside of Communications Day. They regularly participate in judging student competitions for Arkansas Scholastic Press Association, Arkansas SkillsUSA, Ozark Media Arts Festival, and A-State Creative Media Student Competition
- For 2018-2019, the school provided travel and administrative support for the executive director of the Arkansas Scholastic Press Association, Kristy Cates, who was also the development director for KASU and a quarter-time instructor with the school.
- Multimedia journalism faculty members frequently collaborate with regional schools to provide consultations, advice and guest lectures. For example, last year Terrance Armstard conducted a series of tutorials for students at Fox Nettleton Creative Media School to show how to build a newspaper, capture audio and video on an iPad in the classroom. The school had a multi-year program helping high school teachers learn how to use iPads to teach media and journalism.
- The James Callaway/AT&T faculty fellowship, awarded in 2010, helps promote improvement of high school minority journalists in the Arkansas Delta. Funds from the fellowship have been used primarily to fund the stipend of a faculty member, Lillie Fears, to mentor underserved youth from the Arkansas Delta in journalism education during the summer months. In 2020-2021 she met with more than 140 students at several high schools in the lower Arkansas Delta region via Zoom last year and spoke on topics such as “News Literacy: How to Spot Fake News,” “What the First Amendment Guarantees,” “Mistakes You Don’t Want to Make on Social Media,” and “Internet Privacy & Security: What You and Your Parents Need to Know.”
- Every year, the school hosts student groups for tours of the facilities. Over the period since the last accreditation site visit, students from Valley View High School, Nettleton High School, Cave City High School, Harrisburg High School and the Current Career Center from Doniphan Missouri have brought groups of 20-35 students for tours. These visits were curtailed during the last two years due to the pandemic, but they are starting up again this year.
- The school offers two digital photography summer workshops for high school and junior high students interested in photography.

## **Part II, Standard 9. Assessment of Learning Outcomes**



Multimedia Journalism students show off their SPJ Diamond Awards, including first place in Multimedia Reporting in the professional division. With faculty advisor Ron Sitton and KASU News Director Johnathan Reeves.

### **Executive summary.**

The Multimedia Journalism program promotes a modified version of the ACEJMC 12 values and competencies as its learning outcomes. A matrix identifies the values and competencies that are measured with assessment and where they are addressed or taught within the unit's curriculum. The school has a written assessment plan. The plan, which was revised within the past five years, provides for collection of data using a variety of direct and indirect measurements. The results are shared with faculty and used to adjust curriculum and teaching accordingly.

Alumni and other professionals provide advice for assessment as members of professional advisory boards, portfolio evaluations, answering alumni surveys and sharing opinions while serving as professionals-in-residence.

The school's assessment committee is composed of faculty members from both of the school's degree programs. In the fall of 2019, the school designated Lillie Fears to be the assessment leader for the Multimedia Journalism Program. She has gone through several workshops with the university's Faculty Center, worked closely with the university's

assessment director, and attended several summer assessment workshops sponsored by the university's Assessment Office. A member of the school's assessment committee, Fears has helped the school refine and improve its assessment efforts.

- 1. Provide a copy of the unit's written plan for assessment of student learning outcomes. This plan must include the dates of its adoption and of implementation of its components.**

The assessment plan used to assess student learning outcomes is available in the Dropbox folder for this standard. Members of the Media Department's assessment committee met throughout the fall 2016 semester to develop this plan and voted to adopt it in December 2016 and to implement it in spring 2017. This plan was used by both programs until fall 2018, when the programs developed more autonomous curricula. At this time, each program developed its own assessment plan. The Multimedia Journalism faculty voted to continue using the plan developed in 2016. Both plans are found in this Dropbox folder:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/cwnegnte8rkrcv0/AABbq8vwZIPY4kwd5u42cNFxa?dl=0>

- 2. Provide the unit's definition of goals for learning that students must achieve. If this definition is incorporated into the plan for assessment, a page reference will suffice.**

In 2014, the College of Media & Communication chose to modify the presentation of the ACEJMC values and competencies in a way that would be more memorable to students. Under three main competencies of Think, Communicate and Be Professional (known among faculty and students as TCB), the college incorporated all of the ACEJMC values and competencies into 10 outcomes. These outcomes are still found in many syllabi and used to describe the desired program outcomes.

In 2016, faculty met with the university assessment director, Dr. Summer DeProw, to revise the learning outcomes and reduce them to eight outcomes cross-listed with the ACEJMC values and competencies, but phrased to fit the language of assessment. Dr. DeProw desired to have fewer outcomes that were more measurable for assessment. When the two programs in the School of Media & Journalism became more autonomous, each developed its own curriculum plan and program level outcomes. The multimedia journalism program continued to use the 8 PLOs developed in 2016. In 2017-2018, the program published a five-column approach to measuring the outcomes. This became the assessment plan for the MMJ program. For the assessment plan the following eight program level outcomes were established to be measured:

**Outcome #1**

Students will apply the principles and laws that underlie different media systems.

**Outcome #2**

Students will apply concepts and theories in the use and presentation of images and information.

**Outcome #3**



Students will summarize the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.

**Outcome #4**

Students will apply current tools and technologies in the production and evaluation of media content for different platforms

**Outcome #5**

Students will conduct research to write and produce content for a wide variety of media platforms.

**Outcome #6**

Students will write and edit in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions.

**Outcome #7**

Students will explain how domestic and international diversity influence the production, dissemination, and consumption of mass communications in a global society.

**Outcome #8**

Students will explain the legal and professional codes of ethics and conduct that under gird mass communications in a global society.

The documents of the process of creating these 8 PLOs is found in this Dropbox folder:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/luqzsgnf7uhq03o/AAAxEiyRtBAib4-Nr6NSDkEOa?dl=0>

A curriculum map of how these outcomes are addressed by each course at three levels—awareness, understanding and application—is found here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/wib7bso6cu7ah1o/MMJ%20Curriculum%20Map%202.pdf?dl=0>

3. **Describe the collection and reporting of data from both direct and indirect assessment measures and how the unit used its analysis of the data to improve curriculum, instruction, etc. Provide copies of any end-of-year assessment reports. If there are multiple reports from the six-year period, summarize the findings and make the reports available in a separate digital file.**

Summaries of how direct and indirect assessment measures and how the data were used to improve curriculum and instruction is described below. In addition, copies of end-of-year assessment reports submitted to the university's assessment repository, Taskstream, may be observed in the Dropbox link provided below. The end-of-year reports provide much more detail about the results of assessment evaluations.

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/16q57eaieyqm3b/AADCtuVeGXrS2z0PX2pSfKC3a?dl=0>

*Collection and Reporting of Direct and Indirect Assessment Measures.*

We use three direct and two indirect measures to assess our program level outcomes. The direct measures are a Senior Knowledge Inventory, portfolio reviews and internship supervisor evaluations. Our indirect measures include a senior exit survey and an alumni

survey that is conducted of alumni who graduated three years previously; for example, 2018 graduates were surveyed in 2021.

Assessment data and analysis are reported at the end of the academic year, in June, to the Office of Assessment and Student Learning through an assessment collection portal called Taskstream. These reports are then discussed in program meetings to create goals and action plans. The action plan and status reports are submitted to the assessment office in October. Complete copies of the assessment findings, action plans and status reports are in the Dropbox folder link provided above.

### *Summary of Findings*

The most valuable of the direct assessment measures has been the **portfolio review**. In recent years, students have been required to build a portfolio in the first course in which they begin producing work. Students are encouraged to build the portfolio using the WordPress platform as it encourages developing website building skills used in the industry, but other blogging platforms are allowed. Faculty evaluate student work that is posted in the portfolio; however, students may post other work in their portfolios that is not developed within the classroom setting. Each spring, the portfolios are shared with members of the advisory board to review, evaluate and provide feedback. Following the portfolio reviews, the board meets with all of the MMJ faculty to discuss the evaluations and discuss ways of addressing concerns in the program. Program faculty members then review the board's evaluation and use it to make appropriate curriculum changes.

The portfolio reviews began in fall of 2019 with nine portfolios. Another eight portfolios were reviewed in spring of 2020 and eleven in spring of 2021. The digital portfolios include multimedia stories where students are evaluated on reporting/research, writing, visuals and social media. Portfolio rubrics have evolved each year to provide more accurate and useful information. For the 2021 reviews, the portfolio rubric was developed by the advisory board in consultation with the MMJ faculty. Reviews of student portfolios have given both positive feedback and identified areas needing improvement. Overall, the reporting and writing have received good reviews, and several students also scored well in visuals and social media, but there were more suggestions for improvement in the areas of visuals, particularly audio/video content, in 2019. As hoped for, portfolio review scores have improved over the last three years as faculty members adjusted their courses to address deficiencies. A few students were reviewed more than once, with significant improvements taking place during the second review.

Portfolio Review Reports can be found in this Dropbox folder:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/h22xwr2g03te0cv/AACFt8VC5iVHnIMdlUxBLROAa?dl=0>

The other direct measure, the **Senior Knowledge Inventory (SKI)**, has been used in some form or fashion since 2010. The original instrument was used across the college to assess core knowledge related to the ACEJMC values and competencies. It has been revised multiple times to reflect changes to the content in the curriculum and was administered to students on assessment day as part of their graduation application.

The SKI was administered over the last six years with varying degrees of success. One of the challenges to this kind of direct measure is providing incentive for students to take the exam seriously. A benchmark of 70% was established to determine whether the program was meeting these cognitive outcomes, but it wasn't tied to student performance in classes or other evaluations. The overall mean for the test generally exceeded the benchmark, but there were enough low scores to raise concerns. To create a greater incentive, the exam was included as part of a capstone class shared by MMJ and Creative Media Production students (Media Management & Entrepreneurship) in 2018-2019. This yielded slightly better results because students were required to take the exam and even provided a study guide. While assessing this assessment tool by asking for feedback from students, many of them commented that the test was tougher than expected and had a lot of content from courses they took several years ago. Several also expressed that, while they were surprised at how much they still remembered in order to pass the test, they don't think it's a good reflection of their command of the learning outcomes.

After both programs revised their curricula in 2018 to be more independent of each other, the test was revised for 2019-2020 to fit the new curriculum. However, the capstone course was no longer available and participation was minimal that year. The MMJ faculty have developed a course where portfolios will be developed and the SKI will be administered, but they are also questioning the value of this direct measure. The Creative Media Production program went through a program review in 2020-2021 and the recommendation from the external reviewers was that these exams have little value.

Senior Knowledge Inventory reports can be found in this Dropbox folder:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ca1sq02h8te9akn/AAANJEd7Buok8cMqRIZWEQj6a?dl=0>

The third direct measure is the **Internship Evaluation** completed by internship supervisors. Since all MMJ students are required to complete an internship, this evaluation from an independent external source is very useful for program assessment. In addition to questions about reliability, work ethic, teamwork and initiative, the evaluation forms ask about student performance on values and competencies such as: thinking creatively, critically and independently; using research; sensitivity to diverse audiences; writing correctly and clearly; communicating effectively through words, images, video and audio; and use of multimedia platforms. Overall, the evaluations have been positive, but occasionally there are lower scores in certain areas and/or comments about needing improvement from the supervisors. The surveys are discussed in the fall during the MMJ faculty meeting focused on assessment. Samples of the evaluation are in the digital appendix.

Redacted copies of the internship evaluations will be available on site.

The **Senior Exit Survey** is an indirect measure that the school uses to evaluate the students' experiences in the programs, such as advising, quality of instruction, quality and availability of equipment and whether they participated in student media opportunities. The survey also includes questions about their perceived preparation with the program outcomes, which

reflect the ACEJMC values and competencies. Surveys were collected in 2016 and 2017 by the College of Media & Communication as part of the graduation application and in 2018 and 2019 by the Department of Media as part of a capstone course. After the two programs created more autonomous curricula, they developed separate surveys. The MMJ program did not report exit surveys for 2020 and 2021. Overall, students rated their educational experience, advising, equipment and co-curricular experiences very favorably. In the 2016 and 2017 surveys, students were asked to reflect on their level of preparation in the ACEJMC values and competencies. Once again, they rated themselves favorable in all areas, especially in ethics, diversity and thinking but rated themselves more toward neutral in statistical concepts. The 2018-2019 exit surveys conducted in the capstone course did not include the competencies and values.

Senior Exit Survey reports can be found in this Dropbox folder:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/med8xhrix3s5mk1/AADYv9dJJzhGs5dGfwvNyKr7a?dl=0>

We administer an **Alumni Survey** annually to our alumni who graduated three years previously for another indirect measure. The questionnaire includes evaluative and demographic questions. The questionnaire serves two functions: to allow alumni to evaluate their educational experiences and to gather placement and contact information. The data are collected and analyzed by the director's office – and shared with coordinators and faculty members for use in programmatic decisions. Survey responses also provide some of the information used by program coordinators to assess placement success and career paths for alumni. The College of Media & Communication conducted an alumni survey in 2017 with 31 responses. In 2018, the A-State Alumni office conducted the alumni survey and only received 10 completed surveys. In 2019, the Department of Media participated in the university's HEDS alumni survey (administered by Higher Education Data Sharing), and only received one response. So, in 2020 the school decided to return to conducting its own survey to include graduates from 2015-2017 and received 16 responses. In 2021, the survey received 20 responses.

In 2017, 68% of the graduates were in jobs they described as “communication related.” Overall, they rated very favorably their education and preparation, but were a little more neutral about whether the degree had prepared them for their current career. On the values and competencies, the students rated their preparation positively on all items, but less positively in the areas of research and statistical concepts. The items on the understanding and applying the First Amendment and understanding the history and roles of the profession scored lower than anticipated. The low participation in 2018 and 2019 did not provide useable data. In 2020, 87% described their current job as communications related and more positive about their experience in the program and how well it prepared them for their current career. Again, evaluation of the values and competencies were positive, but more neutral on applying numerical and statistical concepts. In the 2021 survey, 75% described their current job as communications related and reported satisfaction with their education and preparation. Once again, evaluation of their preparation in numerical and statistical concepts were neutral and understanding of First Amendment and history and roles of professionals was lower than anticipated.

Alumni survey reports are available in this Dropbox folder:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/79nvj3jvf2ceit8/AADD1QOEbk592c0v0qXONXwFa?dl=0>

This section was written to provide an overview of the assessment tools and findings. A more detailed report of assessment data and analysis was prepared by Lillie Fears and can be found here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/5flzl2q0vgexw02/Detailed%20Assessment%20Report%20Fears.docx?dl=0>

### **Improvements as a result of assessment**

#### *Curriculum Revision*

To address concerns in portfolio reviews about some of the writing materials not meeting journalism standards, and lower responses in exit and alumni surveys about understanding the history and roles of the profession, a new course was introduced in the first year of the MMJ curriculum, MDIA 1013 Principles of Journalism. Students were starting their news writing courses without a complete understanding and appreciation for the role of journalism in society and the unique function it plays. Providing an orientation to the practice of journalism has helped our writers understand news and journalism better.

The comments by the advisory board and from portfolio reviews led the MMJ faculty to focus on requiring skill diversity across the program and to emphasize that all students need to be skilled in multimedia reporting. The program decided to eliminate the concentration areas to create a unified identity as multimedia journalists. Students can still take electives that enhance certain desired areas such as broadcast and photo journalism, but the degree is in Multimedia Journalism.

The need to give students more opportunities to publish multimedia reporting led to the development of the Delta Digital News Service. This media outlet serves as a lab to the curriculum, unlike *The Herald*. Students in MDIA 3013 Multimedia Reporting are required to produce content for the news service. This provides better material for their portfolios, and portfolio reviews of multimedia stories have improved.

Feedback from students, alumni and the advisory board suggested the need for more applied experiences. Although the media outlets are available for all students to gain experience, many students commented in the exit survey that it was difficult to find time to participate because of work conflicts. The 2018 revised curriculum added a News Practicum class to give credit for student work in the media outlets of their choice. This was later changed to three 1-credit News Practicum courses to spread the experience over time. The program also added the internship as a requirement instead of an elective.

Faculty members reviewed different ways of teaching the research methods course because it is the area where students feel the least prepared, according to senior exit and alumni surveys. An existing course, Research Methods, underwent revision, including a name change to MDIA 3363 Modern Media Inquiries. The course now focuses more on developing skills needed to evaluate scientific research reports for use as sources in news stories versus having students conduct individual research studies in one semester. Also, a new elective, MDIA 4103 Data Journalism, has been added to introduce tools and specific techniques journalists need to mine datasets and create visualizations used in reporting for multimedia and traditional news formats.

#### *Equipment Needs*

Comments from exit and alumni surveys and from the advisory boards stressed the importance of having up-to-date equipment and software. The school has worked with Information and Technology Services to secure licenses for the Adobe Creative Cloud for all lab computers. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic when the campus was closed to faculty and students, the Adobe Creative Cloud licenses were provided for students to use on their own computers. This off-site access of the Adobe license was extended for 2021. Computer labs remain updated at least once every four years, and dual monitors are planned for several labs. The switcher and graphics server were replaced in the broadcast studio in 2020 as were the audio boards in our audio production labs. Backpack reporting kits are available to check out that include microphones and lighting that enhance the performance of mobile phones. Space was renovated to create the Delta Digital News Service, complete with seven iMacs networked to a large screen monitor.

#### **4. Describe the involvement of members of journalism and mass communication professions in the assessment process.**

Professionals participate in the assessment process in these ways:

- *Portfolio Review*– The advisory boards for each of the programs (Multimedia Journalism and Creative Media Production) undertake an independent assessment of portfolios using assessment instruments developed by the faculty. Recently, the MMJ Advisory Board created a new rubric to use for assessing portfolios. The assessment statistics and feedback are used by faculty to improve course instruction and inform curriculum revisions.
- *Professional Advisory Boards* – Board members meet annually for discussion with administrators, faculty members and students. A special session is added to the meeting schedule to allow board members time to talk with faculty about student work. Individual critique sessions are also arranged during the board meeting to allow time for board members to meet with students to discuss their portfolios. The members' advice has been valuable in curriculum development. After much discussion each semester about the challenges in using the existing portfolio assessment instrument, the MMJ coordinator encouraged board members to develop an assessment instrument that worked better for them in evaluating portfolios. The new assessment instrument was completed in May 2021 and board members used it to evaluate Spring 2021 portfolios.

- *Evaluations of internships and practicum* experiences – After they have junior standing, MMJ students are required to complete an internship and may earn as many as three hours of credit for completing an internship. The professional supervisors evaluate the performance of students using forms provided by the department's internship coordinator.

**5. In a digital file, list the major awards won by the unit's students in local, regional or national competitions in the past six years. Limit to five a year.**

Student awards can be found in this Dropbox document:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/10j6paancp9b112/Student%20Awards.docx?dl=0>

**6. In a digital file, list by specialty each member of the graduating class of 2016 and those graduates' current jobs. If practical, give a total number of "unknowns" rather than including them in the list. Describe the program used to track graduates to assess their experience in the profession and to improve curriculum and instruction.**

The digital file for Class of 2016 graduate's current jobs can be found in this Google spreadsheet:

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1qsTXkXueK3Son0q4xGnnz\\_p0lSnCMQ0-u8ZwQMAi-NM/edit#gid=0](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1qsTXkXueK3Son0q4xGnnz_p0lSnCMQ0-u8ZwQMAi-NM/edit#gid=0)

As described above, the school conducts an annual survey of graduates and invites alumni to participate in the advisory boards. In addition to these measures, the school uses Facebook and LinkedIn to keep in touch with alumni. Additionally, faculty and emeriti faculty are in contact with several alumni and share their successes via social media and emails.

ASU's Alumni Office maintains databases that include employment histories, addresses and phone numbers of graduates. The information is readily shared with the school and programs electronically, and the school shares updated information with the Alumni Office. Long-term university policy prohibits anyone other than the Alumni Office from maintaining alumni databases.