

# Report of ACEJMC Evaluation

## Undergraduate program 2022–2023

Name of Institution: California State University, Northridge  
Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: President Erika D. Beck  
Name of Unit: Journalism Department  
Name and Title of Administrator: Department Chair Stephanie Bluestein  
Date of 2022-2023 Accrediting Visit: February 12 to February 15, 2023

Date of the previous accrediting visit: February 7 to February 10, 2016  
Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Re-accreditation  
Undergraduate program:  
Professional master's program:

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council:  
Undergraduate program: Bachelor of Arts in Journalism  
Professional master's program: Master of Arts in Mass Communication (not accredited by ACEJMC)

### Recommendation by 2022-2023 Visiting Team:

Undergraduate program recommendation: **Re-Accreditation**

*Prepared and submitted by:*

#### Team Chair

Name and Title: Rafael Lorente, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs  
Organization/School: Philip Merrill College of Journalism, University of Maryland

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

#### Team Member

Name and Title: Steve Geimann  
Organization/School: Bloomberg News (retired)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

#### Team Member

Name and Title: Professor Michel Haigh  
Organization/School: School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Texas State University

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

#### Team Member

Name and Title: Jessica Pucci, Senior Associate Dean and Professor of Practice  
Organization/School: Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Arizona State University

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## PART I: General information

Name of Institution: **CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE**

Name of Unit: **DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM**

Year of Visit: **2022-23**

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

- Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools
- New England Association of Schools and Colleges
- North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
- Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges**

### 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.

Founded in 1958 as San Fernando Valley State College, California State University, Northridge (CSUN) is part of a 23-campus [California State University](#) with more than 477,000 students, 56,000 faculty and staff, and four million living alumni.

The [system's roots](#) date to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century, when the forerunner of San Jose State University, California State Normal School, was established. In 1961, the Donahoe Higher Education Act of 1960 instituted the "California State Colleges" as a system with a Board of Trustees and a Chancellor. It followed the recommendations of "A Master Plan for Higher Education in California, 1960–1975." By 1976, the CSU headquarters were constructed in Long Beach, CA., and by 1982, the State University and Colleges system was designated "[The California State University](#)" or CSU.

The Donahoe Act assigned different functions to the University of California, the California State Colleges and the California Community Colleges. The primary function of the State Colleges was broadened to include undergraduate and graduate instruction in the liberal arts and sciences, in applied fields and in the professions; doctoral degrees were authorized if offered jointly with the University of California. Subsequently, state Senate and Assembly bills in 2005 and 2010 authorized doctoral degree programs in educational administration, physical therapy and nursing practice.

The CSU celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2010 and, in 2016, the Board of Trustees approved the system-wide [Graduation Initiative 2025](#), aimed at increasing graduate rates by reducing achievement gap barriers to students' success.

**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: Feb. 7-10, 2016

**5. When was the unit or sequences within the unit first accredited by ACEJMC?** May 23, 1967

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

The Journalism Department's mission statement was first adopted in 1997. The document was revised in 2012 during the strategic planning process to include vision statements for students, faculty and the Department.

**Program Mission**

The Department of Journalism strives to prepare its students to become well-educated, principled citizens who are capable of initiating careers as skilled journalists, public relations practitioners and other related communication professionals.

**Vision Statements**

▪Vision 1 / STUDENTS:

Learn to be excellent writers and communicators who tell factual stories in a variety of forms and platforms for diverse publics and whose work reflects creativity, innovation, analytical thinking, ethics and democratic values.

▪Vision 2 / FACULTY:

Innovate to produce excellence in teaching, research, service and creative activities.

▪Vision 3 / DEPARTMENT:

Foster culture of collaboration among students, faculty, staff, alumni and diverse communities to become a resource, a town square, a network for those interested in journalism.

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

▪Number of weeks in a semester: Sixteen (16)

▪Number of weeks in summer sessions: [CSUN hosts three summer sessions](#), including one spanning 12 weeks and two terms at six weeks each.

▪Number of weeks in intersessions: [Five-week Winter term](#)

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

Bachelor's degree  
 Master's degree (not accredited by ACEJMC)  
 Ph.D. degree

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

- 1) [Bachelor of Arts in Journalism](#) with distinct Options in Broadcast or Public Relations
- 2) [Minor in Journalism\\*](#)
- 3) [Interdisciplinary Minor in Spanish-Language Journalism \(SLJ\)\\*](#)

\*While the Department is aware that ACEJMC does not review minors, it's important to note that typically between 75 percent, such as in Fall 2022, and 100 percent of students in the SLJ minor are Journalism majors and are included in the total headcount.

**10. Credit hours required by the university for an undergraduate degree:**

120 semester units

**11. Give the number of credit hours students may earn for internship experience.**

3 semester-hour units

In addition, students have access to the [California State University Entertainment Alliance](#), which provides internship opportunities. Students at any CSU campus may earn online course credits. In some cases, units earned can be applied to selected upper division elective requirements in Journalism, or as elective credits.

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

| Name of Sequence or Specialty | Person in Charge                     |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Journalism, B.A.              | Stephanie Bluestein, Dept. chair     |
| ▪                             | Option: Broadcast (Radio/Television) |
| ▪                             | Option: Public Relations             |

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

36,123 in Fall 2022

**14. Number of undergraduate majors in the accredited unit, by sequence.**

| JOURNALISM HEADCOUNT / UNDERGRADUATE MAJORS |            |             |            |
|---|------------|-------------|------------|
| Option                                      | FALL 2022  | SPRING 2022 | FALL 2021  |
| Journalism – Major                          | 125        | 119         | 133        |
| Journalism (OPT) Broadcast                  | 137        | 137         | 160        |
| Journalism (OPT) Public Relations           | 106        | 98          | 107        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                | <b>368</b> | <b>354</b>  | <b>401</b> |
| Journalism – Minor*                         | 25         | 23          | 22         |
| Spanish-Language Interdisciplinary Minor*   | 12         | 9           | 10         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                | <b>37</b>  | <b>32</b>   | <b>32</b>  |

*\* In Spring 2019, Fall 2019 and Spring 2020, data show a total of 77, 84 and 71 Journalism and Spanish-Language Journalism minors, respectively. NOTE: The Department is aware that ACEJMC does not review minors. However, typically between 75 percent, such as in Fall 2022, and 100 percent of students in the SLJ minor are Journalism majors and are included in the total headcount.*

**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 [SPRING 2023] during which the visit will occur and for the preceding term [FALL 2022]. Submit two semesters with the self-study and update the list as needed for spring 2023 visits. 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.)**

The chart on the following pages lists the number of students in each section of all skills courses and has been updated for the site team visit, Feb. 12-15, 2023.

| ENROLLMENT IN SKILLS CLASSES                     | SPRING 2023 | FALL 2022 | SPRING 2022 |
|--|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| J.110 / L News Reporting I                       |             |           |             |
| Section 1  | 21          | 20        | 20          |
| Section 2  | 22          | 20        | 20          |
| J.210 / L News Reporting II                      |             |           |             |
| Section 1  | 20          | 16        | 17          |
| Section 2  | 19          | 19        | 17          |
| J.225 / Multimedia Storytelling                  |             |           |             |
| Section 1  | 23          | 21        | 17          |
| Section 2  | 22          | 18        | 20          |
| Section 3  |             | 22        | 15          |
| J.310 / Feature Writing                          |             |           |             |
| Section 1  | 20          | 20        | 17          |
| J.315 / Broadcast Reporting                      | 21          |           |             |
| Section 1  |             | 23        | 21          |
| J.325 / Multiplatform Storytelling               |             |           |             |
| Section 1  | 23          | 19        | 19          |
| Section 2  | 15          | 18        | 17          |
| Section 3  |             |           | 13          |
| J.341 / Writing and Editing for Public Relations |             |           |             |
| Section 1  | 17          | 20        | 17          |
| J.350 / Photojournalism                          |             |           |             |
| Section 1  | 21          | 9 *       | 13          |
| J.375 Engaging Diverse Communities               |             |           |             |
| Section 1  | 20          | 17        | 20          |
| Section 2  | 18          | 15        | 22          |
| J.395B and C / Broadcast Practicum               |             |           |             |
| Section 1  | 22          | 20        | 14          |
| Section 2  |             |           | 15          |
| J.397B and C / Newspaper Practicum               |             |           |             |
| Section 1  | 19          | 17        | 27          |
| J.398B and C / Public Relations Practicum        |             |           |             |
| Section 1  | 19          | 19        | 24          |

| ENROLLMENT IN SKILLS CLASSES                          | SPRING 2023         | FALL 2022          | SPRING 2022           |
|---|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| J.410 / Investigative Reporting                       |                     |                    |                       |
| Section 1   | 21                  | Cancelled          | 21                    |
| J.415 / Reporting for TV News                         |                     |                    |                       |
| Section 1   | 18                  | 24                 | 10                    |
| Section 2   |                     |                    | 14                    |
| J.430 / Public Affairs Reporting                      |                     |                    |                       |
| Section 1   | 20                  | 10                 | 13                    |
| J.445 / Advanced Television News                      |                     |                    |                       |
| Section 1   | 13                  | 8                  | 11                    |
| J.450 / Advanced Photojournalism                      |                     |                    |                       |
| Section 1   |                     | 5 *                | Cancelled             |
| J.455 / Documentary Photojournalism (Spring)          |                     |                    |                       |
| Section 1   |                     |                    | 11 *                  |
| J.460 / Magazine Journalism (Spring)                  |                     |                    | 20                    |
| Section 1   | 21                  |                    |                       |
| J.474 / SLJ / Spanish-Language Media Writing (Spring) |                     |                    |                       |
| Section 1   | 13                  |                    | 15                    |
| <b>J.495 A-Z Selected Topics –SKILLS COURSES</b>      |                     |                    |                       |
| – POD / Audio Storytelling                            |                     |                    |                       |
| Section 1   | 21                  | 20                 | 28                    |
| – EJ / Environmental Journalism                       |                     |                    |                       |
| Section 1   |                     | 14                 |                       |
| – EPR / Entertainment Public Relations                |                     |                    |                       |
| – SMJ/ Social Media Journalism                        |                     | 23                 |                       |
| – SJ/ Sports Journalism                               |                     |                    |                       |
| Section 1   | 19                  |                    | 25                    |
| – SMJ/ Social Media Journalism                        |                     |                    |                       |
| Section 1   |                     | 22                 |                       |
| – SLT / Spanish-Language Television                   |                     |                    | Cancelled             |
| Section 1   |                     |                    |                       |
| – DA / Data Analytics                                 |                     |                    |                       |
| Section 1   | 21                  |                    |                       |
| <b>ONLINE SKILLS ENROLLMENT</b>                       | <b>SPRING 2023*</b> | <b>FALL 2022**</b> | <b>SPRING 2022***</b> |
| J.110 / L News Reporting I                            | 21 OF +             | 20 OH              | 19 FOS                |
| J.210 / L News Reporting II                           | 20 OF               | 18 OH              | 17 FOS                |
| J.225 Multimedia Storytelling                         | 23 OF +             | 21 OH +            | 17 FOS                |
| J.325 Multimedia Storytelling                         | N/A                 | 19 OH              | 20 FOS                |
| J.495 POD   | 21 OH +             | 20 OH              | 28 OH +               |
| J.495 SJ  |                     |                    | 25 OH +               |
| J.495 EPR   |                     | 23 OF +            |                       |
| J.495 DA  | 21 OF +             |                    |                       |

\* In Spring 2023, Journalism classes were designated either OH (Online Hybrid, meaning they alternated meeting in-person and online) or OF (Fully Online).

\*\* In Fall 2022, most online classes were designated OH; one section of J.495 was scheduled as OF.

\*\*\* In Spring 2022, some classes were designated as FOS (Fully Online Synchronous), COI (Fully Online Intermittent) and OH.

+ In sections where enrollment exceeded 20:1 ratio, [see pages 26-27](#), for discussion of consistent adherence to SFR.

**16. Total expenditures planned by the accredited unit for the 2021-2022\* academic year:**  
\$2,716,039.70.

This figure, which will be updated with 2022-2023 data when available, includes projected expenses:

- personnel (faculty, staff salaries and benefits): \$2,667,039.70
- operating (supplies, equipment, faculty travel, services): \$49,000.

\* Considered a “bounce back year,” post-COVID-19 pandemic; GFIs also went into effect.

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

Approximately 7.8 percent decrease (lower salaries due to faculty and staff attrition, offset by general salary increases for faculty and supplemental COVID-relief funding.)

**Amount spent in 2021-22 on full-time faculty salaries:** \$983,555.40

For context, see the [University General Fund Operating Budget](#), Fiscal Year 2022-23.

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

| FULL-TIME FACULTY 2021-22 | RANK                           |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| José Luis Benavides       | Professor                      |
| Elizabeth Blakey          | Associate Professor            |
| David Blumenkrantz        | Professor                      |
| Linda Bowen               | Professor, Department Chair ** |
| Benjamin Davis +          | Associate Professor            |
| Marcella De Veaux         | Professor                      |
| Daniela Gerson            | Assistant Professor ***        |
| David Grewe               | Associate Professor            |
| Taehyun Kim               | Associate Professor            |
| Gretchen Macchiarella     | Assistant Professor            |
| Melissa Wall              | Professor                      |
| Yue Zheng +               | Assistant Professor ***        |
| SABBATICAL SPRING 2022    |                                |
| Stephanie Bluestein       | Associate Professor *          |
| EMERITUS FACULTY, 2021-22 | YEAR GRANTED                   |
| Scott Brown               | 2020                           |
| Susan Henry               | 2010                           |
| James Hill                | 2018                           |
| Kent Kirkton              | 2015                           |
| Rick Marks                | 2019                           |
| Cynthia Rawitch           | 2017                           |
| Jessica Retis             | 2020                           |
| Maureen Rubin             | 2017                           |
| Ezra Shapiro              | 2019                           |
| Sally Turner              | 2021                           |

\* Promoted to full professor, effective 2022-23 academic year. \*\*Entered Faculty Early Retirement Program, effective 2022-23. \*\*\*Tenured and promoted to associate professor, effective 2022-23 academic year

+ **SITE TEAM VISIT UPDATES:** As noted in other sections of this report, Prof. Benjamin Davis left at the end of Fall 2022 to accept a leadership position in the School of Global Journalism and Communication at Morgan State University. Prof. Yue Zheng is on leave for Spring 2023.

**18. The names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in Spring and Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 are listed in the updated chart.**

| PART-TIME / TEMPORARY FACULTY 2021-22 |                      |                      |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| SPRING 2023                           | FALL 2022            | SPRING 2022          |
| Aron Bender                           | Aron Bender          | Aron Bender          |
| Julie Bien                            | Julie Bien           | Julie Bien           |
| Chris Cathcart                        | Christopher Cathcart | Christopher Cathcart |
| Agustín Durán                         | Ryan Fonseca         | Ryan Fonseca         |
| Jose Duran                            | Linda Nuñez Hettich  | Stacy Long **        |
| Ryan Fonseca                          | Stacy Long **        | Joshua Molina        |
| Bobbie Eisenstock *                   | Josh Molina          | Kyle Stokes          |
| Carlos Herrera                        | Kyle Stokes          | Tammy Trujillo       |
| Linda Nuñez Hettich                   | Tammy Trujillo       | Arvli Ward ***       |
| Edward Hoffman                        | Arvli Ward ***       | Tim Whyte            |
| Ruben Keoseyan                        | Tim Whyte            | Lova Yazdani         |
| Stacy Long **                         |                      |                      |
| Josh Molina                           |                      |                      |
| Kyle Stokes                           |                      |                      |
| Tammy Trujillo                        |                      |                      |
| Arvli Ward ***                        |                      |                      |
| Tim Whyte                             |                      |                      |

\* Full-time lecturer; \*\* Adviser, Agency 398; \*\*\* Publisher/adviser, Daily Sundial

**19. For each of the last two academic years, please give the total number of graduates from the unit.**

| TOTAL NUMBER OF JOURNALISM GRADUATES |                 |   |         |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|---|---------|
| Academic Year                        | Total Graduates | 72 or more semester hours outside of journalism and mass communication* | Percent |
| 2021-22                              | 128             | 128   | 100     |
| 2020-21                              | 156             | 156   | 100     |



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

The Journalism Department at California State University, Northridge dates to 1958, one year after the school's newspaper was founded, without a name. The newspaper was part of the San Fernando Valley Campus of Los Angeles State College. Published on February 1, 1957, the newspaper's first edition had a question mark for a name and a naming contest for readers. Now known as the *Daily Sundial*, the newspaper is one of seven student media outlets, including a broadcast operation, the *Valley View News*, a public relations operation, Agency 398, and the Spanish-language *El Nuevo Sol*.

The Journalism Department and the greater university serve a highly diverse population in and around the San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles. Many of the students are first-generation college students. Journalism is housed in Manzanita Hall and is one of six departments in the Mike Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication.

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

**(a) The unit has a written mission statement and a written strategic long-range plan that provides vision and direction for its future, meaningful short-term measurements, identifies needs and resources for its mission and goals and is supported by university administration outside the unit.**

The unit's mission statement says it "strives to prepare its students to become well-educated, principled citizens who are capable of initiating careers as skilled journalists, public relations practitioners and other related communication professionals." The statement has specifics about students, faculty and the department, and outlines student learning outcomes.

The unit has a strategic plan that was adopted in 2012. The unit notes that it has overhauled its curriculum since the last re-accreditation visit. However, it is a weakness that the plan has not been updated in 13 years. Now that the COVID-19 pandemic is waning, the unit fully intends to revise the plan.

The unit appears to have the support of the greater administration of the College and University. The newly-minted provost, an organizational psychologist by discipline, had clearly read the self-study and was keen to ask questions about what she could do to help the Journalism Department move forward in what she recognizes is a fast-changing field.

**The unit posts its mission statement and strategic plan in a prominent, easy-to-find place on its website.**

The unit's mission statement, strategic plan and other key documents are posted [here](#).

**Describe in detail how the mission statement/strategic plan is implemented, plays into the daily life of the unit and its effectiveness in driving progress. Who has responsibility for keeping the plan updated? Is it revised regularly to deal with rapidly changing issues of instruction and technology?**

The chair of the department is responsible for the mission statement and the strategic plan.

The unit's mission statement dates to 2018.

The unit's strategic plan dates to 2012. The unit recognizes the need to update the plan based on the frequency and volume of changes the field has undergone since then. COVID-19 played a role, but even by the beginning of the pandemic shutdown, the plan was eight years old.

That said, several of the plan's key 2012 objectives have been implemented, including a comprehensive curriculum redesign, the creation of Department social media pages, and the creation of several new

courses, as well as the launch of Agency 398, a student-led, practicum-based public relations operation with on- and off-campus clients, and the companion CSUN PR Advisory Council, comprised of industry professionals and PR alumni.

**(b) The unit's administration provides effective leadership within the unit and effectively represents it in dealings with university administration outside the unit and constituencies external to the university.**

The Journalism chair reports to the dean of the Mike Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication, which includes departments of art, cinema and television arts, communications studies, music, and theater. The Journalism chair is responsible for class schedules and teaching assignments, part-time faculty hiring, budgeting and more. The chair supervises administrative and advising positions, including the person responsible for information technology. The chair also supervises the staff of the campus media outlets, the Daily Sundial, and the radio and television stations.

The unit has undergone an extraordinary amount of leadership and administrative turnover in the last year. This turnover has taken place under a president who began her tenure in January of 2021 (NOTE: The site team did not meet with the president because of a travel conflict). The provost had only been on campus six weeks when the site team met with her.

Professor Stephanie Bluestein began her first three-year term as Journalism chair in Fall 2022. She was on sabbatical for about half of the self-study period. The previous chair, Professor Linda Bowen, served as the chair of the department throughout the self-study year. Additionally, the administrative analyst (budgeting) and the administrative support coordinator have been in their positions for less than five months each.

Bowen's third, three-year term ended in Spring 2021, but she agreed to a tenth year because of the newly elected chair's sabbatical, and to lead the self-study.

The new chair appears to have the support and respect of both the faculty and the university's administration. Bluestein has served on the campus' Academic Grievance and Grade Appeal board, an elected position. Bluestein is a past president of the Greater Los Angeles Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, working to connect students and faculty to the industry. She also led a collaboration between Cal State students and students at Bowie State University, an HBCU in Maryland.

"The leadership changes at the department level have been handled very well," said one long-time faculty member. "We had a democratic transition."

The faculty member added that everyone's voices were heard and that the department voted for the right person, in their opinion.

Campus representatives from the library, institutional research, Africana Studies and other units praised Journalism faculty for being collaborative and effective. The head of institutional research praised the unit for having more than twice the percentage of Black or African-American students as the rest of the campus, and for practically eliminating racial and ethnic achievement gaps among its students. The head of faculty development singled out Bluestein for taking an early leadership role, using her original faculty orientation and turning it into workshops for her department.

One campus representative said: "It's a department that's known for intense mentoring of their students, intense interventions."

**Characterize in depth the leadership of the unit as an agent for progress, advocate for the unit's fields of study within the university and aggressive connector with alumni. What significant achievements can be attributed to the leader? Has the leader built partnerships within the university? Is the leader seen as a strong advocate on matters of diversity, inclusion and equity? Is faculty and student diversity improving? Do scholars and professionals work collaboratively? Is creativity in curriculum, teaching and research sought and rewarded? Is the leader driving**

**forward the curriculum (while respecting faculty governance and required process) to keep up with a rapidly changing media world?**

During her 10-year tenure, Bowen, the previous chair, was an active presence both at the university and externally. Bowen served for five years on the Mike Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication Council of Chairs, helping to shape campus-wide academic policies. She also serves on the advisory board of the Moorpark College Journalism Advisory Board, among other activities. Community college connections are critical because many of the unit's students transfer from those institutions.

One faculty member praised Bowen for the most recent curriculum revisions, saying it was her leadership that moved the Department to adopt a more digitally focused curriculum that is better aligned with what students and the industry need.

The unit's current chair, Bluestein, will have to manage up and down while getting to know several new people, including the provost. She faces significant challenges, including declining enrollment caused in part by soon-to-end geographic limits on student admissions, the recent loss of two full-time professors of color to leadership positions at other universities, and the need to find the funds to modernize broadcast and other equipment.

In spite of the challenges and the transition, alumni spoke highly of the school's leadership.

A recent alum echoed the improvement in the public relations option and was impressed by the outreach to community colleges. They found the Department's chair, the College's dean, and even the University's president accessible while a student.

"At the end of the day, it was all about the students and listening to their voices," the alum said.

In both cases, these alumni felt connected to the school.

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

The Department's data is on the website.

**(d) The unit gathers, maintains and analyzes enrollment, retention and graduation data and posts them annually in a prominent, easy-to-find place on its websites.**

The University posts retention and graduation data on its Institutional Research site [here](#).

The unit analyzes its data and has shown remarkable success at closing racial and ethnic achievement gaps.

**On indicators (e), (f) and (g) the site team should make sure the unit operates within accepted academic norms and need only report in detail on extraordinary situations, cases or variances from policy.**

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

Policies and procedures for faculty governance are in place at various levels:

- [The California State System](#)
- [The University](#)
- [The College](#)

No extraordinary situations of variance were found.

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

The University's Academic Policies and Procedures Manuals govern recruitment, appointment and evaluation processes.

Department chairs are chosen by a vote of the tenured faculty and serve three-year terms. There are written procedures for evaluations of the chair, which take place at intervals of no more than three years.

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

Faculty, staff and student grievances are handled informally and formally, with the latter sometimes requiring assistance from the Office of Equity and Diversity, or others on campus. The campus Faculty Affairs office handles faculty and staff issues in accordance with the campus's collective bargaining agreements in effect.

Student complaints, often about grades, tend to come through the chair. Students are often asked to meet with the instructor first. If a student is unsatisfied with the department's decision, they may appeal to the [Academic Grievances and Grade Appeals Board](#), which gets involved "when a student feels aggrieved in (non-grade) matters concerning an academic decision, action or judgment by a faculty member." Members of the Department, including the current chair, have served two-year terms on the board.

Some issues require other resources on campus, such as the office of Disability Resources and Educational Services or the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. The latter office handles cheating, plagiarism and other academic integrity issues.

**SUMMARY:**

The unit faces internal and external challenges due to staff turnover, leadership transitions and declining enrollment caused by university limits, among other factors. The expected lifting of those geographic student recruiting limits could go a long way to alleviating the enrollment issues. The new chair appears to have strong support from both the faculty and university leaders alike. As we get further away from the worst effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the unit will need to focus on strategic planning and implementation if it is to continue to succeed.

**Overall evaluation (undergraduate program) compliance/noncompliance:**

COMPLIANCE

## PART II — Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

Discussions of indicators b, c and f should describe and evaluate individual academic sequences in the unit.

**(a) Students in the unit complete academic requirements for a baccalaureate degree that meet the liberal arts and sciences/general education requirements of the institution. Programs may identify classes within the unit that contribute to a liberal arts and social sciences perspective for graduates from the unit.**

Journalism students complete 120 credits for the bachelor of arts degree. The department has opted to maintain the now-noncompulsory ACEJMC guideline of 72 hours outside the major: Journalism students complete 48 hours in the Department.

The degree's external credit requirements provide students a strong liberal arts foundation, as well as deeper learning in areas they select. The university requires undergraduate students to complete 48 credit hours of general education in six areas: English Language Communication and Critical Thinking; Scientific Inquiry and Quantitative Reasoning; Arts, Humanities, and U.S. History; Social Sciences and California and Local Government; Lifelong Learning; and Comparative Cultural Studies (which includes gender, race, class and ethnic studies, as well as foreign languages). One required course (Mass Communication) and three electives across the major satisfy General Studies requirements; students fulfill their remaining general education requirements outside the department.

All Journalism students are urged to complete an area of interest or minor of at least 15 credit hours outside the college. The department encourages students to select a field specific to their career interests, such as political science or music industry studies.

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

All students in the college share a 30-credit core of media courses that provide a foundation in mass communication theory, concepts, and skills. Within that core, students complete 16 lower division credits, including a Mass Communication course, reporting and multimedia courses, and either Visual Communication or Introduction to Public Relations. Freshmen also complete a 1-credit Introduction to Journalism course, launched as part of a recent curriculum redesign to foster student retention and acquaint students with the professions' foundational principles and concepts. The core also encompasses 14 credits of upper division coursework: Theoretical and conceptual courses include History of the American News Media or International News Media and Media Law and Ethics, while skills courses include Multiplatform Storytelling and Writing for Public Relations. Skills courses include a small but smart range of required and elective courses, including Environmental Journalism, Audio Storytelling, Data and Analytics and Entertainment Public Relations.

Students progress through required and elective coursework specific to their major and specialization before pursuing a hands-on, practicum, where theory and skills collide. In the Advanced Television News practicum, students produce the weekly Valley View News show; in the Daily Sundial, students produce content for the website and monthly magazine; in Agency 398, students engage local nonprofits

with PR services. In each practicum, faculty guide students in applied work, connecting theory to practice and promoting career readiness.

Students may pursue the general journalism major or emphasize broadcast or public relations. The Journalism, Broadcast and Public Relations “options” prescribe lists of upper-division skills and values courses both specific to and shared among those disciplines. Students may also pursue a minor in Spanish-Language Journalism, in which students supplement their journalism curriculum with Spanish language courses and a course in Chicana/o or Central American Studies, and opt for a Spanish-language media practicum.

ACEJMC values and competencies form the basis of the curriculum’s learning outcomes (noted in Standard 3) and are well represented throughout skills and values courses. Students are quick to identify the courses in which values are introduced and note that subsequent courses frequently return to the roots of values and foundational concepts.

**(c) Instruction, whether on-site or online, synchronous or asynchronous, is demanding and current, and is responsive to professional expectations of digital and technological media competencies.**

Since the last reaccreditation, the unit has undergone a comprehensive curriculum redesign intended to better prepare students for a rapidly changing media industry while fostering stronger assessment practices. Implemented in the 2018-2019 academic year and with consultation from industry professionals, the redesign added or overhauled 15 courses, and placed new emphasis on multimedia digital storytelling, news literacy and engaging diverse communities.

Through analyses of assessment data and interviews with alumni came two new digital storytelling courses: Multimedia Storytelling (part of the major’s required core) and Multiplatform Storytelling (for students in the general journalism and broadcast options), which develop students’ skills in digital content, photo and video, graphics and social media, preparing them for applied work in media production and practicum courses. The redesign also spawned new courses in News Literacy, Engaging Diverse Communities and Public Relations Campaigns. Other courses were refreshed to reflect changes in the professions.

Faculty also develop and deliver coursework via “Selected Topic” and “Senior Project” classes, which indoctrinate students to emerging issues and technologies, and serve as elective and senior project courses. Environmental Journalism and Smart Speakers for News are among these courses. Coursework is supplemented by extracurricular seminars and workshops taught by professionals, such as a drone workshop in 2022 and a NextGen radio workshop in 2020.

Faculty are pleased with the curriculum changes, and yet they know they have more work to do to align student demand with industry expectations: Declining enrollment in visual journalism courses necessitates revision of the photojournalism curriculum; university leadership’s emphasis on interdisciplinary collaboration requires new academic relationships; and opportunities to increase the unit’s general education offerings have the potential to bring new students into the department. The unit also recognizes its greatest growth opportunity is in expanding its PR discipline. After formalizing a PR pathway during the curriculum revision just before the pandemic and launching its Public Relations Advisory Council, the unit has gained both momentum and donations to support PR coursework, conference participation and revenue-generating activities.

Syllabuses reflect rigorous coursework that aligns with the profession’s core competencies and capabilities. Students feel their coursework prepares them well for their practicums and internships, and that their applied work is relevant to the careers they seek. Alumni concur: Recent graduates affirm that

the unit's coursework adequately prepared them for entry-level positions in the field, and that they felt more prepared on the job than some peers.

**(d) The unit demonstrates efforts to connect faculty and administrators to the professions they represent, with a specific understanding of the changing skills needed to be successful in the workplace.**

The unit emphasizes professional development for faculty in both the teaching and media disciplines; indeed, one faculty member has a partial appointment in the provost's office supporting faculty development.

Faculty proactively work to improve their teaching through campus-wide and individual activities. During the pandemic, faculty participated in trainings to learn how to teach remotely; the unit has sustained those skills, and today offers more fully online and hybrid courses than ever. Other development opportunities have focused on pedagogy, assessment and equity in teaching—and faculty put these to practice: Following a workshop on creating learning-centered syllabuses, faculty created an ad hoc committee to map the outcomes and standards for two reporting courses, which streamlined the syllabuses and solved grading challenges. Individual faculty regularly participate in workshops across the campus and the country on academic integrity, multiculturalism, research methods for students, ethics and classroom management.

Faculty also nurture their professional skills, keeping abreast of trends in digital media and journalism techniques through online courses, professional organizations and networking opportunities. (Notably, the chair has served as president of the Los Angeles chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists.) The unit's Journalism Alumni Association is active and helps the unit maintain industry standards; the new Public Relations Advisory Council, composed of industry professionals, meets four times a year with PR faculty to ensure a relevant curriculum. The college provides funds for faculty travel, and faculty regularly participate in academic conferences, collaborative events and professional immersion experiences.

**(e) Student-faculty classroom ratios facilitate effective teaching and learning in all courses. Except for campaigns courses, the ratio in skills and laboratory sections, whether on-site or online, should not exceed 20-1.**

The previous two site teams indicated the student-to-faculty ratio as a weakness. In 2016, the team recommended that the unit "show consistent adherence to student/faculty ratio" in the next evaluation. The 2010 team made the same recommendation. The unit continues to struggle, enrolling 21 or more students in at least 14 in-person and three online class sections across the Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 semesters. Discussions with department, college and university leadership indicate the College may have misunderstood that the university makes exceptions to campus-wide enrollment minimums and caps for courses in accredited programs. The provost (who, at the time of the site visit, had held her appointment for just six weeks) and the vice provost (a longtime CSUN leader) passionately affirmed support for the 20:1 ratio, and stated they would ensure the college and department adhere to ACEJMC guidelines.

All other skills classes—both in person and online—met the 20:1 ratio, and computer labs provide only 20 computers. Students praised the Department's relatively small class sizes and high contact with faculty and said classroom intimacy helped foster a sense of community among peers.

**(f) The unit advocates and encourages opportunities for internship and other professional experiences outside the classroom and supervises and evaluates them when it awards academic credit. Units may award academic credit for internships in fields related to journalism and mass communications, but credit should not exceed six semester credits (or nine quarter hours).**

Internships are encouraged (but not required) of students in the department. About 10 percent of the students (including minors) complete an internship for credit via the internship course, which fulfills elective credit.

The previous site team identified a weakness in the unit's ability to place students in internships; the unit has made some improvement, thanks to optimized advising practices and weekly email announcements. (Still, some students shared that they weren't made aware of an internship option until "too late" in their academic careers.) As one of Los Angeles County's few journalism programs, the unit sees healthy demand by the city's robust media landscape for student interns. The department collaborates with communications agencies and English- and Spanish-speaking newsrooms across the region to offer internship opportunities; students thrive in posts at Telemundo and Fox Sports to E! News and Make-A-Wish of Greater Los Angeles.

**When students take courses for internship credit at appropriate professional organizations, the unit must show ongoing and extensive dual supervision by the unit's faculty and professionals.**

The elective internship course is taught by a faculty member who serves as the department's internship coordinator. Students share performance feedback from their employers with the instructor via mid- and endpoint evaluations, and the instructor supervises student progress through twice-monthly reflection reports, online discussion forums and three mandatory hourlong workshops during the semester. Students track their work hours and satisfy the internship course requirements when they have completed 135 hours of work and the requisite assignments and submitted employer reviews.

**Students may take up to nine semester credits (or their equivalent) at professional media outlets owned and operated by the institution where full-time faculty are in charge and where the primary function of the media outlet is to instruct students.**

Students are required to complete four credits of a practicum, which serves as a capstone experience. Practicums are embedded within institution-owned, faculty-led media, including the Daily Sundial, a multimedia daily newsroom; Agency 398, a PR agency that serves nonprofit clients; and KCSN LatinAlt, a Spanish alternative radio station. Students do not take more than nine credits; indeed, students who wish to pursue multiple semesters within the university's media outlets often seek paid, not-for-credit roles in those experiences.

#### **SUMMARY:**

A recently revised journalism curriculum that emphasizes multimedia work and community engagement provides students solid footing for successful careers and supports both the critical thinking and digital skills the industry demands. Designed to drive both learning and career outcomes, the bachelor's degree consists of 48 units in the major that effectively balance theory, concepts and practice; applied practicum experiences give students valuable hands-on experience. The unit and new university leadership value small class sizes and have committed to adhering to the 20:1 ratio.

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



## PART II — Standard 3: Assessment of Learning Outcomes

*The Accrediting Committee and Council seek site-team reports on assessment that are appropriately detailed for a judgment on compliance that is informed, fair and consistent from one team to another.*

**Unit performance with regard to indicators:**

**(a) The unit has a written assessment plan that has been implemented, is up to date and addresses contemporary curricular issues, including instruction related to the rapidly changing digital media world.**

The unit has a written assessment plan that has been implemented. The plan is dated 2018-2025. The department has an Assessment Committee that oversees the general assessment activities and works with the university. The updated curriculum includes contemporary issues relevant to the changing media world.

**The unit posts its assessment plan in a prominent, easy-to-find place on its website.** The unit's plan is available on its website under the "[Mission](#)" tab.

**(b) The unit defines the goals for learning that students must achieve, including the professional Values and Competencies” of the Council. (See Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction.)**

The unit has identified program learning outcomes with measurable goals with each class contributing to distinct areas. The outcomes are on the syllabuses and the unit's website. They combine some of the ACEJMC competencies rather than presenting all 10 in the plan. Here are the program learning outcomes:

- Students will be able to report and write for diverse publics, using proper grammar and punctuation, word usage and spelling, sentence and storytelling structures across multiple journalistic formats.
- Students will be able to gather and analyze information, including basic numerical concepts, using reporting techniques, such as interviewing, observation, and researching primary and secondary sources.
- Students will be able to think critically, creatively and independently.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness, and diversity.
- Students will apply tools and technologies appropriate for the news media professions in which they work to communicate for and with diverse publics.
- Students will be able to understand and apply the historical, theoretical, legal and societal contexts for producing and consuming news media for consumers, ranging from local to global publics.

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

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

**Direct Measures:** Public relations practitioners use a rubric to evaluate students' public relations campaign books. Journalism faculty members assess students' essays, professionals review senior

projects, broadcast journalists assess students' news audio and scripts from the broadcast practicum, online/print journalists assess student news stories from the news practicum.

**Indirect Measures:** A survey is sent to undergraduate seniors, students are surveyed about their senior project, and student awards won in competitions.

**(d) At least one direct and/or indirect measure should include journalism and mass communication professionals engaged in assessment data collection.**

Industry professionals are included in the assessment process. They review projects from the practicum courses. The professionals included in the assessment process come from public relations, broadcast, and online/print news organizations. The unit also uses feedback from internship supervisors.

**(e) The unit collects and reports data from its assessment activities and applies the data to improve curriculum and instruction. There is substantial, concrete evidence of “closing the loop,” generally and specifically. Multiple examples of “closing the loop” are evident.**

The unit collects and reports data from its assessment activities on a yearly basis. The unit rotates the area being examined (public relations, broadcast or news) each year. The assessment reports provided in the self-study materials show the unit is including professionals in the assessment process and evaluating the ACEJMC competencies each year.

**Examples of closing the loop:**

- The unit began stressing the importance of internships and advising about the internship process based on a survey of graduating seniors in 2017-2018.
- PR faculty worked to add assignments that focus on creativity and defined creative, critical and independent thinking on their course rubrics based on feedback from PR professionals.
- After professionals reviewed the broadcast news practicum, the faculty added content to courses on how to create smartphone stories, blogs and websites.
- The 2017-2018 curriculum redesign was designed to close the loop. Several new multimedia and emerging technology courses were added. Faculty integrated audio/visual/social media into existing lower- and upper-division skills courses.
- An upper-division campaigns courses was added, and the introductory PR course was listed with a lower division number to align with community college transfer curriculum.

**SUMMARY:**

The unit has a written assessment plan. The plan, learning outcomes and curriculum map are presented on its website. The unit uses the ACEJMC values and competencies as its student learning outcomes. The unit includes mass communication professionals in its assessment of student learning. The unit has multiple direct and one indirect measures to assess student learning. The unit provided multiple ways it has closed the loop based on findings from the assessment activity.

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

## PART II — Standard 4: Diversity and Inclusiveness

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

**(a) The unit has a written diversity plan that has been implemented and discussed annually, for achieving an inclusive curriculum, a diverse, culturally proficient faculty, staff and student population, and a supportive climate for working and learning and for assessing progress toward achievement of the plan. The diversity plan should focus on domestic minority groups and, where applicable, international groups. The written plan must include the unit's definition of diversity, identify under-represented groups and articulate key performance indicators upon which the unit intends to focus and improve.**

**The unit posts its diversity plan in a prominent, easy-to-find place on its website.**

The Department has a written diversity plan posted under the Mission tab of the school's website. Originally adopted in 2015, the plan has not been updated; it does not include a definition of diversity; does not identify underrepresented groups; and does not articulate key performance indicators. The plan *does* assert a commitment to "a department that is inclusive, culturally competent and diverse," and encourages diversity and inclusion across the faculty, student body, curriculum and learning environment.

What the unit lacks in articulated benchmarks, it makes up for in a shared understanding of the importance of inclusivity and service to its community, and alignment on shared goals. The department's Diversity Council, composed of full- and part-time faculty, works to emphasize inclusivity within the curriculum and school environment, invite diverse speakers, and advance diversity initiatives throughout the Department. The unit's current diversity objectives are to increase Latinx faculty, and to analyze retention data (focusing on students of color) and assessment outcomes related to diversity.

**(b) The unit's curriculum creates culturally proficient communicators capable of learning with, working on and advancing the value of diverse teams. The unit's curriculum includes instruction on issues and perspectives relating to mass communications across diverse cultures in a global society.**

While the unit offers courses dedicated to diversity (including Spanish-Language Journalism and Engaging Diverse Communities), inclusivity and proficiency in cultural communication weave throughout the curriculum, and are best exemplified through student work. The Senior Project capstone course has completed projects including "Migration Memoirs" and "Ethnic Media, Memes and Movements;" a Photojournalism course covers an organization that supports the Native homeless population; and the Daily Sundial newsroom has a "communities" beat dedicated in part to coverage of underrepresented groups. The school's Spanish-language news products are particularly impressive, with two TV newscasts (Valley View en Español and Noticias del Valle) and a multimedia bilingual publication (El Nuevo Sol) created and produced by students.

The unit makes an effort to invite guest speakers representing diverse perspectives, such as an Afro-Panamanian documentarian who presented a film on undocumented immigrants, and a Black philosopher and author who led a conversation about racism and inequity in America. The department's Diversity Council, the student NABJ chapter and other campus groups also frequently bring guests to campus who reflect a range of voices.

The Department is also one of just four collegiate groups invited to launch the NBCUniversal Telemundo Local Academy, which provides Spanish-speaking journalism students with one year of

training and networking. The first cohort included 11 students, and the Department expects that all will be recruited for professional opportunities by the program's end.

Students note that while the campus and its surrounding area is largely politically liberal, they feel prepared to cover the entire landscape, and feel safe doing so. Several broadcast students asserted they emphasize reporter safety overall, noting, "A press pass doesn't protect you fully." Peers agreed, sharing that they use the safety skills they were taught in riskier situations, including reaching out to protesters ahead of time (rather than surprising them on the scene), and using mobile phones instead of attention-grabbing, large video cameras.

**(c) The unit demonstrates effective efforts to enhance all faculty members' understanding of diversity, equity, inclusion and ability to develop culturally proficient communicators capable of learning with, working on and advancing the value of diverse teams. The unit also demonstrates intentional efforts to recruit and retain faculty and professional staff who are from demographics that are historically, domestically marginalized.**

The Department fosters development opportunities to increase faculty's understanding of diversity, including hosting "Fault Lines" workshops (that both faculty and students attend) and a training to develop faculty's cultural competency, both hosted by outside facilitators. Faculty facilitate other workshops themselves: One faculty member attended a national training program on creating educational equity and diversity through personal reflection and testimony, and brought the training back home. Other faculty serve as liaisons to diverse campus groups (including the Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies Minor Committee, and the Armenian Studies Working Group).

Students notice the faculty's efforts. One student lauded a professor who speaks frankly with students about covering diverse communities as a white person: "He has gone into Skid Row and [other countries] for his work ... it would be easy for him to engage in tokenism, but he tells us about his experience and how he avoids that in his work."

The faculty includes slightly more women than men. Racial and ethnic diversity falls slightly short of the university's service area and faculty community. Full-time faculty members are 57 percent white (compared with 53 percent institution-wide). Both the self-study and faculty emphasize the need to increase Latinx faculty to better represent the student body, which is nearly 56 percent Latinx (full-time and part-time faculty are about 7 percent and 21 percent Latinx, respectively). There is additional need to hire Spanish-speaking faculty: One of two tenured Spanish-language program faculty took a leadership role at another university, and the other receives a teaching release to direct the Tom & Ethel Bradley Center (a unit of the university library that preserves the region's visual history and highlights communities of color). The unit has one faculty search underway for a new bilingual broadcast tenure-track position, and pools for part-time teaching roles have yielded 50 percent candidates of color. In Spring 2023, 80% of the five new part-time faculty were people of color.

Faculty recruitment has proven difficult for the unit, which is bound by the CSU system's collective bargaining agreement, which regulates personnel processes. Still, the Department has increased its full-time faculty diversity through dedicated recruitment efforts: Of the four most recent tenure-track hires, two were faculty of color, and three were women. The unit also values its ability to increase representation via part-time faculty, and it has worked to increase candidates by engaging local and regional news organizations, as well as alumni: More than half of the unit's adjuncts are former students.

The unit has some success in retaining diverse faculty, citing its internal faculty mentorship program and the University's New Faculty Foundations resources (which includes an orientation and a yearlong

academy). New tenure-track faculty also receive a one-course teaching release in each semester of their first two years. In the last six years, all four faculty members who went through the tenure and promotion process were tenured; half were women, and half were faculty of color.

But while faculty diversity is a priority for the unit—and the faculty is more diverse today than it was at the last reaccreditation—challenges beyond the unit’s control have hampered progress. Two tenured faculty of color departed for leadership positions at other universities. Among those departing: one of two Spanish-speaking faculty members; the remaining member has been reassigned away from teaching to other creative activity within a diversity-focused center. And faculty diversity—or lack thereof—is a campus-wide concern. A 2018 Campus Climate Survey indicated “a significant number of faculty and staff (nearly 50 percent)” had considered leaving “due in some cases to bullying, co-worker tension and what they perceive as lack of appreciation for their work.” The university has made efforts to improve diversity and inclusivity, including hiring a Chief Diversity Officer, creating faculty hiring programs focused on equity, creating new faculty pipelines, funding Diversity and Equity Innovation grants and other initiatives intended to improve the campus climate.

Perhaps the biggest roadblock to diversifying the unit’s full-time faculty is what it calls “tenure density,” which means that the unit has a higher percentage of full-time faculty in relation to their student enrollment numbers. (Larger departments in the College have higher enrollment but fewer full-time faculty in comparison to Journalism.) In addition, all but one of the full-time faculty are tenured, and half are approaching or pursuing retirement. Because enrollment is also declining, the unit is not confident that College leadership will allow vacated positions to be filled, stalling the unit’s faculty diversification efforts.

**(d) In alignment with the institution's mission, the unit demonstrates effective efforts to help recruit, retain and graduate a student population reflecting the diversity of the population the institution aims to serve.**

CSUN is a Hispanic Serving Institution, the largest in the CSU system. Housed in the heart of Los Angeles’ San Fernando Valley region, the university serves a population that is nearly 50 percent Latinx. Half of the University’s students are Pell grant eligible (including more than half of the Department’s students), and the University offers assistance to 80 percent of its students.

During the review period, the California State University system imposed the practice of “impaction” in Fall 2016 in response to large state-funded budget reductions, limiting the university’s (and thus, the Department’s) enrollment in key geographic areas. Department leadership is hopeful impaction will be lifted soon, allowing the unit to resume admissions and increase enrollment from formerly robust recruitment areas.

Though the unit’s total enrollment has declined during the review period, the percentage of students of color is stable. The unit has the most diverse student population of six departments within the College, and among the most diverse in the University: Nearly 70 percent of Journalism majors are Latinx, Black, American Indian/Alaskan Native or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Asian students comprise about 6 percent of majors. About 60 percent of students are female, more than the University population (55 percent female).

Efforts to retain diverse students are robust, including advising support, student organizations, hybrid courses and faculty relationships; the department also created new student workrooms and scholarships during the pandemic. These tactics are working: 56 percent of transfer students in the 2019 cohort graduated in two years (nine percentage points higher than the campus-wide rate), and 42 percent of the 2017 freshmen class graduated in four years (18 percentage points higher than the university rate). Both

rates were year-over-year improvements. And while the rest of the campus struggles to retain first-semester Black students, the department has closed that gap.

**(e) The unit demonstrates that it has an inclusive climate, free of harassment and all forms of discrimination, in keeping with the acceptable cultural practices of the population it serves, accommodates the needs of those with disabilities, and values the contributions of all forms of diversity.**

**Accreditation site visit teams will apply this standard in compliance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations, as well as the laws of the countries in which non-U.S. institutions are located.**

Students feel included and supported within the unit—and some students had changed their major to journalism *because* they felt more welcomed in the department. Said one student, “CSUN is big and it can be easy to feel lost, but professors are always helping us understand connection and communication, for ourselves and for our career. They push us to constantly network and make connections outside school, but in class, too.”

Next to supportive faculty, student organizations earned high praise from students for creating a sense of community and belonging within the unit. Six student clubs (including a new student chapter of the Asian American Journalists Association) engage students across and beyond the department with professional development and networking opportunities, though students were eager to praise these organizations’ “hangout” events that simply foster familiarity and friendship.

CSUN’s centralized efforts help the department maintain an inclusive climate and deliver accessible learning experiences. The university’s Office of Equity and Diversity administers interactive Title IX training and provides a Sexual Assault Victim Advocate to support students. The university is home to the National Center on Deafness, which provides both in-person and virtual resources to students, faculty, staff, and visitors requiring auditory accommodations (including academic advising in ASL). A Center on Disabilities coordinates accommodations and programming for students with disabilities and assists with video captioning; Americans with Disabilities Act statements also appear in course syllabuses. One student, however, noted that the Department’s building has just one accessible door that makes getting to class on time challenging.

**SUMMARY:**

The unit effectively promotes diversity and inclusivity through its curriculum, creativity and culture. While the unit strives to increase faculty diversity, its student body—predominately students of color—are well-served by passionate educators who care about the communities they serve. The unit’s diversity plan must be updated to reflect the unit’s enthusiastic focus on fostering a diverse learning environment.

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

| <b>TABLE 6. FULL-TIME FACULTY POPULATION / ACADEMIC YEAR 2021-22</b> |               |             |  |  |
|--|---------------|-------------|--|--|
| <b>Group *</b>   | <b>Female</b> | <b>Male</b> | <b>% of total<br/>jour<br/>faculty</b> | <b>% of total<br/>in<br/>institution</b> |
| Black/African American   | 1             | 1           | 14%                                    | 4.8%                                     |
| White  | 7             | 1           | 57%                                    | 53%                                      |
| American Indian/Alaskan native                                       | 0             | 0           | 0%                                     | 0.6%                                     |
| Asian  | 0             | 1           | 7%                                     | 17.4 %                                   |
| Hispanic/Latino (any race)   | 0             | 1           | 7%                                     | 10.2%                                    |
| Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander                               | 0             | 0           | 0%                                     | 0%                                       |
| Two or more races  | 0             | 0           | 0%                                     | 1.4%                                     |
| Unknown  | 0             | 1           | 7%                                     | 11.1%                                    |
| International (any race)   | 1             | 0           | 7%                                     | 1.5%                                     |

| <b>TABLE 6. PART-TIME FACULTY POPULATION / ACADEMIC YEAR 2021-22</b> |               |             |  |  |
|--|---------------|-------------|--|--|
| <b>Group *</b>   | <b>Female</b> | <b>Male</b> | <b>% of total<br/>jour<br/>faculty</b> | <b>% of total<br/>in<br/>institution</b> |
| Black/African American   | 0             | 2           | 15%                                    | 3.5%                                     |
| White  | 3             | 1           | 30%                                    | 56.3%                                    |
| American Indian/Alaskan native                                       | 0             | 1           | 7%                                     | 0.8%                                     |
| Asian  | 0             | 1           | 7%                                     | 7.7%                                     |
| Hispanic/Latino (any race)   | 1             | 2           | 23%                                    | 12.5%                                    |
| Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander                               | 0             | 0           | 0%                                     | 0.1%                                     |
| Two or more races  | 1             | 0           | 7%                                     | 1.2%                                     |
| Unknown  | 0             | 2           | 15%                                    | 17.3%                                    |
| International (any race)   | 0             | 0           | 0%                                     | 0.7%                                     |

\* The ethnicity and gender of all faculty is self-reported. Institutional Research is working with Admissions and Records to get a more accurate count of faculty diversity during a specific semester. Population data will be updated in time for the site team visit, Feb. 12-15, 2023. Part-time applicants receive a confidential [Applicant Flow Questionnaire](#). Filling it out is strictly voluntary and the form is sent directly to the chief diversity officer. We can track general ethnicity and gender data collected by the [Office of Institutional Research](#), based on information gathered in offices of Faculty Affairs and Equity and Diversity.

## PART II — Standard 5: Faculty

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

**(a) Full-time faculty have primary responsibility for curricula, oversight of courses, research/creative activity and service.**

The full-time faculty have the primary responsibility for curricula, oversight of courses, and research/creative activity, and service. The teaching responsibility of courses is usually 50 percent. During the academic year, 2021-2022, 49 percent of classes were taught by full-time faculty, and 51 percent were taught by part-time faculty. During the 2020-2021 academic year, 54 percent of classes were taught by full-time faculty, and 46 percent by part-time faculty. From 2019-2020, 50 percent of classes were taught by full-time faculty, and 50 percent were taught by part-time faculty. It should be noted the part-time faculty serving the unit are working in one of the largest media markets in the U.S.

**(b) The unit's faculty (full- and part-time) are highly qualified and keep their expertise current through professional development opportunities and maintain relationships with professional and scholarly associations.**

Of the 13 tenured or tenure-track faculty, six have Ph.D.s, one holds an Ed.D. (and shares a three staff Pulitzer Prizes), one has both a Master of Arts and a Master of Fine Arts. The remaining five faculty members have master's degrees, and each has 20 or more years of professional journalism experience.

Faculty are encouraged to participate in teaching workshops, including those sponsored by the Faculty Development Office. Recently, the university has emphasized training faculty in creating a climate of diversity and inclusiveness. The faculty have taken courses on how to teach online. Faculty have also attended workshops on campus and across the country on topics related to academic integrity, multiculturalism, new media, entrepreneurship, ethics, and classroom management. Examples include the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in American Higher Education, Teaching Solutions Journalism by Solutions Journalism Network, and the Dow Jones News Fund's training on Borderzine Multimedia.

**(c) The unit requires, supports and rewards faculty research, creative activity and/or professional activity. Expectations for promotion and tenure are clear.**

The faculty have heavy teaching loads (4/4), but they are productive scholars. The Department, college and university require and routinely support and reward research and creative activity. Full-time faculty can receive \$1,000 per year to attend a conference to present a paper, poster, panel or project. Additional funding may be available on a case-by-case basis. The college provides \$5,000 of start-up or seed money for new tenure-track faculty hires. They also receive three units of reassignment for their first two years, providing time to develop their scholarly and creative activity.

The college provides semester grants of a class release or the equivalent in travel support of research-related and creative work. The Research and Scholarly and Creative Activities competition has provided most full-time faculty members with either a course release or travel support to work on research and creative activities. During the review period, nine faculty received "reassignment grants." The College's Research Fellowship competition, which provides 12 units of course release time (roughly four courses) for a year.



Faculty interviews indicate they feel supported to perform research and creative activity they are interested in pursuing. Several are actively pursuing course releases for research and creative work. Faculty stated the promotion and tenure guidelines were clear, and the annual reviews and feedback from the Personnel Committee are helpful.

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

The faculty actively present their research and creative activity. For example, faculty presented at the International Conference on Intercultural Communications, International Association for Media and Communication Research, the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, the Society for Humanistic Psychology, the National Association of Black Journalists, the Cultural Studies Association, the Broadcast Education Association, and the Western Psychological Association national conference.

Faculty produced three sole-authored or co-authored books including *Citizen Journalism: Practices, Propaganda, Pedagogy*. They produced 23 book chapters, 59 refereed conference papers/panels, four encyclopedia entries, and 32 articles in refereed journals such as *Health Promotion Practice, International Journal of Communication, International Journal of Mobile Communications, Journalism, Journalism Educator, Journalism Practice, Media and Communication, New Media & Society, Open Cultural Studies, and Teaching Journalism & Mass Communication*.

A few creative projects include a peer-reviewed films including *The Club that No One Wants to Belong to: A Family Struggles & The Widow Bitch, Off the Streets for Good, and Older LGBTQ & Homeless*. A digital humanities project titled *Farmworker Movement Collection* was the fruition of a \$350,000 grant.

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

The unit has a reputation for excellence as a professional department. Campus representatives and alumni appear to share a high regard for the unit, its faculty, and students. The unit is well respected across campus, and faculty serve the campus in a variety of ways. They have been active in the faculty union, the faculty senate, and university assessment. Two faculty are currently reassigned to university leadership positions. Interviews with alumni noted the faculty are dedicated to the success of their students and staying connected to the industry. Alumni noted the unit prepared them to enter the field. Employers in the area hire students because of their skillset and drive.

**SUMMARY:**

The unit uses a mixture of full-time and part-time faculty to deliver its curriculum. The faculty are highly qualified. Tenured and tenure-track faculty have an average of 16 years of professional service. They are active members of professional and scholarly associations. The unit, college, and university support and reward faculty research and creative activity. Considering the heavy teaching loads, the scholarly and creative output is impressive. The unit is respected on campus, by its alumni, and by those in Los Angeles media industry.

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

| <b>SCHOLARSHIP, RESEARCH, CREATIVE AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES – 2016-22</b> |                  |                     |                          |                          |                      |             |
|--|------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
|  | Total from Unit* | Individuals         |                          |                          |                      | Totals (26) |
|  |                  | Full Professors (6) | Associate Professors (6) | Assistant Professors (1) | Other Faculty** (13) |             |
| Awards and Honors  | 18               | 5                   | 7                        | 0                        | 6                    | 18          |
| Grants Received Internal   | 20               | 10                  | 5                        | 1                        | 4                    | 20          |
| Grants Received External   | 12               | 2                   | 3                        | 3                        | 2                    | 12          |
| Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co-authored  | 3                | 3                   | 0                        | 0                        | 0                    | 3           |
| Textbooks, Sole- or Co-authored  | 1                | 0                   | 0                        | 0                        | 1                    | 1           |
| Books Edited   | 1                | 1                   | 0                        | 0                        | 0                    | 1           |
| Book Chapters  | 23               | 13                  | 4                        | 1                        | 4                    | 23          |
| Monographs   | 0                | 0                   | 0                        | 0                        | 0                    | 0           |
| Articles in Refereed Journals  | 32               | 9                   | 16                       | 2                        | 5                    | 32          |
| Refereed Conference Papers/Panels  | 59               | 28                  | 16                       | 5                        | 10                   | 59          |
| Invited Academic Papers  | 8                | 0                   | 0                        | 0                        | 8                    | 8           |
| Encyclopedia Entries   | 4                | 2                   | 1                        | 1                        | 0                    | 4           |
| Book Reviews   | 3                | 2                   | 0                        | 1                        | 0                    | 3           |
| Articles in Non-refereed Publications  | 13               | 0                   | 6                        | 0                        | 7                    | 13          |
| Juried Creative Works  | 5                | 2                   | 3                        | 0                        | 0                    | 5           |
| Non-juried Creative Works  | 13               | 6                   | 6                        | 0                        | 1                    | 13          |
| Other (please specify)   | 15               | 6                   | 4                        | 4                        | 1                    | 15          |

## PART II — Standard 6: Student Services

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

#### **(a) The unit and institution ensure that students are aware of graduation requirements.**

The Department requires all majors to meet with an academic adviser each semester. During the meetings, students are told about the requirements for the major and graduation. On many occasions students get a written, long-term course plan.

First-year freshmen are advised by professionals in the university's Matador Advising Hub, which was created by the Office of Undergraduate Studies in summer 2019 to centralize services for new students as a way to meet the university's retention and graduation goals. Advising appointments are mandatory in each semester. A freshman is unable to sign up for second-semester courses until meeting with an adviser in the Hub.

Sophomores are handled by the Department's staff adviser, who prepares them to meet with their faculty adviser starting in their junior year. The staff adviser also works with seniors about to graduate, students on academic probation and others with special issues. The remaining upperclass students meet with a faculty member, with each responsible for 17 to 25 students.

Except for new tenure-track faculty in their first year, all tenured and tenure-track faculty take on an advising load.

Documents provided to students and multiple pages on the University's website guide a student through their career, including course roadmaps and degree progress reports. The Department's advising process works with both College and University systems, which the self-study notes have undergone substantial changes in six years. "It's very easy to see the classes you need," one student told the team.

#### **(b) Professional advisers, and faculty where appropriate, provide students with academic and career advice.**

The Department's staff adviser trains junior tenure-track faculty to work with students, helps with new-student orientation and holds pre-advising workshops. The adviser works with the chair, the administrative support coordinator and student assistants to resolve problems, and participates in College and University initiatives.

Faculty members have extensive links to the profession and the unit is proud of its graduates who land at Los Angeles media outlets or elsewhere. The broadcast technician keeps tabs on graduates and during the visit played a video reel showing students on CSUN projects with a graphic showing their current employment. Graduates told team members they remain in contact with the faculty.

The collective bargaining agreement requires all full- and part-time faculty to schedule one office hour for each course they teach. In practice, students said they rarely had difficulties reaching their adviser.

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

The office staff monitor digital advising files, forms and records for accuracy and completeness. The staff also maintain curriculum for the curriculum, information sheets about requirements, and maintain ongoing email exchanges with students about advice in the student-produced weekly Monday Memo email newsletter.

On average, eight to 10 faculty members advise upwards of 300 juniors and seniors each semester. The Department begins mandatory advising six weeks before the start of class registration for the following semester. A few students suggested the schedule should be moved up, to two months or more before the next semester.

As part of the 2018 curriculum revision, a new one-credit first-year seminar course was added to introduce the department's traditions and expectations, as well as resources and opportunities available to students. Students meet faculty, get to know campus media, clubs and career options and learn the unit's writing, ethics and other academic and advising standards.

**(d) The unit and institution provide extra-curricular activities and opportunities relevant to the curriculum and that help develop the students' professional and intellectual abilities and interests.**

The Department supports student-run media operations, which are part of the curriculum, in two languages as well as a public relations agency and six clubs tied to national professional organizations. One student said the faculty "shamelessly plug" the practicum and the student clubs, making them hard to avoid.

- The *Daily Sundial* started in 1957 as a print weekly. Newspaper practicum students produce the online and periodic print editions. The newspaper is mostly financially independent, supported by advertising and student fees with an operating budget projected at \$225,000, for 2022-23. A trust account supports non-operating expenses, such as conference travel. The Sundial is editorially independent.
- Broadcast journalism students prepare newscasts at Latin Alt HD3 at KCSN-FM (88.5), the campus-based public station operated with the Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts. Since July 2017, the station - which broadcasts four newscasts daily - has operated in collaboration with Saddleback College, a two-year school in Mission Viejo.
- Agency 398, the student public relations agency, works mainly with non-profit and campus clients. Students in the Public Relations Practicum help clients develop brands through strategic tactics while gaining hands-on experience. The class meets weekly and students complete an additional six hours each week on agency work.
- El Nuevo Sol, a cross-platform bilingual publication covering local social justice issues, features work of students in the Spanish-Language Journalism minor. The first issue appeared in 2003 as a four-page insert in the Daily Sundial. The minor came three years later. The digital El Nuevo Sol is the base for JOUR 498 Senior Projects classes on Border Journalism, and CSUN Latino Journalists Club activities.
- Valley View News is a weekly broadcast on public access channel LA36, a website, YouTube channel and on Apple TV, Roku and Twitter. Students in Advanced Television News produce this capstone-style half-hour show using an anchor desk donated to the Department and camera modified, by staff, for high-definition video.
- On Point is a weekly public affairs talk show, airing on KCSN-FM, public access channel LA36, a YouTube channel and at the Daily Sundial. Students in the capstone-style elective Reporting Public Affairs produce the broadcast. Advanced journalism students develop the multimedia show.
- Global Pop-Up Newsroom produces special projects. Collaborators have included universities in Germany, India, Lebanon, the Netherlands, the U.K. and the U.S. The project is a virtual, temporary newsroom using mobile phones, and iPads to cover events such as protests, poverty, and International Women's Day.
- Matador News' final broadcast aired in March 2020. The 10-to-15-minute "practice" newscast was produced and presented two- to three-times weekly for several years on the CSUN Matador News YouTube channel and at The Sundial.

Students can also get involved with chapters of the Asian Journalists Association, CSUN Latino Journalists (National Association of Hispanic Journalists), National Association of Black Journalists, Public Relations Student Society of America, Radio Television Digital News Association and the Society of Professional Journalists.

**(e) The unit uses retention and graduation data to improve student services, such as advising, and to reduce barriers to student success.**

For the 2017 freshman cohort, 42 percent graduated in four years, about the same as the college rate of 41 percent but higher than the university's 25 percent; the one-year persistence rate was 88 percent, in contrast to the university's 81 percent. The 2018 first-time transfer group showed a 45 percent two-year graduation rate - slightly higher than the college's 44 percent but below the campus' 51 percent. The third-year persistence rate of 82 percent was the same for the campus.

Journalism's graduation and retention rates have improved since 2015-16. Among the 2016 grads, only 30 percent of first-time freshmen and transfer students graduated in four and two years, respectively.

The unit created programs to eliminate graduation impediments. An in-person/virtual walk-in "Friday grad-senior day" has reduced the number of students listed on the "graduation error" report. The staff adviser created the event to help students with short questions as they approach graduation days.

**SUMMARY:**

The Department makes it hard for students to miss the requirements to reach graduation within four years by using professional advisers as students begin their college career and assigning the faculty to complete the journey. Students were effusive in their praise of the faculty, the advising and the Department.

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

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

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The Department budget covers both Journalism and the non-accredited Mass Communications graduate program. Some faculty teach in both areas, and equipment and facilities are shared. The strategic plan was adopted in 2012. Updating the plan was delayed by COVID-19 and the change in department leadership.

The current budget is 2.7 percent lower than the prior year plan, and a 7.7 percent decline from the 2019-20 academic year. The budget shows 56 percent is devoted to salaries for full-time faculty, and 18 percent for part-time faculty. The total budget is \$1.75 million for the 2021-22 self-study year.

An operating budget, or general fund, is developed in the dean's office with the director of finance and operations, the associate dean, the six department chairs and college staff. This fund supports office operation and travel. Budget allocations are based on a college-set formula that includes the previous year's expenses and percentages of full-time equivalent students and number of majors and faculty.

The Department can make requests for additional funding in negotiation with the dean and finance officer. During 2021-22, the chair secured \$9,000 in special pay to support five faculty members working on the self-study team.

Additional funding is derived from other sources, including student fee-based monies administered by the Academic Resources and Planning division. Other resources include scholarships and funds in the Department's CSUN Foundation accounts and the separate Daily Sundial Trust.

**(b) Resources provided by the institution are adequate to achieve the unit's mission and are fair in relation to those provided to other units.**

The Department, one of six in the Mike Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication, ranked fifth in funding in the previous year, according to the self-study. Journalism's "share" of the \$346,000 operating and travel budget for 2021-22 was 14 percent compared with 20 percent for Art, 15 percent for Cinema and Television Arts, 23 percent for Communications Studies, 15 percent for Music and 13 percent for Theater.

Salaries, for the most part, are commensurate across departments, the university and the state system. Efforts have been made to address salary compression and equity issues; annual starting salaries for new tenure-track hires at CSUN is roughly \$83,100. In some colleges and departments, such as Business and the Sciences, faculty benefit from research and project grants that augment salaries and/or buy out their teaching time. But the unit's leadership said they were being treated equitably.

In 2020-22, the university received federal support from the COVID-19 economic package, along with funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Recovery and Economic Securities Act. These funds allowed the Department to buy some technology and equipment.

During the self-study year, the Department got private donations, including two \$20,000 grants from the Golden Globes-awarding Hollywood Foreign Press Association for a new Student Diversity Fund

project and a \$25,000 donation - doubled through a campus funding campaign - to support public relations and other students. Funds will be disbursed in 2022-23.

The PR Advisory Council has been active in supporting the unit with financial aid.

**(c) The unit's facilities and information resources enable and promote effective scholarship, teaching and learning.**

Journalism is headquartered in Manzanita Hall, a three-story glass-fronted structure completed in summer 2001. The Department occupies almost 14,000 square feet on three floors. The radio news operation is at public station KCSN-FM in the performing arts center complex, The Soraya, a five-minute walk from Manzanita.

Faculty share space on the third floor with Communication Studies and Cinema and Television Arts. The building has a large lecture hall, the 100-seat Armer Theatre, Communication Studies' Aronstam Library, classrooms, studios, laboratories, production areas and advising offices. Lecture spaces on the first and third floors provide from 47 to 120 seats.

The Department has exclusive control of two multimedia labs, one 20-seat classroom, conference/seminar room and a small library/student study space. Two adjoining rooms are for student media practicums: Agency 398's headquarters and SCENE magazine's workroom, where student clubs also meet. The Sundial and TV news outlets are on the first floor's west side.

Journalism students produce news and other media from three newsrooms under Department control (two are in Manzanita Hall; the other in The Soraya).

**(d) The institution and the unit provide faculty and students with equipment, or access to equipment, and technical assistance needed to support student learning, curriculum and the research, creative and professional activities of the faculty**

Students have access to kits with DSLRs, video cameras, MacBook Pro laptops, GoPro cameras, iPads and other tablets, tripods, voice recorders, ring lights, various mics and other equipment they need to produce work for their classes and student media. The system allows for 48-hour loans, with additional time on request. Students reported no issues with access to equipment, except during final-exam weeks.

In the Department, an information technology consultant and a group of student assistants provide equipment check-out. They monitor and maintain devices from desktop and laptop computers to cameras and mobile tools.

Software for audio and video editing is available and the students said getting access is easy.

Additional assistance comes from the College's lead information technology technician, who collaborates with tech staff and consults with faculty in all six departments. He served as the Department's lone technician following the August 2020 departure of a staff member and throughout the pandemic.

The Department reports it needs renovated and upgraded teaching and lab spaces, and during the visit the unit provided a document showing \$46,000 in projects to upgrade studio production space and convert a one-time photo lab into a multipurpose room. Key is a \$622,000 proposal for new studio cameras and lighting equipment in the TV facilities, where enrollment remains strong but not at pre-COVID-19 levels.

The TV lab media broadcast technician has rewired the standard definition studio cameras, on pedestals, to accommodate high-definition lenses. He also rewired control room switchers to remain relevant.

Students in the broadcast courses said the equipment often failed, delaying production and recording of the weekly Valley View News broadcast.

**SUMMARY:**

The Department occupies an attractive building on the south end of the campus about 25 miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles, with several computer labs, lecture rooms and a television studio. The Department's television studio and control room are in need of a refresh and the overall budget has been in decline for at least three years.

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



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

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

**(a) The unit consults and communicates regularly with its alumni, and actively engages with them, other professionals and professional associations to keep curriculum and teaching current and to promote the exchange of ideas.**

Alumni are involved with and consulted by the unit on a regular basis. For example, since the last re-accreditation visit the unit has worked to strengthen its public relations track in part by creating the CSUN Public Relations Advisory Council. About half of the council is made up of alumni who were consulted when the school redesigned its curriculum in the two years before the COVID-19 pandemic.

The school's Journalism Alumni Association supports the school through fundraising and networking and was particularly helpful during the pandemic, raising \$15,000 in emergency funds for struggling students. The association also assists with an annual Speed Mentoring event that uses the dating concept to connect students and professionals.

Alumni are active in other ways, including as part-time faculty at CSUN and as guest speakers in classes.

A long-time alum said the leadership has been responsive in several areas, including improving and growing the public relations and Spanish-language sections of the curriculum, and reaching out to community colleges to improve on declining enrollment.

"They're doing a good job," they said.

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

CSUN's faculty, despite its relatively small size, is active as presenters at workshops in person and online. Among recent examples are a webinar on covering protests for the International Women's Media Foundation, a presentation on effective photography for a Kenyan NGO, and a hiring workshop at the 2017 National Association of Black Journalists convention.

Others have been involved with the Journalism Education Association, the Society of Professional Journalists and a nonprofit group tracking news coverage of immigration.

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

Faculty and students are active in journalism and non-journalism service throughout the area.

The *Sundial*, the student newspaper, held a community outreach forum in 2019 to get feedback on how it could better cover the community. The newspaper plans to begin holding similar workshops again now that the pandemic has eased.

Faculty have also been involved in university and community engagement projects. One student described with pride how a faculty member who works with people experiencing homelessness does it in a way that authentically tells their stories without taking advantage of them.

**(d) The unit supports scholastic journalism.**

Each fall the unit holds the annual CSUN High School Journalism Day Conference co-sponsored by the *Los Angeles Times*, the Southern California Journalism Education Association and Los Angeles' chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists.

Each spring the unit hosts and helps judge the High School On-the-Spot Writing Tournament held by the Los Angeles Journalism Teachers group.

The unit also has extensive ties with area community colleges, including memberships on advisory boards and collaborations with the Journalism Association of Community Colleges. The unit has several lecturers who teach at area community colleges.

**SUMMARY:**

The Department and its faculty work hard to stay connected with professionals in one of the world's largest media markets. The creation of the Public Relations Advisory Council has helped in the unit's efforts to strengthen its public relations curriculum, an area it hopes will help with declining enrollment. The unit also has admirable connections to high schools and community colleges in the area, helping it maintain that critical pipeline.

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

**COMPLIANCE**

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

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

##### Strengths

- \*Dedicated faculty and staff who do a lot with a little
- \*Ambitious and motivated students
- \*A culture of inclusivity and a sense of community on a large campus.
- \*Organized advising that promotes graduation
- \*By far one of the best departments on campus when it comes to closing racial and ethnic equity gaps

##### Weaknesses

- \*Equipment deficits in the broadcast studio
- \*A long-standing pattern of over-enrolling skills courses
- \*An out-of-date diversity plan that needs current KPIs and a definition of diversity

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

Standard 2 - Curriculum and Instruction

#### **3) In the case of a recommendation for accreditation or reaccreditation, with standard(s) not in compliance, list the deficiencies that need to be addressed before the next site team evaluation.**

The unit must comply with the 20:1 rule. The pattern for three, consecutive accrediting cycles was to over-enroll skills classes. The unit was not over-enrolling once or twice by one student. The pattern is to over-enroll by two or more students - multiple sections over multiple semesters.

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

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

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

The last site team noted the 20:1 ratio in skills courses and the unit's failure to address this issue. The unit did not fully address this issue during the current accrediting cycle.

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

The self-study is the heart of the accrediting process. The unit involved a range of faculty members in the process. The self-study had many virtues but was confusing in some sections and incomplete in other areas. The team found contradictory information but was grateful for responses and additional data to clarify and provide the needed information.

April 7, 2023

Dear Ms. Hardin and Accrediting Committee members:

We appreciate this opportunity to respond to your March 28 letter formally noting the Accrediting Committee's vote to recommend reaccreditation of the Department of Journalism at California State University, Northridge.

After the Site Team's visit on Feb. 12-15, several positive developments have taken place that will support our efforts to lower the enrollment in skills classes:

- I met with the Dean, Vice Provost, and Provost on March 1 to discuss the 20:1 ratio in our skills classes. The Provost was unequivocally in support of our accreditation mandate to keep enrollment in our skills classes at no more than 20 students.
- After conducting a thorough analysis of our anticipated enrollment, we determined the need for an additional section of two skills courses. In support of keeping our skills classes at a 20:1 ratio, the Dean agreed to add these sections to the Fall '23 Schedule of Classes so students will not have to wait an extra semester for a class.
- We will initially cap our skills courses at 15, instead of 20, then use enrollment management strategies to enroll those on the wait list with the greatest need.
- We have revised our academic advisement form to capture additional data, allowing us to anticipate our expected enrollment as we build each Schedule of Classes.

We are an institution that values helping its diverse population graduate on time, while keeping enrollment in the skills classes at no more than 20. We now have a system in place for achieving both of those important directives.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Bluestein, Ed.D.  
Chair & Professor