

Report of On-Site Evaluation

ACEJMC

Undergraduate program

2016–2017

Name of Institution: Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Randy Pembroke, Chancellor

Name of Unit: Department of Mass Communications

Name and Title of Administrator: Elza Ibroscheva, Department Chair

Date of 2016 - 2017 Accrediting Visit: Nov. 13-16, 2016

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

Date of the previous accrediting visit: Nov. 7-10, 2010

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Re-accredit

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Re-accredit

Recommendation by 2016 - 2017 Visiting Team: Re-accredit

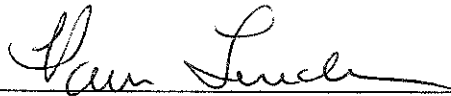
Prepared and submitted by:

Team Chair

Name and Title: Pam Luecke, Professor

Organization/School: Department of Journalism and Mass Communications, Washington and Lee University

Signature

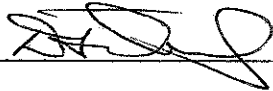


Team Members

Name and Title: Denise Dowling, Associate Professor

Organization/School: School of Journalism, University of Montana

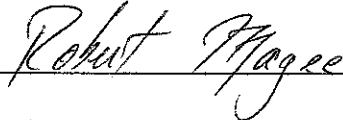
Signature



Name and Title: Dr. Robert Magee, Assistant Professor; Director, Graduate Program in Integrated Marketing Communications

Organization/School: Meek School of Journalism and New Media, The University of Mississippi

Signature



Name and Title:

Organization/School:

PART I: General information

Name of Institution: Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Name of Unit: Department of Mass Communications

Year of Visit: 2016

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.

In 1957, "residence centers" in Alton, IL, and East St. Louis, IL, were established by Southern Illinois University Carbondale. In 1958, the Southwestern Illinois Council for Higher Education (SWICHE) appointed a committee to raise private funds for the purchase of the land on which the SIUE main campus now is established. Land was purchased in 1959, and the first graduation ceremony was held in 1960. That same year, a bond issue of \$25 million was passed for construction of SIU Edwardsville's first buildings. Construction began in 1962 and classes commenced on campus in September of 1965. SIU Edwardsville draws legal authorization to operate from the Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University, and receives its operating budget and oversight from the Illinois Board of Higher Education, the State's coordinating board, which was created in 1961. The board's major statutory responsibilities include a continuing analysis of the aims, needs and requirements of Illinois higher education; making budget recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly for higher education operations, grants and capital improvements; approving proposals for new units of instruction, research and public service for public colleges and universities; approving operating and degree-granting authority for independent and out-of-state institutions; administering designated state and federal grant programs, and other responsibilities specified in the *Illinois Compiled Statutes*.

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

Yes
 No

If yes, give the date of the last accrediting visit: November 7-10, 2010

5. When was the unit or sequences within the unit first accredited by ACEJMC? 2005

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

The Department of Mass Communications addresses itself to the study of the media and information industries, including, but not limited to, radio, television, journalism, video, digital media, corporate and advertising media communications and information technologies. The goals of the faculty are to prepare professionals for these areas and to provide a framework for serious and broad discussions of the implicit effects of the media and communications technologies. (Latest revision, Aug. 18, 2006)

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Semesters of 16 weeks
Quarters of _____ weeks
Summer sessions of 5 weeks
Intersessions of 3 weeks

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

Bachelor's degree
 Master's degree
 Ph.D. degree

9. List the specific degrees being reviewed by ACEJMC. *Indicate online degrees.

B.A. and B.S. in Mass Communications

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

120 credit hours

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

3 semester hours may be credited toward major requirements.

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

<u>Name of Sequence or Specialty</u>	<u>Person in Charge</u>
Print and Electronic Journalism	Mark Poepsel
Television/Radio	Shi Li
Corporate and Institutional Media	Cory Byers
Media Advertising	Jason Yu

13. Number of full-time students enrolled in the institution: 13,346 (spring 2016)

14. Number of undergraduate majors in the accredited unit, by sequence and total (if the unit has pre-major students, list them as a single total):

<u>Name of Sequence or Specialty</u>	<u>Undergraduate majors</u>
Print and Electronic Journalism	26
Television/Radio	89
Corporate and Institutional Media	34
Media Advertising	86
Total	245*

* Total reflects 10 undecided professional track declared majors

15. Number of students in each section of all skills courses (news writing, reporting, editing, photography, advertising copy, broadcast news, public relations writing, etc.). List enrollment by section for the term during which the visit will occur and the preceding term. Attach separate pages if necessary. Include a separate list for online skills courses, which also must meet the 20-1 ratio.

(* The Council has ruled that campaigns courses are exempt from the 20-1 ratio.)

Fall 2016

INTRO. SKILLS/LAB COURSES

MC 202.001	Writing for the Media	15
MC 202.002	Writing for the Media	15
MC 202.003	Writing for the Media	15
MC 202.004	Writing for the Media	15
MC 204.001	Intro to TV/Audio Prod	16
MC 204.002	Intro to TV/Audio Prod	16
MC 204.003	Intro to TV/Audio Prod	16
MC 321.001	Feature Writing	27*
MC 323.001	Digital Publishing and Design	15
MC 324.001	Advanced News Reporting	16
MC 326.001	Adv. Copywriting/Des.	6
MC 327.001	Design/Writing WWW	16
MC 327.002	Design/Writing WWW	16
MC 327.003	Design/Writing WWW	16

MC 330.001	Adv. Broad. Writing	17
MC 332.001	Advanced News Production	15
MC 333.001	Adv. Video Writing/Prod	16

MC 334.001	Commercial Production	18
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MC 342.001	Digital Imagery	16
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ADV. SKILLS COURSES

MC 433.001	TV Producing/Directing	6
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MC 441.001	Advanced Multimedia	8
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MC 471.001	Managing Digital Content	14
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Spring 2016

INTRO. SKILLS/LAB COURSES

MC 202.001	Writing for the Media	13
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MC 202.002	Writing for the Media	15
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MC 202.003	Writing for the Media	15
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MC 202.004	Writing for the Media	15
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MC 204.001	Intro to TV/Audio Prod	16
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MC 204.002	Intro to TV/Audio Prod	16
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MC 204.003	Intro to TV/Audio Prod	16
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MC 204.004	Intro to TV/Audio Prod	16
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MC 322.001	Copy Editing for Media	15
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MC 323.001	Digital Publishing and Design	16
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MC 327.001	Design/Writing WWW	16
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MC 327.002	Design/Writing WWW	16
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MC 327.003	Design/Writing WWW	16
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MC 327.003	Design/Writing WWW	16
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MC 330.001	Adv. Broad. Writing	18
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MC 331.001	Electronic Media Perf	13
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MC 333.001	Adv. Video Writing/Prod	15
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MC 334.001	Commercial Production	18
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ADV. SKILLS COURSES

MC 422.001	Writing Corporate& Inst Markt	22
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MC 433.001	TV Producing/Directing	6
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MC 431.001	Freelance Media Production	13
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MC 441.001	Advanced Multimedia	11
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**The class size of 25 was determined to accommodate more Print majors, since the class doesn't require direct lab writing.*

16. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2016 – 2017 academic year: 913,198.76

Percentage increase or decrease in three years:

2013-2014 decrease of -12%

2015-2016 increase of +6%

Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries: 648,839

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

Tom Atwood, instructor
Undrah Baasanjav, assistant professor
Cory Byers, instructor
Gary Hicks, professor
Elza Ibroscheva, professor
Musonda Kapatamoyo, associate professor
Shi Li, assistant professor
Tammy Merrett, instructor
Suman Mishra, associate professor
Mark Poepsel, assistant professor
Jason Yu, associate professor

18. List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in fall 2016. Also list names of part-time faculty teaching spring 2016. (If your school has its accreditation visit in spring 2017, please provide the updated list of faculty at time of visit.)

Fall 2016

Jessica Brown-Billheymer
Stephen Horrell
Levi Malan
William Tucker
Mary Leonard
Gary Dotson
Steve Jankowski

Spring 2016

Julie Smith
Josh Bovinette
Frtiz Faerber
Gary Dotson
Mary Leonard
Levi Malan

19. Schools on the semester system:

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

Year	72 or more semester hours outside of journalism and mass communications		
	Total Graduates	Number	Percent
2015-2016 academic year	__68*__	__68__	__100__
2014-2015 academic year	__57__	__57__	__100__

** Summer graduation numbers for 2016 were not officially available at the time of the self-study preparation*

PART II — Standard 1: Mission, Governance and Administration

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville is one of three branches of Southern Illinois University, whose flagship campus is in Carbondale, about 100 miles southeast. The other is in Springfield. The campus dates only to the late 1950s and graduated its first class in 1960. Although it started as a commuter college, today Edwardsville is an attractive residential university with nearly 14,000 students, within just a few thousand of Carbondale's enrollment.

The Department of Mass Communications at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville is one of 24 units within the College of Arts and Sciences. The department has been accredited since 2005, although it first sought and achieved accreditation in 1975. The department let accreditation lapse after accreditation was denied in 1988, but regained it 17 years ago.

Edwardsville is a town of 25,000, just 30 minutes east of St. Louis, Mo., and it benefits from that proximity. The university offers reciprocal tuition for Missouri students, so many of its students come from Missouri and other reciprocal states. Nearly half of the department's students are transfers, often from area community colleges.

Both the Carbondale and Edwardsville campuses have programs accredited by ACEJMC, but there is little interaction between the two programs.

The Edwardsville department offers students four sequences (with the number of majors in parentheses): Print and Electronic Journalism (26); Television/Radio (89); Corporate and Institutional Media (34); and Media Advertising (86). Another 10 declared majors have not yet decided on their professional sequences. Public Relations is taught in a separate department within the college: Applied Communications Studies.

The Department of Mass Communications also has a small master's program, which is not part of this review.

The department's mission statement (last updated in August 2006) says:

“The Department of Mass Communications addresses itself to the study of the media and information industries, including, but not limited to, radio, television, journalism, video, digital media, corporate and advertising media communications and information technologies. The goals of the faculty are to prepare professionals for these areas and to provide a framework for serious and broad discussions of the implicit effects of the media and communications technologies.”

At a meeting in August 2016, the department approved an updated Strategic Plan, which outlines the faculty's goals for the next five years under five categories: Innovation, Increased Enrollment, Diversity, Community and Professional Engagement, and Continuous Improvement. Each category details specific tactics and a timeline for completion.

During the six years covered by this review, the department was guided by six goals established in 2009. These included improving the student newspaper, enhancing convergence in the curriculum and establishing a lab that would enable quantitative research. Progress was made on all three of these.

The university is operating in one of the toughest fiscal environments in the country. Illinois has been operating without a state budget for 18 months and state funding for higher education is precarious. SIUE seems to be weathering the budget woes better than most of Illinois' universities, thanks to prudent spending, stable enrollment and entrepreneurial initiatives. Still, faculty have not had raises for three years.

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

As a department within a college, the Department of Mass Communications has responsibility for its curriculum and course content, although ultimate approval for substantive policy and curricular changes must go through the Academic Policies and Curriculum Committee of the College of Arts and Sciences. The department has its own Curriculum Monitoring Committee, as well as several other standard committees.

At the time of the site visit, a move to organize the university's tenured and tenure-track faculty was underway, which could change the dynamics considerably. The university's non-tenured faculty members are already represented by a union.

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

Dr. Elza Ibroscheva has been chair of the department since Summer 2015; the previous chair stepped down after six years in the position but remains on the faculty. Dr. Ibroscheva is a full professor who has been at SIUE since 2003, and she is highly respected in the classroom. In 2015, she received the college's top honor for "outstanding teaching, scholarly and/or creative activity accomplishments."

As an administrator, faculty and peers say Dr. Ibroscheva is organized, enthusiastic and effective. "I give her an A+," one faculty member said. Others called her "awesome" and "inspiring." Faculty appreciate that she finds ways for them to pilot new courses and take time to work on their research. "She's working miracles despite the budget," one said. "She has a clear vision for where the department is going."

Administrators also praise Dr. Ibroscheva's leadership, saying she is a strong communicator and a champion for her department. "She has a future in academic leadership," one said.

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

Succession begins with the formation of a departmental Chair Search Committee. A list of nominees willing to serve – which may include external candidates -- is submitted to the faculty, who vote by secret ballot. The committee forwards the name to the dean, who makes the decision.

Each department chair is evaluated annually, following a detailed method outlined in the self-study. That method allows for faculty input.

Dr. Ibroscheva's first evaluation was in spring 2016, after less than a year in her position. Both the faculty and dean gave her high marks.

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

The self-study describes clear avenues through which concerns may be addressed. The university has detailed policies for both students and faculty members with complaints. The first step is a conversation, and faculty have an open-door policy to encourage dialogue. At the time of the site visit, there were no outstanding complaints.

COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

The unit provides curriculum and instruction, whether on site or online, that enable students to learn the knowledge, competencies and values the Council defines for preparing students to work in a diverse global and domestic society.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

- a) **The unit requires that students take a minimum of 72 semester credit hours (or 104 quarter credit hours) required for a baccalaureate degree outside of journalism and mass communications and meet the liberal arts and sciences-general education requirements of the institution. ACEJMC expects at least 95 percent of the graduating classes in the two academic years preceding an accreditation visit to meet this requirement.**

The self-study reports that graduation checks are completed with advising appointments each semester and that 100 percent of the graduates in the past two years were in compliance with the 72-hour rule. A spot-check of records by the team confirmed this.

The department requires 39 hours inside the major, leaving 81 credits for a student to take outside Mass Communications if they graduate with the minimum of 120 hours. Students majoring in all four professional sequences must meet these requirements:

- Introductory core: 9 hours
- Advanced core: 12 hours
- Ethics requirement: 3 hours (philosophy credits)
- Courses required for sequence: 6 hours
- Electives: 9 hours

Mass communications majors are required to earn a minor outside Mass Communications. Minors range from 18-21 credits. University electives are expected to range from 19-22 hours outside the major.

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

The department has four different sequences for Mass Communications students: Corporate and Institutional Media, Media Advertising, Print and Electronic Journalism, and Television/Radio. The department lists a good balance of theoretical and skills courses required for all sequences. Students in all four sequences must complete the same 24 credits of lower and upper division core requirements. It's worth noting the sequence heads listed in the self-study were unaware they held those positions. The core courses are:

MC 201-Mass Media and Society
MC 202-Writing for the Media
MC 204-Intro to Audio and Television Production
MC 327-Writing and Designing for Digital Media
MC 401-Media Law and Policy

MC 403-Cultural Studies in Media
MC 481-Internship/Portfolio
PHIL 481-Media Ethics

Each sequence has six credit hours of required upper division coursework. In two of the sequences, the required upper division courses comprise one skills and one theory course. Print and Electronic Journalism upper division core requirements are both skills-based; the courses in Media Advertising are both theory-based.

Corporate and Institutional Media:

MC 402-Media Management
MC 422-Writing for the Corporate and Institutional Market

Media Advertising:

MC 325-Fundamentals of Advertising
MC 389-Media Planning

Print and Electronic Journalism:

MC 322-Copy Editing for the Media
MC 324-Advanced News Reporting

Television/Radio:

MC 330-Advanced Broadcast Writing
MC 402-Media Management

One point is worth noting concerning the Corporate and Institutional Media sequence. The sequence seems to lack curricular objectives that serve to set it apart from the other sequences, and no faculty seem to “own” the sequence. None of the faculty who were queried could offer a clear definition of the sequence’s distinctiveness. The individual listed as the “person in charge” of the sequence was not sure, when asked, who the head might be. He teaches one of two required courses in that sequence. Other faculty members who were queried did not know who might be responsible for the sequence.

The sequence requires MC 402 – Media Management and MC 422 – Writing for Corporate and Institutional Market. The first course, MC 402, is also a required course in the Television/Radio sequence and likely does not meet a need that is unique to the Corporate and Institutional Media sequence. The second course, MC 422, is in danger of having significant duplication with the public relations coursework, which is housed in the Applied Communication Studies (ACS) department. It should be noted that the ACS department chair does not believe any course in Department of Mass Communications duplicates courses offered in public relations. Nevertheless, the two required textbooks for MC 422 are “The Public Relations Writer’s Handbook,” by Aronson, Spetner and Ames, and “Public Relations Practices: Managerial Case Studies and Problems,” by Center, Jackson, Smith, and Stansberry. Of the listed electives, four are offered under Print and Electronic Journalism, two are offered under Television/Radio, and one is offered under Media Advertising. Only one elective, MC 453 – Transnational Media, is not offered under the other sequences. In sum, only one course, MC 422, seems to be truly unique to the sequence, and this course borders on duplicating course content offered elsewhere in the College of Arts and Sciences.

The department uses the ACEJMC professional values and competencies and aligns them with the courses in which those competencies are taught. Some of the courses are stated to include almost every

competency required. For example, MC 202 -Writing for the Media, claims to hit eight of the 12 competencies. Advanced News Reporting is reported as fulfilling nine of the 12. Adjunct professors who teach some of these courses reported no instruction to incorporate the values and competencies into their courses.

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

The department has moved toward courses with multimedia competencies and values and has begun fundraising to create a convergence media laboratory/classroom. In Fall 2016, the department introduced an experimental senior capstone course where students from all sequences are learning about innovation and entrepreneurship. Students in the course create a multimedia product including a mobile app. The department hopes to make this kind of capstone a requirement for all majors.

Instruction in the introductory core course, MC 202-Writing for the Media, is inconsistent. The course is primarily taught by adjunct professors in the fall and spring semesters. Three sections offered in Fall 2016 are taught by adjuncts with a background in writing for print; the fourth is taught by an instructor who also advises the student newspaper. Two of the adjuncts said they do not teach writing across platforms but focus solely on AP print style and address broadcast writing in one class session or not at all.

In the Print and Electronic Journalism sequence, the required Advanced News Reporting course is also a print-focused class, with a nod to writing for online while adhering to AP Style. The course does not have multi-media assignments nor products created by the students.

The Television/Radio sequence requires an Advanced Broadcast Writing course for its majors. The course focuses on digital media and not solely broadcast writing. The syllabus calls for writing/producing content for social media, web, video, audio, marketing and public service announcements. The sequence also has a popular junior/senior elective in which students produce documentary-style television pieces that air on a local public access television channel, plus promotional and public service writing.

The curriculum in the Media Advertising sequence appears to be current with trends in the industry and responsive to needs in the profession. The curriculum is demanding in that it incorporates material of sufficient academic rigor that is comparable to that of other universities. MC 325 – Fundamentals of Advertising provides a sufficiently rigorous and theory-based approach to the field. MC 389 – Media Planning teaches planning and buying skills that are important in the advertising industry. Each course uses a standard text that covers a breadth of topics, including digital media, and the assignments appear to apply the content to the profession. Electives such as MC 451 – Research Methods in Mass Media teach analytical skills that are in demand.

The core courses in Corporate and Institutional Media were not taught during the semester of the site visit, so an elective course (Feature Writing) was observed. The adjunct instructor had a good rapport with the students. The topic was choosing an appropriate sample for feature writing for a “person-on-the-street” feature. The instructor addressed issues of diversity in choosing a representative sample. The instructor engaged the students and used multiple approaches to drive home the idea of the importance of choosing a good sample for feature writing.

Courses were updated in 2015 to include social media, and some courses are incorporating that into their syllabi. MC 402, the Media Management course, has “evolved” into a media entrepreneurship course with a focus on new ideas and new media products. The students in this course compete in the Scripps International Innovators Cup competition.

Special topics courses and modules in other courses focus on current content, including data mining, social media analytics, health communication, mobile app design, viral marketing and international advertising.

The department had its first-ever study abroad course taught in 2013. A faculty member accompanied students to China, and the department hopes to continue sending students there in the years ahead.

Student work is not routinely critiqued or reviewed by professionals outside the faculty. Many journalism students said the best “instruction” they got was working on the student newspaper, which is not formally tied to the department or the curriculum. Students and some faculty expressed a desire to find professional outlets for student work by engaging area professionals.

The department lists several teaching awards won by faculty, many internal to the campus. The department chair earned the college’s highest teacher/scholar award, the Going award, in 2015. One faculty member has presented teaching workshops to colleagues on campus, including a session on using social media to engage students.

The department chair writes letters to parents of students who are named to the dean’s list, congratulating them on the success of their student. Student work deemed worthy by the faculty is entered in awards competitions.

d) Student-faculty classroom ratios facilitate effective teaching and learning in all courses; the ratio in skills and laboratory sections, whether on-site or online, should not exceed 20-1. (Campaigns classes are exempt from the 20-1 ratio.)

The department keeps a close eye on the ACEJMC-required course capacities. In the 2016 academic year, the unit lists only one over-subscribed course. Feature writing is listed as a skills course, but had 27 students enrolled in the fall 2016 semester. The self-study notes the department determined a class size of 25 was acceptable as the class “doesn’t require direct lab writing assignments.” A review of enrollments in prior years shows the feature writing course enrolled 25 students in 2015, 27 in 2014 and 25 in 2013.

The department shows only one other over-subscribed course in the past three years; MC 422-Writing for the Corporate and Institutional Market had 23 students enrolled in spring 2014.

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

Students across sequences are required to take an internship/portfolio course for three credit hours. Students must complete 225 hours of an approved internship and attend two classes at the beginning of the semester, held by the internship advisor.

Internship hosts are required to submit an evaluation of the student work, and the students write an internship paper outlining their duties and responsibilities. Students are also asked if prior course work adequately prepared the student for the internship.

The unit keeps a list of acceptable internship hosts. This includes organizations with prior, positive ratings by students. Phone calls made by the site team to listed host sites returned mixed results. A local newspaper reported a solid relationship with the department and its students; that internship host is an adjunct instructor at SIUE. Phone calls to two television stations on the approved host list found internship supervisors with no relationship with the school and no interns from the institution in the last three years. Students did report finding meaningful internships with marketing and video production firms in the region.

COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness

The unit has an inclusive program that values domestic and global diversity, and serves and reflects society.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The department revised its diversity plan in October 2016, as the self-study was going to press. The new plan builds on both the university's and the college's diversity statements. The department's new plan defines diversity broadly, "recognizing each individual's unique internal and external characteristics as well as acknowledging that diversity is an evolving concept with multitudes of identities, perspectives and dimensions." It then details these areas of diversity, with more than a dozen categories.

The new diversity plan focuses on actions to achieve a diverse student body, diverse faculty, and diverse curriculum and to maintain a supportive climate. The plan is detailed but does not have deadlines for specific tasks.

The new plan replaces a plan that was last revised in 2003. That plan focused solely on recruiting and retaining minority and female students and faculty.

b) The unit's curriculum fosters understanding of issues and perspectives that are inclusive in terms of domestic concerns about gender, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation. The unit's curriculum includes instruction in issues and perspectives relating to mass communications across diverse cultures in a global society.

The department expresses a commitment to infusing themes of diversity and inclusiveness throughout its curriculum. Several courses – both required and elective – include these themes explicitly, and other courses apply the lessons in practice. The department encouraged students to participate in university events following the racial unrest in nearby Ferguson, Mo., and two mass communications majors took part in a conference last spring on Black Lives Matter. Speakers representing diverse perspectives are often part of Mass Comm week and other events. Of 36 departmental speakers from 2014 to 2016, 47 percent were female and 22 percent were racial minorities.

Global perspectives are also a priority in the department's curriculum, with international speakers and distinct courses, such as Transnational Media, and a special topics course in International Advertising. In 2013, a faculty member led a study-abroad course in Chinese media and culture, something the department hopes to repeat.

Some, but not all, syllabi include a statement underscoring the department's commitment to fostering student understanding of domestic and global diversity. In student meetings, some students cited specific courses in which such themes were discussed and assignments in which those lessons were applied. "The university and the department are pushing diversity," said one African-American student. "I appreciate that about SIUE." Other students expressed a desire for more preparation for a multicultural workplace.

c) The unit demonstrates effective efforts to recruit women and domestic minority faculty and professional staff and, where feasible, recruits international faculty and professional staff.

The department's full-time faculty is a "mini-U.N.," with representation from four continents. Four of the 11 faculty members, or 36 percent, identify as black or Asian. One other identifies as international, bringing the diversity percentage to 45 percent. The 11 faculty members include six men and five women.

The department is mindful that its faculty lacks any African-Americans, something that was noted by the previous site team. Because 28 percent of its students are African-American, a number considerably higher than that for the university, the department understands why this would be important. The newly adopted Strategic Plan states that hiring an African-American faculty member is an "imperative." "While we have not been awarded new faculty lines, we have taken advantage of a university-wide initiative to hire targeted candidates who can add to the diversity of faculties as visiting assistant professors, with the opportunity to be converted to tenure-track positions." The self-study states that an application for this position will be submitted in the 2016-17 academic year.

The department does have a male faculty member of African descent who "has emerged as a valuable mentor to a number of our minority students." Earlier this year, he was awarded the university's Dr. Martin Luther King Faculty Humanitarian Award, which recognizes a minority faculty member's contribution to a diverse and inclusive campus. The department also has an African-American broadcast engineer who serves a mentoring role for some students.

In the past three years, the department has conducted three searches and hired two women, one Asian and the other Asian-American. A search in 2013-14 failed.

Of the eight part-time faculty during the self-study year, all were white. Two were female and six were male. The university recruits part-timers through "one big, annual search," which includes placing ads in the St. Louis American, a weekly newspaper that serves the city's African-American population.

The department takes steps to diversify the part-time pool by encouraging people it knows to apply. These might be identified if someone from the St. Louis media market gives an effective guest lecture, for example, or appears at the department's annual Mass Comm Week. However, none of the department's searches for part-time faculty in the past three years included any minority candidates.

d) The unit demonstrates effective efforts to help recruit and retain a student population reflecting the diversity of the population eligible to enroll in institutions of higher education in the region or population it serves, with special attention to recruiting under-represented groups.

Admission decisions are handled centrally at the university, but the department does some outreach to area high schools. (Further outreach is one of the four action items in its new diversity plan.) The department's minority enrollment has increased significantly since the last site visit; it now exceeds the university's by seven percentage points and the service area by 16 percent. The department's African-American enrollment exceeds that of the university, but its Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander enrollment is lower.

The university's Institutional Research Department does not maintain statistics on minority retention by department. According to the university's Fact Book, the six-year graduation rate for all students who entered in 2007, 2008 and 2009 is 50 percent, and the rate for African-Americans is 33, 37 and 27, respectively. The gap between all students and Hispanic and Asian-American students is not as wide.

At the department level, retention efforts are handled primarily through faculty mentoring.

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

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

The department cites a collaborative atmosphere among students and faculty as instrumental in creating a climate free of harassment. Faculty are asked to include a section in their syllabi explaining the university's policies about harassment and discrimination and many, but not all, do.

Students and faculty expressed no concerns to the site team about harassment or discrimination.

COMPLIANCE

FULL-TIME FACULTY

GROUP	FEMALE	% OF TOTAL FACULTY	MALE	% OF TOTAL FACULTY
Black	0	0	1	9
Hispanic	0	0	0	0
Asian or Pacific Islander	2	18	1	9
American Indian or Alaskan native	0	0	0	0
White	2	18	4	36
2 or More Races	0	0	0	0
International	1	9	0	0

PART-TIME/ADJUNCT FACULTY

GROUP	FEMALE	% OF TOTAL FACULTY	MALE	% OF TOTAL FACULTY
Black	0	0	0	0
Hispanic	0	0	0	0
Asian or Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
American Indian or Alaskan native	0	0	0	0
White	2	25	6	75
2 or More Races	0	0	0	0
International	0	0	0	0

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

The unit hires, supports and evaluates a capable faculty with a balance of academic and professional credentials appropriate for the unit's mission.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The unit standards clearly express what is expected of faculty in the areas of teaching, service and scholarship. The unit's promotion and tenure guidelines also outline what constitutes unsatisfactory, satisfactory, meritorious and excellent performance in these areas.

Faculty members must self-report annually by submitting an activity summary.

The self-study did not include evaluation forms for job applicants and it is unclear what criteria are used in selecting permanent faculty members. It did include job postings, but it appears the three ads provided are for the same position.

Part-time faculty are selected mainly by word-of-mouth. Adjunct faculty told the site team they were invited to teach by someone they knew in the department. The seven adjuncts teaching in Fall 2016 are all Caucasian men and women.

Adjuncts say they see their student evaluations, but are neither evaluated nor coached by the faculty. Indeed, none reports ever having a faculty member visit their classes, and adjunct faculty said they are "left alone" to teach what and how they want.

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

Full-time faculty teach 77-80 percent of courses in the academic year, with adjuncts teaching 20-23 percent. Adjuncts teach almost exclusively lower-division core requirements in the fall and spring semesters with few full-time faculty listed for those courses.

Instructors are responsible for a significant amount of the creative work produced by the full-time faculty. Tenured and tenure-track faculty are producing scholarly work in line with their expectation of what's necessary for promotion and tenure.

c) Credentials of the unit's faculty represent a balance of professional and scholarly experience and expertise kept current through faculty development opportunities, relationships with professional and scholarly associations, and appropriate supplementation of part-time and visiting faculty.

The university offers faculty development opportunities in the way of workshops and mentoring opportunities. The unit encourages its faculty to take part, and they report their participation in their annual activities report.

Faculty have earned fellowships or grants from organizations such as the American Center for Mongolian Studies, Fess Fellowship, IREX, and the Scripps Howard Leadership Academy.

Department faculty are members of many scholarly and professional associations including American Advertising Federation, Broadcast Education Association, National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association, AEJMC and the International Communication Association.

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

The department requires faculty members to self-report on their teaching each year. Faculty are also required to give students an opportunity to evaluate the course at its conclusion. A compilation of student comments from evaluations of courses is included in the faculty reports. The department chair reviews these evaluations and discusses them with faculty members at their annual reviews.

The College of Arts and Sciences policy requires all tenure-track faculty to have a peer classroom observation each semester and faculty seeking promotion are required to have a peer classroom observation once a year.

The department does not consistently offer online courses but, like other departments at SIUE, is moving in that direction.

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

Personnel from across campus had nothing but praise for the collegiality and quality of teaching in the department. The dean of the college praised the department for working with other units in shaping curriculum and interdisciplinary courses and projects. Faculty are well represented on university committees. The administrators at the university level praised mass communications graduates' abilities to find jobs. Professionals at local media outlets found graduates well prepared for entry-level media jobs.

COMPLIANCE

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

With unit support, faculty members contribute to the advancement of scholarly and professional knowledge and engage in scholarship (research, creative and professional activity) that contributes to their development.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The unit, with the support of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Graduate School, and the university, encourages faculty research, creative and/or professional activity.

Faculty members have at least three sources of funding to support conference travel to disseminate research. The department, the College of Arts and Sciences and the Graduate School provide a total amount of \$1,900 for travel requests so that a faculty member can present a paper at a conference. Faculty members who have secured an external grant receive an additional \$900 that may be used for travel to a second conference. It should be noted that this amount is devoted to conference travel specifically, and not to faculty development more generally, whether it be for reference books, software licenses, or skill development. Some faculty members have purchased smaller software licenses or supported regional travel personally.

The availability of graduate research assistants has been curtailed because of state budget cuts, and the remaining assistants are spread among various faculty members. Some faculty members no longer have a graduate assistant.

Faculty have a dedicated research space with eight computer terminals and research administration software installed on the computers. The university's Information Technology Services department purchased the research software license and computers.

The Graduate School's Office of Research and Projects provides several programs to support research. Competitively awarded Seed grants for Transitional and Exploratory Projects (STEP) are available to tenured and tenure-track faculty for research projects during the academic year and the summer term. In addition, matching funds are available to support faculty costs for travel, publication and production, and any other costs associated with disseminating research.

Senior faculty members are also able to participate in the Paul Simon Outstanding Scholar award, given to recognize outstanding research and creative activity. The Hoppe Research Professor Award and the Vaughnie Lindsay New Investigator Award recognize faculty members whose research or creative activities have the promise of making significant contributions to their fields of study. In addition, three research competitions are offered on a rotating basis. The first competition covers equipment and tools, the second one covers assigned time for research (ART), and the third competition provides support for multidisciplinary teams.

During the past six years, four faculty members have taken sabbaticals or leaves. These opportunities were used to develop and present research that appeared in conference papers, journal articles and books.

During the past six years, all tenured and tenure-track faculty members have taken advantage of travel funding to attend academic conferences. In addition, three faculty members have received a STEP grant. One faculty member has received an ART grant. Four faculty members have taken advantage of the new faculty incentive program. One faculty member was awarded a publication cost grant. Taken together, it is apparent that the faculty actively seek out funding opportunities that are made available to them in the university, and they use these funds to actively disseminate their research to their colleagues and the profession.

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

Expectations and criteria for evaluation for promotion and tenure are clearly specified in the promotion and tenure documents.

The College of Arts and Sciences requires pre-tenure faculty to attend a tenure workshop.

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

The criteria are inclusive and are applicable to the many types of research, creative, and professional activity that the faculty members generate.

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.

College administrators said that the faculty productivity is well regarded and appropriate.

The unit provided evidence of an active and engaged faculty in terms of research, creative and professional activity. Faculty members have received six internal grants and six external grants. They have also received 71 awards and honors. Six of these were received by full professors, nine were received by professors at the associate rank, six were received by professors at the assistant professor rank, with 50 received by full-time faculty at the instructor rank. The faculty produced 27 articles in refereed journals, three scholarly books, 12 book chapters, and 62 refereed conference papers. Creative productivity included 11 juried creative works and 162 non-juried creative works. It is particularly noteworthy that the faculty produced more than 130 refereed or juried works.

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

All of the faculty members who were interviewed said readily that the department fosters a climate that supports intellectual curiosity, critical analysis and the expression of differing points of view.

COMPLIANCE

Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activities	Total from Unit*	Full Professors (2)	Associate Professors (3)	Assistant Professors (3)	Other faculty** (3)	Totals (11)
Awards and Honors	71	6	9	6	50	71
Grants Received Internal	6	2	5			8
Grants Received External	6	2	1	1	2	6
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co-authored	3	3				3
Textbooks, Sole- or Co- authored						
Books Edited	1	1				1
Book Chapters	12	8	2	2		12
Monographs						
Articles in Refereed Journals	27	11	14	2		27
Refereed Conference Papers	62	23	28	12		63
Invited Academic Papers						
Encyclopedia Entries	1		1			1
Book Reviews	2	2				2
Articles in Non-refereed Publications		1				
Juried Creative Works	11				11	11
Non-juried Creative Works	162				162	162
Other (specified)	116	1	1	2	112	116

*Co-authored work should be counted as a single publication in the unit totals. However if, for example, two members of the faculty are co-authors on the same journal article, it would be reported as a publication for both authors.

**Includes all full-time faculty who do not hold listed ranks, such as instructors and others on term appointments. Many faculty in this category may hold teaching appointments without significant scholarship, research or creative requirements.

PART II — Standard 6: Student Services

The unit provides students with the support and services that promote learning and ensure timely completion of their program of study.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

a) Faculty and/or professional advising staff ensure that students are aware of unit and institutional requirements for graduation and receive career and academic advising.

The College of Arts and Sciences employs full-time advisors who work with mass communications students. Career counseling and placement support is available to all university students through the Academic Success Center, which provides a number of career fairs, resources, seminars and the like. Proactive students receive faculty guidance with career choices and opportunities.

b) Faculty are available and accessible to students.

Students said they feel welcome to meet with instructional faculty, and faculty members are readily available. Students said that, relative to other faculty on campus, the mass communications faculty members are quite responsive, with some even answering e-mail messages in fewer than 10 minutes.

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

The department communicates with students via an electronic list-serv, the department website, the department blog and prominent bulletin boards.

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

The department hosts Mass Comm Week, which provides students opportunities to meet with media professionals and deepen their understanding and appreciation of curricular content.

Students are invited to collaborate or serve as crew members on a number of video projects for clients under an instructor's direction.

Students have the opportunity to be involved in campus and departmental media, including the independent campus newspaper *The Alestle*, SIUE Web Radio, wSIUE *The Sound*, and the *Kaleidoscope* series of documentary shorts. Students also can participate in the Ad Club, the Society of Professional Journalists, and the Radio Television Digital News Association.

- e) **The accredited unit must gather, maintain and analyze enrollment, retention, graduation rates and other aggregate information for improving student services and reducing barriers to student success. The unit annually publishes retention and graduation information on its website.**

Graduation and retention data are available via a link on the home page of the department's website. The department's four-year graduation rate (69%) is higher than the average for the College of Arts and Sciences (53%).

COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 7: Resources, Facilities and Equipment

The unit plans for, seeks and receives adequate resources to fulfill and sustain its mission.

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.

Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville lives under the cloud of a state government without a budget. The state has been operating without a budget for the last 18 months. Stopgap measures have kept the university afloat, but the university has had to dip into cash reserves. The anxiety over the situation in Springfield is evident in faculty and students.

SIUE personnel say their campus has fared better than others because of strong enrollment and tuition dollars. However, faculty have not had raises in years and have completed the paperwork to unionize.

The unit has submitted a 2016 budget of \$730,533.71 with 89 percent of funding going to salaries. The remaining funds are devoted to equipment maintenance, travel and supplies.

The department lists these resource goals in its strategic plan adopted in August 2016.

- Convergent media lab
- Capstone experience in entrepreneurial media
- Increase enrollment
- Hire domestic minority in faculty line

The department's priority is the creation of the new convergence laboratory and teaching space. The unit has launched a fundraising effort around the lab. Donors contributed an initial \$25,000 and seek to name the lab after a long-time professor. The chair has spoken with the college's development officer about a fundraising plan. The price tag on the lab stands at \$300,000 with the department hoping to raise \$100,000 of that amount.

The department and the university have seen increases in enrollment over the past several years. The department presented no written plan to increase enrollment and no budget lines allocated to recruiting.

There is no additional faculty line to assure the department may hire a domestic minority. However, the dean's office told the site team a hire at the instructor level is his priority for the department.

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

The department, as part of the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), completes an annual budget exercise with other departments of the CAS. The deans meet with chairs and directors to review preliminary budgets and learn of special needs of each unit. The deans then work together and with the provost and vice-chancellor to allocate funds among the units.

The CAS has an Instructional Equipment Resources Committee which prioritizes needs of the school. Each department submits its “wish list” and the faculty of the CAS vote on priorities. The IER Committee then takes those choices into consideration but may alter the order of priority based on safety, price and number of students potentially affected.

The dean has discretionary funds that in the past six years have often been directed to the department to update technology. The chair and her predecessor have been successful in securing \$700,000 from the college over the past six years to enhance one classroom, purchase high-definition cameras and purchase a server-based video storage and playback system.

The department reports it has been treated well by the central administration in terms of resources.

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

The department has classrooms, labs, studios and office space on two floors of Dunham Hall in the center of the SIUE campus. The floors are shared by students in the theater and music departments.

Faculty have offices on the first and second floors of the building. Adjuncts do not have designated offices and use a conference room to conduct meetings with students outside of class.

The department has created a research lab for faculty and equipped it well. The room boasts eight computers complete with SuperLab software so faculty and graduate students may conduct experiments and gather data.

The department has access to several “smart” classrooms the faculty and students enjoy. One classroom has undergone upgrades thanks to the dean’s targeted funding initiative. The walls are painted to be working whiteboards and the technology allows multimedia presentations on the classroom computer. The building has wireless internet and the smart classrooms can accommodate showing video, PowerPoint presentations and video chats.

The television studio has a professional news set donated by a local network affiliate and high-definition studio cameras. The faculty and students are not using the recently-purchased video server and playback in their courses at this time. A video editing lab is available during the week with engineers on hand to assist students. Many students find it more convenient to edit on their own laptops or on home computers.

Some students lamented the condition of the audio facilities and the change in operations at the radio station housed in Dunham Hall. The station, which used to be an independently operated public radio station under department purview, is now managed by the university’s marketing arm. [The team was told after submitting its report that the prior department chair and the entire faculty opposed this decision.] The ongoing budget strain means the station has been told it must become self-sustaining or the license may be sold. Students now have limited radio course work and the curriculum is not connected to the station. A few students interested in radio have created independent studies in order to learn radio broadcasting.

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

The department employs three engineers to keep audio and video equipment in working order and to help students with technology. The faculty and students are also supported by central information technology services, which keep computer hardware and software operational.

New high-definition field video cameras, DSLR cameras, digital audio recording units, lights and tripods are all available for checkout through the engineering staff. The number and quality of the kits seems adequate to serve students.

The department is considering a laptop policy for its students as it becomes increasingly expensive and difficult for the department to afford software. The department does maintain an Avid editing lab on site, with engineers on hand to troubleshoot any problems.

Faculty report they have support from the department, in the way of equipment and course releases in order to conduct creative and professional work.

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

The library budget has not been immune to the budget ax. Database access has been narrowed, which is of concern to the department and school. The Fine Arts Librarian reports a good working relationship with the department in making budget decisions.

The department supplies the hardware and software faculty need in order to conduct their research and creative activity.

COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 8: Professional and Public Service

The unit and its faculty advance journalism and mass communication professions and fulfill obligations to its community, alumni and the greater public.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The department holds Mass Comm Week annually. During this weeklong event, area media professionals, alumni, and featured speakers are brought to campus for lectures, panel discussions, and workshops. An examination of the topics covered suggests that the event helps students remain up to date with industry developments and timely content. About 70 alumni attended an alumni evening event in Spring 2016 as part of the department's annual Mass Comm Week.

Administrators in the College of Arts and Sciences said that the mass communications alumni are one of the most engaged segments out of all the college's departments.

The department reconstituted an advisory board of alumni in Spring 2016. This development is too recent to be included as substantive evidence in the evaluation.

The department maintains several efforts to communicate with alumni, including a blog, a Facebook page and a Twitter account. However, information on these channels' effectiveness was not provided. The department's Twitter account had 87 followers and seven likes. The Facebook page has 29 likes. The department's blog has posted regular content since Fall 2014.

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

Faculty members provide service to a number of community organizations. Faculty also speak at high school and junior high school classes and community groups. These efforts, taken together, are evidence of the unit's intent to act as a resource for the region with regard to media education.

The department offers a media literacy post-baccalaureate certificate through its graduate program. This certificate program is designed for high school teachers who wish to address questions of media and society, including areas such as diversity and ethics.

Faculty are active members of several professional associations, including the Society of Professional Journalists; Illinois Press Association; Investigative Reporters & Editors; Mid-America Press Institute; and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists.

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

Faculty are active members of several academic associations, including the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication; Gateway Journalism Review Board of Editorial Advisors; Broadcast Education Association; and International Communication Association.

Faculty also serve as manuscript reviewers for journals in the discipline and have served in leadership roles in divisions and interest groups in AEJMC.

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

Students in advanced video production courses produce one or more public service announcements. Students in advertising campaigns work with local clients to produce advertising materials. Students also provide video production help for nonprofit organizations and small business.

Faculty members promote student service through a number of student organizations, including the Society of Professional Journalists and the Advertising Club. Students also participate in campus media: The Alestle independent campus newspaper and SIUE Web Radio.

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

In addition to the media literacy program mentioned above, faculty members have served as judges for professional and student competitions. Among these are regional and national Emmy awards; Broadcast Education Awards; SPJ Mark of Excellence Awards; National Federation of Press Women; and the Kansas City Press Club.

The department offered its facilities (i. e., writing labs, TV studio, technical support) for the 2016 St. Louis Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists College Journalism Boot Camp.

COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 9: Assessment of Learning Outcomes

The unit regularly assesses student learning and applies results to improve curriculum and instruction.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

a) The unit defines the goals for learning that students must achieve, including the “Professional Values and Competencies” of this Council. (See 2. Curriculum and Instruction.)

The department blends ACEJMC’s 12 competencies with eight “desired characteristics” of its College of Arts and Sciences. ACEJMC’s 12 competencies are all assigned to specific courses in the core for each sequence, but syllabi do not consistently state those as objectives. (One core course to which eight competencies are assigned is taught primarily by adjuncts, and the syllabi vary widely.)

In some places, the department’s wording varies from that of ACEJMC. For example, it combines domestic and global diversity (Competencies 3 and 4) as “understanding of diversity and citizenship in a global society as relates to mass communications.” And its statement of Competency 12 is “apply tools and technologies appropriate for mass media professions,” omitting the word “current,” which the Council added several years ago.

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

According to the self-study, the department’s assessment plan was written in 2010 and data first collected in 2013. The plan was updated in June 2016.

The current plan describes these direct measures:

- Internship/senior portfolios
- A pre-test and post-test survey, which measure the eight “desired characteristics” of the College of Arts and Sciences. Some of these mesh with ACEJMC competencies (e.g. critical thinking and communications). Others (e.g. citizenship and life-long learning) do not.

Indirect measures listed are:

- Syllabi (which are more typically considered inputs rather than learning outcomes)
- Alumni Surveys
- Reflection essays by graduating seniors
- Student awards

The university also requires all students to complete a Senior Assignment (SRA), which has been recognized as an “exemplary practice” for assessment of learning outcomes by the Association of American Colleges and Universities. In mass communications, this assignment includes the senior portfolio. The content of the portfolio is judged by a committee of mass communications faculty members for grading. Students must receive an overall grade of 70 percent. The analysis does not, however, examine the level of student mastery of specific ACEJMC competencies.

The previous site team report expressed concern that the department thought of assessment as “grades, rather than a tool for improving curriculum and instruction.” This site team had similar concerns.

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

The department is behind the curve in collecting data and applying it. While it does collect some data, the department notes that it has not had a full cohort move through the current assessment plan, since data was not collected until 2013. And it could make greater use of the data it collects. All students are required to have an internship, for example, and supervisors complete an evaluation that includes nine of ACEJMC’s competencies. Those scores are used only for the student’s grade, but they could also be synthesized by term or cohort and examined for trends.

The self-study includes several curricular changes made since the last self-study, including a new emphasis on media entrepreneurship and a class in web writing and design. The self-study says that “we rely heavily on indirect measures such as faculty engagement with media professionals, letters of reflections by our graduates, as well as alumni feedback” to plan curriculum changes and program modifications.

The department’s new strategic plan includes “continuous improvement” as one of five goals and one faculty member has been asked to oversee and monitor assessment activities. The faculty member selected, one of the newest in the department, will not be given a course release for this duty, despite its importance. As stated in the new plan: “This new role in the department will assure that our future plans are in fact informed by a meaningful engagement with the data we have been collecting.”

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

The department has a six-member alumni advisory board, a blog, and regular activities to stay in touch with alumni. According to the self-study, its alumni relations have been praised by the university as “one of the best among units in this relatively young university” and administrators echoed those sentiments to the site team.

The university’s Department of Institutional Research surveys graduates one, five and nine years after graduation, and the department draws on that data for its assessment plan. It does not, however, receive data specific to its majors.

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

As mentioned above, an internship is required of all majors, and their supervisors’ evaluations are an important part of the assessment process. The department also plans to use its advisory board “to discuss matters of professional and curricular developments.” When the new board met in the spring, it discussed how to involve more alumni in evaluating the senior assignment and portfolios.

NON-COMPLIANCE

PART III: Summary by site visit team

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

Strengths:

- A well-equipped television studio and ample engineering support.
- A minority student population that has grown since 2010 and now exceeds that of the university and its service area.
- A collegial faculty with strong scholarly activity and rich global perspectives.
- Up-to-date technology, despite a tough state budget environment.
- A willingness to develop innovative course topics and instructional formats and design.
- A well-respected chair, who is a champion for her department.

Weaknesses:

- Lack of standardization in syllabi for different sections of the same course.
- Underuse of the television studio and control room.
- Diminishing opportunities for students to study radio.
- An uncertain state budget that has left faculty without pay raises for three years.
- An assessment plan in need of significant improvement.

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

Nine: Assessment of Learning Outcomes

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

The department must improve its measures; more carefully align its courses with ACEJMC competencies; synthesize data already being collected; and show evidence that data is used to improve curriculum.

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

N.A.

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

N.A.

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

The previous team found the department out of compliance on Standard 9, Assessment, and said it “must develop an assessment plan that truly measures how much students have learned.” It added that the portfolio review “can be a piece of the assessment process but it is not enough.”

The department responded to that report by updating the plan soon after the visit and again in June 2016. But data was not collected until 2013 and, as the self-study notes, the department “is currently in its first year of producing cohort data points,” well behind what is expected of accredited departments at this point.

(On the 2004-05 visit, assessment was not yet a standard, but teams were required to comment on the department’s progress toward adopting a plan. That team felt the department had “implemented its assessment plan with success.”)

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 report format was attractive and convenient, but the writing was uneven and the report would have benefitted from careful editing.