

Report of On-Site Evaluation

ACEJMC
Undergraduate program
2017-2018

Name of Institution: University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Joseph E. Savoie, president
Name of Unit: Department of Communication
Name and Title of Administrator: Dr. Lucian F. Dinu
Date of 2017-2018 Accrediting Visit: Oct. 15-18, 2017

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

Date of the previous accrediting visit: Oct. 29-Nov. 2, 2011
Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Re-accredit
Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Re-accredit
Recommendation by 2017-2018 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

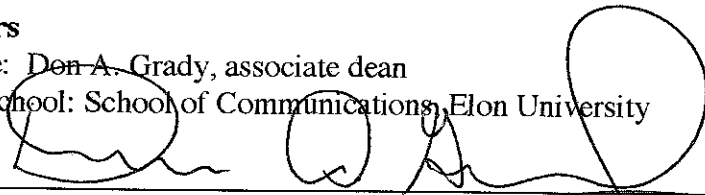
Signature _____



Team Members

Name and Title: Don A. Grady, associate dean
Organization/School: School of Communications, Elon University

Signature _____



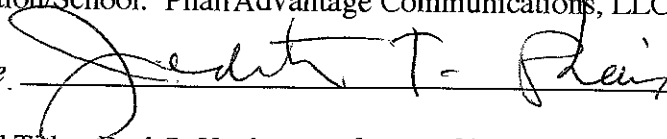
Name and Title: Nancy Mitchell, professor
Organization/School: College of Journalism and Mass Communications, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Signature _____



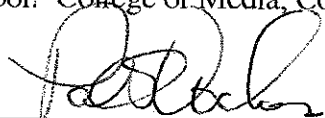
Name and Title: Judith T. Phair, president
Organization/School: PhairAdvantage Communications, LLC

Signature _____



Name and Title: Paul S. Voakes, professor of journalism
Organization/School: College of Media, Communication and Information, University of Colorado Boulder

Signature _____



PART I: General Information

Name of Institution: University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Name of Unit: Department of Communication

Year of Visit: 2017

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.

The University was established by Legislative Act 162 in 1898 as the Southwestern Louisiana Industrial Institute. The institution became a degree-granting college in 1921. Its name was changed to the University of Southwestern Louisiana in 1960. It became the University of Louisiana at Lafayette in August 1999.

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: 2011

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

The Department of Communication was first accredited in 1994.

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

Mission

The Department of Communication embraces the mission and values of the Accrediting Council on Education in Mass Communications and Journalism (ACEJMC) and the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, to provide students with an exceptional educational experience that incorporates diverse

worldviews, builds understanding of multidimensional communication practices, and supports adaptability to the modern global communication environment. The Department is committed to developing leaders, innovators, and scholars who are well equipped with theoretical knowledge and practical skills to take part in improving the human condition.

Values

In keeping with this mission and the values of ACEJMC and UL Lafayette, the Department is devoted to generating a rich diversity of professionals whose values reflect the ever-broadening spectrum of ethical, scholarly, and civic interests that drive our fields of study:

- **1 Intellectual Curiosity, Creativity and Research:** We encourage personal, scholarly and professional growth by guiding students' pursuit of knowledge for its own inherent value; and by inspiring in them the creativity and critical thinking skills to serve others by transcending established ideas.
- **2 Tradition, Pluralism and Respect:** We celebrate the worth and distinctiveness of local, regional, and global cultures inclusive of age, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, and ability as they converge in creating a welcoming learning environment of respect, empathy, and esteem for all.
- **3 Equity:** We cultivate scholars and professionals who exemplify ethics, responsibility, and accountability as they strive to achieve and protect fair treatment and justice for all.
- **4 Integrity and Responsible Professionalism:** We require stakeholders to demonstrate character, honesty and trustworthiness; and to manifest understanding of and appreciation for the principles of free speech, a free press, and the role of communication professionals in ethically shaping societal discourse.
- **5 Sustainability:** We continually adapt to keep pace with the dynamic nature of modern, interactive media and to utilize resources in a forward-looking fashion that meets present and future needs effectively.
- **6 Transparency and Collaboration:** We communicate and share information openly and readily in a spirit of teamwork and collegiality.
-

Vision

The Department envisions becoming a top-ranked program among its peers in terms of quality of education, student recruitment and retention, and professional job placement of our graduates. To achieve this vision, the department will take a leadership role in integrating teaching, research, and outreach activities through active, energetic and interdisciplinary collaboration with faculty, students, and citizens of global society.

Our actions are guided by a shared commitment to integrity, truth, fairness, service, and open-mindedness. We are vigilant in our efforts to effectively adapt to our changing environment while preserving the values that define and drive our department. We encourage our students to be open-minded and adaptable to change in their professional lives. We are proud of the inclusive connectedness that describes the caring relationships we share among faculty, staff and students.

Revised: October 2016

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Semesters of 15 weeks

Quarters of weeks

Summer sessions of 8 weeks

Intersessions of 1-3 weeks

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

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

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

Bachelor of Arts in Public Relations
 Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication-Journalism
 Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication-Advertising
 Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication-Broadcasting

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

124 semester hours of credit

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

Students may take a 3-credit internship class (CMCN 490) repeatedly, but only 3 semester hours apply to the degree.

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>
Mass Communication-Advertising	Dr. Alice Ferguson
Mass Communication-Broadcasting	Dr. William Davie
Mass Communication-Journalism	Mr. James Lovel
Public Relations	Dr. Dedria Givens-Carroll

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

Full time enrollment for Fall 2017 is 17,297.

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):

Fall 2017 enrollment is:

<u>Name of Sequence or Specialty</u>	<u>Undergraduate majors</u>
Mass Communication-Advertising	51
Mass Communication-Broadcasting	87
Mass Communication-Journalism	44
Public Relations	158
Mass Communication (no specialty selected yet)	19
Organizational Communication (not subject to ACEJMC accreditation)	50

Total

409

15. Number of students in each section of all skills courses (newswriting, reporting, editing, photography, advertising copy, broadcast news, public relations writing, etc.). List enrollment by section for the term during which the visit will occur and the preceding term. 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.)

Course	Section	Spring 2017 Enrollment	Fall 2017 Enrollment
CMCN 212 – Introductory Newswriting	1	16	17
CMCN 212 – Introductory Newswriting	2	18	18
CMCN 212 – Introductory Newswriting	3	18	17
CMCN 212 – Introductory Newswriting	4	18	12
CMCN 212 – Introductory Newswriting	5	20	15
CMCN 212 – Introductory Newswriting	6	15	16
CMCN 212 – Introductory Newswriting	7	16	18
CMCN 250 – Audio Production	1	16	10
CMCN 250 – Audio Production	2	12	19
CMCN 308 – TV Performance	1	15	12
CMCN 312 – Advanced Reporting	1	NA	11
CMCN 313 – News Editing	1	6	NA
CMCN 321 – Writing for Public Relations	1	14	16
CMCN 321 – Writing for Public Relations	2	NA	10
CMCN 333 – Digital Photography	1	NA	16
CMCN 335 – Visual Communication I	1	17	17
CMCN 335 – Visual Communication I	2	17	14
CMCN 335 – Visual Communication I	3	18	17
CMCN 335 – Visual Communication I	4	17	16
CMCN 337 – Visual Communication II	1	17	NA
CMCN 338 – Internet Communication	1	*25	*24
CMCN 339 – Portfolio Development	1	NA	13
CMCN 340 – Advertising Creative Strategy I	1	NA	12
CMCN 341 – Advertising Creative Strategy II	1	18	NA
CMCN 352 – Scriptwriting	1	7	9
CMCN 342 – Electronic Media Advertising	1	NA	18
CMCN 357 – Broadcast Newswriting	1	12	19
CMCN 360 – Television Production	1	19	15
CMCN 365 – Single Camera Production	1	14	18
CMCN 412 – Feature Writing	1	4	NA
CMCN 413 – Public Affairs Reporting	1	6	NA
CMCN 425 – Public Relations Campaigns	1	18	NA
CMCN 425 – Public Relations Campaigns	2	13	NA
CMCN 437 – Advertising Campaigns	1	6	16
CMCN 455 – TV News Production	1	9	NA
CMCN 465 – Documentary Filmmaking	1	NA	10
CMCN 469 – Digital Media Convergence	1	7	10

**As the state drastically reduced the budget allocation to universities, departments came under considerable pressure to maximize enrollments. This pressure led to exceeding the maximum enrollment in CMCN 338.*

List of online skills courses

	Section	Spring 2017	Fall 2017
CMCN 421 – Advanced P. R. Writing	1	18	11
CMCN 421 – Advanced P. R. Writing	2	12	NA

16. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2017 – 2018 academic year:

Give percentage increase or decrease in three years:

Budget 2015-2016: \$1,790,228.00

Budget 2016-2017: \$1,762,750.00 - a decrease of 1.56% from previous budget

Budget 2017-2018: \$1,802,334.00 – an increase of 2.25% from previous budget

Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries: \$1,777,383.00

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.

Name	Rank	Notes
Philip J Auter	Professor	
William R. Davie	Professor	
Steven J. Dick	Professor, research scientist	Not currently teaching
Lucian F. Dinu	Associate Professor	
Dedria Givens-Caroll	Associate Professor	
Do Kyun Kim	Associate Professor	
Patricia Holmes	Associate Professor	
Alice Ferguson	Assistant Professor	
T Phillip Madison	Assistant Professor	
Caryn Winters	Assistant Professor	
Amal Bakry	Assistant Professor	Starting Fall 2017
Lauren A. Auverset	Assistant Professor	Starting Fall 2017
Lindsay Hobbs	Instructor	
James Lovel	Instructor	
Shari Wallace	Instructor	
Maniko Barthelemy	Instructor	Starting Fall 2017

18. List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in fall 2017. Also list names of part-time faculty teaching spring 2017. (If your school has its accreditation visit in spring 2018, please provide the spring 2018 adjunct list in the updated information.)

Name	Notes
Scott Brazda	B.A. Marketing, University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Anchor and reporter for KATC TV. Executive Director for the Stuller Family Foundation.
Kelly Briggs	M.S. Mass Communication, University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Commercial, Promotional and Documentary Film Production.
Gary Cruice	M.S. Communication, University of Southwestern Louisiana. research interests include: Visual representation of data and impact of data representation upon data interpretation; language processing; structure of educational systems; technology in education and its pedagogical use.

Greg Dubois	M. ED. University of Tennessee. Cathedral-Carmel School Vice-Principal, Pre-K through Eighth Grade.
Mike Gervais	Ed. D. University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Department safety coordinator. Has a Federal Aviation Administration Drone Pilot Certification.
Masey Hammons	E.d. D. University of Louisiana at Lafayette (expected Spring 2018). Director of Forensics. Member of the Southern Forensics Championship Board, Carroll and Barbara Hickey Award winner plus many others.
Monica Hebert	B.A. University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Award-winning Media Director and consultant for BBR Creative, Holbrook Multimedia, Pop-a-Lock and NOVA Safety & Environmental.
Robert Jones	M.A. Mass Communication, Louisiana State University. Media Specialist, Writer, Graphic Design, Advertising Review for Better Business Bureau of Acadiana.
John Korbel	B.A. Western Michigan University. Former News Director for KATC-TV, Lafayette, Managing editor and assignment editor at WDSU-TV News, New Orleans.
Maria Lambert	M.S. Organizational Communication, University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Marketing communications manager, KTC PACE.
Madeline Landry	M.S. Communication, University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Owner, Listen Hear, LLC. Was the Executive Director, LSUE Foundation.
Jeanne LeBlanc	M.S. Interpersonal-Organizational Communication, University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Jeanne L's Draperies, Owner/Designer.
Charles Lenox	B.A. Journalism, Louisiana State University. Former Executive Editor for <i>The Daily Advertiser</i>
Sam McPeek	Ph.D. Rhetoric and English Composition, University of Louisiana at Lafayette expected 2017. Instructor in English Composition, English Department, The University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Ordained Minister of the Lutheran Church.
Mary Pelias	Ph.D. Speech Communication, Southern Illinois University. Professional training and experience as an actor (stage and film) and director (stage). Worked several years in Chicago, HR where she trained others in the art and legalities of employment interviews.
William Says	M.S. Communication, University of Southwestern Louisiana. Currently paralegal and case manager for local attorneys. Experience as Development Director for Acadiana Educational Endowment and KRVS FM operations manager.
Richard Tullous	M.S. Organizational Communication, University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Special Education Teacher, Church Point Middle School, Church Point, LA.
Tom Voinché	M.S. Communication Broadcasting, University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Former News Anchor, KATC TV3.
André Williams	M.S. Communication, University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Public Relations/Business Communication Consultant in the Lafayette area. Public Outreach Coordinator for the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration

Act.

Note: All adjuncts taught in spring and fall 2017, except for Monica Hebert, Madeline Landry and André Williams who teach only in the fall 2017 semester.

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
2016-2017 academic year	__100__	__100__	__100__
2015-2016 academic year	__97__	__97__	__100__

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.

The Department of Communication is the largest of nine units in the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, a midsized city that prides itself as the heart of Cajun culture. The College is one of eight at the university, located on an attractive, walkable campus, landscaped with live oaks and trees draped with Spanish moss. Beside the department's main building, alligators, egrets and turtles laze in Cypress Lake.

The university has 17,519 full-time students, making it the state's second-largest, behind only Louisiana State University, which is 50 miles to the east in Baton Rouge. UL and LSU are the state's only Doctoral Research Intensive universities.

The department has been accredited by ACEJMC since 1994 and is one of five such accredited programs in Louisiana. It offers a public relations major (158) and a mass communication major with three sequences: advertising (51), journalism (44) and broadcasting (87). A fourth sequence in organizational communication is not part of the accredited unit, nor is the master's program, whose focus is academic, rather than professional.

The department's mission statement, adopted in 2016, vows to "provide students with an exceptional educational experience that incorporates diverse world views, builds understanding of multidimensional communication practices, and supports adaptability to the modern global communication environment." The statement goes on to outline six values and concludes with a vision to become a "top-ranked program among its peers in terms of quality of education, student recruitment and retention, and professional job placement of our graduates."

The department adopted a new strategic plan in 2013 and updated it in 2016 to align with a new university strategy. The plan outlines four strategic imperatives focused on faculty, students, research and governance. Each category, in turn, spells out strategies and indicators, including seeking stable funding sources for computer labs and broadcasting equipment. The strategic plan is scheduled for review and revision in 2018.

The dean and provost expressed support for the department's direction and needs.

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

The department has numerous committees that carry out the governance and work of the faculty, including a Curriculum Committee, which considers and coordinates faculty requests for new courses

and course revisions. In addition, the department head serves on the University Curriculum Committee. The newest committee, Strategic Planning, consists of the department head and the sequence coordinators. The faculty met nine times during the most recent academic year.

Department members serve on several university-level committees, including the Faculty Senate, the Faculty Senate Budget Committee, the Office for Campus Diversity Advisory Committee, and the President's Committee on Sustainability.

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. Dinu has been on the faculty for 13 years and has been head of the department since 2016. His predecessor had served as department head since 2003. Colleagues uniformly praised Dr. Dinu's leadership, saying he is aware of issues, listens to all opinions, communicates well, and is developing a vision for the department. The dean also spoke highly of Dr. Dinu, describing him as a selfless leader "whose heart is in the work." He has ideas for the department and follows through.

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

Faculty were actively involved in the selection of the department head, although the decision was ultimately the dean's. Department heads are evaluated once a year with a rubric used college-wide. Dr. Dinu has been through just one evaluation in his role as department head.

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

The faculty handbook outlines a process for resolving complaints between faculty or between faculty and administrators. This can include the Faculty Senate Mediation Committee or a Faculty Grievance Committee. Student concerns about grades and courses are first handled informally, but can, if necessary, also involve the department head, dean, and a formal appeals process. At the time of the site visit, there were no unresolved formal 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 department requires 42 credit hours for the Communication degree. The department also requires an 18-hour minor.

The student must complete a minimum of 124 semester-hours for the baccalaureate. The site team inspected the degree audits of 48 randomly sampled, recent graduates, and 100 percent of the sampled students took more than 72 credit hours outside the department.

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 requires a core of five courses: Media and Society, Introductory Newswriting, Communication Theory, Communication Law & Ethics, and Internship. To complete the major, students take additional courses specific to their sequence:

Public Relations:

The public relations curriculum includes a good balance of theoretical and conceptual courses. Students are required to take Public Speaking, Principles of Public Relations, Visual Communication, two writing courses (Writing for Public Relations and Advanced Public Relations Writing), Public Relations Case Studies, and the capstone, Public Relations Campaign Management. The case studies and campaign courses are strongest in the application area, while also emphasizing critical thinking. More general courses in research, ethics and law are also required, along with courses outside the department in such areas as economics, management, and marketing. The Campaign Management course pairs students with a client from the university or community, and is widely praised by students as valuable career preparation.

Advertising:

In addition to the 15 credit hours of core courses, advertising majors enroll in eight required courses (24 credit hours) that reflect a typical approach to study in the discipline: Principles of Advertising, Visual Communication, Advertising Creative Strategy (two courses), Electronic Media Advertising, Advertising Media Planning, Communication Research, and the capstone Advertising Campaigns. Students must enroll in one Communication elective course, and they are required to take a marketing course outside the department. The courses apply theory to practice, as described in the self-study and confirmed by visits to classes. Interviews with students indicated that they wish they were taught more social media skills either inside or outside their coursework.

Journalism:

Journalism students take eight courses to complete the degree: Principles of Journalism, Advanced Reporting, News Editing, Visual Communication, Feature Writing, Public Affairs Reporting, Multimedia Journalism (the capstone), and two Communication electives. Journalism students seemed generally happy with their curriculum. They praised the sequence's only full-time Journalism faculty member, but they were also looking forward to the hoped-for addition of an assistant professor in Journalism. They noted that the sequence seemed print-oriented, with the capstone being the only multimedia Journalism course, but they added that Journalism students can take a few Broadcasting courses as electives.

Broadcasting:

The sequence curriculum reflects a balance of conceptual, writing and skills courses that address ACEJMC values and competencies. The required courses include Audio Production, Internet Communication, Principles of Electronic Media, Broadcast Newswriting, Television Production and Digital Media Convergence (the capstone). Students must also take one production and one performance course from a short menu of Broadcasting electives.

Overall, Communication students are very likely to emerge with an understanding of all 12 ACEJMC core values and competencies. The self-study identified dozens of courses that engage understanding and/or awareness of the core values and competencies. Syllabi are clear about course objectives and content. Introductory classes lay the foundation for deeper understanding and application in upper-level classes. Students begin with broad overviews (Media and Society, and Principles of Advertising/Electronic Media/Public Relations/Journalism), they learn more specific skills in the relevant sequence, and then gain depth and breadth in their capstone classes.

Communication Law and Ethics is in the required (department-wide) core, but the syllabus suggests that the course is entirely given to communication law (with no assignments, readings or modules on ethics). The department head says the last two weeks of the class are devoted to professional ethics under the title "Media Issues," with attention to ethics codes and issues identified by professional organizations. Majors in Broadcasting and Public Relations (but not Advertising or Journalism) are required to take a Professional Ethics course in the Philosophy department. The self-study also indicated that many of the "principles" and skills courses in each sequence frequently deal with ethical issues.

A few years ago, the department committed to increasing online course offerings, and this initiative has brought a new source of revenue, via student online-course fees. Ten faculty members are certified to teach online. Both faculty and students had mixed reviews for the online courses, which typically account for 10-15 percent of the undergraduate courses offered. In most cases, the online course is taken asynchronously, which benefits students with full work/school schedules. A few of the courses are "hybrid," where students and instructor meet in the classroom, but for less than half the time allotted for the course's instruction.

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.

In general, the instruction in the Department of Communication is indeed demanding and current. Students praised their faculty for their up-to-date knowledge of trends in the respective professions, and

for their flexibility in engaging students in the news of the day. They also praised their Media and Society instructors for bringing in a wealth of media professionals as guest speakers. The team also heard several comments about the demanding nature of the senior-level courses.

Public Relations:

Full-time faculty members all have professional experience that contributes significantly to the currency and relevance of their teaching and interaction with students. Several adjunct faculty members are practicing professionals. Students commented that both full-time and adjunct faculty were extremely helpful in securing internships, providing career counsel, and engaging them in discussion of current events and developments in the field. In response to student interest and changes in the profession, the sequence recently added a course in Social Media in Advertising and Public Relations.

Advertising:

Faculty designed the academic experience for advertising majors with a goal of preparing students for the profession. Visits to classes and discussions with students reflected this emphasis, with current events and examples from up-to-date professional practices. Students, many of whom have work and family obligations, expressed appreciation for the education they are receiving but wished for more access to scheduled time in computer labs with specialized software.

Journalism:

After the core and introductory courses, the Journalism sequence focuses exclusively on professional preparation. With the exception of the Visual Communication course, instruction focuses on text-based reporting and writing. The only multimedia course in the sequence is the capstone course. Students reported that the multimedia-savvy classmates had learned their skills elsewhere (not in their Journalism courses); thus, the multimedia content of the course was described by students as sporadic. In office visits, faculty in both the Broadcasting and Journalism sequences expressed enthusiasm for increasing the multimedia content across this curriculum.

Broadcasting:

Site team conversations with alumni and students indicate that Broadcast sequence courses are demanding and that professors teach concepts and skills that are pertinent to current technologies. For example, the Internet Communication course requires students to build their own websites, create personal blogs, and learn to use a variety of social media platforms. The Digital Media Convergence capstone builds on audio and video skills from earlier courses as the foundation for multimedia production. While Mac and PC computer labs support Internet and social media instruction, faculty recognize the need to upgrade aging audio, video and standard definition television equipment to better support digital techniques that are essential for multimedia production. Nevertheless, students seemed to recognize and value the competencies they gain from courses and they believe these skills are transferable to contemporary professional media environments.

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.)

Of the 58 sections of skills courses taught in the spring and fall semesters of 2017, three exceeded the 20-student limit: Broadcast Newswriting (21), and Internet Communication (24 and 25). The chair explained that these enrollment levels were allowed in order to enable seniors to “graduate on time.” All three of the *online* skills-course sections (Advance Public Relations Writing) had enrollments under the mandated limit.

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.

All Communication students are required to take a 3-credit-hour internship course during the senior year. This is the only professional experience outside the classroom for which academic credit is awarded. The internship requires at least 10 hours a week of work on-site during fall or spring semester, and 15 hours a week during the summer. The department chair, who organizes the course and its internships, keeps a list of about 160 employers who meet the department's criteria for on-site supervision and substantive learning experiences. The chair reports that the list is updated frequently, as new employers approach the department with opportunities each semester. Some employers' requests are not granted because they do not meet the department's criteria.

About six weeks before the beginning of each semester, students receive a list of available internships, and they are required to secure an internship on their own from this list. Once the internship begins, students must file a weekly report with the course instructor. Both supervisor and student evaluate the experience at the end of the semester. Students told the team that they did not find it difficult to secure the internship they wanted, and that these were positive experiences.

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.

In 2013, following the most recent re-accreditation, the diversity plan underwent a significant makeover, and the resulting document was adopted in 2014. The Diversity Committee, under new leadership, continued to rework the plan and another revision was reviewed and endorsed by the faculty in fall 2016. The department's diversity plan is connected to its strategic plan and reflects its commitment to educate the campus community on the university's strong commitment to diversity, equal opportunity, and inclusion for all. It highlights the achievement of diversity as a matter of both principle and process, and notes the region's history as the destination for Cajun settlers who were exiled from Canada in 1755.

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.

Diversity topics are woven into the content of all courses in the department, and all syllabi contain a diversity statement. Numerous courses include diversity-related assignments and discussions. For example, broadcast students prepare public service announcements related to diversity issues.

Public relations students address diversity issues and audiences in their study of cases and in their campaign class. The introductory Media and Society course addresses the role of diversity in all human communication. In meetings with students, several mentioned examples of class discussions and exercises that supported diversity.

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 has faced some challenges in its efforts to recruit and retain women and minority faculty and professional staff. These include hiring freezes, salary restrictions, described by faculty administrators as "draconian," and several faculty departures in the past few years. However, the full-time faculty is more diverse in national and global terms than it was six years ago, with nine women and seven men, including three African-Americans, one Asian, and one Hispanic. In fact, the department added three women (one is African-American and one Middle Eastern) during the current academic year. A diversity focus and goals are incorporated into all searches, and retention efforts for faculty and staff have increased. These include mentorships, sabbaticals for research, travel support, and additional research assistant hours for all tenure-track faculty.

Achieving greater diversity in the ranks of part-time and adjunct faculty in the sequences under review continues to be a problem. Only one African-American is among the eight faculty members in this group. Guest speakers are one way the department is seeking to increase a minority presence, although some students said that more diversity is still needed.

African-American faculty members are highly involved with the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) student chapter and have helped launch an NABJ scholarship program.

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.

Diverse students represent a larger percentage of the department's population – at 37 percent – than of the overall university student population (21 percent). African-American students comprise 35.5 percent of department student enrollment and 24.5 percent of the area population. Hispanic students are 3.9 percent of the department enrollment, 19.8 percent of overall university enrollment, and 24.5 percent of the area population. The department received the 2016 Southern States Communication Association Award for Minority Outreach and Retention.

The department actively seeks diverse students through participation in campus-wide recruitment, as well as through personal involvement by faculty members. NABJ presents an annual outstanding member award as well as a student scholarship.

Some faculty members seek student assistance in recruitment activities. The student organization Giving Love, Acceptance, Safety and Support, helps recruiting in the LGBTQ community.

Student advising and mentoring are key elements in the retention program for students with diverse backgrounds.

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.

Several initiatives seek to promote a climate free of harassment and discrimination. Syllabi contain diversity policy statements. Regular rotation of faculty committee assignments helps maximize diversity. The department works closely with the Office of Equality, Diversity, and Community Engagement, sponsoring two seminars with the office that offer development and training for students and faculty as Communication Diversity Advocates. The advocates will provide a forum for students to share personal concerns and will report to the department chair. Members of the department Diversity Committee recently participated in a faculty development workshop on mentoring underrepresented and minority students. In the wake of events affecting members of the university community of various religions and ethnicities, students and faculty have reached out to the Muslim Students Association and the Islamic Center of Lafayette, among others, to generate discussions that build stronger relationships across cultures.

COMPLIANCE

Full-time Faculty

Group	Female	% of total faculty	Male	% of total faculty
Black/ African American	2	13.32	1	6.66
White	3	19.98	7	46.62
American Indian/ Alaskan native	0	0	0	0
Asian	0	0	1	6.66
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	1	6.66	0	0
Native Hawaiian/ other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
Two or more races	0	0	0	0
Other race	0	0	0	0
International (any race)	0	0	2	13.32

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 department follows policies and procedures as stated in the University's Faculty Handbook for hiring, supporting and evaluating full-time and part-time faculty. The department head in consultation with the appropriate faculty issues a request to the dean of the College of Liberal Arts, who then prioritizes all requests and transmits a recommendation to the vice president for academic affairs who, in turn, makes a recommendation to the president of the university. Once a position is approved, the department advertises the position, giving special attention to diversity by advertising in diversity newsletters of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and PRSSA, as well as NABJ. The procedures for interviewing and hiring successful candidates as well as samples of the advertisements were included in the self-study. Part-time faculty members are hired based on the same policies and requirements as full-time faculty, but the procedures differ. Part-time faculty positions are not "recruited" by advertising a position, establishing a search committee or conducting formal campus interviews, which is the process for full-time positions.

All full-time and part-time faculty and instructional staff are reviewed annually as required by the university. In an effort to convey expectations clearly to those being evaluated, the College of Liberal Arts provides those hired with indicators of performance quality and explains procedures for attaining tenure in its "Guidelines for Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure" document.

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

As outlined in the Faculty Handbook, a standard teaching load for tenure-track faculty is four courses (20 percent for each class), and each faculty member is expected to actively engage in research and participate in service (20 percent total for both areas). The university established five workload tracks to recognize the uniqueness of faculty members and provide flexibility. As an illustration, faculty members with intense research agendas teach three courses per semester (60 percent) and the remaining 40 percent of their time is allocated to research and service. Some faculty members receive course-load reductions to complete books or comparable research projects or for administrative responsibilities. Expectations for faculty appointments and the process leading to tenure are explained in the letter of offer given to those who are hired. Visits with tenure-track faculty, instructors and part-time faculty confirmed that they understood what was expected of them.

Full-time tenured, tenure-track and fixed-term faculty have taught the majority of core and required courses for the three years before the site visit, according to a table included in the self-study. Teaching of core and required courses hovered around 70 percent for full-time faculty and 30 percent for part-time instructors during this time period.

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.

Faculty members' qualifications and characteristics reflect a balance of degrees, professional experience, gender, race and rank. Full-time and adjunct instructors are required to hold at minimum a master's degree in their field of instruction. Significant experience can be substituted for a master's degree for adjunct professors. All full, associate and assistant professors must have earned doctorates. Eleven of the 16 full-time faculty employed in the spring 2017 each earned more than six years of professional experience in addition to their graduate education. Twelve of the 19 adjuncts employed in spring 2017 and fall 2017 have more than 10 years of professional experience.

Several racial minorities are currently included on the full-time faculty, including three African-American females, three international faculty members (one Asian male, one Middle Eastern female and one White male and a Hispanic female). Since 2011 the rank of the faculty members has shifted as 10 have left the university, including three full professors, one associate professor, two assistant professors and four instructors. Ten people have been hired to replace them. Nine of these hires were made at the assistant professor or instructor level and one as a researcher. No adjuncts were people of color. One adjunct of color was hired starting the fall semester of 2017.

The department encourages professional development by encouraging faculty to pursue certification for online teaching, providing additional help from graduate assistants to support the work of tenure-track faculty members, and promoting collaborations among faculty. Senior faculty mentor assistant professors informally. In addition, UL Lafayette offers a number of different programs and workshops aimed at helping faculty and staff improve teaching, research and advising.

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

Administrators annually evaluate the performance of all full-time and part-time faculty members and instructional staff. The evaluation process for full-time faculty starts at the beginning of the year with each faculty member completing a workload form that asks faculty to describe their teaching, service, research, and administrative activities during the previous year. Faculty members provide details about the courses they taught, sections of thesis independent studies and thesis committee memberships and professional development. They list their research and scholarly activities, including grant activity. The department reviews these documents and assigns a rating to each faculty member, using an internally created rubric. Students evaluate all instructors and advisers, whether they are full-time or part-time. Their feedback is part of the annual performance review. The department head meets with each full-time faculty member to discuss his or her performance and gives a merit rating. Junior faculty members are mentored during the annual evaluation meeting. Part-time faculty members are hired on a per-course basis and are not eligible for merit raises.

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

Faculty in the department serve the college and broader university community through service on committees. Faculty members have made contributions to a wide range of activities, such as Faculty Senate, University Curriculum, General Education committees at the university level and Outreach and Engagement committee for the college. Faculty members advise student groups, including the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA), the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ), and the

National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ), Louisiana Association of Broadcasters (LAB), the Advertising Club, Organizational Communication Association (OCA), and Sigma Gamma Mu, ULL's Communication Honor Society.

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 Department of Communication assigns each faculty member workload percentages that include teaching, research and service, which serve as one definition of ongoing faculty duties. The percentage allocated to tenure-track faculty for research ranges between 10 and 20 percent, with one of the 10 tenure-track faculty members allocated 30 percent. The percentage for the four instructors ranges from 0 to 5 percent for research. The chair evaluates each faculty member's performance annually in accordance with these distributions.

The unit encourages, in its written materials, "both traditional and innovative approaches to scholarship," but the vast majority of the research reported in the self-study describes traditional journal articles, book chapters, technical reports, conference paper presentations and the like.

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

In evaluating faculty members for tenure and promotion, the unit adheres to two documents: the university's "Faculty Handbook," and the College of Liberal Arts' "Guidelines for Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure," with the latter providing such details as performance indicators for research productivity. The faculty hiring process follows the procedures stipulated in the campus Faculty Handbook.

Assistant professors receive a "mid-term" progress evaluation after their third year on the faculty. In interviews, assistant professors said the department leadership has given them clear guidance as to expectations, well beyond the official documents.

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

Faculty CVs indicate a broad range of research interests and specializations, which is not surprising given the wide range of subdisciplines under the "Communication" umbrella. The entire body of output is well within the guidelines indicated in the university's and college's rubrics for research that counts for promotion, tenure and annual merit.

The research output is notable for its global range of topics.

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.

During the study period, faculty members presented 63 conference papers; published 21 articles in refereed journals and 23 book chapters; and edited or co-edited six books. The data indicate that the typical faculty member, during his or her employment in the department during the study period, published one refereed article every two years and one book chapter every two years, and presented a paper at a conference once a year. Given that most tenure-track faculty have only 20 percent of their time and effort allocated to research, this level of productivity seems appropriate.

The research output is uneven, as three of the 10 tenured or tenure-track faculty members accounted for nearly three-fourths of the unit's journal publications. Overall, however, the dean of the college and the provost both stated that they were satisfied with the research productivity of the unit.

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

The unit exudes a climate that supports intellectual life. This is particularly in evidence in the recent changes the chair and senior faculty have made to help boost productivity across the board:

- A concerted effort was launched two years ago to invoke a faculty mentorship program that includes tenured faculty's research consultation and collaboration with newer faculty members. In interviews, both senior and junior faculty members cited projects and works in progress that reflect this new collaborative endeavor.
- The unit has embraced a campus initiative to increase online course offerings, which has had the somewhat unexpected result of increasing research-related travel for the faculty. A portion of each student's online-course fee is returned to the unit, and recently the permissible expenditure of the funds was expanded to include faculty travel to support research and professional development. Thus, the average faculty member's travel reimbursement has now more than tripled from its "normal" level of \$350 a year. The department also used online-generated funds to improve office technology for its faculty.
- The department has allocated more graduate-student hours to research assistantships for assistant professors. In the fall semester of 2017, each of the five assistant professors had 10 hours of research assistance per week. Tenured faculty had five hours of assistance per week.
- Finally, the department recently acquired the services of a "senior research scientist," who works primarily with (and is salaried at) a research institute elsewhere on campus but who has considerable experience in media research. He gives guest lectures to research-methods classes and consults with faculty colleagues on their research projects.

COMPLIANCE

Productivity in Scholarship

Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activities	Total from dept.	Individuals				Total
		Full Professors	Associate Professors	Assistant Professors	Other Faculty	
Awards and Honors	9	5	4			9
Grants Received Internal	6	4	1	1		6
Grants Received External	5	1			4	5
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co-authored	7	1	7			8
Textbooks, Sole- or Co-authored	4	2			2	4
Books Edited	1	1				1
Book Chapters	21	5	9	1	8	23
Monographs	1		1			1
Articles in Refereed Journals	17	9	8	1	3	21
Refereed Conference Papers	57	25	29	4	5	63
Invited Academic Papers	11	4	3	4		11
Encyclopedia Entries	2		2			2
Book Reviews	5	2	2	1		5
Articles in Non-refereed Publications	2	2				2
Juried Creative Works	1				1	1
Non-juried Creative Works	1				1	1
Other (Specified)	1*		1*			1*
Technical (Project) Reports - External	14		4		10	14
Invited Presentations	25	15	5	1	4	25

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.

All communication majors are assigned a full-time faculty member from their respective area of specialization.

First-time, first-year students are advised during orientation before the semester starts. Regular advising occurs during a two-week period toward the middle of each fall and spring semester, when students schedule one-on-one appointments or meet in open sessions with advisers. Advisers must be certified to advise students, which requires attending training sessions sponsored by the Academic Success Center. Advisers are responsible for discussing with the student their life plans and career goals, explaining university processes, policies and support services and referrals, and advising students regarding appropriate course choices and the importance of a balanced schedule. Students complete two copies of an advising form during their appointment, taking one copy and leaving one for their file.

The student's degree plan document must be approved by the adviser, department head and dean at least a semester before graduation. This plan ensures that students stay on track to graduate in a timely manner.

Students reported general satisfaction with faculty advising, as indicated in data collected by the Communication department and in meetings with students. However, some students reported being unable to take required courses in a timely fashion and even graduating later than expected because of poor advising. Students also expressed a concern about receiving adequate guidance in selecting balanced and sequential course loads.

b) Faculty are available and accessible to students.

Faculty members are required to maintain at least 10 office hours a week, posted on their office doors. Students can also arrange meetings outside these times. Students who met with the site visit team said they appreciated the easy access to faculty members, who were generous with their time and advice.

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

Students receive information about advising and department activities through announcements in class, postings in the buildings and electronic notices. Advisers communicate with students via email and through the ULink system. Advisers maintain a folder on the student's advising history, kept in the department office.

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.

Students can take advantage of several opportunities to gain experience through student professional organizations and other extra-curricular activities. The university publishes an independent student newspaper, *The Vermilion* and a yearbook, *L'Acadien*. An online publication, *Ragin' Wire*, is produced by a multimedia journalism class one semester each year. Beginning in 2017, broadcast students can work on a weekly program on community-access cable television.

Students can participate in student chapters of several professional associations, including the National Association of Black Journalists, Public Relations Student Society of America, Society of Professional Journalists, and Louisiana Association of Broadcasters. The Advertising Club and the Organizational Communication Association are not national organizations but have a presence in the department. The department also sponsors its own honor society, Sigma Gamma Mu. Faculty members advise these organizations, which enrich students' education. Some students reported that their participation in some of these organizations is limited by obligations to work and family, and they said they wished they could have taken advantage of these opportunities to become more involved.

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

The department's retention and graduation rates mirror the university rates, which the university is trying to improve. This information is available to the public on the department's website. As of spring 2017, the department's 4-year graduation rate was 15.4 percent, and the latest 6-year graduation rate was 33.7 percent.

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.

Like many state universities, UL has endured a painful state budget climate for many years. In the past decade, under a previous governor who offered little support for higher education, the state slashed its financing of the university's budget from approximately 75 percent to 25 percent. The university responded by increasing student tuition and fees. Louisiana's current governor has been kinder to education than his predecessor, and faculty will receive a raise in 2018. (The last one, which was small, was in 2015.) Nonetheless, discretionary money remains scarce, with the faculty travel budget being especially tight.

The university's budgeting system does not allow for many strategic choices at the department level. The department's current budget is 7 percent higher than it was six years ago and 18 percent higher than it was in 2014-15. But 95 percent of the budget is salaries, with the remaining portion being divided among supplies, travel and operating services.

The department's budgeted travel line for the past three years has been only \$4,375. The department has been resourceful in finding other ways to support faculty travel, however. Several professors have three-year endowed professorships that include money for travel. And the department may use revenue generated by faculty who teach online courses for some equipment and faculty travel.

The department's annual budget does not include funds for equipment and facilities, which are allocated at the university level. While this process causes some frustration for the department, faculty and staff have been aggressive about applying for internal and external grants and have met with some success.

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.

In a tight budget environment, the department appears to receive its fair share of university resources.

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

The Department of Communication is housed in three buildings: Burke-Hawthorne Hall, Wharton Hall, and a small adjacent building referred to as the Audio Annex. Burke, which was last renovated in 2008, includes classrooms, computer labs, eight video editing suites, administrative and faculty offices, an 82-seat auditorium, and storage space. The campus radio station, KRVS-FM, Radio Acadie, a listener-supported public radio station, is located in Burke Hall, but is not part of the department. A spacious television studio, control room, equipment checkout and storage space, chief engineer's office, and a PC computer lab are located in Wharton Hall, and the Audio Annex supports three audio production rooms and a small classroom. Computer labs and the auditorium are shared with the Communicative Disorders Department.

The university does not provide the department with its own budget for equipment acquisition or repair. Instead, the unit must apply for equipment from the following sources: STEP (Student Technology

Enhancement Fund (from student fees)), BoRSF (Board of Regents Support Fund) state level grants, and other sources. Despite recent budget cuts, the unit has been able to maintain a steady program of facilities upgrades.

The department has received almost \$350,000 in additional funding since the last accreditation review. These funds have been used to purchase software and equipment to support research and production initiatives. Faculty have received Distance Learning funding to upgrade computers to assist with online courses. These funds have helped to generate over \$70,000 to support upgrades, research and travel for faculty who teach distant learning courses.

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 provides equipment to support instruction, research and creative activities. The unit has committed to making every classroom a SMART classroom, which includes custom podiums, instructor computers, data/video and document projectors, screens, and audio speakers. Most classrooms have multimedia technology and the unit believes it has “made progress” in updating technology since the last accreditation review. In the future, the department plans to install smartboards in all classrooms. Students and faculty have wireless Internet access throughout the facility, and learning is facilitated via Moodle, an online course management platform.

The department has four computer labs and software programs that are suitable for writing, layout and design courses, and online and multimedia production. Two Mac and two PC computer labs are available to students during the week and on the weekend. At the time of our visit, a PC lab had recently been upgraded with new computers and the latest Adobe Creative Suite of software. Computer labs and the equipment checkout room are staffed by student workers and graduate assistants. Equipment is maintained by the department’s engineer and a university computer technician. In addition to office computers, faculty who teach online courses also have laptops and most faculty have relatively recent computers.

The department professes to have up-to-date field video equipment and studio post-production facilities. However, the television production studio and control room are quite dated and the department does not now produce any live broadcasts from this studio. Instead, the department uses the local cable channel’s public access facility for its live student news program, *Louisiana Focus*, which is telecast every Friday on AOC Community Media.

The department has 10 video cameras, 15 additional cameras shared with the English Department, and an array of supporting equipment, including carrying cases, monitors, playback units, mics, tripods, and lighting kits. The television control room and studio equipment currently supports standard definition video, but not high definition.

Video editing is done using Final Cut Pro X non-linear editing software in Mac labs. In addition to editing, one computer lab in Wharton Hall doubles as an audio/video playback room for newscasts. Videotape-to-memory storage cards equipment is provided at three locations in Wharton Hall. “Transfer” stations enable students to convert P2 format video to digital hard drive storage. Audio editing is performed using Adobe Audition, a popular digital audio recording and editing software package.

A number of other strategies provide students access to equipment. For example, some television classes are taught at the Acadiana Open Channel (AOC), a local community access channel, and some classes rely on equipment already owned by students, such as smartphones and video equipment. Although some student projects are distributed to a wider audience via the AOC, many class projects must be uploaded to YouTube to provide viewer access. The unit has also attempted to share equipment to help maximize access to the latest technology. For example, this fall semester, a drone journalism class was cross-listed with a cinematography class; however, this course did not have sufficient enrollment and was cancelled. Overall, faculty believe that the equipment is “mostly adequate” to meet the needs of students and faculty.

In the future, the unit hopes to modernize the TV studio and control room and invest in more high-definition video equipment and production drones. The unit reports that its most urgent needs include: upgrading computer labs and converting to HDMI technology, providing greater WiFi access to better accommodate in-class teaching, converting existing television and control equipment from standard definition to digital HDTV, and accommodating a virtual performance studio.

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

Library and information resources are centrally located in the Edith Garland Dupré Library. This facility, less than half-block away from the department, has more than one million bound volumes and ebooks, over 6,000 serial titles, special collections and computers to access online resources. These resources include adequate materials to support all four accredited sequences in the department.

According to the self-study, there are no funds allocated to the department for library or other information resources. Instead, control of these resources is centralized with the library. The department’s Library Committee solicits acquisition suggestions from the faculty, prioritizes and submits to Dupré Library for approval and purchase.

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.

Regular communication with alumni is conducted through both the annual alumni newsletter, *Cypress Lake News*, and social media, including a Facebook page. Advertising and public relations professionals in the area review the portfolios of graduating students, including print, online and portable drive versions. The department uses data from these reviews to address weaknesses in the curriculum. Changes resulting from these reviews have included the addition of an advanced writing course to the public relations curriculum and moving Visual Communication (encompassing portfolio design) from an elective to a required course. Department leaders also cited review comments as a basis for the new strategic communications major that will encompass public relations, advertising, and organizational communications sequences.

The Outstanding Alumni Award is presented at the annual Awards Banquet, and the winner also addresses student classes. The 2017 awardee was Catherine Hernandez Blades, senior vice president, Aflac.

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.

All sequences in the department have active advisory boards. Faculty members also use their involvement with such organizations and events as the Louisiana Association of Broadcasters, Public Relations Association of Louisiana, and the local chapter of the American Advertising Federation to keep these groups informed of curriculum revisions to meet changing industry standards, to seek student internship opportunities, and to cultivate interest in interviewing and hiring UL graduates.

Among associations in which department faculty participate are the Society of Professional Journalists, Public Relations Society of America, Public Relations Student Society of America, the Radio Television Digital News Association, the Louisiana Association of Broadcasters, the Broadcast Education Association, the American Advertising Federation of Acadiana, Southeast Journalists Conference, and the Public Relations Association of Louisiana–Acadiana Chapter.

One recent retiree is founding member and board member of the Society of Professional Journalists, Louisiana Chapter, served as a faculty delegate to the Southeast Journalism Conference and recruited students for the national conference. Other faculty members serve on the boards of the American Advertising Federation – Acadiana, the Louisiana Center for Women in Government and Business, the Research Association of Minority Professionals, and the Gay Men’s Wellness Center. The department hosted the Region 12 Society of Professional Journalists Conference in 2012 and the Southeast Journalism Conference in 2014.

Faculty members judge local, regional and national competitions, including the Broadcast Education Association Festival Awards and the Edwin R. Murrow Awards for the Radio Television Digital News Association.

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.

Department faculty members play leadership roles in the Louisiana Communication Association, American Communication Association, Broadcast Education Association, American Academy of Advertising, AEJMC, and the International Communication Association. They also serve as reviewers for many scholarly journals.

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 and faculty have assisted the community through numerous volunteer activities, including during such crises as the 2016 flood. Currently, students in the Public Relations Campaign Management Class form an in-class agency and develop a *pro bono* communication campaign for a non-profit or education-based organization in the community. Faculty members are developing a student-run advertising and public relations agency that would also serve similar community clients. Audio production students produce radio public service announcements for local stations, and broadcast students have produced videos for the local community through Access TV.

In addition, students and faculty donate services to several other non-profit organizations, such as the Gay Men's Wellness Center, the Louisiana Lupus Foundation, and the Lafayette City/Parish Government. Students also produce the online publication *Ragin' Wire*, providing information to students and the surrounding community.

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

A now-retired faculty member visited local high school newspapers to talk with students about professional editing and the generation of story ideas, while another regularly judges broadcast news competitions for the statewide Literary Rally. Faculty members are also involved in the annual Social Studies Fair; Constitution Day Committee, promoting freedom of the press to high school and college students; and the Speech Rally, featuring speech and debate tournaments for high school students. A faculty member organized UL students to visit journalism programs at four high schools in the region to promote diversity, offer assistance, and recruit potential students.

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 the Council.

The department’s assessment plan outlines “teaching goals” that correspond directly with ACEJMC requirements. The plan clearly indicates that the department adopted the ACEJMC values and competencies for each of the four sequences in the department.

The department participates in assessment for two distinct purposes: for the university’s regional accreditation from SACS and for ACEJMC reaccreditation. These two efforts are separate except for three related outcomes (which are worded slightly differently for different sequences):

1. Graduating seniors should have the skills and ability needed for entry-level work.
2. Students should write correctly and clearly.
3. Seniors should have the ability to build specialized portfolios that reflect their ability to apply knowledge obtained in the program

The department produces a detailed assessment report annually for the university-related SACS report. The department does not create a separate assessment report annually for ACEJMC competencies.

Because the SACS assessment does not address all of the department’s required learning outcomes, the discussion below focuses only on the assessment plan described in the self-study.

The department uses the structure of the curriculum as a framework for deploying assessment measures in core and required courses in each sequence. Core courses and teaching goals correspond as follows:

1. Media & Society (history & roles of professionals)
2. Introductory Newswriting (effective writing, ethics, and analytical & critical thinking)
3. Communication Theory (theory and application to images and information)
4. Communication Law & Ethics (freedom of expression, ethical principles, diversity, and truth, fairness and accuracy)
5. Internship (“real world,” hands-on experience)

These teaching outcomes are associated with specific courses in the department’s curriculum matrix, as provided in Standard 2. A sequence-specific capstone course in each of the four sequences provides the opportunity for students to apply skills, create projects, demonstrate understanding of their field of study, and finalize their portfolio. Overall, the curriculum addresses all 12 ACEJMC values and competencies, which are described as teaching goals and sequence-specific objectives interpreted by the site team as student learning outcomes.

These sequence-specific (learning) objectives for each of the four sequences are included in syllabi to ensure that values and competencies are transparent to students and consistently addressed in all courses, including those with multiple sections. Selected teaching goals are reinforced in each sequence. For example, courses in the Broadcasting sequence emphasize particularized ACEJMC values and

competencies as goals, including: writing, technology skills, accuracy and fairness, law, ethics and diversity, research, and thinking and evaluating media across platforms. Additional relevant teaching goals beyond ACEJMC values and competencies include outcomes related to: economics, business and management principles, political issues, media professions and the future of electronic media. Similarly, the other three sequences provide additional teaching goals.

An assessment coordinator is identified on the Department Assessment Plan chart. Sequence coordinators and the internship instructor are responsible for administering sequence-specific learning objectives.

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

The description of the assessment plan in the self-study explains how the department defines and addresses the teaching goals and sequence-specific learning objectives. Direct measures include comprehensive portfolio evaluations, pre- and post- entry-level grammar, spelling, punctuation tests, capstone course grades, and internship evaluations. Indirect measures include retention and graduation rates, probation and dismissal rates, student internship survey, senior exit interviews, and collegiate contests.

This ambitious array of measures includes both formative and summative assessment measures. Some measures appear to be used for both program assessment and course evaluation; for example, capstone course grades reflect an evaluation by the teacher of the course. Thus, program assessment is confounded with course grades, which likely reflect the evaluation of specific assignments in the capstone course, not student learning outcomes.

Retention and graduation rates are included in the self-study and on the university website, as required by ACEJMC; however, these data do not directly address the student learning outcomes (teaching goals) identified by the department. As a result, these indirect measures as indicators of success are not helpful in assessing student learning outcomes, even though they provide some context for other assessment findings.

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

According to the Department Assessment Plan, the department is systematic in implementing measures, collecting data and reporting findings to an assessment committee. However, the involvement of this committee in guiding improvements in the curriculum and instruction is not clear. The plan describes the process for reporting results to the committee, but it does not link the actions needed to “close the loop,” with the evidence collected from assessing student learning outcomes. Curriculum changes are summarized in the assessment section of the self-study; however, some actions taken appear to be based on general impressions that may have only an indirect relationship to specific student learning outcomes.

Direct Measures

As described above, the unit’s assessment plan uses four direct measures of assessment.

Portfolio

Each sequence uses a capstone course as a direct assessment measure. The comprehensive portfolio evaluations are central to the unit’s assessment efforts, although the reporting of results has been uneven over the past six years. The department attempts to collect portfolios from all students. However,

because late submissions are not accepted and because one sequence weeds out portfolios that do not satisfy minimal standards of quality, there is no indication that this procedure provides a representative sample of student work. As indicated in the self-study, the focus of closing the loop resulting from this measure appears in part to be on improving portfolio design and developing courses that provide skills to support the creation of portfolios, in addition to improving student learning outcomes.

Entry Level Grammar, Spelling, Punctuation Test

The pre- and post- entry-level grammar test, which is currently administered in the Introductory Newswriting course, occurs early in the curriculum. It provides an incremental assessment at the course level, but does not provide an assessment of student writing at the end of the program. As a result, it may reflect what a student learned in this course, but not the program overall.

Capstone Course Grades

Some of these measures appear to be used for both program assessment and course evaluation; for example, capstone course grades reflect an evaluation by the teacher of the course. Thus, program assessment is confounded with grades, which likely reflect the tabulation of assignments in the capstone course.

Internship Evaluations

Internship supervisor evaluations are also used as a direct measure of assessment. Appendices in the self-study indicate a uniform format for assessment rubrics; however, the evaluation items and scales on the internship measurement instruments varied by sequence, and do not directly address many ACEJMC student learning outcomes. Likert scale evaluations varied in points and direction, from seven points, to five points, to four points. On some scales, “one” was the highest score; on others, four, five, or seven represented the upper end of the scale. These inconsistencies make it difficult to compare results over time and across sequences.

Indirect Measures

The unit uses five indirect measures of assessment.

Retention and graduation rates;

Probation and dismissal rates

Retention and graduation rates, and probation and dismissal rates are provided by the Office of Institutional Research and posted on the department’s website. Retention and graduation rates, and probation and dismissal rates, although useful information, do not directly address the teaching goals or learning outcomes of the program. As a result, these measures, while interesting and valuable in guiding the overall mission of the unit, do not directly address student learning outcomes.

Student Internship Survey

A Student Internship Survey indicates that students across sequences perceived that they were “reasonably” well prepared for their internship. Open-ended comments on the survey also indicated that students were well prepared. The survey suggested the need for greater knowledge of social media. In response, the unit indicates that it created new courses and added more social media to existing courses.

Senior Exit Interviews

The program asked students to complete an Exit Survey, which is administered as part of the internship course. Although this measure is referred to in the self-study as an “interview” with the department head, no summary of interviews was provided in the self-study. The department did use a standard survey rubric that students complete. The survey instrument reflects ACEJMC values and competencies

and other relevant skills, including speaking/listening, adaptability, and lifelong learning. Generally, students received high scores on learning outcomes and the impact of the program. The department has indicated that it plans to “enhance its relationship” with the Office of Institutional Assessment for assistance in administering the survey and internship evaluations.

Collegiate Contests

Finally, as an indirect measure, the program also provides a list of student achievements in collegiate journalism contests as an indirect measure of assessment. The results indicate that broadcasting and journalism students were the primary recipients of awards, including multiple awards in the past six years in the Best of the South competition, the Southeast Journalism Regional Conference, the American Advertising Federation (Acadiana Chapter), and the Society of Professional Journalists (Region 12). Nevertheless, the unit recognizes that wins are “irregular” in competitions. To strengthen this measure, the program should encourage students in public relations, advertising and all sequences to submit their work for competitive review.

As discussed above, the department described its assessment process in the self-study and states that this version of the assessment plan was adopted in 2012 and has been revised annually. The item marked “Assessment Plan” in the Appendix is simply a multi-page grid, which does not provide a detailed description of the components’ implementation dates. The program would benefit from a unified, written “Assessment Plan” that describes the measures and procedures in narrative form, in addition to the grid.

Assessment results do not clearly identify sequence-specific (learning) objectives and corresponding values and competencies and the level of the program in achieving these objectives. Instead, many of the actions mentioned as completing the loop appear to be based on reviewer impressions and other information that guide the overall development of the program, such as improving student portfolios, not learning objectives reflected in these portfolios.

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

The self-study recognizes “the lack of systematic tracking of alumni” as a weakness. The unit maintains contact with alumni through a variety of methods, including: participation as evaluators of portfolios, guest speakers in classes, internship mentors, and sequence-specific advisory boards. In the site team’s conversations with faculty and students, we learned that many professionals are engaged with the department and return periodically to evaluate portfolios and engage with students.

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

The unit involves professionals in its assessment of learning goals. Professionals are involved in evaluating student portfolios, providing internships, visiting in classes and serving as panelists for on-campus symposia. According to the self-study, the internship evaluation forms “...ask supervisors to evaluate interns on the 12 ACEJMC values and competencies.” For example, Journalism sequence portfolios were evaluated by professionals.

Faculty in the Public Relations and Advertising sequences consulted with professionals in local public relations and advertising organizations regarding concerns about students’ “limited experiences” in these

two fields. According to the self-study, the process resulted in a recommendation to merge the two sequences with Organizational Communication into a new major, named Strategic Communication, which received approval from the Board of Regents shortly before the team's visit to campus. The new curriculum started in Fall 2017.

The public relations sequence involves professionals through client interaction, a capstone performance survey, internships, portfolio reviews, and periodic roundtable discussions. Students also communicate with professional clients for course assignments in selected courses, including capstone courses, where they discuss the elements of projects and campaigns. The department also reports that professionals complete a performance survey to assess presentation skills and knowledge of concepts related to ACEJMC values and competencies at the end of the capstone course. Students have the opportunity to interact with professionals through the activities of the Media Board of Advisors, which consist of 10 media professionals in the area, and who consult with faculty on ways to improve curriculum. "Social Media Breakfasts" also provide students with the opportunity to network with local professionals.

Although the department has maintained relationships with alumni and professionals, it does not follow that these interactions and affiliations inform specific student learning outcomes that are identified by the program assessment plan.

NON-COMPLIANCE

PART III: Summary by site visit team

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

Strengths:

- A dedicated department head who is widely supported by the faculty
- Accessible faculty with a commitment to student advising and mentoring
- Clear guidance for faculty on tenure track
- An array of campus organizations and internship sites that offer students opportunities to connect with the professions
- Increased diversity among full-time faculty and consistent attention to diversity themes in courses

Weaknesses:

- An unfocused assessment plan that doesn't directly inform curriculum improvement
- Lack of department-wide professional and public service activities
- Inadequate attention to digital and multimedia competencies in some sequences
- A dated broadcast studio and control room
- Little racial diversity among adjunct professors

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

9 – Assessment of Learning Outcomes

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

The department needs a comprehensive assessment plan that adds narrative context to the current chart and includes more specifics about the use of the data. The department should also revise its existing measures to eliminate those that are grade-based and institutional-level metrics that do not reflect solely the impact of the department.

The department would also benefit from a unified assessment process that meets the requirements of both ACEJMC and the university, and that allows a single assessment report each year.

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

NA

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

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.

NA

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 was well organized and attractive. In some places, the team detected missing or incorrect information, but the department addressed concerns promptly.