

**Report of On-Site Evaluation
ACEJMC
Undergraduate program
2017-2018**

Name of Institution: Southern University and A&M College

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Dr. Ray Belton, President

Name of Unit: Department of Mass Communication

Name and Title of Administrator: Dr. Okoye I. Y. Ahmose, Chair

Date of 2017-2018 Accrediting Visit: January 21-24, 2018

Date of the previous accrediting visit: 2012

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Provisional Reaccreditation

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Provisional Reaccreditation

Date of revisit: 2014

Recommendation of the revisit team: Reaccreditation

Recommendation of the Accrediting Council: Reaccreditation

Recommendation by 2017-2018 Visiting Team: Reaccreditation

Prepared and submitted by:

Team Chair

Name and Title: DR. BARBARA B. HINES

Organization/School: Professor Emerita, Howard University/Cathy Hughes School of Communication

Signature 

Team Member

Name and Title: SONNY ALBARADO

Organization/School: Projects editor, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette

Signature 

Team Member

Name and Title: DR. CARYL COOPER

Organization/School: Associate Professor, University of Alabama/College of Communication and Information Sciences

Signature 

Team Member

Name and Title: DR. KIM LEDUFF

Organization/School: Vice President-Academic Engagement and Chief Diversity Officer/University of West Florida

Signature 

PART I: General Information

Name of Institution: Southern University and A&M College

Name of Unit: Department of Mass Communication

Year of Visit: 2018

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.

Southern University and A&M College is a state-supported coeducational institution offering undergraduate, graduate and professional degrees. It is administered by the Board of Supervisors for the Universities and the Board of Regents (State of Louisiana)

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: 2012

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

It was first accredited in 1995.

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

Mission Statement

The mission of the Department of Mass Communication at Southern University and A&M College is to prepare students, through a liberal arts education and understanding of the emerging media technology, to assume successful careers and further studies in broadcasting, print journalism and public relations. As a teaching unit, the department fosters an interactive and supportive environment characterized by diversity, creativity, ethics and critical thinking in the service of democratic ideals through teaching and community service.

The mission statement was revised and adopted on April 21, 2017.

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Semesters of 16 weeks
 Quarters of _____ weeks
 Summer sessions of 4 & 8 weeks
 Intersessions of 3 weeks

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

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

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

Undergraduate Degree: Mass Communication

Name of Sequences:

Broadcasting
 Print
 Public Relations

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

One hundred twenty (120) semester hours for the Bachelor's degree

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

Three (3) semester hours for internship will count toward a 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>
Broadcast Journalism	Okoye Ahmose
Print Journalism	Okoye Ahmose
Public Relations	Okoye Ahmose

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

6,357 as of Aug. 1, 2017

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

<u>Name of Sequence or Specialty</u>	<u>Undergraduate majors</u>
Broadcast Journalism	108
Print Journalism	25
Public Relations	27
Pre-majors	46
Total	206

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.)

Fall 2017

Course	Section	Credit Hours	Title	Enrollment
MCOM 202	01	3	Intro to Mass Communication	19
MCOM 202	02	3	Intro to Mass Communication	18
MCOM 211	01	3	News Writing	15
MCOM 211	02	3	News Writing	3
MCOM 225	01	3	Introduction to Radio	15
MCOM 230	01	3	Writing for the Electronic Media	15
MCOM 301	01	3	Public Relations Practices	11
MCOM 306	01	3	General Assignment Reporting	1
MCOM 307	01	3	Media Graphics	14
MCOM 308	01	3	News Editing	5
MCOM 316	01	3	Public Relations Writing	12
MCOM 322	01	3	Broadcast News Writing	11
MCOM 325	01	3	Computer Assisted Reporting	9
MCOM 328	01	3	Electronic Field Production	15
MCOM 330	01	3	Broadcast News Reporting & Newscast	6
MCOM 331	01	3	African American Media	19
MCOM 345	01	3	TV Editing	4
MCOM 400	01	3	Communication Law	24
MCOM 455	01	3	Multi Camera Production	8
MCOM 491	01	3	Internship	6
MCOM 494	01	3	Convergent Media	15

Spring 2018

Course	Section	Credit Hours	Title	Enrollment
MCOM 202	01	3	Intro to Mass Communication	19
MCOM 202	02	3	Intro to Mass Communication	12
MCOM 211	01	3	News Writing	14
MCOM 211	02	3	News Writing	10
MCOM 225	01	3	Introduction to Radio	11
MCOM 230	01	3	Writing for the Electronic Media	9
MCOM 307	01	3	Media Graphics	4
MCOM 322	01	3	Broadcast News Writing	5
MCOM 325	01	3	Computer Assisted Reporting	11
MCOM 325	02	3	Computer Assisted Reporting	7
MCOM 330	01	3	Broadcast News Reporting & Newscast	10
MCOM 331	01	3	African American Media	16
MCOM 343	01	3	Photo Journalism	8
MCOM 345	01	3	TV Editing	6
MCOM 400	01	3	Communication Law	21
MCOM 401	01	3	Reporting Public Affairs	0
MCOM 430	01	3	Public Relations Research	10
MCOM 439	01	3	Public Relations Techniques/Campaign	8
MCOM 455	01	3	Multi Camera Production	4
MCOM 491	01	3	Internship	3
MCOM 494	01	3	Convergent Media	14

MCOM 328 01 3 Electronic Field Production 10

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

Total expenditures July 2017 = \$526,990

Give percentage increase or decrease in three years: Decrease of .44 percent

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

Total salary expenditures = \$366,899

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:
Dr. Mahmoud Braima	Professor
Dr. Lorraine Fuller	Professor
Dr. Okoye Ahmose	Assistant Professor
Dr. Yolanda Campbell	Assistant Professor

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:	Position:	Term:	Course:
Cynthia Bougere	Adjunct	Spring 2017	Newswriting: Computer Assisting Reporting
Cynthia Bougere	Adjunct	Fall 2017	Newswriting
Cynthia Bougere	Adjunct	Spring 2018	Newswriting: Computer Assisting Reporting
Darrell Roberson	Part-time instructor	Spring 2017	Multi-Camera Production: Electronic Field Production
Darrell Roberson	Part-time instructor	Fall 2017	Multi-Camera Production: Electronic Field Production
Darrell Roberson	Part-time instructor	Spring 2018	Multi-Camera Production: Electronic Field Production

Mr. Darrell Roberson serves as a part-time instructor and part-time engineer and is a 12 month employee. He was promoted to the rank of assistant professor by the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs in 2005. He is required to teach two classes each 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	<u>38</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>100</u>
2015-2016 academic year	<u>27</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>100</u>

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 Mass Communication at Southern University and A&M College has been in operation since 1971; it was first accredited in 1995. It is a popular major on the campus and currently has the largest enrollment of any department in the College of Humanities and Interdisciplinary Studies. The university has, however, faced continuing challenges over the past six years: leadership change, reorganization, natural disasters, state budget cuts requiring furloughs, and regional (SACS) accrediting issues, all of which have affected programs campus-wide.

At its last regularly scheduled visit (2012), the Department was in the College of Arts and Humanities. The following year, there was a reorganization on campus and the Mass Communication Program was designated as a program in the new College of Education, Arts and Humanities. In 2014, the former Department of Mass Communication was re-established in the College of Education, Arts and Humanities. In 2018, it is again a free-standing department located in the College of Humanities and Interdisciplinary Studies. Through all of the change, the department has operated successfully and developed policies and procedures that complement the University's mission to encourage student and faculty growth.

The Department adopted its second five-year strategic plan in October 2017 and it embraces both the Louisiana Board of Regents and ACEJMC requirements for strategic planning. The University's plan focuses on three main goals: increasing opportunities for student access and success, ensuring quality and accountability, and enhancing services to communities and the State.

To update its new plan, the Department conducted a SWOT Analysis to formulate objectives and performance indicators related to student enrollment, graduation rates, availability of student scholarships, student learning outcomes, professional community service and alumni relations. The faculty then established committees to develop and implement action plans with timelines to achieve the goals. The team noted that because Southern prides itself on teaching, there is no objective or performance indicator related to faculty scholarship.

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

A small faculty (5 fulltime members) makes all decisions regarding educational policies, curriculum development, curriculum review and faculty searches as a committee of the whole. Additionally, faculty advisers to student organizations (National Association of Black Journalists, the Public Relations Student Society of America and the Southern Broadcasting Association) meet separately to discuss issues affecting their respective associations.

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. Okoye Ahmose became the department chair in fall of 2014. While he had taught previously at Southern and worked in the broadcast industry, he earned his Ph.D. and returned to academia. Since joining the faculty, he has worked effectively across campus and is learning about the external constituencies so critical to the department's success. Under his leadership, the department has strengthened its curriculum, developed a new Student Handbook, and worked to enhance student

recruitment. Each member of the faculty adds his or her personal expertise to creating a department with purpose and strength.

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

There is a clear chain of events that must occur with the selection and evaluation of administrators. The dean of the College of Humanities and Interdisciplinary Studies first solicits nominations for the chair position from the faculty. A time and location for the election is then announced. The individual receiving the majority vote will be recommended for a three-year term as chair. In case of a tie, a repeat election will be held immediately following the original election. If the election still produces a tie, the dean breaks the tie. Members of the faculty are responsible for evaluating the chair on an annual basis. The evaluation then goes to the dean.

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

Department student grievances tend to be about grades or faculty performance and are generally handled internally by the chair. If there is not a satisfactory resolution, the student can file a formal academic grievance, which moves from the department to the dean of the College of Humanities and Interdisciplinary Studies. If not satisfied at that level, grievances can move to the Office of Academic and Student Affairs. A University Ombudsman is also available to hear academic and non-academic grievances. There have been no grievances during the six-year period that required moving above the department level.

The *Faculty Handbook* (2017-2020) provides Campus Grievance Review Procedures for Unclassified Employees; there's also a *Sexual Harassment Policy* in the *Handbook for University Personnel* (2015). Both provide guidelines and timelines and explain the process up to the University System President.

SUMMARY: The Department of Mass Communication provides a collegial environment with shared governance to serve students, faculty, staff and external publics.

Overall evaluation: 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.

Southern University students must take 120 credit hours to graduate with a bachelor's degree. Thirty-nine credit hours are required for students enrolled in the broadcast, print or public relations sequence leaving 81 hours to be earned outside of journalism and mass communications. The 81 credit hours are earned in courses that meet the liberal arts and sciences-general education requirement of the University.

The Department did not provide official transcripts for review. Upon request, the Department provided a random sample of 10 unofficial transcripts (two from fall 2016 and eight from fall 2017). All reviewed unofficial transcripts met the ACEJMC criteria for taking 72 semester credit hours outside journalism and mass communication and met the University's liberal arts and sciences-general education requirement.

In each of the past two years, the Department reported it is 100 percent in compliance with the 72 credit rule.

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 39 credit hours in the major for graduation. Each sequence curriculum requires 15 credit hours and three credit hours as an elective. Eighteen credit hours are devoted to the Department's core courses: Introduction to Mass Communication, News Writing, Computer Assisted Reporting, Communication Law, Convergent Media and Ethics in Mass Communication (required for majors entering the University in fall 2017).

The department has identified in each of the courses how theory and concepts impact the skills courses in providing a strong foundation for students. From demonstrating an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions that shape communications, to conducting research and evaluating information for the jobs students will secure, the curriculum is well rounded. A curriculum map coordinates with syllabi; instruction matches the department's goals for a professional education.

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

The Department does not provide online courses. While there are specific writing courses for each major, there is a strong focus on writing across the curriculum.

Reviewing course syllabi did not provide information about how the curriculum is demanding, current or responsive to professional expectations. The following evaluation is based on student interviews and reviewing faculty vita for evidence of remaining current through research and professional development efforts. Five faculty vita were reviewed for such activity from 2012-2017. Within that time, one faculty member, an endowed professor, had attended two seminars. Another faculty member remains current to industry expectations because she owns her own public relations and consulting business, and was a

public relations counselor from 2009 through 2017. An additional faculty member made one conference presentation. When students were asked to evaluate their internship readiness in comparison to those attending other universities in the area, SU students said that they felt very prepared and often found themselves teaching writing and strategic thinking skills to students from competing programs.

The faculty are acutely aware that the Department's computer labs, computer software, editing equipment, studio equipment and camera equipment, computers and broadcast equipment are long overdue for upgrades. Equipment is on order (approximately \$300,000) and will be installed to enhance facilities by the end of the spring 2018 semester. Currently, the Department's technology allows students to edit their assignments on Final Cut Pro editing software. Public Relations majors submit assignments electronically via email, Moodle and/or LiveText.

Several Public Relations courses require students to make PowerPoint presentations about current issues in the communication field. The PR introductory class requires students to create and present small video clips that promote university pride and positivity regarding activities on campus or in the community. Through assignments, students are required to identify and network with industry professionals. These efforts encourage students to meet industry expectations for using relevant equipment and platforms.

Broadcast Journalism

The Broadcast Journalism major requires 15 credits: Writing for Electronic Media, Broadcast News Writing, Electronic Field Production, Broadcast Reporting & Newscast, and Multimedia Production.

As with other sequences, students in broadcast journalism are required to take 81 of the required 120 hours needed to graduate outside of the department. A minor is not required in the department.

Students have access to a TV studio. There is also camera equipment available for check-out. The department has one editing lab with 16 Apple Mac Pro computers with Final Cut Pro editing software. In addition, there are three computer labs with 15 Apple computers in each lab along with HDTV monitors in each lab.

The faculty teaching these courses stay engaged in the professional community and often bring professionals to classes as guest speakers. One half-time assistant professor and half-time engineer manages the equipment. The studio is maintained by WDSU in New Orleans through a partnership with the university.

The computers and camera equipment at the time of the visit were dated, but the chair provided evidence that new equipment is on order and should be available on campus within the next 30 days.

Broadcast students can do an internship for credit:

MCOM 491 Internship (3 credit hours) provides students with opportunities to obtain valuable learning experiences and learn professional level print journalism, broadcast journalism and public relations work. Interns are expected to work a minimum of 10 hours per week during the semester in which they are registered for the internship credit.

Public Relations

The Public Relations major consists of five three-credit courses: Public Relations Practice, Public Relations Writing, Public Relations Research, Public Relations Techniques and Campaigns and Media Graphics. PR Practice and PR Writing are taken together, usually in the fall semester. PR Research and Public Relations Techniques and Campaigns are taken together, usually in the spring semester. Public Relations Case Studies is an elective course for all majors and most PR majors take this class.

Public Relations Practices is the introductory undergraduate course in public relations. It is a survey class that includes the history of the practice, research, issues, crisis communication and an introduction to public relations skills. A variety of assignments require students to locate a local public relations

profession and bring him/her to class for a presentation that highlights their career path, make a PowerPoint or video presentation about a current PR issue and a group presentation on a chapter from the book. Public Relations Writing completes the introduction to the industry by improving writing skills. Students write news releases, fact sheets, media list, speeches, letters and material for Internet web pages.

The remaining two courses in the major, Public Relations Research and Public Relations Techniques and Campaigns complement one another. Students can use what they've learned about research and apply it to the Campaign Plan Booklet assignment. In addition to learning a variety of primary research methods, students also learn about the ethical issues related to public relations research. Students work in teams in both courses.

Public Relations Case Studies is a global campaigns class that gives students the opportunity to analyze the impact of public relations campaigns in different countries. Case studies include IBM's Smarter Planet Initiative, as well as those from Finland, Costa Rica, Denmark, Africa and the Middle East. This is one class that helps students understand the diversity of people and cultures within the context of public relations in a global society.

Print

The Print major requires five specialty courses: General Assignment Reporting, Media Graphic, News Editing, Photojournalism and Public Affairs Reporting. Four course syllabi were reviewed: Convergent Media, Reporting Public Affairs, Photojournalism and Media Graphics. Although two course syllabi did not include learning objectives, the content shows a correlation to ACEJMC's image literacy and professional values. The Convergent Media course is geared toward development of digital-journalism skills, balanced with theory about comparative strengths and weaknesses of legacy and online media. Syllabi for other print-sequence courses indicate a similar balance of skills and concepts.

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.)

University enrollment figures provided and observations in the classes attended during the site visit confirmed no more than 20 students per class; in fact most classes were 10-15 students.

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

The Department encourages students to have internships, but little seems to be done to help them find meaningful out-of-classroom experiences. Internship opportunities are not posted in the hallways or on the department website. Most students said they find their own internship opportunities. Most of the students interviewed said that they work, so it is difficult for them to have an internship during the fall and spring semesters. As a result, many students have internships during the summer or at night during the fall and spring semesters. Once secured, students go to the department's Internship Coordinator for approval (if the internship is for academic credit). When asked about his role in finding internships for students, the Coordinator (a designated faculty member) said that "occasionally a few television stations and the local newspaper will contact me about [openings]...now and again public relations offices and local magazines will call."

SUMMARY: The curriculum has a balance of theoretical and skills courses that supports ACEJMC's professional values and prepares students for entry level positions in the mass communication industry. Syllabi and instruction reflect multimedia competencies and that students must take at least 72 hours from outside the department.

Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The Department of Mass Communication at Southern University has a departmental diversity plan that is “based on the university’s comprehensive Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Statement.” The plan does not clearly define the department’s definition of diversity. The plan identifies the groups addressed in the university’s equal opportunity policy, stating that “no person shall on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, veteran status, or any other non-meritorious factor, be discriminated against in any employment practice.”

A statement on equal educational opportunity states that “the department will make all decisions regarding recruitment and all other terms and conditions of admission without discrimination on the grounds of race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, physical or mental disability.” The plan also includes a section on leave and maternity leave.

There is no definition of diversity included in the diversity plan, but a definition was offered in the self-study:

“We define diversity as the inclusion of various races and sexes in academic endeavors as well as in the student and faculty population. The Department’s inclusion efforts include accommodations for the disabled.”

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.

Based on review of the curriculum and the syllabi, it appears that students are learning about global issues and minority issues. There is an African American Media course and in PR Case studies, students review international cases.

There is a lack of consistency when it comes to including an ADA statement in the syllabi. Not all syllabi included it. Some included an “Instructor’s Academic Freedom Policy,” which stated that if a student was uncomfortable with an assignment or course content, the instructor would give another assignment.

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 faculty within the unit is 100 percent Black/African American. Of the full-time faculty, three are male and two are female and there is one female adjunct. No faculty have earned tenure or been promoted since the last accreditation visit.

The self-study indicates that the department makes an effort to publish job advertisements in

publications that reach a diverse audience, but it does not appear (based on the data in the self-study) that the searches are resulting in diverse pools of candidates.

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

The self-study does not include demographics for the unit's geographic service area. Instead, it offers the campus demographics without a point of comparison. The campus is 95 percent African American and 70 percent female. The student population within the unit is 95 percent African American and 53 percent female. There is no indication of a strategic effort on behalf of the unit to recruit students from underrepresented populations.

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

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

The departmental Diversity Plan affirms the Equal Employment Opportunity policy. It also offers a university contact if employees have EO questions or concerns. The faculty handbook also includes the university's policy on sexual harassment.

Some syllabi include an ADA statement but it was not consistent in all syllabi.

At the time of the site visit the elevator in the 3-story building was not working. Faculty reported that the structure is old and it is common for elevators not to work. There were also classrooms where the desk organization made the space inaccessible for any person in a wheelchair.

SUMMARY: There was evidence in syllabi that there is an effort to include diversity related topics in courses and in the curriculum. There is also an effort to create a safe and inclusive environment for employees. However, the departmental diversity plan does not suggest a strategic effort on behalf of the unit to:

- Define diversity within the context of the department.
- Define underrepresented populations based on current demographics and make an effort to recruit those students and faculty.
- Measurable goals related to diversity and inclusion efforts
- Clear assessment of those goals
- Clearly define separate efforts for students and for faculty

There are no clear goals and no means of assessment. There is simply a statement that says, "The Department of Mass Communication will assess the progress of the diversity plan by understanding that diversity is one of the primary goals of the University." As an historically black institution the university is serving an underrepresented population, but a more inclusive approach to diversity is encouraged.

Overall evaluation: NON-COMPLIANCE

Table 6. Faculty Populations, Full-time and Part-time

Show numbers of female, male, minority, white and international faculty members and the percentages they represent of the unit's total faculty. (Report international faculty the same way the university reports them.)

Academic year: 2017 – 2018 Full-time faculty

Group	Female	% of total faculty	Male	% of total faculty
Black/African-American	2	50%	2	50%
White	0		0	
American Indian/Alaskan native	0		0	
Asian	0		0	
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	0		0	
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander	0		0	
Two or more races	0		0	
Other race	0		0	
International (any race)	0		0	

Academic year: 2017 – 2018 Part-time/adjunct faculty

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

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

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The department evaluates faculty as outlined in the current *Faculty Handbook* which was most recently approved by the Southern University Board of Supervisors on July 21, 2017. It contains the written criteria for selecting and evaluating the performance of all full-time and part-time and instructional staff. Full-time and part-time faculty are evaluated annually.

Peer evaluations are conducted annually for all faculty members. Similarly, the chair evaluates the faculty in the department and the faculty evaluates the chair.

Included in the *Faculty Handbook* are the criteria for awarding promotion and tenure. Promotion from one major rank to the next is based upon the following criteria:

1. Teaching Excellence
2. Research, publications and creative activities
3. Professional training and experience
4. Professional activities
5. University activities
6. Student mentoring, including advisement

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

The teaching load of full time faculty in the department is determined by University policy. Normal workload for faculty consists of four courses per semester. The chair has a 3-course workload each semester. Advisement is also part of the faculty workload. The number of students assigned to each adviser is determined by the student's concentration—not a specific allocation of students to each adviser.

As a result of a high teaching load, faculty within the department indicate limited time for research and service. This is concerning especially for the two Assistant Professors who will go up for tenure in the next year. Based on the language of the university's tenure and promotion policy the current faculty who are on the tenure track may face significant challenges in the tenure and promotion process. When quizzed about the requirements for tenure, university administrators cited a broad commitment to and understanding of creative activity.

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

Full-time faculty in the department bring significant professional experience to the classroom. Dr. Lorraine Fuller has 10 years of experience in the broadcast industry. Dr. Mahmoud Braima has 3 years of experience in the print media industry. Professor Darrell Roberson has 7 years of experience in the media industry and continues to work free-lance. Dr. Okoye Ahmose worked for 15 years in broadcasting before going into academia.

Dr. Braima and Dr. Fuller, both full professors, have a history of significant contributions in research. Currently, faculty research is minimal. The last conference presentation by a faculty member was in

2016 and the last publication was in 2005. There is only \$1,500 in the travel budget for faculty which does not support travel for conferences. The high teaching load also limits time for research.

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

The unit evaluates full-time and part-time course instruction to determine teaching effectiveness. Students evaluate teaching through a process instituted by the Office of Planning, Assessment and Institutional Research. Two classes for full-time faculty are evaluated and one class for part-time faculty members is evaluated. The dean receives the results only after the grades are submitted. The dean forwards the results to the chair, who in turn, shares the results with individual faculty members.

Peer evaluations of faculty are also conducted.

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

In meetings with representatives of the campus community it appears that most faculty within the department are very helpful and supportive in the campus community. For example, one member serves on the Faculty Senate and University Assessment Committee and another serves on the Athletics Committee. The department is valued and respected on campus.

SUMMARY: Full and part-time faculty are expected to contribute to the university in the areas of teaching, research and service. Faculty do the best they can with limited resources. High teaching loads and limited financial resources make it difficult for faculty to make significant contributions in research and attend conferences to stay current. Faculty have been promoted and tenured according to *Southern University Faculty Handbook* requirements.

Overall evaluation: 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.

Because Southern University has an institutional research vision, faculty are encouraged to conduct a broad program of research, both basic and applied, and creative work to stimulate faculty and students. Research and creative production are expected; however, teaching is the institution's main mission. The site team did note that there is no objective or criteria in the Strategic Plan related to faculty scholarship.

The Department has limited funds for travel (\$1,500) but has helped faculty members find ways to identify grant funds for student and faculty travel. While productivity in research and creative activity is encouraged, it is not required. Two faculty members are tenured full professors.

One faculty member received the Cleo Fields Endowed Professorship in Mass Communication in recognition of his research, teaching and service. It provides a salary supplement and \$5,000 for research. Another faculty member secured grants for student travel to national and regional Public Relations Society of America (PRSSA) conferences. The department's assistant professor/engineer secured grants from the Southern University System Foundation for international study travel and the creation of a digital filmmaking/smartphone course. He is working to develop some applied research based on the two trips.

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

The *Faculty Handbook (2017)* provides clear direction for research, creative activity and/or professional activity in criteria for hiring, promotion and tenure. The expectations are different at the various ranks with teaching receiving the greatest number of points for both the annual review and for promotion. At the time of the visit, there were four full-time faculty members: two tenured professors; two assistant professors on the tenure track. Both assistant professors plan to apply for promotion within the next academic year.

While faculty members say the criteria are well established, all say it is difficult to strive for refereed research with a 4-4 teaching load and limitations on financial support. Most do seek, however, to do creative productions that can be presented at national and international conferences or workshops.

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 members are encouraged to engage in active research with the goal of increasing scholarly presentations and publications in refereed journals. Because the department has an emphasis on media professions, faculty members are dedicated to the publication and production of creative works including, but not limited to, print and online articles, video public service announcements, and broadcast documentaries.

During the previous six years, no faculty member published refereed work; however, two faculty members had refereed conference papers. Faculty have focused on professional and creative activity: one produced a documentary. Another (who has also encouraged the digital expansion of the

curriculum) founded *Alkhabar Newspaper*, a daily online publication covering Sudan and South Sudan, with coverage of Africa, the Middle East, International News, Business and Sports. Two faculty members have worked collaboratively creating public service videos for the local Center of Empowerment for Families and Youth, and they are now on YouTube.

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.

Faculty in the Department of Mass Communication have presented their work at conferences in the U.S. and globally at the Broadcast Education Association and the Biannual Conference of the East African Public Relations Association. They have conducted and participated in workplace diversity conferences and entrepreneurial workshops in Baton Rouge and throughout the South.

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

While the university and the department encourage curiosity, analysis and free expression, there is little time to spend creating and sustaining work that would help build a national reputation for the unit or the university. The department is respected among its alumni and colleagues; area media professionals speak positively about the program. There is, however, little time and resources for research and creative productivity.

SUMMARY: While Southern University aspires to traditional, refereed research, it considers professional and creative activity appropriate scholarship for a professionally-oriented undergraduate department.

Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE

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

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

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

PART II — Standard 6: Student Services

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

Each faculty member is responsible for advising students from a specific sequence. One professor said many students often seek out the advice of instructors with whom they are most familiar, not always their assigned adviser. Regardless, each student in the program receives from their assigned adviser a printed checklist informing them of the requirements for graduation. Each student also receives a printed handbook detailing the unit's expectations and requirements.

The student handbook makes clear it is the student's responsibility to keep track of fulfilling their required courses in consultation with advisers. Students must meet with their advisers at least twice a semester, especially before registering for the next semester's classes.

Advising records kept in the unit's office were sometimes incomplete, and no judgment could be made about how well students and their faculty advisers adhered to the requirements.

The self-study acknowledges that there is no official process to measure effective advising/counseling, but stresses there is always open and continuous communication between faculty and students that enables any problems that may arise to quickly to be addressed. Conversations with students and faculty bear this out.

One student noted that, not only are professors "very available," they are "like family. They care about you." This student, who transferred to Southern after starting at Louisiana State University, contrasted the caring atmosphere in the Mass Communication Department against what she said was the relative anonymity of the larger institution and a lack of concern on the part of her adviser at LSU.

The self-study cites as indirect evidence of proper advising, the unit's consistent status as one of the top programs on campus in terms of number of graduates and retention rates.

The unit had no statistics available regarding career placement, and the self-study's list of nearly 40 recent graduates listed employment information for only two individuals.

b) Faculty are available and accessible to students.

Two hours per day, maximum 8 hours per week, are required, but faculty also are available via social media and email outside regular hours. Students said they had no challenges in meeting with their faculty.

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

In addition to the student handbook and social media communication, professors spend substantial class time coaching students on what is required of them to succeed in class and in the program.

The PRSSA chapter maintains an active Instagram account and Facebook page, managed by the public relations sequence adviser and the PRSSA president.

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

The Southern Digest (independent student newspaper (that is part of the Student Media Department), Ego magazine (also part of Student Media), campus media relations department, and departmental web-based radio station all provide students with hands-on activities that enhance and reinforce their classroom learning. They are external to the department but students are highly encouraged to work there.

The unit also has an up-to-date television studio with broadcast-quality equipment provided by New Orleans TV station WDSU used for classes as well as production of extracurricular programming. WDSU maintains the studio equipment for use as a remote location in the event of a hurricane or flooding that knocks out its studios in New Orleans. During the self-study period, students produced talk-show programs that aired on the local Cox Communications public-access cable channel and that are archived on YouTube.

The most active on-campus organizations appear to be Public Relations Student Society of America and the Broadcast Education Association. The self-study lists a student chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists, but faculty and students said it is inactive at present. The self-study noted that students sometimes avail themselves of contact with local professional chapters of NABJ, the Radio-Television Digital News Association and the Southern Broadcasters Association.

During the self-study period, students attended PRSSA regional conferences in Chicago and Atlanta. Students also attended BEA national conferences in Las Vegas, at which they presented papers.

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 does not gather its own enrollment, retention and graduation rates. The university does this through the Institutional Research Assessment department, which publishes the information online. The department currently has the fifth largest enrollment on campus: 206 undergraduate students, according to the self-study. The dean of the College of Humanities and Interdisciplinary Studies referred to the Mass Communications Department as the “crown jewel” of the college and said the unit has the largest enrollment of any school in the college, which includes the Education Department. Although the unit remains one of the top programs in the college, it has seen a decline in the number of degrees awarded since 2012 falling from 41 in 2012 to 38 in 2017.

Graduation rates hover below 50 percent. Highest was 52.2 percent in 2014-15; lowest was 33 percent in 2012-13. Still, the department’s retention rate of 65.2 percent in 2014-2016 was above the College of Humanities’ 51.8 percent.

Even though the department performs better than most programs across the campus, there is room for improvement, the self-study acknowledged.

Summary: The unit adequately advises students as to requirements for completion of coursework and timely graduation and provides ample opportunities for extracurricular use of skills and concepts learned in the classroom.

Overall evaluation: 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.

Resources continue to be a challenge for the department and the university. Higher education in Louisiana has not been a priority. In fact, while the team was on campus, the governor announced a “doomsday” budget which included cutting the TOPS program (Taylor Opportunity Program for Students), a \$233 million program which helps fund students to attend college in the state.

Because of the limited budget, there is little time spent developing long-range plans; it’s more important to meet the everyday needs of students and faculty. The budget of \$531,990 covers the traditional line items of administrative and teaching salaries, clerical, supplies, travel, operating services and fringe benefits.

During the past three years, the department’s budget shows a slight decrease of 1.4 percent in part-time faculty and clerical. However, grants from Title III funds have provided close to \$300,000 worth of new Apple computers and software for all computer labs, faculty and staff offices.

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

The dean of the College of Humanities and Interdisciplinary Studies confirmed the department’s budget was in line with other departments across campus. She indicated that in some respects the department had received more funding because of its technology needs.

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

The department is housed in the W.W. Stewart Hall, a two-story building built in the 1950s. The majority of the classes are taught in labs and classrooms on the first floor of the building; faculty and department offices are located on the second floor. It shares the building with the Education program. As one walks in the building, it seems there are two “cities.” On one side is the Department of Mass Communication. On the other is a much better maintained Education.

Bathrooms are in need of repairs; there is no elevator access to the second floor, a major ADA concern. Baton Rouge experienced record cold temperatures the week prior to the site visit and the campus did not fare well. A pipe burst adjacent to Stewart Hall, which required replacement of part of the first-floor walkway and blocking access to some faculty offices and labs. The university’s library was also affected by the storm.

A television studio on the first floor serves as the Baton Rouge bureau of WDSU-TV. A unique partnership was created as a result of Hurricane Katrina, when the New Orleans studios of WDSU were flooded and re-located to the SU campus. In return for the use of the television studio during any future disaster, WDSU donates equipment and provides maintenance to keep it operating. Faculty, staff and industry professionals call it a “win-win” situation.

The department has a strong relationship with the university’s Institutional Technology division, which helps keep their computers and networks working around the clock.

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.

Faculty members have individual offices, telephone, a computer workstation with software and connections to the unit's and university's network infrastructure and networked printing. The department has first priority on use of one general classroom on the second floor. There is additional classroom space in the first floor labs.

There are five Apple computer labs with 4K Smart LED TVs. Each lab is networked to the department's and university's network:

The print/public relations lab has 16 iMac computers with wired/wireless Internet connections and a complement of software including SPSS, FileMakerPro, QuarkXPress, the Microsoft Suite, Firefox, Garage Band, iMovie, iDVD, iTunes and Safari.

The broadcast lab has 16 iMac computers running both Mac and Windows operating systems with access to CNN NewsSource audio and video. New Ross Inception News Production software is on order. There is wired/wireless Internet connections, and a complement of software including QuarkXPress, the Microsoft Suite, Firefox, Garage Band, iMovie, iDVD, iTunes and Safari.

A digital photojournalism lab has 15 iMac computers with wired/wireless Internet connections, Adobe software, including Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Media Player, Adobe Media Encoder, Adobe InDesign, Adobe Flash, Adobe Fireworks, Adobe Dreamweaver, Adobe Bridge, GarageBand, iMovie, iDVD, iTunes and Safari, and QuickTime Player.

An audio production lab has 10 iMac with wireless Internet connections and Apple Logic Pro Audio Production software and Electro Voice RE 20 microphones

A radio production lab has 1 Mac Pro computer and GarageBand software. Available audio equipment includes one Electro Voice RE 20 microphones, 360 Systems Shortcut Personal Audio Editor, and a Tascam MD-30 Mini Disc Recorder/Player.

There is also a radio studio with RCS Player 101 radio automation system software, Audio Arts Air 2+ console, Adobe Flash Media Live Encoder for streaming audio over the web, Audacity audio production software, Omnia-3net, which processes the Web audio stream, Denon DN-635 compact disc/MP3 player, Sony CDR-XE400 compact disc player, 2 Tannoy Reveal 6" Passive monitors, Samson SERVO 200 amplifier, DBX microphone processor, telephone and equipment for audio production and distribution.

The television studio (WDSU Baton Rouge bureau) has a news desk, two SDI broadcast quality cameras along with two camera pedestals, Teleprompters, and two sets. The control room will be receiving a new Ross Carbonite switcher, multi-view monitors, playback/record deck, wireless microphones and intercom system. The Ross Inception News Production software will be installed within the next 30 days.

Students have access to video cameras and related equipment for check out: 20 Panasonic AVCHD Memory Card Cameras, tripods, microphones, and camera lights. An additional 20 Sony XDCAM Camcorders, with accessories including tripods, LED on-camera lights, camera bags and 20 portable 3-light interview kits are on order.

A multi-media room houses a computer, projection system, Sympodium Interactive Pen Display, microphone, DVD player, wireless microphone, document camera and two cameras for recording presentations.

The challenge for the department is funding for maintenance. With help from the IT Division, from WDSU and the department's engineer, the unit is able to keep the equipment going.

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

The John B. Cade Library is in close proximity to Stewart Hall and has more than one million volumes, 57,000 electronic books and more than 2,000 journal subscriptions. However, on the Friday before the site team arrived, single digit temperatures caused the rupture of pipes that devastated the library. There is a small reading room in the department, where students can read some journalism materials. Most students rely on electronic databases to which they have access.

SUMMARY: With the resources it has, the Department of Mass Communication has been effective in training undergraduates for media careers.

Overall evaluation: 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.

After the appointment of the new department chair in fall 2015, two professors were appointed co-chairs of the Mass Communication Alumni Association. One of the chairs acknowledged to the site team that there is room for improvement in the unit's outreach to alumni. The unit's database of alumni is outdated and needs reorganizing.

The unit created a web page, Alumni Spotlight, but the page remains a bare-bones construction, featuring only pictures of about 14 program graduates and their job titles and locations. The unit also has an alumni Facebook page, but it is not very active. The most recent post on it at the time of the site visit was more than 30 days old.

Despite these shortcomings, individual alumni report strong ties to the university. The department reaches out regularly to alumni regularly for speaking engagements and updates, one graduate reported. This graduate also noted that she is part of an alumni advisory group to the Office of Student Media, which is not part of the Mass Communication Department.

“We (alumni) stay in touch very regularly and offer mentorship and workshops. We have held several events on and off campus for students to network. I feel that the department's alumni advisory board can benefit from some of the things we do with the Office of Student Media,” she said.

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

The unit has sponsored individual faculty attendance and participation in broadcast industry faculty seminars and a “boot camp” on accountability in journalism, to name just two events. The unit hosts an online-only radio station, “The Bluff,” that produces public affairs programming. The unit also sponsors colloquia and an annual Spring Conference, inviting speakers who address issues of significance to the community. The conference also provides a job fair at which students can have their portfolios and video packages critiqued by local media professionals. Faculty also have served as judges of convention and conference papers at the Southwest Journalism and Mass Communication annual colloquium, among others.

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.

While no faculty member has published in a refereed journal in the self-study period, they have all participated in academic associations and related activities.

Department Chair Dr. Okoye Ahmose produced a scholarly documentary on “The Myth of Race and the Evolution of Skin Color.”

Dr. Mahmoud Braima presented scholarly papers at the 2016 Broadcast Education Association convention in Las Vegas and at the 2013 Biannual Conference of the East African Public Relation

Association in Uganda. Dr. Braima also is a human rights advocate, founder and president of the Darfur Association, a board member of Voices for Sudan, and publisher and executive editor of www.alkhabarnewspaper.com, an African-centered online daily newspaper.

Dr. Yolanda Campbell serves as adviser to the university's PRSSA chapter and as departmental liaison to the university Athletic Department for meeting NCAA student athlete advising requirements and to the Southern University Accreditation Committee. A work in progress is "PRactice makes PeRfect: A public relations scenario workbook" for use in courses related to an introduction to the field of public relations.

Dr. Lorraine Fuller has research in progress: "Symbolic Gospel's Renditions on What's So Funny About the Black church?"

Darrell Roberson is the 2018 recipient of National Association of Television Program Executives (NATPE) Faculty Fellowship and will attend the group's Marketplace Conference in January. He was named the 2017 Baton Rouge Area Association of Black Journalists (BRAABJ) Pioneering Journalist. He has attended seminars of the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences as a faculty fellow and the International Radio and Television Society.

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.

One faculty member served as an educational volunteer at Bettie's Advanced Childcare and Learning Center in Hattiesburg, Miss., in 2017, and she consulted with a Baton Rouge nonprofit, the Center of Empowerment for Families & Youth Inc., in creating a public service advertisement on child abuse. Another has provided video services to local non-profits.

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

The unit has conducted workshops at a local middle school and a local magnet high school for students interested in broadcast careers and has brought students from those schools to the Southern campus for visits and tours of the unit. The state's scholastic journalism organization is housed on another campus in close proximity to Southern.

SUMMARY: While tracking of alumni and their careers can be improved, the unit overall and the faculty are engaged with alumni, journalism education and the broader community through guest lectures by alumni, participation in academic associations and volunteer service to community groups, as well as encouraging scholastic journalism.

Overall evaluation: 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:

The Accrediting Committee and Council seek site-team reports on assessment that are appropriately detailed for a judgment on compliance that is informed, fair and consistent from one team to another. Please respond to each of these questions in your report on indicators (a), (b) and (c):

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

Dr. Mahmoud Braima oversees the assessment process. To ensure continuity, all courses have grading rubrics that are connected to ACEJMC’s professional values. Each course syllabus includes student-learning outcomes expressed in words that reflect, but are not identical to, ACEJMC’s professional values and competencies. For example, having students “effectively locate databases, journals, etc. necessary to perform public relations research (primary and secondary research)” relates to ACEJMC’s Competency and Value #8: Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work. The Department’s Assessment Plan shows that each professional value or competency is aligned with specific courses in the curriculum. The curriculum map provides a detailed pairing of particular courses to specific professional values or competencies as well as the comprehension level at which each competency or professional value is achieved by students: awareness (familiarity with specific information, including facts, concepts, theories, laws and regulations, processes and effects); understanding (assimilation and comprehension of information, concepts, theories and ideas); and application (competence in relating and applying skills, information, concepts, theories and ideas to the accomplishment of tasks).

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

The Department has had an assessment plan since 2004. The updated version is dated 2016. Both direct and indirect measures are used to evaluate learning outcomes of the values, competencies and skill enumerated in the curriculum intended outcomes.

Direct measures include a pre-test post-test examination, writing proficiency taken upon completion of English 111, internship reviews, LiveText assessment of learning outcomes for all courses each semester, comprehensive examinations, practitioners’ evaluation of students’ professional work and practicum course performance.

The first assessment tool is the use of an entry examination taken by all students who enroll in the Introduction to Mass Communication course (MCOM 202) as a pre-test. The course is the entry point into the department and the mass communication program. All seniors take the exit comprehensive examination and have an exit interview as a requisite for graduation. They also take the entry examination again as a companion to the comprehensive, post-test activity. Comparing the mean score of the pre-test and post-test provides another quantitative comparison between the level of knowledge among entering students and graduating seniors. Additional direct measures include a writing proficiency assessment conducted by the students’ sophomore year. Indirect measures include course evaluations, faculty meetings and employer surveys. Professionals who supervise internships are an integral part of generating assessment data. They evaluate student performance at midterm and at the end of the semester by completing evaluation forms for each student indicating the level of the competencies and professionalism. All students must pass professional evaluations to receive credit for internship participation.

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

The Department uses LiveText, the University's assessment portal. The faculty develop rubrics that are based on the ACEJMC professional competency being assessed. The rubrics are loaded into the LiveText system along with the course and the professional values and competencies. Students upload the specific document or project into the LiveText system at the end of the semester. Faculty assess the assignment using the rubric. The system collects the student data and faculty assessment, completes a data analysis and generates a report based on five performance levels as a class and for each student: Exceptional, above average, average, below average and substantially below average.

All graduating seniors are required to pass a comprehensive examination in their concentration of broadcast, print journalism or public relations. The comprehensive examination measures the level of their respective competencies within their professional concentrations. If patterns or weaknesses are identified, the faculty in the respective concentration discuss the results and develop future actions to increase student success. The recent assessment revealed a weakness in the area of ethics. A new mass communication ethics course was created and is now part of the Department's core curriculum.

The LiveText system makes it easier for faculty to identify weaknesses and individualize strategies to increase student success.

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 Department does not have a system for establishing relationships with its alumni. Although several faculty members have personal relationships with some graduates, there seems to be no programmatic strategy for generating alumni support (both human and financial). The self-study indicated there was a 20-member advisory board that is composed of its alumni and is supposed to meet each semester. The board, however, did not meet during the self-study year.

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

The self-study notes that "local professionals and alumni outside the department are engaged in the assessment process of students' professional packets at several points." However, it is not clear about the timing and regularity of the assessment.

Professionals who supervise interns are an integral part of the assessment activities of the program. Intern supervisors complete a confidential evaluation form at midterm by responding to a battery of questions in the questionnaire thereby evaluating students' performance and providing pointers for their improvement. At the end of the internships, supervisors also complete a rating form for individual interns. The ratings not only provide the internship director with indicators for evaluating students' performance in the course but also provide the department with a wealth of information to evaluate students learning outcomes from several courses in the curriculum.

Some faculty members invite selected local practitioners to review professional packets at the end of each semester. They evaluate and rate students' performance in the packets. They also provide feedback to improve their professional work. The broadcast professionals invited in recent years include the following: Joe McCoy, award winning videographer, WBRZ, George Sels, Anchor, WAFB, Paul Gates, Anchor, WAFB, Jay Grimes, Weatherman, WAFB, Cheryl Stroy, Producer, WBRZ, Whitney Van, Anchor, WBRZ, Donna Britt, Anchor, WBRZ, Steve Davidson, Production Manager, Orion Production, Marc Goldstein, CEO, Video Productions and Keith Nelson, Reporter, WAFB.

The self-study did not indicate that public relations or print professionals review the packets of those majors.

Each spring semester, the department holds a Spring Conference. Professionals and alumni who are working locally and within the region are invited to participate. Some participate as guest speakers while others as evaluators. The afternoon session is devoted to evaluating students' professional work and feedback as well as providing them with professional guidance.

SUMMARY: The Department assesses ACEJMC's professional competencies in its curriculum each semester and demonstrates how assessment results lead to curricular improvements.

Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE

PART III: Summary by site visit team

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

The site team noted the following:

STRENGTHS:

A faculty committed to educating students under trying financial conditions.

Students who are passionate about their school and the quality of the education they are receiving.

A legacy of mentorship and service to the African-American community by the unit and its alumni.

WEAKNESSES:

Outdated and poorly maintained physical facilities.

Inadequately funded program that restricts the unit's ability to improve-through hiring faculty, offering specialized courses, providing opportunities for research and promotion to faculty.

No demonstration of the ability to see diversity within a multicultural and global society.

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

Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusion

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

It is recommended that the department create a diversity plan that is not solely based on the university's equal opportunity policy. The Department should define diversity from a global and inclusive perspective. As an HBCU, the university serves a predominately minority population. But there are various types of diversity within the population that should be considered. There should be specific goals for faculty diversity, student diversity, and creating an inclusive and supportive environment for people from all backgrounds.

The plan should include strategies to expose students to diverse perspectives. It is evident that students are getting some exposure through course work, but the impact of that exposure should be assessed.

In terms of recruitment of faculty and staff, the department should clearly identify multiple places to advertise positions to generate diverse candidate pools. The department should also invite professionals in the community from various backgrounds to come in and speak and engage with students.

Through unique community service and programming the department can do outreach and potentially attract diverse students. Perhaps the department can partner with admissions.

The ADA statement should be included in all syllabi and students need to be told what resources are available if they are in need of accommodations.

The classroom spaces should be organized in a manner where faculty and students of all abilities can have access and easily navigate the space. The department also needs to work with the university to accommodate students with disabilities that will not allow them to use stairs.

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

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.

In 2012, the department was out of compliance with two standards: Standard 4: Faculty and Standard 5: Scholarship.

Standard 4: The department must address the lack of full-time faculty issue to meet the growing undergraduate population.

The department eliminated the graduate program, which required faculty to teach eight graduate courses and sections of the 25 courses and sections that were being offered. The university increased funding for adjuncts, from \$25,000 to \$45,000 in 2013-2014.

There are now six full-time and part-time faculty devoted to the undergraduate program, teaching 22 courses and sections to 206 majors and pre-majors. The department is still working to increase the size of the faculty, and the dean of the College has one line for Mass Communications that she would like filled in 2018, so that the university does not lose the line.

Standard 5: The department must address the lack of full-time faculty who do refereed journal research or juried creative work and meet the university's vision for expanded research.

Teaching a four-course load makes research and creative activity a challenge. Southern University prides itself on its teaching mission. All administrators on campus agree that the research and creative activity being conducted by the faculty in the Department of Mass Communications meets the university's vision and is deemed acceptable.

On the revisit in 2014, both standards were in compliance and the unit was reaccredited.

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.

Team members felt the self-study was both a challenge to read and incomplete. There were conflicting statistics and missing tables; it made it more difficult to ascertain the veracity of the information. It needed the hand (and eyes) of a strong editor to provide consistency and accuracy. A complete set of spring 2018 syllabi was not available.