

Report of Evaluation

Undergraduate

2021–2022 Site Visits

Draft Copy*

Accrediting Council on Education
in Journalism and Mass Communications

***NOTE: This copy is only a draft of the final report. It may contain errors.** School and university representatives may file challenges of fact and judgment with the team chair during the three weeks following the visit. The Accrediting Council makes the final accreditation decision.

Report of ACEJMC Evaluation

Undergraduate program 2021–2022

Name of Institution: Kent State University

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Todd Diacon, President

Name of Unit: School of Media and Journalism

Name and Title of Administrator: Emily Metzgar, MDJ Director

Date of 2021-2022 Accrediting Visit: Oct. 10-13

Date of the previous accrediting visit: Jan. 20-23, 2015

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Re-accreditation

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Re-accreditation

Recommendation by 2021-2022 Visiting Team: Re-accreditation

Prepared and submitted by:

Team Chair

Name and Title: Jennifer Sizemore, Vice President of Communications

Organization/School: Arnold Ventures

Signature _____

Team Members

Name and Title: Diana Knott Martinelli, Ph.D., Dean and the Widmeyer Professor in
Public Relations, Reed College of Media

Organization/School: West Virginia University

Signature _____

Name and Title: Kenton Bird, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Journalism and Mass Media

Organization/School: University of Idaho

Signature _____

Name and Title: Denise Dowling, Director, School of Journalism

Organization/School: University of Montana

Signature _____

Please indicate if team members participated on site or virtually only:

On site: _____ Sizemore, Martinelli, Dowling

Virtually: _____ Bird

PART I: General information

Name of Institution: Kent State University

Name of Unit: School of Media and Journalism

Year of Visit: 2021

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

If the unit seeking accreditation is located outside the United States, provide the name(s) of the appropriate recognition or accreditation entities:

2. Indicate the institution's type of control; check more than one if necessary.

- ☐ Private
- ☒ Public
- ☐ Other (specify)

3. Provide assurance that the institution has legal authorization to provide education beyond the secondary level in your state. It is not necessary to include entire authorizing documents. Public institutions may cite legislative acts; private institutions may cite charters or other authorizing documents.

Kent State University was established in 1910 by statutory act and is maintained by the state of Ohio. It is under the jurisdiction of a board of nine voting trustees, plus two national trustees and two student trustees, all appointed by the governor, subject to the advice and consent of the Ohio Senate. The university is supported financially through state legislative appropriations, student tuition and fees, and gifts.

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

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes, give the date of the last accrediting visit: January 2015

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

1965

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

We provide our students with a solid academic experience that balances both conceptual and practical courses, professional opportunities and multiple internships, all of which are grounded in a foundation of ethics in a diverse and global society.

Adopted in 2014.

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Semesters of: 15 weeks

Quarters of: weeks

Summer sessions of: Two 5-week sessions; One 8-week session

Intersessions of: 3 weeks

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

X Bachelor's degree

X Master's degree

 Ph.D. degree

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

Bachelor of Science degree

- Advertising
- Digital Media Production
- Journalism
- Public Relations

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

120 semester hours

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

Students in the Digital Media Production, Journalism, and Public Relations sequences are required to complete a one-credit semester hour internship. The Advertising sequence requires a two-credit semester hour internship.

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

Name of Sequence or Specialty

Person in Charge Fall 2021

Advertising

Evan Bailey

Digital Media Production

Jeff Fruit

Journalism

Mitch McKenney*

Public Relations

Michele Ewing

*McKenney is serving as Journalism sequence coordinator in Fall 2021 while Jacqueline Marino is on Professional Improvement Leave.

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

As of Spring 2021: 33,234 across eight campuses. Please see the University's Spring 2021 enrollment data

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 (Spring 2021)</u>	<u>Undergraduate majors</u>
Advertising	86
Digital Media Production	272
Journalism	213
Public Relations	<u>108</u>
Total	679

15. Number of students in each section of all skills courses (newswriting, reporting, editing, and section for the term during which the visit will occur and the preceding term. Include a separate list for online skills courses, which also must meet the 20-1 ratio. (The Council has ruled that campaigns courses are exempt from the 20-1 ratio.)

Course	Section	Title	Spring 2021	Fall 2021 (as of August 16)
20004	001	Advertising Writing and Storytelling	16	16
	002		13	10
20011	001	Production Fundamentals	15	20
	002		16	20
	003		16	16
	004		16	
	005		Section cut	
	006		18	
	600			4
21005	001	Advertising Messaging and Communication	12	16
22004	001	Visual Storytelling	18	
23004	001	Story For Picture	17	16
	002		18	18
	003		18	11
	004		18	11
23130	001	Directing for Picture	20	20
	002		20	19
				14
23140	001	Production I	18	16
	002		18	15
	003			8
26001	001/60	Writing Across Platforms	18	18
	002		18	18
	003			15
	004		17	

Course	Section	Title	Spring 2021	Fall 2021 (as of August 16)
	005			
	006		19	18
26005	001	Storytelling Across Platforms	20	19
	002			20
26007	001	Reporting	20	21
			20	
26008	001	Broadcast Reporting	14	11
30036	001	Digital Video Editing	20	20
			20	9
			20	20
31002	002	Advertising Copyrighting	16	20
31003	001	Advertising Media Planning	17	15
31004	001	Digital Advertising	18	16
31007	003	Digital Analytics in ADV and PR	20	13
	004		20	13
31011	001	Advertising Strategy Development	20	16
32001	001	Photojournalism I		19
	002			8
32002	001	Photojournalism II	13	
33033	001	Sound for Picture	19	20
	002		19	19
33042		Studio Television		13
33043	001	Digital Cinematography	18	20
	002		20	20
	003		20	
36005		Editing		20
36010	001	Interviewing and Data for Journalists	16	
36018	001	Feature Writing	14	13
36020	001	Storytelling with Sound	17	18
40037	001	Scriptwriting for Video and Film	17	18
40295		ST: Mixed Reality Storytelling		19
41111	001	Fashion Publishing		18
43035	001	Advanced Television News Producing		16
	002			16
44050	001	Post-Production Sound	11	16
45001	001	Advanced Lighting for Digital Film & TV	15	16
45007	001	Producing for Picture	18	21
	002			20
46003	001	Producing Television News	15	
46006	001	Opinion Writing	14	18
46009		Reporting Public Policy		19
46016		Business of Publishing		
46020	001	Magazine Design	19	20
46021	001	Advanced Magazine Writing	16	

Course	Section	Title	Spring 2021	Fall 2021 (as of August 16)
46057		Motion Graphics for Video Editing	17	20
48001	001	Media Relations and Publicity	17	20
48002	001	Public Relations Tactics	18	18
	002			6
48003	001	Digital Public Relations	17	21
48006	001	Public Relations Publications	20	20

16. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2021–2022 academic year: \$5,560,971

Give percentage increase or decrease in three years: 4.83% increase over 2018-19 expenditures of \$5,304,264.

Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries: \$2,967,609

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

In the table below, TT = Tenure Track Faculty; NTT = Non-Tenure Track Faculty. There are no faculty members who teach only at the graduate level.

1	Luke Armour	Associate Professor NTT
2	Evan Bailey	Associate Professor NTT
3	Candace Perkins Bowen	Professor TT
4	Karisa Butler-Wall, Ph.D.	Assistant Professor NTT
5	Roseann Canfora, Ph.D.	Professional-in-Residence NTT
6	Danielle Sarver Coombs, Ph.D.	Professor TT
7	Michele Ewing	Professor TT
8	David Foster	Associate Professor NTT
9	Jeff Fruit	Professor TT
10	Scott Hallgren	Assistant Professor NTT
11	Gretchen Hoak, Ph.D.	Assistant Professor TT
12	Karl Idsvoog	Associate Professor TT*
13	Christopher Knoblock	Lecturer NTT
14	Cheryl Ann Lambert, Ph.D.	Associate Professor TT
15	Jacqueline Marino	Professor TT*
16	Mitch McKenney	Associate Professor TT
17	Emily Metzgar, Ph.D.	Professor and Director TT**
18	Stefanie Moore	Professor NTT
19	Abraham Avnisan Nowitz	Assistant Professor TT
20	Amy Reynolds, Ph.D.	Dean, College of Communication and Information TT**
21	Tim Roberts	Associate Lecturer NTT
22	Rebecca Rolnick	Assistant Professor NTT
23	Connie Schultz	Professional-in-Residence NTT
24	Gene Shelton	Professor NTT
25	Stephanie D. Smith	Professional-in-Residence NTT
26	Tang Tang, Ph.D.	Professor TT
27	Wendy Wardell	Associate Lecturer NTT
28	Thor Wasbotten	Professor TT
29	Dana White	Assistant Professor TT*
30	Susan Zake	Professor NTT

* Not teaching. Research or Professional Improvement leave.

** Not teaching. Full-time administrative role

18. List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in fall 2021. Also list names of part-time faculty teaching spring 2021. (If your school has its accreditation visit in spring 2022, please provide the spring 2022 adjunct list in the updated information.)

Fall 2021 (As of August 16)

Justin Armburger
Kimberly Barth
Joseph Bertoni
Brendan Beseth
John Bowen
Kelly Campbell
Charles Chubbuck
Michael Donelan
Diane Dragus-Zetts
Daniel Fisher
Toqa Hassan
Ryan Hollingsworth
Carol Howell
Jaeson Jackson
Phil Johnston
John Kroll
Deborah Lee
Dustin Lee
Betty Lin-Fisher
Sean McArdle
Jimmy Miller
Casey Nichols
Francesca Passeri
Amanda Rabinowitz
R. Shane Roach
Daryl Royer
Jerrold Staas-Haught
Patricia Sedon
Timothy Smith
Ashley Spiker
Michael Suglio
Sarah Szweda
Lisa Valendza
Vance Voyles
Craig Webb
Traci Easley Williams
Bradley Wilson
Susan Zimmerman

Spring 2021

Deborah Adams-Simmons
Justin Armburger
Eslah Attar
John Bowen
Kelly Campbell
Roseann Canfora
Charles Chubbuck
Mark Dawidziak
Cindi Deutschman-Ruiz
Michael Donelan
Diane Dragus-Zetts
Tina Fallani
Daniel Fisher
Jason Gottshall
Carol Howell
Christina Jackson
Phil Johnston
John Kroll
Jacob Kucek
Dustin Lee
Melanie Long
Christine Lange-Meeker
Sean McArdle
Francesca Passeri
Amanda Rabinowitz
R. Shane Roach
Ron Russo
Patricia Sedon
Sarah Szweda
Mark Turner
Lisa Valendza
Craig Webb
Traci Easley Williams
Susan Zimmerman

19. Schools on the semester system:

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

72 or more semester hours outside of journalism and mass communications			
Year	Total Graduates	in Compliance	Percent
2020-2021 academic year (SU 20, FA 20 SP 21)	<u>167</u>	<u>167</u>	<u>100</u>
2019-2020 academic year (SU19, FA 19 SP 20)	<u>207</u>	<u>207</u>	<u>100</u>

School of Media and Journalism students must meet the 72-hour requirement to be cleared for graduation with a BS degree. Undergraduate students are cleared for graduation using Ellucian's Degree Works auditing system, which KSU refers to as GPS. The GPS audit tracks and reports each student's progress toward meeting the 72-hour requirement.

PART II — Standard 1: Mission, Governance and Administration

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

The School of Media and Journalism's mission is "to provide students a relevant academic experience that balances both conceptual and practical courses, professional opportunities and multiple internships, all of which are grounded in a foundation of ethics in a diverse and global society."

The school's strategic plan was adopted in 2013 and last updated in 2016. The plan has 10 "SMART" goals, supported by metrics related to research, teaching, community engagement and outreach. The school's plan aligns with the overall university's plan. The school's long-term planning was certainly disrupted by the pandemic, but the process had been in a bit of a holding pattern previously: Changes in university and school leadership, budget uncertainties and more than three years under an interim director all played a part. Director Emily Metzgar, who arrived July 1, 2020, with the school in pandemic triage mode, is committed to opening the discussion of the mission and strategic plan to the faculty in Spring 2022. This timing will align with the university's overall Academic Affairs strategic planning process.

There is a historically and currently strong relationship between MDJ and university administration. The school is treated fairly and its current and emerging strategic direction is supported. "MDJ is critically important," said the Dean of CCI. "They are a jewel on campus and a jewel of the college."

The Provost said, "The school is doing really well. It's a very respected college."

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

MDJ has a Faculty Handbook that functions as the unit's administrative operating manual. The Handbook must adhere to university policy and the collective bargaining agreements (CBA) for tenure- and non-tenure track faculty. The University Policy Register is the master governance document.

The school governs itself using a mix of standing and ad hoc committees. At the time of the self-study, there were seven standing committees, including Undergraduate Studies and Diversity and Globalization, and three ad hoc, including Recruitment and Outreach. A new Assessment Committee was formed in September 2021. The formal advisory function on policy making is done through the Faculty Advisory Committee, which is a committee of the whole. Votes are advisory to the director. A faculty member acts as a "sequence head" for each of the school's four sequences.

New or revised policies and curriculum often originate in a sequence, and curricular changes must be approved by the Undergraduate Studies committee, and then the Faculty Advisory Committee. Recommendations from the FAC go to the director, who – if she agrees – must then recommend to the dean of the college. If the recommendation is curricular, the College Curriculum Committee votes and

makes the recommendation to the dean. MDJ has a tenured representative who sits on the CCC.

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.

Praise for Director Metzgar's leadership was fairly universal, especially considering she didn't meet some of her faculty in person until she had been on the job for a full year. University administration, peers outside the unit, and alumni and other professionals called Metzgar innovative and "a convener."

"She's very well-informed and critically relevant," said one university peer.

Another university administrator said of the director: "She is open. She has a 'let's see what we can do' positive approach.

"Emily came in Day One eager to learn and implement," said another. "She is good at problem-solving and engaging. I have a lot of confidence in her leadership."

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

The director selection process is defined by the CBA. The director is selected by a search committee whose members are volunteer MDJ faculty as well as faculty and administrators outside the school. MDJ requires a member of the Diversity and Globalization committee to sit on all search committees. The dean of the college works with the search committee to create a job description, which is shared with the full faculty for input. Faculty are encouraged to solicit and recommend candidates. After finalists are chosen, they make in-person visits, and then the committee recommends its choice to the dean, who makes the final decision.

The director is reviewed during the third year of a four-year contract, by a review committee of MDJ faculty and at least one member from outside the school. The review committee distributes a questionnaire. The survey results inform the committee's report to the dean, who makes the final decision on whether to reappoint the director.

The director appoints all other unit administrators in consultation with faculty and the Faculty Advisory Committee. At the time of the site visit, the Director's administrative team was depleted by everything from resignations to visa problems. Other schools and the college itself are all contributing administrative assistance to ensure the school keeps moving forward as positions are filled.

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

Tenure- and non-tenure track faculty have grievance processes outlined in the CBA. The process for non-represented staff is detailed in the University Policy Register.

The University Policy Register also outlines the pathways for nonacademic and academic student grievances. For example, students with faculty grievances are required to first seek a solution directly

with the faculty members. If there is no resolution, a formal complaint form is filed. That triggers a seven-day rebuttal period; ultimately the Academic Complaint Committee holds a hearing and makes a recommendation to the director, who decides the outcome. If students disagree with the outcome, they can appeal to the dean. Like many schools, MDJ prizes and promotes respectful conversations as the best way to resolution. In 2020-21, one case appeared before the Academic Complaint Committee; it was not appealed to the dean.

SUMMARY:

The School of Media and Journalism has policies and practices that are the foundation of a fairly and equitably administered program. The mission and strategic plan, while still applicable and directional, are due for an update, and that is in the works.

Overall evaluation compliance/non-compliance:

COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The self-study reports that all graduates of the school's programs in Advertising, Digital Media Production, Journalism and Public Relations had a minimum of 72 semester credit hours in areas outside of journalism and mass communications. The university requires 120 credit hours for graduation, and the majors above range from 43 to 48 required hours, leaving plenty of room in students' curricula for external coursework. Each major also requires between 13 and 20 credits outside of the school, in addition to the University's general education curriculum of at least 36 credits.

The school ensures compliance with the "72-hour rule" through its electronic degree auditing system (in DegreeWorks), which tracks and reports student progress toward achieving this minimum. In addition, if students take more than 48 hours within the journalism and mass communication discipline, these extra credit hours aren't counted toward their graduation requirements.

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.

During the last accreditation visit in early 2015, the curricular balance of theoretical and conceptual courses with skills courses was identified as a weakness. The site team report said: "Disproportionate focus on skills at the expense of conceptual learning" (p. 32). The school conducted a curriculum map in 2018, to determine each course's focus on ACEJMC's 12 core values and competencies, and the distribution of these courses for each major. The map reported *the two primary values and competencies* emphasized in each course. That report concluded that the school's courses "primarily emphasize teaching writing and digital tools skills."

The self-study identifies the courses by major that are theoretical/conceptual, skills based and both. Syllabi demonstrate that each required major curriculum includes at least some theoretical/conceptual coursework. The school also has made changes to its curriculum since the last accreditation visit to include a requirement of three 3-credit courses external to the school, but part of the larger College of Communication and Information curricula. These courses have significant conceptual learning components and are listed below:

- Introduction to Human Communication
- Intercultural Communication
- Creative Coding
- Human-Computer Interaction
- Information Fluency in the Workplace and Beyond
- Introduction to User Experience Design

Design: Principles, Process and Practice

In conversations, some students alluded to some of the above courses when asked about theoretical learning. In looking at syllabi and talking with faculty, there was evidence of theoretical/conceptual content.

The one formal course (not internship) required across all four majors is the introductory Media, Power and Culture class, which includes theoretical/conceptual content. Although the 2018 curriculum map did not list this course as including domestic diversity as one of its primary foci, Kent State University currently recognizes it as a course that fulfills this requirement, and indeed, a review of the course's syllabus underscores diversity content's presence and focus. This class and other major-specific required courses (e.g. ethics and law classes) help address the previously noted lack of conceptual/theoretical curriculum. Assessment findings, too, seem to support a general understanding of theoretical concepts, based upon senior exam results.

Most syllabi across majors list all 12 of ACEJMC's core values and competencies and specifies those values/competencies that are relevant to each specific course. Faculty members are charged with overseeing multiple course sections to ensure consistency. Although this role has not been consistently formalized, examined multi-section course syllabi adhered to a common syllabus, ensuring consistent learning outcomes across sections.

Below, each major and its *required* courses are listed, followed by any curricular gaps noted from the 2018 curriculum map (discussed above).

Advertising (47 major credit hours)

Aside from the required internship (2 credits) and above mentioned Media, Power and Culture course, which satisfies a University General Education (Social Sciences) requirement, Advertising majors are required to take the following core courses:

- Advertising Writing and Storytelling
- Research and Measurement in Advertising and Public Relations
- Principles of Advertising
- Advertising Messaging and Communication
- Advertising Copywriting
- Advertising Media Planning
- Digital Advertising
- Digital Analytics in Advertising and Public Relations
- Advertising Strategy Development
- Ethical Issues in Integrated Communication
- Law of Advertising and Public Relations OR Law of Mass Communication
- Advertising Campaigns

Advertising majors also must choose another elective course from an impressive list of options, including public affairs, political advertising, global advertising and PR, and activation advertising, among others, and take an additional three courses from a list of options within the College of Communication and Information.

In examining the 2018 curriculum map, a gap in the required Advertising coursework involved global diversity, and the one-credit-hour Ethical Issues in Integrated Communication course option is the only noted required course within the major with a focus on ethics. However, in talking with faculty and looking at curriculum, ethical and diversity topics were said to be topics that were long important to and part of the Advertising sequence culture. In looking at syllabi, there is evidence of these topics embedded in multiple courses.

Students were happy with their curriculum, particularly its focus on psychology/strategy as well as creative.

Digital Media Production (48 major credit hours)

Aside from the required internship (1 credit) and above mentioned Media, Power and Culture course, Digital Media Production majors are required to take the following core courses:

- Elements of Film, TV, and Animation
- Production Safety and Set Protocol
- Production Fundamentals
- Story For Picture
- Directing for Picture
- Production I
- Digital Video Editing
- Sound for Picture
- Digital Cinematography
- Law of Mass Communication
- Ethics and Issues in Mass Communication
- Producing for Picture
- Production II

Students also choose two “advanced skills” electives as well from a plethora of options, including scriptwriting, selected topics, aerial cinematography, advanced lighting and many more, and take an additional three courses from a list of options from the College of Communication and Information.

In examining the 2018 curriculum map, gaps in the required Digital Media Production coursework included research, evaluation, statistics, and global diversity. In examining syllabi, theoretical, diversity, and ethical elements were seen, but learning outcomes across sections were sometimes inconsistent and AEJMC values/competencies were not always highlighted.

The largest major in the school, with about 40% of the students, DMP was the center of student discontent during the last accreditation visit. The site team noted it as a weakness, stating that it “is not performing at the level of the others” and that it left “many students deeply unsatisfied.” Students were unhappy with the perceived lack of rigor and the feeling that the major was “an afterthought” with faculty and equipment that were not up to date.

Since that time, the school has restructured the major, implementing changes in the 2019-2020 school year. The school reports that the major now has a more balanced mix of courses, with new digital and multimedia offerings, such as Strategic Esports and Mixed Reality Storytelling, and while the site team was there, such courses as People of Color in Film and Queer Cinema, were also offered.

New full-time faculty and adjuncts have been hired as well, and students are exposed to equipment and production projects earlier in the program, so they may then apply them more adeptly earlier in their academic experience through the many venues Kent State University offers and through internships. However, school and university administrators admit that the revised curriculum is still a work in progress, and assessment, student and faculty feedback will continue to play a role in this, its third year. In addition, the school is relying on adjuncts and support from the University's TeleProductions unit, after they lost studio-related staff members.

Seven students and an alumnus attended the morning meeting to discuss the major, and two came with typed notes. These students expressed dissatisfaction with the sequence, stating they were not prepared for either television or film industries based on their coursework alone, and complaining that the coursework was redundant. They believed what they had learned came from other students through student media or through their own initiative, such as watching YouTube, and that they did not have access to advanced classes, leaving them with only basics that put them at a competitive disadvantage post-graduation. However, students also gave examples of very positive learning experiences, citing advanced courses, and all unanimously were complimentary of their professors. However, they believed the sequence was understaffed—with only four faculty—and that at least one class was inconsistent in its approach (hands-on production versus writing assignments), and in their opinion, equipment was outdated and inadequate. It should be noted that the process for checking out equipment has been revamped recently, and that no other students or faculty complained about the equipment. (See Standard 7 for more detail.) The Student Resource Lab (SRL) maintains more than 4000 pieces of equipment. The school believes that while not all equipment available through the SRL is state of the art, it is advanced enough to ensure that students develop the skills necessary to succeed in their courses and in their careers following graduation. One person affiliated with the program noted that while the sequence has grown in students over the years, the faculty for that sequence did not, and that is something “just adding adjuncts isn't going to fix.”

Journalism (42 major credit hours)

Aside from the required internship (1 credit) and above mentioned Media, Power and Culture course, Journalism majors are required to take the following core courses:

- Writing Across Platforms
- Storytelling Across Platforms
- Law of Mass Communication
- Ethics and Issues in Mass Communication

Journalism majors also choose three additional “skills” electives, which include such options as copy editing and design, broadcast reporting, photography, reporting, feature writing, and storytelling with sound, among others, and then choose an additional three courses in “specialized” electives. These latter electives include some overlap with the “skills” elective courses, but also include higher level courses, such as Photojournalism II, as well as courses such as producing television news, opinion writing, the business of publishing, magazine design, managing media diversity, media marketplace and many more. Journalism students then take two “culminating experience” electives, which include advanced photo techniques, advanced television news producing, advanced magazine writing, reporting public policy, broadcast documentary and more. Journalism majors also choose three courses from a menu of College of Communication and Information electives.

In examining the 2018 curriculum map, gaps in the required Journalism coursework included research,

statistics, and global diversity. In examining syllabi, there was evidence of these in their few required courses, with the exception of statistics.

Journalism students with whom the site team spoke expressed both appreciation for and frustration with their curriculum. They were grateful for their faculty and the student media opportunities they were afforded at KSU, particularly the live daily television newscast and the newspaper. Some students expressed a desire for more and more coordinated co-curricular efforts. Some student work produced in reporting, feature writing and advanced magazine writing does feed into student media outlets. Some students expressed the difficulty in working for student media owing to their financial needs to work and the lack of time necessary to volunteer with these media. The students also expressed frustration that there were limited opportunities to take advanced, hands-on classes in their particular areas of interest that would help them take their knowledge and skills to the next level.

Public Relations (48 major credit hours)

Aside from the required internship (1 credit) and above mentioned Media, Power and Culture course, Public Relations majors are required to take the following core courses:

- Research and Measurement in Advertising and Public Relations
- Writing Across Platforms
- Reporting or Broadcast Reporting
- Principles of Public Relations
- Digital Analytics in Advertising and Public Relations
- Public Relations Case Studies
- Ethical Issues in Integrated Communication
- Law of Advertising and Public Relations
- Media Relations and Publicity
- Public Relations Tactics
- Digital Public Relations
- Public Relations Publications
- Public Relations Campaigns

Public Relations majors take an additional five credits of elective courses from a wide variety of options including public affairs, crisis communication, fashion publishing, and global advertising and public relations.

In examining the 2018 curriculum map, noted gaps in the required Public Relations coursework included global diversity, and as in the Advertising major, the one-credit-hour Ethical Issues in Integrated Communication course option is the only one in the major noted that has a focus on ethics. However, in talking with faculty and examining syllabi, both ethics and diversity seem to be embedded in some required courses.

A full room of Public Relations students attended the session with the site team and seemed universally pleased with their curriculum and faculty, with the exception of a required journalism reporting class, which most students believed would be more relevant if offered as a public relations-specific writing course. A couple of students also lamented redundancies in the curriculum. Students were overwhelmingly appreciative of their faculty's professional experience, accessibility, the internships that

were available, the professionals who guest-lectured in classes and in PRSSA, and of the sincere care and attention their public relations faculty provided. One student mentioned that they had such respect for the faculty they wanted to do their best work, so as not to “let them down.”

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.

As other programs around the country and the world, the school responded to the pandemic in spring 2020 with a shift to online courses. With that shift, the school invested in equipment to facilitate remote and hybrid learning, and faculty engaged with online tools and technologies (e.g. Blackboard Collaborate Ultra, Canvas, Zoom, Kaltura, with webcams deployed throughout Franklin Hall) to reach, teach and engage with students. These tools allowed for guest speakers and adjunct faculty from outside the geographical area to share their expertise with students. Faculty were provided the option of whether to teach in person or remotely for Fall 2021; 70% of the courses were scheduled on ground. When asked about the quality, rigor and engagement of current online courses, students expressed enthusiastic satisfaction.

Each of the school’s majors has updated its curricular offerings to include current digital and technological competencies. For example, Advertising and Public Relations majors must take a course in digital analytics; Digital Media Production majors are required to take Digital Cinematography; Journalism majors are required to take Storytelling Across Platforms as part of their core. In addition, all students now must take My Story on the Web, an Adobe-focused software skills course that is offered by the School of Emerging Media and Technology within the College of Communication and Information. Various current special topics and elective courses are available to students as well.

Faculty regularly attend teaching-related trainings and their work has been recognized through teaching grants, serving as a Fulbright Specialist, AEJMC Great Ideas for Teachers, and industry certifications/credentials. Director Emily Metzgar is chair of AEJMC’s Standing Committee on Teaching. Since the last accreditation visit, two professionals-in-residence with significant and impressive backgrounds have been hired. Since the last accreditation, three faculty members within the school have been finalists for Kent State University’s highest teaching award; two have received it.

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.)

With rare exceptions, the school regularly meets the required ratio of students to instructors. This compliance was confirmed through both faculty and students. Spring 2021 skills classes ranged in size from 11 to 20; Fall 2021, from 4 to 21. Typically, some courses with low enrollments (fewer than 10) are canceled, while additional sections for high-demand courses are considered to accommodate demand. Although full-time faculty teach just over half of the course sections offered by the school, they taught 81.5% of core/required courses in spring 2021.

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 four of the school's majors require at least a one-credit internship for graduation. (Advertising majors must earn two credits.) One credit equals 150 hours working in a position that is supervised by a professional in their field of study. Students are encouraged to find multiple internships, if possible, although there are limits on the credit hours that may count toward each major, with none exceeding six. Another three credits may be earned through a student practicum course.

Each sequence has a faculty member who is responsible for serving as that program's internship coordinator. In that role, they communicate opportunities, evaluate and approve them. Students may also look for internships through Handshake, the University's employment system. Students learn specifics about the internship requirement through a website, where they apply. Students indicated various ways in which they learned about internship opportunities, from one-on-one meetings with professors to emails to school-wide information sessions, although some students discussed anxiety associated with the requirement and seemed unclear as to the specific prerequisites to apply for one.

Internship coordinators vet the students and internship opportunities, ensuring they have the proper prerequisites and that the internship will provide a supervised professional experience. Students submit reports that detail their internship duties and experiences and provide work samples, and their supervisors submit an online evaluation of their performance. Feedback is used to strengthen the curriculum, and examples were provided by faculty as to the curricular changes that were made as a result of student and supervisor feedback. Coordinators assign students a satisfactory or unsatisfactory grade.

Within the last couple of years, the school has worked to update the internship accessibility, evaluation and reporting systems. During the pandemic, faculty worked with students to find virtual opportunities and campus-related professional experiences, such as working remotely for the documentary production company 1895 Films in Los Angeles; for the donor- and grant-funded Collaborative NewsL@b project, which serves as a collaborative newsroom, supplying content to seven local news rooms; and IdeaBase, which is located in the school and provides design, video, website, and other types of communications and promotional work for local businesses and university units.

Aside from formal internships, students at KSU may obtain professional experience through 10 campus media outlets (i.e. newspaper, radio, magazines, newscasts, entertainment programming) overseen by a Student Media Board, as well as Franklin Advertising, a hands-on student organization for anyone pursuing a degree in advertising, marketing, visual design or other related communications studies; the university's TeleProductions operation, including opportunities to work with ESPN+ to cover university sporting events; and IdeaBase, a student-powered design agency.

SUMMARY:

Overall, school curricula seem to be teaching the ACEJMC values and competencies; they are mostly present in syllabi. Changes to the Digital Media Production curriculum are relatively new; however, it seems as though close attention to student and faculty concerns within that sequence remain particularly warranted. In addition, the DMP unit—and other units within the school—could be guided by an updated curriculum map/syllabus audit to identify where core values and competencies are being taught and applied throughout each major's required/core courses.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:
COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness

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 unit's diversity plan was created in 2013 and updated in 2016, with progress reports delivered annually. The plan identifies historically underrepresented and underserved students, faculty and staff as its target groups. The plan expands the unit's definition of diversity to include race, culture, national origin, ethnicity, religion, beliefs, social class, socioeconomic status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, physical or mental ability, age, body size/type/shape, marital status, parental status, and military and veteran status.

The student population of the school closely matches the racial diversity of the service area. Recruitment and retention efforts of undergraduates focus on first-generation college students and students with high financial need.

The faculty makeup reflects a lack of Black and Hispanic faculty members compared to the census of the service area.

The unit works with its college and university on diversity, equity and inclusion efforts and has several annual events devoted to increasing diversity and inclusion awareness. They include a student award for diversity, the longstanding Robert G. McGruder Award and Lectureship and a Diversity Leadership Award, given to a professional in the media.

The plan is thorough in that it outlines a goal, initiatives to reach the goal, expected outcomes and metrics to measure progress. Several stated goals have not been met including diversifying the faculty, increasing the diversity of the applicant pool and embedding instruction in diversity across the curriculum.

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.

There is one class required of students in all sequences that deals with inclusivity and that is Media, Power and Culture. Students normally take it as freshmen and report that often that is their last instruction in diversity and equity issues. Students report the course is as much about politics as it is about diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging, and a visit by a site team member to class supported that. Electives offered that include some DEI content are Managing Media Diversity, Multimedia Diversity, People of Color in Film, and Queer Cinema.

Syllabi from other courses not specifically focused on DEI reflect a lack of lessons incorporating DEI issues and practices. Students across the majors did not suggest courses (outside those listed above) that

included assignments, exercises or discussion of diversity issues.

A selection of student comments when prompted to discuss the reflection of diversity in the curriculum:

“The professors’ diversity could be better, but they are really inclusive.”

“In six years I have had one course dedicated to diversity.”

“None of the other courses had a unit or emphasized diversity.”

“We touch on bits and pieces of it in class but it’s not discussed enough I think.”

“There needs to be much more work on racial diversity.”

The unit encourages study abroad and has created a passport program and an international travel savings account to provide financial assistance and encourage students to gain international experience. At present, the unit’s study abroad opportunities, through the college, are primarily focused in Western-European countries with the exception of a two-week program in China. The unit is currently exploring new opportunities for partnerships with the University of Rwanda and Universidad Espiritu Santo, Guayaquil, Ecuador.

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 unit falls short in the diversity of its full-time faculty. The census data show the Black population of the identified service region at 12.4%. Black faculty (2) make up 7% of the full-time faculty. One full-time faculty member is Asian and has a .75 appointment in the school. The full-time faculty is 87% non-Hispanic Caucasian, compared to 81% of the region’s population. The full-time faculty shows no Latino nor Native American members.

Since the last site team visit in 2015, the unit has had 10.75 openings for full-time faculty, the .75 coming in a split position with another school in the college. Of those 10.75, 1.75 hires have been people of color with a Black faculty member hired in Public Relations and an Asian-American hired in the .75 position shared with the School of Emerging Media and Technology. For context, two of the completed hires were partner/spousal hires. All three Professionals-in-Residence hires were opportunity hires – a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist, a May 4 survivor and nationally recognized scholastic journalism educator, and a globally accomplished advertising and marketing executive (the pending hire). The pending hire is diverse.

Information on hiring in 2017-18 and 2018-19 shows less-than-ideal makeups of the candidate pools. For full-time positions, females in the pool represented 32% and 20% of the total applicant pool, respectively. Minorities comprised 32% and 12% of those applicant pools. No offers were made to minority candidates in the 2018-19 academic year. Hires made from 2019 to 2021 show no information on candidate pools. The hires in those years were either the above-mentioned spousal accommodation hires or search requirements were waived.

In the recruitment of part-time/adjunct faculty, of 15 open positions in 2018-19, no minority candidates applied. In 2019-20, when 14 positions were listed, only one candidate was a minority.

The part-time faculty numbers do not reflect the diversity of the region nor the student body. Black faculty comprise 5.8% of the part-time group, one Asian part-time faculty member represents 2.9% of the group. No Hispanic members are present in the full-time nor part-time faculty despite regional and student census

putting Hispanic members at 3.8% of the service area population. No full-time nor part-time faculty are listed as international.

The gender split among all faculty members is 52% female to 48% male, but the student population of the unit is weighted more heavily female with female students comprising 59% of the student body of the school.

The unit promoted five women to full professor since the last site team visit, with four of those five women remaining on the faculty.

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 student population of the unit reflects very closely the diversity of the area/region it serves. The unit outperforms the institution in this measure. Since the time of the last accreditation visit the unit has improved its population of underrepresented student groups from 15.8% to 18.8%, a 3 percent increase.

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 unit has a full-time, split-appointment Asian professor who was unavailable during the site team's visit. The professor was not teaching undergraduates during the semester the visit was held and did not respond to the site team members' request for a one-on-one meeting.

A student specifically called out that the professors are "really good about SAS accommodations." And several students lauded the university's welcoming LGBTQ+ community.

SUMMARY:

While the student body is appropriately diverse for the service area, that is the bright spot in this standard. In the last site team report, a lack of diversity on the faculty, both full-time and part-time, was called out as a weakness. It remains one. With 10.75 opportunities to hire full-time faculty since 2015, 1.75 openings were filled with people of color and the other nine went to white candidates. The candidate pools for those searches were not appropriately diverse and in one year, no people of color applied for any part-time positions. While the curriculum has one required course that focuses on diversity, DEI lessons, exercises and assignments are not incorporated across the curriculum. In addition, multiple student groups responded with a mix of blank stares and critiques of any diversity issues regularly reflected in their coursework.

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

(Please include the Faculty Population table at the end of this section.)

*Note-for two faculty members with split appointments, we are classifying them as full-time with a .75 and .5 appointment, respectively.

Academic year: 2020 – 2021 Full-time faculty

Group	Female	% of total Faculty	Male	% of total faculty
Black/African-American	1	3.5%	1	3.5%
White	13	46%	11.5	41%
Asian	.75	2.5%	-	-
Not Reported	-	-	1	3.5%
TOTALS	14.75	52%	13.5	48%

Academic year: 2020 – 2021 Part-time/Adjunct Faculty

Group	Female	% of total faculty	Male	% of total faculty
Black/African-American	1	2.9%	1	2.9%
Asian	1	2.9%	-	-
White	12	35.3%	13	38.2%
Multi-Racial	-	-	1	2.9%
Not Reported	2	5.9%	3	8.8%
TOTALS	16	47.1%	18	52.9%

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

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.

According to the school's Faculty Handbook, the college dean and school director appoint a faculty search committee and chair for full-time faculty searches, who provide input to the dean and director for the job advertisement. A member of the school's Diversity and Globalization Committee serves on every such committee, and the University advertises the position in multiple venues, including those with large minority readerships, e.g. Insight Into Diversity, National Association of Black Journalists, National Association of Hispanic Journalists. University administrators acknowledged that the way job descriptions have traditionally been written can be unnecessarily narrow and discourage or prevent underrepresented candidates from applying, and the university is now incorporating best practices for job descriptions into search processes. Several finalists are brought to campus for extended interviews, and the committee then shares recommendations to the director and dean. Part-time faculty are now recruited through the University's job portal, where a call for adjuncts is posted to help move beyond mere personal recommendations.

The school's Faculty Handbook, updated every three years and most recently in 2020, specifies teaching, research, service, creative and professional activity and the processes and expectations around tenure, promotion and reappointment. There is a collective bargaining agreement that formalizes workload expectations, and the school has worked recently to further specify credit-hour equivalencies to ensure equitable work assignments. Under the agreement, tenured and probationary faculty must submit a workload summary report to the director each spring, which describes the previous year's work and accomplishments. Both tenure-track and non-tenure track faculty are eligible for promotion. Expectations around teaching, research and service are included in the faculty handbook, and the university holds panel and information sessions about tenure and promotion as well. Faculty who are currently on the tenure track and those who had recently participated in the promotion process described the support and mentorship of the college's dean and school director in providing feedback and guidance.

A faculty committee reviews each full-time faculty member annually. Student Surveys of Instruction are included as part of those reviews. Adjunct faculty performance is monitored by the respective sequence heads and the school's undergraduate coordinator. If performance is considered sub-par and does not improve, the adjunct is not rehired.

Faculty who earn tenure are expected to continue to be productive in research and creative pursuits, meaning original work is produced and evaluated through peer review prior to publications/distribution. The individual faculty member must make the case as to how his/her work is significant. Service to the university and professional service through organizations and to entities beyond the university is considered in promotion and tenure decisions as well; however, teaching is considered the core of promotion/tenure within the school and is evaluated through examination of student evaluations and through peer evaluations by senior faculty.

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

Thirty full-time faculty are represented at various ranks, including professionals-in-residence, lecturers and assistant, associate and full professors who are both tenure- and non-tenure track. This figure includes the dean of the college and the director of the school. The numbers of tenure-track faculty and non-tenure faculty are equal at 15 and 15 and they teach an average of 76.6% of *core and required* classes over the past three academic years, with increases each year (from 72.9% to 75.5% to 81.5%, respectively). Overall, full-time faculty teach just more than 50% of the school's course sections.

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.

As noted above, the school's full-time faculty are equally balanced between tenure track and non-tenure track, with instruction supplemented by 25 adjunct/part-time faculty (who taught in both fall and spring last academic year), particularly for elective courses. On average, full-time faculty have just over 20 years of professional experience; 13 of the 30 full-time faculty have a terminal degree. The two professionals-in-residence bring significant professional experience into the classroom: One is a Pulitzer Prize winner; the other, a long-time strategic communications professional with a Ph.D.

During the last accreditation visit, it was noted that only one woman held the rank of full professor, along with five men. Since then, five female faculty (including four current faculty members) have been promoted to professor. Three non-tenure track faculty hold the rank of full professor.

Faculty are recognized by and actively engaged in professional associations, including the Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations, Scripps Howard Foundation, Ohio News Connection, Public Relations Society of America, College Media Association, Society of Professional Journalists, National Society of Newspaper Columnists, and AEJMC, among others.

Adjuncts who taught both fall and spring terms in academic year 2020-2021 had an average of more than 27 years of professional experience and more than 13 years of teaching experience.

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

Student Surveys of Instruction (SSI) and peer reviews are the primary means by which faculty are evaluated on instruction. The SSI is now wholly online, and it includes four university-required questions and eight specific Likert-scale school-required questions. Faculty may choose to add an additional five questions of their own, if desired. Owing to the disruption caused by the pandemic, Kent State University halted SSI administration from Spring 2020 term through Summer 2021. Peer review of part-time instructors has recently (as of Fall 2021) become more formalized, with a standardized peer review form and a charge from the director to the school's Undergraduate Coordinator.

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

Faculty are widely respected on campus by central administrators, who appreciate their and their

students' engagement across campus, their willingness to adapt curriculum as news and communications industries evolve, and their history of student and alumni success. Several faculty have been actively engaged in university-wide Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and educational outreach efforts to underserved communities. Three professors have been finalists for the university's Distinguished Teaching Award in recent years, and two have won it (one in 2017; the other, in 2019). The award is the highest teaching recognition at the university and requires nominations and a teaching portfolio, which is judged by a university committee that then selects the honorees. Only three faculty members university-wide annually receive the award.

SUMMARY:

The School of Media and Journalism has a well-balanced full-time faculty who teach the majority of required courses and are engaged and recognized beyond the campus through professional and scholarly work. Adjuncts also have a wealth of experience, and students respect their real-world approach and authentic care of them as people and young professionals. Teaching, research and service activities are all valued by the university, and promotion and tenure processes are well defined and communicated.

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

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

Many of the school's faculty, including several not on a tenure track, publish in academic journals, write for professional or applied publications, or produce creative work, primarily films. Six faculty (including the dean and director) have doctorates and two others have terminal master's degrees. The previous site team was critical of the research productivity of the faculty, a deficiency that has been remedied, at least in part, through hiring of new faculty, promotions to full professor, and additional incentives for current faculty to engage in scholarship.

The school's Faculty Handbook declares that tenured and tenure-track faculty "are expected to be engaged in endeavors that support the school's mission" and to pursue "presentation and then to publication in quality scholarly or professional venues." Faculty engaged in scholarship or creative activity typically receive a workload adjustment (course release), based on criteria in the Faculty Handbook and negotiated annually with the director.

The school provides sabbatical leaves to tenured faculty members with at least seven years of experience, and since the last site visit, eight faculty have taken sabbaticals and one is currently on sabbatical (Fall 2021). Their sabbatical projects include conventional academic research, applied scholarship, professional development to improve teaching skills and journalistic activities. One longtime faculty member took an unpaid research leave (Fall 2019 to Spring 2021) and an untenured faculty member is on a university-sponsored research leave in the current semester.

Typically, every faculty member is eligible to apply for up to \$3,000 a year for travel, as well as \$750 per year from Kent State's Division of Research and Sponsored Programs. After a suspension of sponsored travel in Spring 2020, the university allowed travel to resume in Fall 2021. The school has documented faculty who received travel grants from the school since 2014-2015 to attend conferences for paper presentations or panels, as well as for research on documentaries, papers and books.

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

The Faculty Handbook, last revised in 2020 when the unit was known as the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, describes how faculty members are evaluated, along with the tenure and promotion processes. Faculty seeking tenure and promotion to associate professor are expected to be "very good" in research and creative activity; those seeking promotion to full professor are expected to be "excellent" in either teaching or research. An appendix to the Faculty Handbook offers helpful rubrics for evaluating the research and creative activities of faculty for decisions on reappointment, tenure and promotion.

[Newly hired tenure-track faculty members interviewed by the site team indicated their familiarity with these policies.]

c). Evaluation criteria for promotion, tenure and merit recognition account for and acknowledge

activities appropriate to faculty members' professional as well as scholarly specializations.

Reflecting the professional nature of the school, the Faculty Handbook recognizes a range of professional and creative activities in which faculty members engage. The handbook states: "Given the School's professional mission, published journalism of the highest quality qualifies as published research, using standards defined in more detail [later in the handbook]." The self study's table of faculty activity includes an additional category for "published professional work" to reflect essays and articles for national publications.

The promotion of four associate professors to full professors since the last review reflects the school's success in mentoring mid-career faculty to promotion.

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

The tables of scholarship, creative and professional activities in the self study show work by both tenure-track and non-tenure track faculty. Since the last review, tenure-track faculty produced 70 refereed conference papers, 45 articles in refereed journals, 36 articles in non-refereed publications, 31 book chapters and five scholarly books. Tenure-track faculty produced 13 juried creative works, 33 non-juried creative works and 10 published professional works, while non-tenured track faculty contributed five juried creative works, 12 non-juried creative works and four professionally published works to the school's output.

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

The school's Core Values include "diversity of culture, beliefs, identity and thought," "freedom of expression and the free exchange of ideas," and "respect, kindness and purpose in all we do." These values are reflected in the broad range of courses offered to undergraduates, the variety of research and creative activities undertaken by faculty, and the robust commitment to public service and outreach.

SUMMARY:

The school has made measurable progress on this standard since its 2015 reaccreditation. Pending revisions to the Faculty Handbook will reinforce the recognition of creative activity. Future hiring, which the director and dean indicate will focus on faculty with potential for high scholarship productivity and creative activity, will further strengthen this area of the school's mission.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:
COMPLIANCE

Tenure-Track Faculty Only

Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activities	Total from Unit*	Individuals		
		Full Professors (8)	Associate Professors (6)	Assistant Professors (3)
Awards and Honors	44	16	13	15
Grants Received Internal	8	2	5	1
Grants Received External	13*	9	4	1
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co- authored	5	3	2	-
Textbooks, Sole- or Co- authored	2	1	1	-
Books Edited	6	5	1	-
Book Chapters	31*	20	13	-
Monographs	-	-	-	-
Articles in Refereed Journals	45*	23	18	6
Refereed Conference Papers	70*	29	28	15
Invited Academic Papers	6	2	3	1
Encyclopedia Entries	2	1	1	-
Book Reviews	12	3	7	2
Articles in Non-refereed Publications	36*	30	3	3
Juried Creative Works	13	-	-	13
Non-juried Creative Works	33	-	-	33
Published Professional Work	10	9	1	-
Other (please specify)**	106	75	16	15

*Co-authored works only counted once.

** Panel Moderator, Panelist, Presenter, Workshop Creator, Conference Chair, Division Head, Website posts, Reviewer, Pilot, Board member, Filmmaker

Non-Tenure-Track Faculty

Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activities	Total from Unit*	Individuals				
		Full Professors (2)	Associate Professors (5)	Assistant Professors (3)	Associate Lecturers (2)	Lecturers ¹ (2)
Awards and Honors	39	11	15	2	6	5
Grants Received Internal	7	-	1	5	-	-
Grants Received External	5	-	5	-	-	-
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co-authored	2	-	1	1	-	-
Textbooks, Sole- or Co-authored	0	-	-	-	-	-
Books Edited	0	-	-	-	-	-
Book Chapters	6	-	4	1	-	1
Monographs	0	-	-	-	-	-
Articles in Refereed Journals	1	1	-	-	-	-
Refereed Conference Papers	0	-	-	-	-	-
Invited Academic Papers	0	-	-	-	-	-
Encyclopedia Entries	0	-	-	-	-	-
Book Reviews	8	-	1	-	-	7
Articles in Non-refereed Publications	7	-	4	-	-	3
Juried Creative Works	5	-	2	3	-	-
Non-juried Creative Works	12	-	-	9	-	3
Published Professional Work	4	-	-	-	-	4
Other (please specify)**	12	-	10	2	-	-

¹ Includes Professional in Residence

** Panel Chair, Workshop Co-Founder, Essayist, Conference Chair, Columnist, Author

PART II — Standard 6: Student Services

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.

Kent State requires academic advising every semester. The school says it provides a “net of support for students throughout their time at the university, both in the classroom and beyond.” Its students are served by a team of professional and academic advisers housed in the College of Communication and Information (CCI). The college added a Director of Academic Advising in 2019.

There are multiple touchpoints for students to learn about, and be reminded of, the requirements of the degree and the major, and progress toward those and compliance with the 72-hour rule are proactively monitored.

However, there is an undercurrent of distrust or dismay about the centralization of advising at the college level. Advisers used to be physically located with each school in the college. Now, in an effort to scale their resources, they are both physically grouped together and work as generalists across all five schools in the college. Both students and faculty feel like they no longer have the specialized services they were used to: “They can show you what classes to take in what order to graduate, but they can’t help with your path in the actual fields.” Other students were complimentary of the advising team’s assistance. All students pay a fee for the services of the campus career development office, but that is a separate function from the college’s academic advisers.

The college dean said she has heard no complaints about advising and thinks the centralized approach is successful. Unfortunately, during the pandemic half the team of advisers left the university; they have since hired three new advisers. In recent months, other administrators have pitched in to help the advising team manage the workload.

b). Faculty are available and accessible to students.

Faculty are required to keep regular office hours of at least five hours a week, and this requirement carried over to remote methods. Faculty and students report that faculty regularly and willingly schedule time to meet with students outside of those hours, and students praise the accessibility of their instructors. In a phrase repeated in so many words in every student meeting, “The professors always go above and beyond for us.” And even more inspiring, “They are willing to make my vision come true.”

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

There is no shortage of communication to the students. The advising team at the college level, the school and each of the four sequences use both listservs and social media to keep students informed about new courses, internships, job opportunities, registration requirements, scholarships – and of course events, speakers and workshops. There are bulletin boards everywhere in Franklin Hall, filled with fliers on everything from jobs to new courses, workshops to events. Wide-screen digital monitors in the Franklin Hall lobby are an eye-catching and easy-to-update source.

Students say that the school is “pretty good” at sending out emails about what’s going on, and that the all-college emails are especially good ways to catch up (if a bit overwhelming to some). Students also use the CCI Instagram and Facebook pages. Unsurprisingly, many students who were new or transfers during the pandemic year reported that they felt disconnected and had no idea what was going on even in Franklin Hall. This looks like a pandemic gap in which the online version of the intro class didn’t mention the physical opportunities in and around the building – because they weren’t accessible. Some students suggested a quick resources-refresher seminar would be well-attended.

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.

In 2020-2021, more than 350 students worked in Student Media (in 2019-2020, pre-pandemic, it was more than 500) – 10 media outlets independently operated but with full support from MDJ including advising and class-Student Media coursework convergences. Participation rebounded to about 500 students in Fall 2021, during the time of the site visit. About half the student participants are paid, making Student Media one of the largest student employers on campus.

The Student Media Board is made up of a mix of MDJ faculty and its director, along with students, faculty and staff from across the university. It is a standing university committee and serves as the institutional publisher, responsible for approving budgets and selecting student leaders. All media partners have either faculty or professional advisors. Students are responsible for all day-to-day editorial and advertising operations.

National award-winning Student Media outlets include:

TV2. A TV station in Franklin Hall that produces 20 hours of original programming every week, including a live 30-minute newscast at 6 p.m. on weekdays. Its programming reaches an estimated 26,000 households in the country via cable. It is the only county-based TV station.

The Kent Stater. A weekly newspaper published Mondays with a circulation of 6,000. Students in MDJ reporting classes contribute – at editors’ discretion – as a co-curricular initiative. The print edition was suspended during the pandemic and has returned in Fall 2021.

KentWired. This is the shared website of the Kent Stater and TV2, and also distributes on Facebook and Twitter, reaching more than 350K UUs/month. After classes were canceled in March 2020, KentWired became the most active outlet in Student Media, and traffic spiked.

Black Squirrel Radio. An internet radio station housed in Franklin Hall that produces 56 student-hosted shows that air from 10 a.m. to 2 a.m. during the school year. The shows are a mix of music, news, sports and alternative media. A website and social media accounts are additional platforms for BSR content.

Kent State University Independent Films. A production company that produces web series, short films, documentaries and TV shows. It also runs film festivals.

A Magazine. Annual print fashion, beauty and culture publication is augmented by three social accounts and a multimedia website.

The Burr Magazine. Annual magazine featuring topical long-form journalism on relevant issues. Throughout the school year, original multimedia content is posted at TheBurr.com and on three social media channels.

Fusion Magazine. An annual LGBTQ+ print publication that also regularly updates content on its website and two social media channels.

Luna Negra. An annual literary arts journal that publishes throughout the school year on its website and three social media accounts.

Uhuru. An annual print publication that examines racial, social and political issues through writing, photography and design. It is named for the Kiswahili word for freedom. It also regularly updates its website and three social channels.

Student Media Advertising and Marketing. Team helps campus departments and local business reach their target audiences through the Student Media partners.

In addition, there are five pre-professional associations:

- Female Filmmakers Association
- Focal Point (for aspiring photographers)
- Franklin Advertising (serving real-world clients)
- National Association of Black Journalists
- Public Relations Student Society of America (named outstanding chapter of the year in Fall 2019; placed second in the 2018 Bateman case-study competition; a KSU team has received honorable mention in Bateman every year since 2015)

The College of Communication and Information also has a living-learning community. Students in the five schools that comprise the college are eligible to live in Olson Hall, an eight-minute walk from Franklin Hall. In 2019-2020, 113 of the 202 residents were MDJ majors. The Commons offers 30-plus programs every school year, from grammar assistance to internship panels, and has a design studio that hosts design clinics, matches students with mentors who live in the Commons and has an in-house director who serves as a resource for students' academic and general issues.

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.

From the self-study:

Retention and degree completion information below was provided by Kent State's Office of Institutional Research. MDJ statistics reflect first-time, full-time college students who started in an MDJ major and returned/graduated in any Kent State major.

- Goal: MDJ students persist and graduate from KSU programs at rates that meet or exceed institutional goals (85% retention, 65% 6-year graduation).
 - MDJ's freshman retention rate (2019 cohort) of 83.9% is 2.3% higher than the overall Kent Campus rate of 81.6%.

- MDJ's second-year retention rate (2018 cohort) of 77.6% is 4.1% higher than the overall Kent Campus rate of 73.5%.
- MDJ's four-year graduation rate (2016 cohort) of 55.1% is 5.6% higher than the overall Kent Campus rate of 49.5%
- MDJ's six-year graduation rate (2014 cohort) of 75.7% is 10.2% higher than the overall Kent Campus rate of 65.5%.

While MDJ's retention and graduation rates are higher than the Kent Campus as a whole, first-year retention rates still fall below the University's goals (85 percent).

The school [publishes the rates](#) on their website.

SUMMARY:

The opportunities for students to gain real-world experience in a safe and educational setting are stellar. Advising is on-point and appropriate and faculty accessibility is widely praised.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:

COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 7: Resources, Facilities and Equipment

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The School of Media and Journalism is one of five schools in the College of Communication and Information operating under an RCM model where CCI serves as the financial unit. The school faces a budget cut of \$1 million in the 2021-2022 academic year. Changes to the cost-sharing agreements among the schools and college mean the unit has assistance in navigating the budget reductions attributed to declining enrollment and the pandemic. For example, functions such as advising and marketing are now centralized at the college level.

The unit lists several long-range strategic goals in its budget including:

- Cost sharing with the College
 - Technology & infrastructure
 - Recruitment & outreach
 - Diversity, equity, inclusion & belonging initiatives
 - Advising

The college and school are working together on all of the cost-sharing goals listed above. The college is taking the lead on the above initiatives, hiring personnel and administering the effort from the dean's office. The schools in the college will contribute to the financial support of the initiatives.

- Student support
 - Scholarships
 - Improved teaching
 - International engagement

The college has created several scholarship programs, especially targeting students with high financial need and first-generation students. Just more than 35 percent of the school's students are first-generation college students, most with financial need. The college has created an annual, renewable scholarship pool to support these students. Six in-state students in the school were offered a \$4,000 scholarship in fall of 2020, one student was awarded \$3,000.

There are several other scholarships directed to underrepresented students and a dean's scholarship program also supports students with financial need. The overall pool of scholarships controlled by the unit is modest, considering there are more than 375 students in the school classified as first in their families to attend college, most of whom have significant financial need.

The school has a program to assist students in paying for a passport. This is part of the effort to create more international engagement. The unit also encourages students to maintain a study abroad savings account to plan ahead for the financial burden of international study.

A laptop loaner program supports students in need of a computer. Since the program was established in

2017, 65 students in the school have benefited from the program.

- Faculty support
 - Research funding
 - Instructional & classroom
 - Entry level course relief

The college has created a faculty research award pool to encourage scholarship. Faculty are able to work with an instructional designer to improve their course content and teaching.

The 2020-2021 budget shows cuts that could impact the unit's ability to meet some of its strategic goals. The budget for the school was \$5.2 million in 2019-20 and was reduced to \$4.2 million in 2020-2021. Specifically diminished in the budget: allocations for increasing support for entry-level course instructors and research support to increase faculty productivity.

The strategic plan calls for support for part-time faculty who primarily teach entry-level courses. The budget line item for part-time teaching faculty dropped from more than \$600,000 in 2018-19 to \$229,000 in 2020-21, making it difficult for the unit to meet its stated goals of improving pay for part-time faculty. Strategic planning also calls for breaking large, entry-level courses into smaller sections to improve teaching and learning. The reduction in the line item for salaries for part-time instructors means these support measures for part-time faculty may be difficult to fund.

The line item for research support dropped from \$25,000 in 2019-2020 to \$10,000 in 2020-2021.

The unit says its strategic priorities include retention, recruitment, diversity and advising initiatives but there is not money earmarked for those efforts in the budget. These initiatives are administered at the college level but the school is also expected to make its own contribution to these efforts.

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 unit feels fairly treated in its budget allocation compared to other units on campus. However, the overall budget of the unit is down more than \$1 million over last year. There is no question the pandemic has caused a downturn in budget for the unit, the college and the university at large, as the state allocation is directly tied to enrollment.

Specific line items that have reduced budgets include part-time faculty, which has seen a 60 percent reduction since 2018-19. With nearly 50percent of the teaching staff being adjunct and/or part-time, this reduction will hit hard, especially in the DMP sequence, which is the sequence with the fewest full-time faculty and the most students in the school.

The budget line for teaching assistants is less than half what it was in 2018-2019. The unit has a commitment to provide teaching experience to graduate students and the graduate teaching assistants are often assigned to teach entry level courses.

The budget for equipment is less than 50% of what it was in last year's cycle. Some students expressed

concern about the functionality of the student checkout gear, especially high-end video and still cameras. Others said they had trouble being able to check out the gear they needed because of the high demand on certain items. A new checkout process has been installed that is intended to address concerns about faulty equipment.

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

The facilities in Franklin Hall are bright, open and equipped with adequate technology to support effective scholarship, teaching and learning. Classroom upgrades have assisted with the teaching and learning environments for large lecture courses. Computer labs are up-to-date and functioning well. Lab spaces in both video and audio have seen improvements, some significant, since the last accrediting team visit.

Especially impressive are the working newsroom spaces including the offices of Kent Wired, the Kent Stater and TV2. The equipment and work spaces are open and up-to-date, showcasing the work of Student Media throughout Franklin Hall.

The unit lost its broadcast engineer and some other support staff in the television studio from retirements and resignations. The TeleProductions Center on campus, a non-academic unit, has stepped in to temporarily fill the gap. There are fewer resources in the broadcast TV area of study, and students say the curriculum for broadcast news and broadcast production has diminished with the loss of faculty. The unit will need to determine if the TV news emphasis can continue with the loss of faculty and staff around this area of study.

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 unit's faculty say they have the facilities and support they need to complete their scholarship and creative work.

The Student Resource Lab tracks and manages more than 4,000 pieces of equipment. Faculty can use this equipment for their scholarship, but students enrolled in MDJ courses come first, followed by students working in Student Media.

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

The access to library and information resources is adequate for both students and faculty working on scholarly and creative works.

SUMMARY:

The unit has an attractive home in Franklin Hall with updated classroom, lab and studio spaces. The school has a robust student and faculty equipment-checkout system with adequate support and maintenance. Scholarships are made available both internally and externally, with special attention being given to students who are first-generation college students or having high financial need. The unit faces a budget reduction and has created cost-sharing opportunities to absorb some of the downturn. The unit will need

to find a means to deliver on its stated goal to improve support for entry-level courses taught by adjunct or part-time faculty.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:
COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 8: Professional and Public Service

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

a). The unit consults and communicates regularly with its alumni and 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.

For more than 60 years, the school published a magazine, *Jargon*, with news and photographs of student, faculty and alumni achievements. The most recent printed edition, published in Fall 2019, contained 32 pages. Two new initiatives are scheduled to begin in Fall 2021: a monthly digital newsletter of *Jargon* for alumni, and a podcast, “Around the Sphere,” whose 19-minute first edition is posted on the school’s website and second episode goes live the day the site team leaves. A variety of social media, including Facebook and Twitter accounts, are managed by the school. There are Facebook groups for alumni of each of the school’s four majors. The parent College of Communication and Information oversees a YouTube channel.

The school’s former Professional Advisory Board was reconstituted in 2018 as a Professional Advising Team with more than 50 members. The team did not meet in 2020. School Director Emily Metzgar plans to rebuild the team in 2021-2022, beginning with the launch of the new *Jargon* newsletter. The school regularly invites alumni and other professionals to speak on campus, evaluate student work in culminating experience (capstone) courses, serve on the Student Media Board and develop internships.

These activities are supplemented by informal contacts among the school’s director, faculty and staff, and alumni. Alumni interviewed by the site team say they have frequent contacts with faculty seeking internship opportunities for students and mentors for recent graduates. A slideshow of successful alums plays on a loop on one of the lobby TVs.

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 School of Media and Journalism has developed an impressive series of outreach and engagement events that serve current students, media professionals in the region, high school students and the public at large. These include the Poynter-KSU Media Ethics workshop (2015-2019), an annual media ethics lecture (offered in 2019 and 2020, to be resumed in 2022), a “YouToo” social media conference (presented since 2008), and a Media and Movements seminar coordinated by a faculty member and professional in residence in the school (2018-2021).

Of special note was the school’s exemplary work to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 1970 shootings on the Kent State University campus. Students and faculty collaborated on an interactive exhibit, an ethics workshop, documentary projects and a retrospective of student journalists’ coverage of the 1970 events. An eyewitness to the May 4 shootings, Roseann Canfora, is a professional-in-residence for the school in Fall 2021. She is teaching two courses and working with the Kent State president’s office to plan future commemorations of May 4.

c). The unit contributes to the improvement of journalism and mass communication as academic

disciplines by supporting the faculty's involvement in academic associations and related activities.

Faculty members participate in national and international academic and professional organizations, often in leadership positions. These groups range from the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, the International Communication Association, the Public Relations Society of America, and Kappa Tau Alpha honor society. This participation provides networking opportunity for these faculty members while enabling them to stay abreast of current issues in media education.

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.

The school's faculty engages with media partners in northeast Ohio through a variety of outreach and service-learning activities. The NewsL@b collaborative gives Media and Journalism students an opportunity to write for professional publications and community websites. Since 2020, at least 15 news outlets across Ohio have carried more than 70 stories by 11 student reporters. A grant from the Cleveland Foundation gave students an opportunity to investigate environmental justice issues in the city. Another expression of the school's commitment to civic engagement is Project Citizen, a partnership with three other universities in spring-summer 2021 to report on climate change's effects. Carol Costello, an alumnus of the school and former CNN anchor, leads this program, which continues for the 2021-2022 academic year.

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

The school's support for First Amendment rights of high school journalists is recognized by educators nationwide. The school is home to the Center for Scholastic Journalism, a center for research and advocacy on press freedom in schools. Professor Mark Goodman, who retired in 2021, directed the center and was head of AEJMC's Scholastic Journalism Division. Goodman remains an important resource on student free speech issues. The school also sponsors the Ohio Scholastic Media Association, which before the pandemic hosted a two-day state convention that brought hundreds of students and teachers to the KSU campus. The school sponsored a journalism workshop for elementary school students in 2019 and sponsored a Summer Storyteller Workshop for high school students in a virtual format in 2021.

SUMMARY:

The school has a long tradition of professional and public service that elevate its profile across the state and region. Its symposia, speaker series, community partnerships and outreach to high school journalists are remarkable in their breadth and depth.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:
COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 9: Assessment of Learning Outcomes

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.

- *Who is in charge of the assessment program (e.g., administrator, sequence coordinator or faculty committee)?*

For five years, the school assigned one faculty member to oversee assessment, including data collection, analysis and revision of assessment strategies. He produced four thorough and detailed assessment reports, most recently in August 2019 based on the 2018-2019 academic year. Because of the pandemic, no assessment report was written for 2019-2020 or 2020-2021, although some information was collected. The faculty member responsible for assessment left the university in Spring 2021. Going forward, Director Emily Metzgar has created a standing Assessment Committee of five faculty members, which first met in September 2021.

- *How has the unit verified that core and required courses cover all 12 of ACEJMC’s professional values and competencies?*

The school has broken into five clusters the 12 values and competencies that address communication strategies, creative thinking, evaluation of information, legal and ethical considerations, and awareness of diversity, both in the United States and globally. A curriculum map developed in 2018 matches the 12 values and competencies against all courses in the school. One matrix shows the school’s core courses; subsequent tables show each of the four majors. Although the Digital Media Production curriculum was revised in 2019-2020, the curriculum map for that sequence has not been updated to reflect those changes.

A weakness of the curriculum map is that it shows required and elective courses, including some courses that are not regularly offered. Because students have considerable freedom in choosing electives, it is not apparent from the map that all students become aware of the values and develop all of the competencies in their required coursework.

- *How has the unit ensured that the syllabuses for these courses state learning outcomes that address the values and competencies appropriate for each course?*

The school has provided syllabi for all courses taught from Spring 2015 through Fall 2021. With a few exceptions, every syllabus lists the school’s “Core Competencies” near the end of the document. In most cases, the course’s learning outcomes indicate which of the values or competencies will be addressed during the term. Faculty are asked to indicate in boldface which competencies are specifically addressed in the course and underline ones that are more tangentially addressed in the course.

Both the school and the college provide syllabus statements (diversity statements, the university’s Title IX language, information about student accommodations, etc.). The 12 values and competencies are also listed in the Student Learning Assessment plan adopted in 2013 and most recently updated in 2020.

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

- *What direct measures of assessment does the unit use, where in the curriculum and when?*

The following direct measures of assessment are used:

- First-Year Entrance Exam (FYEE). All students in the required First Year Experience class take a multi-choice test to measure their competency in the ACEJMC values and competencies.
- Graduating Senior Exit Exam (GSEE). Graduating seniors take the same exam. Neither of these exams was administered in 2019-2020 or 2020-2021, again due to the pandemic. The 2018-2019 assessment report contains exam results from 169 freshmen and 38 seniors.
- Internship supervisors' assessment. Every student in the school must complete an internship to graduate. All students and supervisors submit reports to the faculty using a Qualtrics site.
- Culminating Experience Team Assessment (CETA). Professionals outside the school are invited to review student work from "culminating experiences" (capstone classes) in each sequence. Faculty members are not involved in this evaluation process.

• *What indirect measures does it use, where and when?*

The following indirect measures are used:

- Retention and graduation rates as indicators of student satisfaction and achievement.
- Curriculum map analysis (last carried out in 2018).
- Alumni surveys to measure graduates' satisfaction with their education and report on their careers.
- Student surveys of instruction (SSI), course evaluations conducted near the end of each term. The university decided that surveys taken during the four terms most affected by the pandemic (Spring 2020 to Summer 2021) could be viewed by instructors but not used for evaluative purposes. The regular surveys are scheduled to resume in Fall 2021.
- Student awards and competitions.

• *Are these measures effective for assessing ACEJMC's professional values and competencies?*

The first-year and graduating-senior surveys specifically address values and competencies, and as a result, are especially effective in assessing knowledge of the key concepts and skills. However, there will be a two-year gap in the data as a result of suspending the surveys during the pandemic. The alumni surveys, which use a convenience model, generated 343 responses in 2018-2019. These surveys address skill areas in which the graduates indicate they would like additional training as well as overall satisfaction with the program.

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

• *How does the unit collect and analyze the findings and identify unsatisfactory learning of specific values and competencies?*

Before 2020, the annual assessment report provided results of direct and indirect measures in one document, which was circulated to the faculty for review and response. Since then, owing to the pandemic and the departure of the faculty member who coordinated assessment, the measures have been less consistent. The newly created Assessment Committee will be challenged to resume the measures already included in the Assessment Plan, as well as identify other strategies.

• *What specific values and competencies had graduating classes not mastered satisfactorily?*

The professional evaluation of student work in capstone classes (2018-2019) identified two needs: better research and measurement and more attention to detail, particularly in presenting written material.

The internship supervisors' most recent evaluations indicated that students were deficient in soft skills, including communication with their supervisors.

The most recent alumni survey indicated students would like more instruction in photo editing, data analysis and statistics, web design and mobile application design. Recent curricular changes have addressed some of these areas.

- *How does the unit decide how to address these areas of concern and what actions did it take to do so?*

Internship coordinators and faculty in each sequence review supervisor evaluations and recommend ways to enhance strengths and address weaknesses. Responses to other assessment measures have been inconsistent during the pandemic, especially without an assessment coordinator on the staff. According to the Assessment Plan, sequence coordinators are asked to present assessment results to faculty, who plan and implement changes to improve curriculum and instruction. Those results are then to be reported back to the assessment coordinator, which has been replaced by the faculty Assessment Committee.

- *How does the unit evaluate whether its actions overcame the weaknesses in student learning and what were the results?*

Because of the pandemic, few assessment measures have been carried out since 2019. The next assessment cycle (2021-2022) will determine the effectiveness of changes made in response to previously identified weaknesses. In addition, the next cycle will be the first opportunity to address the 2019 changes to the Digital Media Production curriculum.

- *Was the program of data analysis and action effective for identifying and overcoming unsatisfactory student learning?*

Before 2020, assessment produced solid data from multiple measures, which were effectively compiled and analyzed. The 2019-2020 revisions to the Digital Media Production curriculum, described in Standard 2, are the most recent example of the school's attempt to address concerns about student learning and mastery of skills.

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 alumni survey referenced above provides an annual opportunity to collect graduates' opinions of the courses and their overall experience. However, this survey was only conducted three times since the last self study. Faculty members in each sequence indicate they regularly consult with alumni about changes in their field and ask alumni to review syllabi. The new Assessment Committee will be charged with reinstating the survey or finding another method to assess alumni experiences.

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

Media professionals are involved in two ways: as internship supervisors, who evaluate student performance, and as members of teams reviewing student work in capstone courses (culminating experiences). At least two professionals with expertise in the four sequences are selected through a purposive sampling method. More than 40 professionals have reviewed students' materials since the last self study.

SUMMARY:

The School of Media and Journalism has a solid assessment plan and five years of detailed reports summarizing assessment findings. With a few exceptions, assessment was put on hold the past two years

due to personnel changes and the pandemic. The new Assessment Committee will need to revise the plan going forward while overseeing ongoing assessment measures.

Overall evaluation compliance/non-compliance:
COMPLIANCE

PART III: Summary by site visit team

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

Strengths:

- Engaged and involved new director
- Support from the college
- Dedicated, student-centered, professionally oriented faculty
- Outstanding student media with 10 outlets, 500 students participating
- Modern beautiful facilities
- Strong public service and outreach
- Students graduating prepared to work in the real world

Weaknesses:

- A sequence (Digital Media Production) in which students seem dissatisfied with higher-level skills-based course options and frequency of offerings
- The biggest major (DMP) has only four full-time faculty for more than 250 students
- Assessment needs to make up for lost time after two years of little testing or analysis
- Lack of diversity on the faculty
- Lack of awareness of diversity as a subject in coursework

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

Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness

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

- Lack of racial diversity in the full-time and part-time faculty
- Lack of curricular Diversity, Equity and Inclusion content in courses throughout the curriculum, resulting in a lack of awareness among students of DEI issues and concepts

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

n/a

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

n/a

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

Lack of diversity in the faculty, both full-time and adjunct, despite progress in strategies and actions – Little to no change; laudable recent initiatives and energy have yet to yield results.

Small number of research-focused faculty, and limited faculty productivity, both scholarly and creative – This has been addressed through new hires, additional workload adjustment for faculty engaged in scholarship and creative activity, and by resuming travel grants for research or presentation of scholarship.

A sequence, Digital Media Production, that is not performing at the level of the others and leaving many students deeply unsatisfied – Since the last site team visit, changes to the Digital Media Production major were made, based on feedback from students, faculty and industry professionals. Implemented in 2019-2020, these changes include allowing students to take skills-based courses earlier in their course of study and new digital and multimedia special topics courses. However, as noted above, these changes are relatively new and their impact has not yet been assessed. Additional attention and resources may be needed.

Disproportionate focus on skills at the expense of conceptual learning – The school has made a concerted effort to add theoretical/conceptual content into major courses. It has furthered students' exposure by also requiring specific courses from other units within the College of Communication and Information.

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 at first glance was clean and attractive and easy to consume. Unfortunately, it was ultimately inconsistent in several areas, had incorrect data in tables in multiple places that had to be verified during the visit, and in many sections obscured the answers to the questions amid nonessential and even irrelevant details.