

Report of On-Site Evaluation

ACEJMC

Undergraduate program

2012– 2013

Name of Institution: Abilene Christian University _____

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Dr. Phil Schubert, President _____

Name of Unit: Department of Journalism and Mass Communication _____

Name and Title of Administrator: Dr. Cheryl Mann Bacon, Professor and Chair _____

Date of 2012 - 2013 Accrediting Visit: Oct. 21-24, 2012 _____

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

Date of the previous accrediting visit: Oct. 29-Nov. 1, 2006 _____

Recommendation of the previous accrediting team: Accreditation _____

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Accreditation _____

Recommendation by 2012 - 2013 Visiting Team: Provisional Accreditation _____

Prepared and submitted by:

Team Chair

Name and Title: Dr. Richard Cole, Kerr Distinguished Professor and Dean Emeritus

Organization/School: School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill _____

Signature _____

Team Members

Name and Title: Dr. Jan Dates, Dean Emerita

Organization/School: School of Communications, Howard University _____

Signature _____

Name and Title: Dr. Tim Gleason, Dean _____

Organization/School: School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Oregon _____

Signature _____

Name and Title: Joyce Mireault, Director of Client Services _____

Organization/School: Flint Group-HatlingFlint, St. Cloud, MN _____

Signature _____

Name and Title: _____

Organization/School: _____

Signature _____

Name and Title: _____

Organization/School: _____

Part I: General Information

Name of Institution: Abilene Christian University
Name of Unit: Department of Journalism and Mass Communication
Year of Visit: 2012

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

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

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

- Private
- Public
- Other (specify)

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

As a private university, authorization is provided through the Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation, most recently filed in the Office of the Secretary of State of Texas Jan. 16, 2002. The complete document is attached as Appendix A. The relevant portions, Articles III and IV are provided here:

ARTICLE III.

This corporation is created for the following purposes, to wit: the establishment and maintenance of a university for the advancement of education in which the arts, sciences, languages and Holy Scriptures shall always be taught, together with such other courses of instruction as shall be deemed advisable by the Board of Trustees and which shall be managed and controlled as hereinafter set forth by a Board of Trustees, each of whom shall be a member of a congregation of the Church of Christ, which takes the New Testament as its only and sufficient rule of faith, worship and practice, and rejects from its faith, worship and practice everything not required by either precept or example, and which does not introduce into the faith, worship and practice, as a part of the same or as adjuncts thereto any supplemental organization or anything else not clearly and directly authorized in the New Testament by either precept or example.

ARTICLE IV.

The location of this university and the business office of this corporation shall be in the county of Taylor in or near the City of Abilene, State of Texas.

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: Oct. 29-Nov. 1, 2006

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

First visit – November 2000. Initial accreditation – May 2001.

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

As part of the self-study process, a committee was appointed in August 2011 by the unit administrator to draft a revised mission statement. The statement was discussed by the faculty in two subsequent meetings and electronically using a shared document.

“Our mission is to engage students in critical and creative thinking in the classroom, in the laboratory and through mentoring relationships, leading them to become exceptional, ethical and agile communicators in a rapidly changing media environment, embracing technology, valuing global diversity and embodying Christ-centered service.”

Adopted by the faculty, January 13, 2012

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Semesters of 16 weeks
Summer sessions of 3-5 1/2 weeks
*January Intersession of 1 weeks
[JMC has not offered any courses in the intersession]

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

Four-year program leading to Bachelor's degree
 Graduate work leading to Master's degree
 Graduate work leading to Ph.D. degree

9. Give the number of credit hours required for graduation. Specify semester-hour or quarter-hour credit.

128 semester hours

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

One semester hour

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

<u>Name of Sequence or Specialty</u>	<u>Person in Charge</u>
Convergence Journalism (BA or BS)	Kenneth Pybus, J.D.
Ad/PR (BS)	Joyce Haley
Multimedia (BS)	Dr. Susan Lewis

The unit does not seek accreditation for two interdisciplinary programs in which it participates:

The Advertising/Graphic design interdisciplinary major (ARTC) is shared with the Department of Art and Design and housed in that department.

A program leading to teacher certification in Texas is coordinated with the Department of Teacher Education in the College of Education and Human Services but housed in JMC. The liaison is Doug Mendenhall.

Students enrolled prior to the 2010-11 catalog were enrolled in differently named and configured majors: Journalism (print, broadcast and photo tracks), Ad/PR, or Electronic Media (visual communication or digital media track).

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

Fall 2011

Full-time Undergrad: 3556	Graduate: 288	Total: 3,844
Part-time Undergrad: 215	Graduate: 499	Total: 714
Headcount Total: 4,558		

Spring 2012

Full-time Undergrad: 3133	Graduate: 293	Total: 3,426
Part-time Undergrad: 294	Graduate: 503	Total: 797
Headcount Total: 4,223		

Fall 2012

Full-time Undergrad: 3,410	Graduate: 324	Total: 3,734
Part-time Undergrad: 219	Graduate: 418	Total: 637
Headcount Total: 4,371		

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

<u>Name of Sequence or Specialty</u>	<u>Undergraduate majors</u>		
	Fall 2011	Spring 2012	Fall 2012
Convergence Journalism	36	33	40
Ad/PR	81	90	81
Multimedia	14	14	17
Journalism/Multimedia Teacher Cert			2
ARTC (interdisciplinary with Art & Design)	10	8	N/A
<i>Note: Majors were reconfigured and renamed in fall 2010. Some students on previous catalogs are in the process of completing degrees under the old degree plans:</i>			
Journalism (Print track)	6	5	9*
Journalism (Broadcast track)	10	10	
Journalism (Photo track)	5	5	
Electronic Media (Digital media track)	8	7	
Electronic Media (Visual communication track)	9	8	11*
Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC)	1	1	
Total	180	181	160

Tracks in the older degree plans have been collapsed into a single line on this chart.

14. Number of students in each section of all skills courses (news writing, reporting, editing, photography, advertising copy, broadcast news, etc.). List enrollment by section for the term during which the visit will occur and the preceding term. Attach separate pages if necessary.

	Spring 2012	Fall 2012
JMC 102.01 Creating Media Messages	15	14
JMC 102.02 Creating Media Messages	15	15
JMC 102.03 Creating Media Messages	9	*
JMC 111.01 Announcing	*	11
JMC 201.01 Intro to Visual Media	15	15
JMC 201.02 Intro to Visual Media	*	15
JMC 223.01 Convergence Reporting I	9	12
JMC 233.01 Photography	15	15
JMC 239.01 Writing for Electronic Delivery	15	*
JMC 260.01 Television Studio Production	*	15
JMC 310.01 Interactive Media	*	14
JMC 324.01 Convergence Reporting II	*	8
JMC 341.01 Copy Editing	*	4
JMC 342.01 Publication Design	15	15
JMC 351.01 Electronic Publishing	11	10
JMC 360.01 Television Field Production	7	*
JMC 390.01 Advertising Creativity and Copy Writing	15	16
JMC 405.01 Visual Portfolio	10	*
JMC 438.01 Broadcast News	7	*
JMC 450.01 Feature Writing	*	6

*not offered this semester

15. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2012 – 2013 academic year:

Operating budgets and salaries in JMC budget lines	\$ 968,905
Capital equipment and fee money estimate based on three-year average	\$ 14,432
FY 13 LINK allocation (awarded every three or four years)	<u>\$ 178,219</u>
*TOTAL	\$1,161,556

**Does not include professional development funds that may be awarded through College of Arts and Sciences and Presidential Fund applications during FY 13. Of the FY 13 LINK allocation, about \$25,000 was from FY 12 funds the team had left over and allocated to the unit in FY 13.*

Percentage increase or decrease in three years:

FY10 – FY 11	+ 4.7 percent
FY11 – FY 12	+ 0.4 percent
FY12 – FY 13	- 7.0 percent*

* All departments took a 6 percent reduction in operating budgets for FY13

Amount spent this year on full-time faculty salaries:

2011-12 faculty salaries	- \$ 458,109.00
2012-13 faculty salaries	- \$ 395,379.00

The reduction in budgeted salary dollars from FY 12 to FY 13 reflects the loss of one position to university budget reallocations. The FY 13 budget includes the salary budgeted for Dr. Susan Lewis who is on a one-year assignment as Interim Vice Provost. On average, faculty salaries increased 13.6 percent since the site visit in 2006.

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

Spring 2012

- *Dr. Cheryl Mann Bacon, professor
- *Dr. Susan Lewis, associate professor
- *Kenneth Pybus, J.D., associate professor
- Joyce Haley, M.S., instructor
- Dave Hogan, M.S., instructor
- Doug Mendenhall, M.S., instructor and journalist in residence (will move to tenure-track upon completion of Ph.D., anticipated by December 2013)
- Cade White, M.S., instructor
- Adrian Jewett, M.S., in Ph.D. studies at University of Florida with partial support from ACU, under contract to join faculty upon completion
- *tenured

Fall 2012

- *Dr. Cheryl Mann Bacon, professor
- *Dr. Susan Lewis, associate professor

*Kenneth Pybus, J.D., associate professor
 Joyce Haley, M.S., instructor
 Doug Mendenhall, M.S., instructor and journalist in residence (will move to tenure-track upon completion of Ph.D., anticipated by December 2013)
 Cade White, M.S., instructor
 Adrian Jewett, M.S., in Ph.D. studies at University of Florida with partial support from ACU, under contract to join faculty upon completion
 *tenured

17. List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in Fall 2012. Also list part-time faculty teaching in Spring 2012. (If your school has its accreditation visit in 2013, please provide an updated list at the time of the visit.)

Spring 2012

Timothy Graham, M.S. (ABD from University of Tennessee) – JMC 111 Announcing
 Dr. Charlie Marler, professor emeritus and senior faculty – JMC 364 Media and Religion
 John Best, M.S., director of broadcast operations – JMC 405 Visual Portfolio

Fall 2012

Dr. Charlie Marler, professor emeritus and senior faculty – JMC 341 Copy Editing
 John Best, M.S., director of broadcast operations – JMC 405 Visual Portfolio
 Joey Roberts, M.S., communications minister, University Church of Christ – JMC 102
 Creating Media Messages
 Sara Hejl, M.S. owner, Photo Card Café – JMC 348, PR Principles
 Dustin Hahn, M.S., JMC 201 Intro to Visual Media and JMC 310 Interactive Media

18. Schools on the semester system:

For each of the last two academic years, please give the number and percentage of graduates who earned 80 or more semester hours outside the major and 65 or more semester hours in liberal arts and sciences.

Year	Total Graduates	80 or more semester hours outside the major		65 or more semester hours in liberal arts/sciences	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
2011-2012 academic year	43	41	95	42	97
2010-2011 academic year	32	32	100	32	100
2009-2010 academic year	40	40	100	39	98

PART II — Standard 1: Mission, Governance and Administration

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

First, a few words of basic general information to set the university and the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication into perspective:

Abilene Christian University (ACU), founded in 1906, is a small, private university offering 67 undergraduate degree programs, 25 master's programs and one doctoral program. Overall, the university has a 16-to-1 student-teacher ratio for its 4,600 students (including part-timers). More than 90 percent of freshmen receive some form of financial aid.

ACU is affiliated with the Churches of Christ. Almost half of the students list Churches of Christ as their religious preference, although the percentage doing so is decreasing over time. All full-time faculty members must be a member of the Churches of Christ.

ACU has been recognized as an innovator in technology and mobile learning.

ACU is geographically isolated in central West Texas, with the nearest major market more than 150 miles away.

Student journalism has been part of the campus for more than a century, and journalism education has been part of it for 90 years. During that time, journalism education evolved as it did at many universities across the country, going through different program names and administrative units. The first B.A. in mass communication was awarded in 1969. In 1978, the program moved into the Don H. Morris Center on the campus with state-of-the-art computer and broadcast equipment. The present unit, the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, was created in 1986.

The university is now going through a period of administrative change: a new president in fall 2010, a new provost in July 2012, and a search for a new dean of the College of Arts and Sciences now underway.

Conversely, the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication – one of the largest units in enrollment in the College of Arts and Sciences -- has been stable. The Department chair has been in that job 14 years. Current full-time faculty members have served at ACU from about six to 33 years. All full-time faculty members are alumni of ACU (either undergraduate or master's or both).

The Department was first accredited in 2000-01 and then re-accredited in 2006-07. Some basic facts and figures about the Department now:

- The Department is an undergraduate unit with no plans to begin a graduate program.
- It had only five full-time faculty members at the time of the site visit:
 - The Department chair is the only full professor.
 - One associate professor with tenure.
 - Three instructors-lecturers on one-year renewable contracts.

A few years ago the Department had seven full-time faculty members, but one left (he was not renewed). A sixth full-time faculty member left for an interim position in the university provost's office and may or may not return to the Department in the future. If she does not return, approval to fill the position already has been granted.

- The Department has from three to six part-time faculty members in any one semester. The university does not require them to be members of the Churches of Christ. At the time of the site visit, there were five part-timers.
- The typical teaching load at ACU is heavy: 12 credit hours a semester. Some faculty members receive reduced loads for performing other duties. In the Department, some faculty

members actively working with students in the newsroom receive 3 hours of credit for that and thus teach only 9 hours of classes.

- Of the total of 79 credit hours of different courses and sections taught in the Department in fall 2012, 58 credits (73%) were taught by full-time people and 21 credits (27 %) by part-timers, according to the self-study.
- Virtually all skills classes have no more than 15 students each.
- The overall budget of the Department for 2012-13 is just short of \$1.2 million.

The Department emphasizes convergence in its curriculum generally. Here are the Department's three majors and their enrollments in fall 2012, according to the self-study:

■ Convergence journalism	40 students
■ Advertising-Public Relations	81 students
■ Multimedia	17 students
Total	138

Adding in some students finishing other programs that were on the books before the curriculum was revamped recently brings the total of undergraduates to about 160.

The Department also has two small programs for which it does not seek ACEJMC accreditation: 1) an advertising-graphic design interdisciplinary major with the Department of Art and Design that is housed in that Department, and 2) a tiny teacher-certification program with the Department of Teacher Education in the College of Education and Human Services but housed in the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication.

The Department allows 1 credit hour of internships to be counted in the 128 credit hours required for graduation. The internship is acquired of all students in the Department.

The Department has three computer labs, where most classes are taught. Student media at ACU are overseen by the Department and are integrated with the Department curriculum.

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

The Department has an appropriate mission statement. Partly in relation to this ACEJMC visit, the statement was discussed and revised in consideration of student learning objectives and other considerations. This occurred in 2011. The statement was then adopted in January 2012. It emphasizes a rapidly changing media environment that embraces technology. It cites the value of global diversity and embodies Christ-centered service.

The University has five-year plans and requests only "entrepreneurial goals" from academic departments. But the Department drafted its own strategic plan for internal use. The Department engages in considerable short- and long-range planning. Generally, faculty planning retreats are held every August and most every January. Here are some of the Department's most important entrepreneurial goals in recent years that have resulted from all-Department, long-range planning. All these goals have been accomplished :

- Streamlining and further converging majors.

- Converging co-curricular student media. Examples include adding a student-run advertising-P.R. agency, producing a weekly coach's show, and creating newscasts and sportscasts for YouTube throughout the academic year.
- Renovating the second and third floors of the Morris Center to create a converged media lab and large lecture room and locate all faculty members on the same floor, etc. This cost a million dollars.
- Revising the unit's diversity plan and doing much more regarding study abroad.

The Department has spent more time discussing and planning for improvements on diversity than on any other subject, according to the self-study. That is discussed elsewhere in this site report.

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

The Department faculty meets for lunch about twice a month. In 2011-12, the faculty met 11 times plus its fall retreat and some other informal sessions. The Department has policies and procedures assuring a strong role for faculty governance. Because of its small size, with only five full-time faculty members now on board, the faculty usually functions as a committee of the whole. For each faculty search, a search committee is formed. Various ad hoc committees have been appointed: mission statement, review of tenure and promotion criteria, etc.

(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.

The Department administration provides effective leadership inside the unit and to the higher university and with its external constituency. The chair is appointed by the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences in consultation with the faculty and is responsible to him administratively. The appointment is for three years and is renewable.

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

The university's Faculty Handbook and the College of Arts and Sciences' handbook detail processes and procedures in this regard. Department faculty and staff members complete an evaluation document on the Department chair. The documents go to the College dean, who then reviews the chair formally every three years. The chair has received positive evaluations and has been praised as a leader. She has been lauded for enhancing the reputation of the Department and for other accomplishments.

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

The Department, College and university have appropriate processes for expressing concerns and having the concerns addressed. The Department has a formal complaint policy that is posted on a bulletin board outside the Department office and on its website. The chair and most faculty members have an open-door policy and welcome students. Students are free to express concerns anonymously on course evaluations. The chair reads every comment from every evaluation each semester. Faculty members receive them after grades are turned in. In spring 2012, about two-thirds of the students said

they would feel comfortable taking a serious complaint about a teacher directly to the teacher. Two-thirds said they felt comfortable exercising their rights under the Department's student-complaint policy. Students may also go to higher officials in the University. Faculty members also have appropriate processes for expressing concerns and for having them addressed, as do employees.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:

Compliance.

PART II — Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

- (a) The unit requires that students take a minimum of 80 semester credit hours or 116 quarter credit hours outside of the unit and a minimum of 65 semester credit hours or 94 quarter credit hours in the liberal arts and sciences (as defined by the institution) outside of the unit.**

In 2011-12, the Department met the requirement with 95 percent of graduates with 80 or more credits outside the major, and 97 percent of graduates with 65 or more credits in arts and sciences. In 2010-11, both the categories were 100 percent.

Due to university reorganization of the College of Arts and Sciences, in which some units previously in CA&S gained college status, the Department includes several courses taught outside CA&S as meeting the liberal arts and science requirement. These courses are either part of the university's Liberal Arts and Sciences Core Curriculum or meet university core requirements. For example, Economics, which is taught in the College of Business Administration, is considered a liberal arts and sciences course because it meets a social science requirement in all degree plans. In addition, Biblical text courses taught in the College of Biblical Studies are included in the liberal arts and science courses based on a past precedent that the study of Biblical text as literature and history meets the intent of the standard.

- (b) The unit provides a balance between theoretical and conceptual courses and professional skills courses to achieve the range of student competencies listed by the Council. (If the unit has more than one sequence, evaluate each sequence.)**

Students in the three JMC majors under review take a 20-credit common core that includes introductory courses on media and media professions, writing for media across platforms, visual communication, digital publishing or digital design, a course in communication law, and a required 1-credit internship.

The internship course includes a classroom introduction to the internship experience, several written assignments and a portfolio, and a minimum of 120 hours of work at an approved professional internship placement.

The Department incorporates a theory base into a substantial number of courses in the curriculum that is documented in a Theoretical/Conceptual and Professional Skills Course Content chart in the self-study and confirmed in a review of syllabi and by student responses to team member questions.

Convergence Journalism

The Department embraced a platform-agnostic approach to journalism in 1996. The building of a converged newsroom and the creation of the JMC Network in 2008 were critical developments in advancing the Department's vision. Today JMC students produce content for student publications distributed across print, broadcast, online, tablet and mobile platforms.

All convergence-journalism majors take a set of core courses in basic and advanced convergence reporting and two semesters of 0-credit student media lab. Then students take 12 credits of courses targeted to their desired career paths from a menu of courses that includes courses in announcing,

photography, photojournalism, copy editing, television field production, Broadcast News, Opinion Writing and Feature Writing, and an additional 3-credit elective.

Advertising and Public Relations

Since the last site visit, the Department changed the name from Integrated Marketing Communication to Ad/P.R., not because there would be less focus on integration but to define more clearly the sequence and reflect the depth of study in each area.

The Advertising and Public Relations major has the highest number of students in the Department with an average of 84 in 2011-12.

Beyond the required classes, the Department offers basically unlimited access to its newsroom and advertising agency, so beyond the required lab experience, students can elect to work in those environments throughout their college career. Opportunities are available to freshman as well.

The addition of the student-run Ad/P.R. agency provides students with an opportunity to work on internal and external projects as part of their media lab requirement, and there are a limited number of paid positions available in the agency.

In addition to the 20 core JMC requirements, the unit requires a major-specific core of 12 credits and one JMC elective.

JMC 239, Writing for Electronic Delivery

JMC 321: Student Media/Agency Lab (2 semesters required; 1 must be with the ad-P.R. agency, where students earn 1 credit)

JMC 347: Principles of Public Relations

JMC 348: Principles of Advertising

JMC 492: Ad/P.R. Campaigns

Advertising and public relations students are required to take 6 credit hours from a menu of classes. There are a number of courses to choose from, allowing students to customize their degree plans according to their individual career goals. Students can choose from:

JMC 223: Convergence Reporting I

JMC 389: P.R. Writing

JMC 390: Advertising Creativity and Copy Writing

JMC 391: Ad/P.R. Media Planning

Students are also required to complete 15 credit hours in a support field; the concentration must be in a single category (business, art, English, ethnic and women's studies, language and literature, history, peace and social justice studies, political science, psychology, science or sociology).

Multimedia

Multimedia majors are offered a menu that affords them the opportunity to work in video production, explore advertising messaging or concentrate in the digital arena. An exception or substitution to a degree plan requirement may be approved by the chair to accommodate special interests and needs of students. Generally, the chair will approve only one exception or substitution per student. The Department requires students to complete a 15-hour support field and encourages selection of a field that complements career goals.

Writing for Electronic Delivery, first created in 2002 to prepare students for the new demands of

writing for online and mobile venues, now is required for Ad/P.R. and Multimedia majors, and as a selection for Convergence Journalism majors. As social media began to dominate technology news, emphasis on writing for this form of delivery has been increased in the curriculum.

Adoption of new digital tools is diligently pursued and ranges from projects that require months of preparation to simple adoption of the latest tools. In 2010, the Department was the first university ever to develop an iPad app for the student newspaper. An interdisciplinary team of faculty and students worked to ensure that the Optimist app was available when the first iPads were available for purchase. Students make in-class presentations using online resources such as Prezi. New video camera acquisitions record to CompactFlash disks. The Morris & Mitchell students keep track of their time via an iPhone app. Course blogs are incorporated by faculty in a variety of ways as a class resource, or for class production and interaction.

Discussion of major news events, news-making advertising and public relations campaigns, viral videos and other mass communication events are integrated into courses and shared among faculty. Students are required to subscribe to mobile news sources and industry resources such as AAF Smartbrief and PR Daily to foster broadly participatory class conversations.

(c) Instruction is demanding and current; achievements in teaching and learning are recognized and valued. (If the unit has more than one sequence, address the quality of instruction by sequence.)

Convergence Journalism

Instruction in classes and in the JMC Network is rigorous and current. The Department continues to innovate and to capitalize on the opportunities created by its converged newsroom. The campus community holds The Optimist, the student newspaper distributed in print, online and on the iPad, in high regard. Several university faculty members cited it as a primary source of news about the university. Industry professionals report positive experience with JMC interns and that they hire the Department's graduates. JMC students are frequent award winners in statewide student competitions.

Advertising and Public Relations

The curriculum includes an appropriate balance of advertising and public relations. Classroom and agency lab instruction supports and demonstrates the importance of an integrated approach to marketing, as is recognized by the industry. Both student experiences offer an emphasis on traditional and nontraditional solutions and include relevant application to business objectives. Faculty and students enjoy a highly technical environment and leverage those capabilities in the classroom and labs. Students indicated a high level of understanding for the importance of audience segmentation as it relates to media planning and messaging, but also diversity. Students also expressed a good understanding of how to apply social media and new interactive tools to a specific business objective vs. simply knowing how to use for personal interaction. Students also demonstrated a solid understanding of analytics and measurement from campaign work.

Students, other colleges and professionals have high regard for the JMC students in the program. Advertising professionals said interns and graduates have an excellent understanding of industry terminology, good critical thinking skills and advertising acumen and work extremely well in teams. At the same time, from speaking with professionals in the region, there was a consensus that advertising students are not as prepared when it comes to professional and business acumen. The word "naive" was used frequently. Professionals indicated that though students are heavily involved in student-run organizations, there is still a need for integration of business acumen, knowledge of how to sell

themselves as professionals, and more experience outside of the campus. There was some awareness of this at the student level, as was expressed during student interviews and discussions.

Multimedia

Faculty members with responsibility for multimedia majors include one tenured full-time faculty member and adjuncts hired as needed. These faculty members establish a rigorous set of expectations for students. The self-study notes and the site visit confirms that instruction is demanding and current, achievements in teaching and learning are recognized and valued and that the Department's commitment to a rigorous and innovative curriculum is strong.

(d) Student-faculty classroom ratios facilitate effective teaching and learning in all courses; a student-teacher ratio of 15-1 in skills and laboratory sections is strongly recommended and the ratio in each section should not exceed 20-1.

All skills courses are taught in laboratory environments that are designed to accommodate no more than 15 students. Only eight JMC courses allow enrollment in excess of 15 students. Even in those courses, enrollment usually is capped at 35 or fewer. Average class size in the 2011-12 academic year was less than 12 students per class.

(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. (If the unit has more than one sequence, address the opportunities by sequence.)

An internship requiring a minimum 120 hours of work in a directly relevant professional work environment is required of all JMC majors. Students take a 1-credit internship course taught by a faculty member who serves as the internship coordinator. In addition to completing an internship, students must complete and defend an internship portfolio that includes an internship diary, a report on the internship experience, essays on domestic and global diversity and professional ethics, and work samples.

In addition to the required professional internship, all students must serve two semesters in a hands-on media lab. Zero academic credit is awarded for these semesters, but they are transcribed and include attendance and participation expectations. Converged journalism majors spend at least one semester working at the JMC Network, producing content for the Optimist print, online and mobile versions. The second semester may be spent at KACU-FM, Abilene Public Radio, the University's NPR-affiliated station. Ad-P.R. majors work at Morris & Mitchell, the student-run advertising and public relations agency, where they plan and implement a wide-range of projects. Ad/P.R. majors may choose to spend one semester in the JMC/Network. Multimedia majors may serve their semesters at either lab but most frequently work in the JMC Network. The labs are directed by faculty advisers working closely with students to maximize the learning opportunity.

A Department faculty member maintains an internship blog with listings of internship resources and current internship opportunities. Internships are also posted on the Department's Facebook page and on the university's Career Services website. Students embrace the internship requirement and seek out opportunities in the Abilene area and beyond.

Convergence Journalism

Recent internship and job placements include the Abilene Reporter-News, The Daily, The Houston Chronicle, CBS Radio-Dallas, Radio Free Asia, KTXS-TV and The Tennessean.

Advertising and Public Relations

Recent internship placements include The Richards Group (Dallas), Golin Harris (Dallas), The Grey Group (New York), North Carolina Forest Service, ACU Office of Alumni Relations, Kimberly-Clark Corporation, and Big Brothers Big Sisters of West Texas.

Multimedia

Recent internships have been at CBS Sports, ACU Online Marketing, In-Focus Digital, and Time Photography.

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 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 Department has adopted a diversity policy and plan aimed at meeting diversity goals. The plan was approved by the faculty in April 1998, updated in February 2000, updated in November 2005 and updated again in August 2009. It established a Departmental policy stating that diversity is broader than any set of statistically measurable variables and that a diverse student body and faculty would reflect not only diversity of gender and ethnicity, the traditional variables, but also diversity of age, economic background, and professional and philosophical approach.

The self-study noted that the Department is committed to the university's policy of hiring full-time faculty members who are active members of a local, independent congregation of the Churches of Christ. This is a challenge for the Department in regard to accreditation in that it greatly limits the faculty hiring pools.

University administrators are aware that the policy presents significant challenges, and they have begun exploring options for amending it. This team also believes that the policy should be revisited to allow for greater flexibility in recruiting faculty members.

The Department's diversity plan is essentially the same plan that was included in the 2006 self-study—with its similar eight bullet points. The previous site team believed the plan was insufficient and that it was basically the same plan that had been used in 2000. The 2006 team called for specific changes that included measurements for assessing the effectiveness of the plan. However, there are few evident specific measurements for assessing the effectiveness of the plan in the most recent diversity plan submitted by the Department, and the plan does not include a system for determining progress toward achieving measurable goals.

(b) The unit's curriculum fosters understanding of issues and perspectives that are inclusive in terms of gender, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation.

The Department's self-study indicated that syllabi and classroom discussions routinely include topics targeted to foster understandings of issues and perspectives that are inclusive in terms of gender, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation. The report listed examples of courses in which diversity segments play an important role in at least 10 courses, from the introductory level through the highest levels in each major. The Ad/P.R. sequence had the least amount of information in its syllabi about how diversity is approached and addressed within courses, although Ad/P.R. students were able to cite examples of how they covered diversity and multicultural groups in their classes.

The self-study notes that the Department has made significant progress in the area of diversity within the curriculum. As evidence, 99 percent of those responding in the most recent annually conducted alumni survey reported that diversity issues were discussed in class in JMC and in their other university classes. And 38 percent reported that diversity was discussed to a high degree in their JMC classes, and 32 percent said diversity was discussed to that degree in their other university classes.

The JMC faculty believes a weakness lies in a lack of co-curricular activities specifically designed to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student population. JMC majors have been active as leaders in the campus-wide organizations that target students of color, and on at least two occasions since the last site visit Ad/P.R. majors have attended the AAF's Mosaic event, but no internal JMC organizations

have been established. In the 2012 fall semester, the university is welcoming its most diverse freshman class in the school's history, with more than 30 percent of entering freshmen representing ethnic minority groups. This makes the development of an initiative to identify and cultivate co-curricular activities such as a student chapter of NABJ particularly timely for the Department, which has a 30 percent minority enrollment in its first-year class for the first time.

The self-study indicates that guest speakers are used to expand the Department's efforts to educate and expose students to diversity and multiculturalism. Over the past six years, there have been a number of speakers of color on campus and some in JMC classes. In a number of cases, it is unclear if students were required to attend their sessions or just encouraged. In some cases, majors were required to attend in specific courses. Required attendance, with assignments related to the coursework, is more effective, of course, if there is to be an effect on the program.

(c) The unit demonstrates effective efforts to recruit women and minority faculty and professional staff and supports their retention, progress and success.

Although the Department was found out of compliance on the diversity standard in 2000 and 2006, on both occasions the Department at least had minority faculty members in the classroom. In 2000, it had two adjunct faculty members who were women of color who have since left the area. In 2006, the full-time faculty included a Native American male who has left the university.

Since the last visit, two searches have been completed. In response to the 2006 site- team report, a faculty member was hired to teach advertising. No minority applicant responded to that search. After the unexpected retirement of a print-focused journalism faculty member in 2007-08, a search resulted in the Department's hiring a faculty member with a master's degree and more than 20 years of professional experience and full financial support from the university for him to complete his Ph.D.; he is not from a minority group.

Because the university was aware of the Department's desire to make a diverse hire, the Department was allowed to continue advertising for a position even after the advertising hire was made and even though no line was budgeted for this. One applicant of color was interviewed in 2006 but not offered a position. Concurrent with the Department's continuing efforts to recruit a minority faculty member, SACS requirements mandated an increase in the number of terminally degreed faculty. As a result, the Department made an agreement of support with a white female who is completing her doctoral studies at the University of Florida. She will join the Department faculty upon completion of her degree in about two years. At some point, the Department chair had discussions with two prospects of color, one male and one female, exploring similar arrangements, but both opted to continue broadcast journalism careers. A new faculty search was opened in the summer of 2012, and the chair began a correspondence with a woman of color urging her to apply in addition to placing ads in NABJ and NAHJ job-posting websites.

In the 2012 fall semester, the full-time faculty is made up of five faculty members. Two have doctorates, 40 percent are women, and there are no minorities currently serving. There are five adjunct faculty members, not any one of whom is from a minority group. There are two and one-half staff members, not any one of whom is from a minority group.

The self-study noted that the Department has been successful at recruiting women as full-time faculty members and in employing women as part-time and adjunct faculty; most semesters about half of the adjuncts are women. The Department chair is a woman as is one of the most recent faculty members to be granted tenure.

Church affiliation is not a criterion for adjuncts, but as noted in the self-study, the geographic area constitutes an entry-level media market in a geographically isolated region. So finding adjuncts of any

ethnicity is a challenge. Since the departure of the two minority adjuncts on staff in 2000, the Department chair has not been able to identify a person of color in the Abilene area with a master's degree in a JMC field that would satisfy SACS credential requirements for adjunct faculty. (As recently as June 2012, only one editorial staff member of the local newspaper held a master's degree. That was the editor, a white male who has taught as an adjunct in the past.) While faculty members have regularly invited local media professionals of color as guest speakers, none have been available to serve as adjunct instructors.

The chair regularly checks with local media outlets to identify any employees who have master's degrees and who would be available to teach, but she has not been made aware of any minority professionals in the city who have SACS credentials for adjunct faculty. The team shared with the Department chair that other similarly situated programs use a multi-pronged approach, such as reaching beyond the local market and using new media technology (Skype or Google Hangout) to help them address unmet diversity needs.

(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.

There is no Departmental variation from the university admission requirement. A student can become a major after being admitted to the university by declaring that he or she is a JMC major. However, for a major to enroll in JMC 102, Creating Media Messages, and all subsequent courses, the student must have a 550 SAT verbal score, a 24 ACT English score or a 70 Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling Exam score. In addition, the student must have a 2.0 overall GPA in the Department and a 2.25 overall at the university for graduation.

Twenty-three percent of the students in the Department are non-white, which is similar to the university's 21 percent non-white. The most recent data show a four-year graduation rate of 43 percent for the non-white students in the Department, which is equal to the four-year graduation rate for that class as a whole. Of students in the JMC Department during AY 2011-12: 8 percent were black; 9 percent were Hispanic or Mexican American; 2 percent were Native American; and 4 percent were Asian or Pacific Islander.

Forty-seven ethnic or racial minority students declared a major in the Department between the fall of 2006 and 2007. Of that number, 20 earned degrees from the Department by 2011, which is a 43 percent four-year graduation rate for minority students in the program. Others are still making satisfactory progress toward a JMC degree. This ethnic or racial minority graduation rate is better than the university's four-year minority graduation rate for the same time period.

According to the self-study, multiple efforts are made to give every student help that is carefully tailored to his or her needs. Retention of minorities is important to the Department, and the chair and faculty believe advising is the front line of this effort. The self-study notes that the level of high student satisfaction with academic advising can be partially attributed to ongoing faculty involvement in mentoring of majors.

The university used a Multicultural Market SWOT Analysis to assist with its recruitment efforts. It used the analysis to better understand how to communicate with prospective minority students. It also used community resources, including the Hispanic Leadership Council and several African-American church alliances. In addition, the fact that ACU offers small classes, personal attention and appropriate close relationships with professors is attractive to multicultural students and majority students alike. As a result, ACU has a higher student diversity ratio than most of its competitors, and it rivals that of the

state competition. Faculty members noted that minority students have flourished in the Department and succeeded in job placements. Some minority alumni maintain contact and relationships with faculty members. Some current students reported that they feel welcome and supported in the Department.

(e) The unit has a climate that is free of harassment and discrimination, accommodates the needs of those with disabilities, and values the contributions of all forms of diversity.

The Department subscribes to the institution's policies and guidelines regarding harassment, discrimination and the needs of personnel with disabilities. They include such items as creating positions that offer growth opportunities for which women and ethnic minorities are strongly considered; promotion and hiring of women and minorities to administrative and other leadership roles; use of the Gallup Organization's StrengthsFinder analysis tool to reveal the strengths of each person, regardless of rank, gender or ethnicity; and the Quality of Life Task Force, which assessed the state of employee morale and planned ways to improve it.

The institution is in full compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and it regularly conducts employee informational sessions about harassment and discrimination in the workplace.

Faculty members include in their syllabi discussion of the Department's policy with regard to harassment and discrimination, the accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities, and the value of all forms of diversity. Each of those areas has been addressed also by efforts at the institution-wide level and are fully supported and implemented by the Department.

Summary:

The Department has made efforts to meet the guidelines found in the diversity and inclusiveness standard. It has done well on recruiting students, as well as on developing a curriculum that systematically focuses on diversity in a climate that is free of harassment. The challenges for the Department are its written diversity plan and its lack of domestic diversity in faculty and staff positions. This is the third accreditation site-visit team where concerns about these areas have been raised by the team. It is the third time the diversity standard has been found out of compliance.

It is clear that some elements are beyond the Department's control at present, preventing it from readily increasing the diversity of the faculty and staff. In light of that, the Department's plan to pursue the avenues described in its self-study as it seeks some candidates who can meet the requirements of SACS and the Churches of Christ membership need to be vigorously carried forward, particularly if the details of the plan include such items as encouraging university administrators to address the hiring policy; seeking minority professionals in the area and having them as guest lecturers in a regularly scheduled required course or at regular intervals by means of Skype or a similar system if necessary; forming a partnership with another university that has faculty members of color or with one of the Historically Black Universities (HBCU's), and continuing to seek eligible faculty members of color. Several years ago, the Department was successful in recruiting faculty members of color—so it can be done.

The team believes the Department could more vigorously embrace those factors that are within its control, as other ACEJMC-accredited, church-affiliated universities have done under similar circumstances.

First, as noted in the 2006-07 report of the on-site evaluation of the Department, it still may be missing opportunities. For example, although there has been an increase in the number of guest

speakers of color invited to speak in the Department since the last site visit, the speakers' work is not necessarily tied back into the courses in a meaningful way, so there is a minimal effect on the academic program. And the Department has not invited professionals of color to become team teachers who interact with students by electronic systems as well as in person.

Second, the Department's Diversity Plan needs to be strengthened. The 2006 site visit team and the current site visit team take issue with the brevity, lack of measureable goals for assessing the effectiveness of the plan, and the fact that it has not been significantly broadened. The plan does not provide specific tactical actions or a system for determining progress toward achieving measureable goals to be undertaken to achieve full compliance.

Third, the Accrediting Council places a strong emphasis on domestic racial diversity, while the Department places an emphasis on international diversity, both of which are important; however, it needs to be separated and approached as separate goals. Moreover, if the Department made domestic racial diversity a priority, it might focus more of the resources and attention on strengthening the curriculum in this regard, increasing the number of guest speakers, and motivating faculty members and students to pay closer attention to the original intent of the diversity and inclusiveness standard, which is clearly an area of concern about this program within the Accrediting Council, as noted in the previous two site visit reports.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:

Noncompliance.

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.

Criteria for faculty hiring and for evaluation and promotion of full-time faculty members are detailed in the ACU Faculty Handbook and the College of Arts and Sciences College Handbook. The Department chair participated in the development of the university and College policies. The Department follows the College of Arts and Sciences policy for evaluating adjunct faculty.

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

In the current academic year, 70 percent of JMC courses (16 of 23 sections) will be taught by full-time JMC faculty. This is a drop in the percentage of courses taught by full-time faculty due to a faculty member's taking an interim appointment in central administration in the provost's office. A search process is under way to replace this faculty member if her administrative appointment becomes permanent. In the 2010-11 and 2011-12 academic years, more than 80 percent of courses were taught by full-time faculty members. The Department does not have a graduate teaching assistant, although it does use a small number of upper-division students as lab instructors. Adjunct faculty members are drawn largely from the Abilene community. Recruiting adjunct faculty members with the appropriate level of experience and academic credentials (a master's degree) is a challenge in a small media market, but the Department has been able to staff the needed three to five courses each term.

JMC faculty members carry a standard teaching load of four courses per term plus research expectation, and substantial advising and service obligations. In fall 2012, one full-time faculty member was assigned to the provost's office for a one-year interim term (she may or may not return), and another is in residence completing a doctoral program at the University of Florida. The five full-time JMC faculty members in the unit at the time of the site visit are feeling stretched. It will be important for the Department to return to full strength to maintain its high quality of instruction.

(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.

ACU is a teaching-intensive institution, and the Department has a long, proud history of excellence in teaching with a commitment to its undergraduate students. The five full-time faculty on staff in 2011-12 averaged nearly 15 years of professional experience each, ranging from six to 33 years, and nearly 12 years of university teaching experience, ranging from four to 24 years. The part-time faculty, including one retired senior faculty member and six other part-timers who teach in the Department on a regular basis, have an average of more than 18 years of professional experience, with a range of six to 26 years, and close to 20 years of teaching experience, with a range of three to 42 years.

One of the five full-time faculty members in fall 2012 holds a doctorate in education. One has the J.D. One is ABD for the Ph.D. The two others hold master's degrees.

Two of the five current faculty members are in doctoral programs, with support from the Department and the university. One of them is an instructor on a renewable 1-year contract. He will become an assistant professor on the tenure track upon completion of the doctorate. The other holds a J.D. and is an associate professor with tenure.

In addition, a former part-time faculty member is now in a Ph.D. program in communication at the University of Florida. She is receiving support from ACU and is expected to join the faculty upon completion of the degree.

This unusual support of doctoral work by current and future faculty is a “grow your own” strategy that is a response to the Southern Association of College and Schools (SACs) recommendation that the Department increase its percentage of Ph.D.’s and to the restraints placed on hiring by the university’s policy requiring that faculty members are practicing members of the Churches of Christ.

All of the five full-time faculty members in residence in fall 2012 and seven of the eight regular adjunct faculty listed by the Department hold one or more degrees from ACU. The university’s policy requiring that faculty members are practicing members of the Churches of Christ is a strength for the Department as it strives to meet its mission to prepare students for careers in journalism and mass communication while “embodying Christ-centered service.” At the same time, the policy constrains the Department’s ability to recruit qualified candidates as it seeks faculty members with the specialized knowledge and skill sets required to build the journalism and communication programs going forward. Discussions about changing this longstanding university policy are currently under way on the campus.

The university’s and Department’s interpretation and implementation of SACS requirements concerning the degree levels required for tenure-related and adjunct faculty members also constrain the Department’s ability to recruit full-time and adjunct faculty members. A more aggressive use of exemptions available under the requirement is one strategy that might help the Department to maintain and enhance its ability to remain current in the rapidly changing journalism and communication professions.

Faculty members are engaged with state and national professional and academic organizations. For example, one faculty member is president of the Small Programs Interest Group of AEJMC, and another is a past president of the Texas Intercollegiate Press Advisors Association.

(d) The unit regularly evaluates instruction, using multiple measures that include student input.

JMC faculty members participate in an annual review under a College of Arts and Sciences Goal and Faculty Evaluation process and a student evaluation of courses.

Under the CAS process, each faculty member submits in June a list of personal goals and objectives for the coming year. After the faculty member and chair agree on these goals, they become the criteria on which the subsequent annual review is based. By March 1 of the next year, the faculty member submits to the chair a short, reflective report of the previous year’s activities and how well the stated goals were met. The chair completes a written evaluation of the faculty member based in part on the faculty member’s report, course syllabi, student evaluations and submission of significant faculty accomplishments of the faculty member. This evaluation includes assigning a performance level (superior, excellent, effective, needs improvement, or unsatisfactory) to each of the general evaluation criteria (teaching effectiveness, scholarly/creative activity and service).

Student evaluations are conducted in every class taught in the Department. The evaluations include both qualitative and quantitative sections with the results being tabulated and reviewed by the chair

before being released to each faculty member. The evaluations become part of each faculty member's annual portfolio and review.

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

On a campus the size of ACU with its culture of community and service, the JMC faculty members are full participants in the life of the University. Colleagues on the campus cited numerous examples of JMC involvement and leadership. Over the last two years, the full-time JMC faculty members served on 18 different university committees. In fall 2012, one JMC person is serving an interim appointment as a vice provost.

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.

Faculty research, creative activity and/or professional activity are viewed as being an integral part of the Department's teaching mission. The Department's policies for review of both tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty reflect the belief that faculty engagement in research and creative activity informs and enriches the curriculum and the student learning experience.

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

The Department's tenure and promotion policy was revised in March 2012 to better reflect the expectations for scholarly and creative activity in a teaching intensive journalism and mass communication program. It specifically recognizes consulting and creative production for either corporate or nonprofit clients, whether paid or pro bono, as being the creative equivalent to scholarship, so long as the activity is subject to an appropriate level of peer review.

The policy also details the number of research, creative activity and/or professional activities required for tenure and for promotion. Consistent with the Department's philosophy of the relation of research and creative activity to its teaching mission, it views the mentoring of undergraduate student research as a research activity.

The university does not have a research or creative activity expectation for faculty holding the instructor rank. In the Department, scholarly or creative activity is part of the expectation for instructors and is included in the evaluation process.

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

The university and Department criteria are designed to encourage and support research and creative activity appropriate to the mission of the Department. The faculty are engaged in a range of activities from presenting papers at national academic and professional conferences to writing journalism and producing video documentaries to mentoring student research.

(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 Department has made impressive progress in research and creative activity since the last self-study. Fewer than 50 percent of the full-time faculty members have been in tenure-related positions for most of the period under review, yet the Department has substantially increased its productivity in a number of areas:

	2006	2012
Awards and honors	1	3
Internal grants	0	8
Refereed journal articles	1	5
Refereed conference papers	3	27
Invited papers	3	8
Articles (non-refereed)	10	43
Mentored undergrad research	0	34

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

The First Amendment is prominently displayed on the Department walls. In this small Department, there is a clear sense of engagement with ideas and a commitment to community. The Department leadership shares research and creative activity opportunities with the faculty at regular meetings, and students shared several examples of faculty members' bringing opportunities for academic and professional projects to their attention.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:

Compliance.

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.

From the point of enrollment through graduation, students receive academic and career advising. The university communicates all department and university graduation requirements through an annual catalog and Passport, the university's orientation program for freshmen and transfer students. During orientation, students are encouraged to meet with their Department adviser to discuss scheduling concerns or credit issues. JMC faculty members are available to talk with students, answer questions and welcome them to the Department. The First Year Program also provides students with the necessary information about course requirements and starts the process of building student schedules based on goals and their declared major. At that time, students are provided with the name of their assigned faculty adviser. The Department's academic adviser assumes responsibility for actually finalizing student schedules once the student has declared a JMC major. The Department holds mandatory meetings for freshmen to reinforce graduation requirements.

In 2001, the Department developed and adopted an advising plan to ensure that all students receive career and academic advising. Since about 2001, the Department has had a part-time adviser who works with students on academic advising. The current adviser was hired in 2011 and works with students on course enrollment, schedules, details of the Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling exam, and all paperwork related to the degree plans and graduation audits.

Career advising is provided by faculty members and the Department's internship director; those efforts are supported by the university career services office.

The self-study and discussion with the Department's academic adviser indicate that freshmen and sophomores are required to see their academic adviser for an advising code. They cannot register without that advising code. The formal report also indicates that juniors must meet with faculty advisers in early March before enrolling in senior classes; however, that requirement is not tracked. There is no formal requirement for seniors, though they are encouraged to meet with their faculty adviser at least once in the last semester to discuss job-search and graduate school plans and to review resumes.

The report and conversations with faculty and students describe a litany of support: career planning in classes, portfolio reviews, guest speakers in classes, an array of industry student chapters/organizations, interaction with the Visiting Committee and alumni professionals, several opportunities to network with professionals and career programs. In addition, the ACU Career Center's Career Link service, nine academic resources, six administrative resources and several additional resources are noted. However, only 60 percent of students expressed some degree of satisfaction with career advising, according to the latest student survey.

The Department report highlights the fact there is no formal process in place or requirement to ensure that students register with Career Services in a timely manner and that other departments on campus require students to enter resumes into the Career Services system before allowing them to register for courses during their junior year. The Department notes this area of weakness and is working with Career Services to investigate this issue.

(b) Faculty are available and accessible to students.

Spring 2012 student survey results indicate that 94 percent of those who responded were satisfied with access to faculty members outside of class.

The Department requires faculty members to be available a minimum of seven hours per week, but an open-door culture is evident. Faculty members post office hours in their syllabi and are regularly available via chat and email; they often provide students with their home or cell phone numbers. In student sessions, students expressed high satisfaction with their advising experience, both academic and career advising. Students also verified the open-door advising schedule and after-hour access.

The report and meetings with faculty indicate that all full-time faculty members advise undergraduate students. Five faculty members are currently responsible for advising 160 students or more. With the largest number of students in Advertising/Public Relations (90), there is a substantial burden on one faculty member (Joyce Haley). And though the Department chair has taken on the previous Ad/P.R. faculty member's advising load, students still tend to gravitate toward Haley. Although students interviewed didn't express access issues, the Ad/P.R. instructor reported a noticeable increase in time spent on campus with students vs. preparedness and other coursework. The same instructor also oversees the student Ad/P.R. agency.

Through interviews with faculty and students, it is obvious there is real community within the Department, one that encourages frequent and respectful information exchange and healthy overall advising resources. The close proximity of classrooms and faculty offices offers students (and faculty) an accessible and communication-friendly environment. The Ad/P.R. agency and newsroom are hubs of activity and a gathering place for learning and interaction.

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

The Department keeps students informed about activities, requirements and policies by providing information on its website. This is a high-touch, high-tech Department community. Communication with students takes place through the Department advising blog and email. Students can schedule meetings with the academic adviser through the blog, and student records, grades, progress and other pertinent information is tracked through Banner (database/IMS). Information about visiting speakers, club meetings, internships, and job opportunities are communicated via email, a Facebook page and the university website. There are also bulletin boards and signage in the Department, and announcements are made in class.

(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 2008, the Department merged print, broadcast and Web into a converged workspace environment. During that same time period, the JMC Network Newsroom was created. The JMC Network connects all ACU student media operations in the JMC Department, and the concentration on technology combined with collaborative workspace provides practical hands-on experience for students. The JMC Network of KUF-TV7, KACU-FM, and the Optimist (print, Web site and iPad app) are student-run with support from professionals. Students learn and serve side-by-side by producing video, news stories, photography, and a weekly football coach's show. In addition, in 2008 the Morris & Mitchell Ad/P.R. agency lab was established. These professional environments offer a competitive, multiyear opportunity for students to get hands-on experience on campus.

Student organizations are chapters of the American Advertising Federation (AAF), Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA), Broadcast Education Association (BEA), the Society of Professional Journalists and Kappa Tau Alpha. Students participate in the university's Film Fest, which showcases the creative talents of university students and is an outlet for those interested in motion picture and entertainment industries. JMC students frequently earn top honors including awards for best director, best producer and best picture. Through membership in these organizations, students have access to programs, competitions, internships, workshops and conferences. The Ad Club participates in the American Advertising Federation's Student ADDYs.

(e) The unit gathers, maintains and analyzes enrollment, retention, graduation rates and other aggregate information for improving student services and reducing barriers to student success.

As part of the university's SACS accreditation, the Department identified outcomes in their Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP). The plan will be monitored accordingly. This initiative is one of the documented ways the university, and Department, are working to improve student services and success.

The Department requires a departmental grade-point average of 2.0 for graduation and a university GPA of 2.25. The Department explains the lower in-house GPA by saying instruction in the Department is more demanding.

In 2009-12, the Department reports an impressive graduation rate of 95-100 percent.

The Department assesses the effectiveness of its advising through the use of student surveys.

Summary:

The Department takes student services seriously and is duly proud of the extensive opportunities available to students. There is expectation of faculty members to provide career advising, which is embraced; however, there is reason to note a substantial inequity in career advising in the Advertising/Public Relations major. The Department has the benefit of a part-time academic adviser position, which is not universal on campus. Given the frequent catalog changes over the past several years, that position has played an important role in taking the academic advising load off of a very small faculty. The culture offers an open-door policy. The Department's approach to providing students real-time, hands-on experience through the JMC Network and ad-P.R. agency lab opportunities is highly regarded and appreciated by students, Department and university faculty, as well as university leaders.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:

Compliance.

PART II — Standard 7: Resources, Facilities and Equipment

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

First, some basic information about the budget:

Most all of the Department's money comes from annual allocations from the university. The Department maintains that its funding – just short of \$1.2 million for 2012-13 – “compares favorably to other units within the College of Arts and Sciences in terms of salary, operating dollars and capital equipment investments.” It maintains that its allocations are fair related to those that other ACU units receive in virtually all categories.

Budgets at ACU have been essentially flat for the previous three years and longer. The university was able to avoid the big budget reductions that many other universities experienced in the same period of time. But for fiscal 2013, a 6% across-the-board cut had to be levied. The Department says that the cut “presents challenges but not insurmountable ones.”

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

The Department has a detailed annual budget, with budgetary items related to its strategic, long-range plan, especially considering the Department's emphasis on convergence, technology and new media.

The Department's curriculum is interwoven with campus media, so the budget includes money for those media (KACU Radio, KUF-TV, ACU Video, the Optimist, the Morris & Mitchell student advertising-public relations agency, etc.).

The Department chair noted that there is little or no money to bring in visiting speakers.

(b) The resources that the institution provides are fair in relation to those provided other units.

As stated above, the Department's budget appears to be fully in line – indeed, more favorable – than budgets of most other units at the university. Site-team interviews with the Department administrator and faculty members bore this out.

Specifically concerning faculty salaries: In a national study of journalism-mass communication units across the United States, the Department came in at almost the 53% mark compared to other units categorized at the master's level. At ACU, only one other department in the College of Arts and Sciences had a higher comparative ranking of faculty salaries.

Capital-expenditure allocations to units at ACU come in the fall each year, after enrollment is established. Each spring, unit leaders submit proposals for capital expenditures for the coming fiscal year. At that time, the Department chair alerts faculty members that the process is beginning and invites requests for capital equipment funds. Typically, such expenditures are for the newsroom, TV studio or student-run advertising-public relations agency. The requests are discussed in a regular faculty meeting and rank-ordered. All this gives the Department faculty a large say-so in budgeting – more than is the case at many other universities.

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

The Department has good facilities. A major renovation of the facilities took place in 2008, and computer labs were upgraded in summer 2012. The Department is housed on three floors of the south

wing of the Don Morris Center. It has three Mac teaching labs that are well-equipped and attractive; most classes are taught in these labs. At ACU, the institutional structure that provides money for lab computers is called LINK. It gives money for lab upgrades on a three- or four-year cycle. In the latest LINK cycle, the Department received roughly \$150,000, which was “by far the largest single allocation on the campus.”

(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 university has a strong technological emphasis. For four or five years, the university has given all students an iPhone or iPod Touch or credit toward the cost of an iPad. Starting in fall 2013, the university is phasing out the phone program. The provost now has a group deciding on whether to give or require students to have iPads or another tablet.

Overall, the Department’s facilities are appropriate for its teaching, research and service missions. Facilities include a 64-seat lecture classroom, two 15-seat teaching laboratory classrooms, a 20-seat lecture classroom, a reading room, the JMC Network Student Media News Lab, the Morris & Mitchell student-run ad-P.R. agency, KACU-FM studios, KUF-TV studios, a student commons area and, of course, offices for faculty and staff.

The media warrant some discussion because they are interwoven with the teaching mission of the Department.

The Department administers KACU-FM Abilene Public Radio, a 33,000-watt FM station licensed to the university. It broadcasts 24 hours a day and includes programming from NPR, the BBC and so on.

The Department also administers KUF-TV, a 1,000-watt Class A TV station, which broadcasts the NASA Channel. KUF also participates in a broadcast partnership with the city of Abilene and the Abilene Independent School District.

The JMC Network Student Media News Lab was completed in 2008 and functions as the epicenter of news operations of student media. A number of news products are produced, including the Optimist, the twice-weekly student newspaper published in print, online and iPad app. Broadcast products produced include weekly newscasts and sportscasts.

The student-run Ad/P.R. agency is discussed in some detail elsewhere in this report.

All faculty-member offices are grouped together on the same floor in the Department, with some extra office space to allow for future growth. The offices are good-sized and pleasant.

Fundraising is under way to convert the TV studio to high definition. The fundraising is expected to take a few years.

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

Library resources are centralized at ACU, which serves the faculty and students appropriately at a university of its size.

Faculty members and students said they were happy with the ACU and Departmental library and information sources.

Summary:

The Department's funding appears to be adequate for its missions and well in line with the funding of other units at ACU. Indeed, in a number of respects, the Department appears to be getting better funding for its size than a number of other ACU units. A major reason for this is the Department's technological nature.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:

Compliance.

PART II — Standard 8: Professional and Public Service

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(a) The unit is actively engaged with alumni, professionals and professional associations to keep curriculum and teaching current and to promote the exchange of ideas.

The Department pursues a number of initiatives to foster alumni involvement in fundraising and mentoring, and to secure internships and jobs for current students. The Department chair is actively involved in this effort, as evidenced by meetings with her but also by statements from faculty members in other departments and from JMC faculty and staff.

At the time of the site visit, earnest efforts were in place to establish a stronger relationship with the local E. W. Scripps Co. newspaper. The Department intends to leverage this and other relationships to solicit funding for needed HD technology expansion and to fund a speakers' series, with a special focus on broadening students' exposure to more diverse experiences and points of view.

A Visiting Committee has been established to evaluate and critique the Department's curriculum, programs and operations and provide feedback, direction and progress reports directly to the academic administration and Board of Trustees Academic Committee. Members serve three-year terms. During the last site visit, there was concern about the make-up of this advisory body; since that time an African-American and Hispanic male have been added to the committee.

Alumni are honored and are featured speakers at the annual Gutenberg event, and the Department sponsors an open house for returning alumni during Homecoming. An alumni print magazine, ACU Today, is sent to alumni with known addresses three times per year. Stories and news items about alumni and faculty appear in the publication, and contributing writers and photographers are often alumni or faculty of the Department. Alumni are also invited to join Abilene PRO, founded by an alumnus of the Department and AAF.

A Department Facebook page is used for outreach. Faculty members provide assistance to alumni in employment searches – largely individual efforts by faculty and former students who remain in touch with the Department. Faculty members remain in contact with former students and call on them for support in identifying internship and job opportunities for current students. Discussions with a number of professionals in surrounding markets, and who have provided internship or job opportunities for JMC students, did report a lack of formal or consistent communication and outreach; they indicated more opportunity for the Department if there were more consistent networking and outreach relative to professional opportunities for students.

Taken together, these activities reflect substantive efforts to create opportunities for exchanging ideas, strengthening the curriculum and engaging faculty, students and professionals.

(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 Gutenberg Award has been established to honor outstanding alumni. The Department faculty annually reviews the professional activities of its alumni and chooses three or four to receive the Gutenberg Award for distinguished professional achievement. The annual event took place the week before the site visit, and the excitement was still evident among students, Department faculty

and faculty members from other departments. The student advertising agency was responsible for the promotion of this year's 20th anniversary event, and faculty members praised the students' work. During the university's centennial in 2006, the Department chair capitalized on the opportunity to bring more diverse speakers to the campus. Stephen Carter, Robin Roberts and Lester Holt, all minorities, were centennial speakers.

Faculty vitae reflect a wealth of service to the community and faith, professional experience, active involvement in a wide range of professional organizations in print, advertising, public relations, radio, television and online – as trainers, collaborators, speakers, panelists and award judges. Faculty members participate in national organizations such as AAF and PRSA, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication and Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication. They collaborate with state and regional organizations.

Faculty members are frequent judges for state professional broadcast, newspaper, radio and documentary competitions. Several have held appointed or elected office with national professional organizations or editorial boards.

(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.

The Department provides some travel funding and support for development activities through the office of the Director of Instructional Development and through the College of Arts and Sciences. University-level support includes Faculty Renewal Leave, Summer Stipend, Mobile Learning Fellows, mini-grants, Presidential Fund for Professional Development, and Cullen Summer Research Grants. The College of Arts and Sciences opportunities include the Professional Development Fund and a Faculty Scholarship. All these awards are competitive and highly sought.

ACU promotion, tenure and post-tenure review guidelines and procedures are detailed in appropriate materials. The guidelines allow for some flexibility by department. JMC criteria are assessed every five years during a program review. The Department's expansion of criteria clearly lays out expectations for service activity relevant to mass communication for advancement with the university.

(d) The unit contributes to its communities through service projects, internship and job placements, and faculty involvement in civic activities related to journalism and mass communication.

Faculty members are involved in a wide range of professional and public service work. On campus, faculty members oversee the operation of the student Ad/P.R. agency and student media, which provide professional experience and internships on campus. Colleagues in other departments praise their participation and solid contributions, many lauding the news organization for providing more timely and fair journalistic reporting than professionals in the market. Faculty members have organized career fairs, professional panels and workshops. Off the campus, faculty members are partners with professional and academic organizations, provide pro bono legal counsel to nonprofits, serve nonprofit clients through the student agency, author columns, provide pro bono Web site design and offer consulting for an array of civic activities and service projects. The Department promotes its professional and public service activities through its Web site and Department brochure.

Professional and public service is emphasized in the promotion and tenure process. Faculty members hold leadership positions in local and national professional organizations, and the Department supports their involvement in refreshing the skills of professionals in the field.

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

The university hosts and the Department faculty directs a number of journalism contests each year, including competition for public and private secondary schools. The self-study provides evidence of scholastic journalism through such activities as workshops, visiting lectures and critiques of student work.

Summary:

Faculty engagement in professional and public service is pervasive in the Department, both on campus and through special projects locally and statewide. The university and Department are highly supportive of scholastic journalism.

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 this Council.

The Department has adopted ACEJMC’s 12 professional values and competencies, framing them under four Program Outcomes and including a required internship for all students. The internship culminates in each student’s producing an internship portfolio that includes a 1,000-word essay describing the person’s internship experience and three 1,000-word essays that focus on domestic diversity, global diversity and ethics. Students have to present and defend their portfolios before a faculty team. The faculty members assess each student’s competencies in critical thinking, visual acuity, writing, editing and evaluation.

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

The Department’s assessment plan was established in November 2005, with a revision in August 2010 and another in August 2011. Within the Department’s assessment plan are outcomes, values and competences that students must possess to demonstrate their mastery of aspects of the program. Then faculty groups use the assessed information to improve teaching and enhance subsequent student learning.

By exit surveys and interviews, the Department collects and reports findings related to current student and alumni mastery of curriculum offerings. From these findings, some faculty members revise their approach to instruction. In one course, for example, the faculty member revised the research project requirement to address diversity in electronic media, defined generally, so that when students discussed project possibilities they broadened their focus to include different types of domestic diversity they may not have considered before. Other faculty members added units in math and diversity and expanded assignments to incorporate more visual and online components. The creation of the Morris & Mitchell student-run Ad-P.R. agency was the direct result of assessment in several contexts – course evaluations, alumni surveys, student surveys and visiting committee reports.

The Department and the university struggle with recruiting faculty members of color, yet within the assessment plan’s outcomes, values and competencies, they have not placed domestic diversity as a high priority (the original intent of Standard 3 and a high priority in ACEJMC’s “Professional Values and Competencies”). Instead of placing it low among the priorities, the Department could place domestic diversity at a higher level using that to motivate faculty and students to address domestic diversity issues, even while there are no domestic minority faculty or staff members. The placement of domestic diversity as a higher priority could help the Department meet Standard 9 and Standard 3 more readily, an issue of concern to the Accrediting Council.

Direct Measures

Student Media Competitions:

For the past 20 years, ACU student media have competed against the best programs in the state and nation, and their record of student achievement is impressive. The student media are overseen by the Department faculty and integrated within the Department’s curriculum. Some of the state and national competitions in which they have earned honors include the Texas Intercollegiate Press

Association, Southwestern Journalism Congress, and Society of Professional Journalists Region 8 Mark of Excellence. Since earning accreditation in 2001, the Department has also participated in the prestigious Hearst Contests; at least one student won a high prize. In 2011-12, ACU students earned first place, national winner, national finalist and other such honors in numerous categories in numerous competitions.

At ACU, student media competitions are a direct measure of student performance in areas such as writing, design, photography and editing for journalism majors. This is because the student media are directly connected with the curriculum. They have the characteristics of a capstone course with portfolio development. Since the student media function under the direct supervision of the faculty and staff, they are intertwined with the curriculum in such a manner that all convergence journalism majors participate on the staff of the JMC Network through at least three courses. Additionally, students may choose from a menu that includes courses that are directly related to the JMC Network.

Internships:

In 2010, the faculty in the Department voted to increase the scope of the internship portfolio to include additional assessments. The faculty decided that all JMC majors would be required to complete an internship portfolio with all of them to be evaluated using the same instrument. Then, because each graduate of the program must complete an internship, the faculty members decided to assess all students' understandings of global diversity, ethics, critical thinking, domestic diversity, visual, writing, and editing and evaluation values and competencies by creating assignments to be submitted within the internship portfolio --- and defended. The faculty member overseeing the internship course continues to assess the students' work for individual internship credit, and then four faculty members share the responsibility of assessing the students for the additional requirements.

The requirements are that each student will submit a portfolio that includes a 1,000-word essay that describes their internship experience and three 1,000- word essays that discuss and demonstrate understanding or application of the following competencies and values: 1) global diversity, 2) ethics and 3) domestic diversity. A student may choose to reflect on the values of global and domestic diversity and ethics from experiences within the internship experience or through a more academic essay. The portfolio and essays are due four weeks after the internship is finished and no less than one week before the next available defense date. The portfolio is sent electronically to a dropbox that is shared among faculty members. The Department enters the rubric as a Google form so that faculty members can complete the evaluation during the presentation on their laptops or mobile devices, and the data can immediately be fed into a spreadsheet for analysis. The team agrees that the internship evaluation process should be considered a direct measure.

Pre-Test, Post-Test Measures:

The Department piloted an exam in the 2011-12 academic year across the entire program to serve as a pre-test, post-test measure of student learning outcomes. The exam was based on a University of South Carolina exam, which was used with permission. The exam is entered into a Google form so that students can take it on their mobile devices or laptops. Data can automatically be formatted into a useful form as a Google spreadsheet. Pre-test data (first-year majors) were gathered in fall 2011 and spring 2012, and the Department attempted to gather post-test data (senior majors) in spring 2012. First-year students took the exam, but the seniors, especially the advertising and public relations majors, balked at the content of the exam because it was so heavily focused on news media topics. The data exist for the first-year students in 2011-12, but the Department will re-evaluate the exam in 2012-13 to make sure it is asking questions that evaluate the learning outcomes for students in all of the three majors offered.

Outcomes of an exam that combines assessment of general journalism and mass communication knowledge with major-specific knowledge will provide the Department with useful data for making decisions. Additionally, the Department is considering the weight of the exam at both the pre- and post-test levels to ensure that the students will take the exam seriously.

Additional Measures:

Course evaluations are completed by students for each course every semester using the university's online tool that includes a five-point Likert scale measuring 14 items and providing for student comments in response to three prompts. Faculty members receive an electronic summary of the evaluations. The chair and dean read all of the evaluations and comments, which become a part of the discussion during annual faculty evaluations each spring. Faculty members are encouraged to include in their goals for the following year any improvements or changes in courses that may be appropriate responses to the evaluations.

Indirect Measures

In capturing perceptions, attitudes and outcomes of the learning experience, the Department diligently conducts annual student and alumni surveys that involve self-reporting of perceptions of the quality of learning at ACU. The Department's record of student performance in competitions has been described above. It is impressive. Student media competitions in the areas of video and Ad/P.R. are indirect measures because participation in media is not a required element of these courses.

The Department has a strong system for keeping track of alumni and lists the employment history and current jobs of members of the classes of December 2008, May 2009 and August 2009 for the self-study report. The Department also list graduates with distinguished careers from 1982 to the present. An area that the Department may want to focus on -- as it continues to strengthen and tweak the system for measuring learning outcomes -- is to establish benchmarks for interpreting the results of assessment measures that identify levels of achievement for the values and competencies (awareness, understanding and application).

(c) The unit maintains contact with its alumni to assess their experiences in the professions and to gain feedback for improving curriculum and instruction.

The Department regularly interacts with alumni through its website, publications and surveys. During AY 2010-11, the Department reviewed the alumni survey used in previous years and revised it, adding values and competencies measures and questions related to the differential between expected careers and actual careers. During spring 2012, 144 JMC alumni from 2001-11 responded to the survey. There was a 35 percent response rate from the 409 solicited responses. Survey data were then used to loop back to make some revisions in the curriculum.

Since graduating from ACU, 78 percent reported that they "ever worked" in a JMC-related field. Half of the total respondents said they were currently working in a JMC-related field. Seventy percent of the respondents reported that the courses they took in the Department prepared them well or very well for their work, graduate school or additional professional training. An additional 20 percent indicated that the courses prepared them adequately. Nearly 40 percent of respondents reported that they had done additional collegiate or professional study since graduating, with 17 percent completing master's degrees and 2 percent completing doctorates. A majority of alumni respondents reported that their JMC education improved their abilities or understanding of the Professional Values and Competencies required by the ACEJMC adequately, well or very well.

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

Professionals have been involved in assessment in the Department through the Visiting Committee program, which has been active since 1986. In 1994, the Department's Visiting Committee first endorsed the plan for the Department to seek accreditation. The next year it was added to the university's five-year plan for 1995-2001, and initial accreditation was awarded by ACEJMC in May 2001.

The Department has developed a reputation on the campus of being one of the departments making the most effective use of its Visiting Committee. During the Committee's one-day visit each fall, members meet with faculty, administrators and students. In open-ended discussions about the Department, students have demonstrated a high comfort level and frankness in their discussions with committee members.

Since the Visiting Committee program began, its reports have been instrumental in the improvement of the Department. The Committee has made recommendations endorsing technological needs, curriculum revisions, advising loads and accreditation, among others.

An African-American male was invited annually for several years to join the Visiting Committee but was not able to accept until fall 2011 because his news director would not allow him to be absent during a rating period, which is when the meeting was scheduled. After changing markets, he expressed interest in serving but then was unable to attend the fall 2011 meeting because he had no remaining vacation days. A Hispanic male was added in 2010 and actively participated in the 2011 meeting. Both will remain on the committee at least through 2013. The team recommended that since faculty members stay in touch with minority alumni, the Department might consider inviting more of them to serve on the Visiting Committee.

The most recent Visiting Committee report commended the Department for restructuring the degrees to better reflect the multimedia landscape new graduates will enter after they graduate, for continuing to give students excellent hands-on training through the JMC Network and Morris & Mitchell, and for employing an adviser. The Committee recommended the re-launch of the Marler Endowment campaign and that the university revisit hiring requirements for faculty members. It also encouraged more widespread use of active learning exercises, incorporation of guest lecturers in person or via the Internet, and more instruction for convergence journalism majors regarding web analytics and search-engine optimization. The Committee supported use of a rubric for assessing portfolio presentations and use of brief personal comments after student presentations.

The Visiting Committee reports are reviewed by the academic administration, the Board of Visitors and the Board of Trustees Academic Committee.

(e) The unit collects and reports data from its assessment activities and uses the data to improve curriculum and instruction.

As noted above, the Department regularly collects and reports data from its assessment activities and uses the data to improve instruction. The Department has worked diligently on strengthening the assessment standard, using creative strategies to do so.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:

Compliance.

PART III: Summary by site visit team

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

Strengths

Talented, dedicated, hard-working faculty devoted to trying to ensure the best education possible for journalism-mass communication students.

Outstanding Department chair who works tirelessly for the Department inside it and on the greater campus with higher administrators, and beyond the campus with alumni and friends of the Department.

Very good facilities that are attractive, pleasant and well-maintained. Modern computer labs and other equipment that is updated regularly.

A successful converged curriculum with strong professional classes interwoven with student media housed in the Department.

Praise from students about the quality of their teachers in the Department and about the education they are receiving in the Department.

A virtual 100 percent graduation rate.

Weaknesses

Important shortcomings regarding diversity and inclusivity that are detailed under Standard 3.

A stretched full-time faculty of only five members currently.

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

Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness.

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

Noncompliance on Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness. This is discussed at length under Standard 3.

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

Noncompliance on Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness. This is the third site-team visit in a row where a noncompliance was given on Standard 3.

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

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

Standard 3, “Diversity and Inclusiveness,” was found out of compliance by the last two ACEJMC site teams (2000-01 and 2006-07).

In 2000-01, the Department had no full-time faculty members who were minorities but had two part-time faculty members who were minorities.

In 2006-07, one full-time faculty member (14%) in the Department was a minority. He was a Native American whose contract was not renewed later. At that time, the Department had no part-time faculty members who were minorities. The site team wrote: “The unit has missed opportunities to expose students to multicultural perspectives through guest speakers; part-time faculty and staff; participation in professional organizations’ diversity programs; and selection of Visiting Committee members. The unit might also bolster its diversity plan with measurable goals and specific tactics.”

In the site-team report that year, two major weaknesses in this standard were:

1. Inadequate incorporation of multicultural professionals as visitors and advisers.
2. Institutional obstacles to faculty hiring, especially minorities.

Please see the detailed comments under Standard 3 for what the Department has and has not done regarding this standard since the last site-team visit in 2006.

Other deficiencies cited by the previous site team, plus actions taken to alleviate them in the time since:

Thin faculty resources in the broadcast area. Since the last visit, the Department has chosen to focus less on broadcasting per se and more on convergence that incorporates video journalism. The general manager of KACU-FM was named director of broadcast operations and given responsibility for overseeing the TV studio. He also teaches studio production. This has helped the situation greatly. The Department has also added a 30-minute coach’s show to its regular production. Multimedia majors are now required to spend at least one semester working in the JMC Network.

Over-reliance on adjuncts for advertising instruction. The major is now advertising-public relations. A full-time faculty member with 15 years of professional experience was added in 2007, and since that time only one advertising course has been taught by an adjunct instead of a full-time person (and the adjunct was a retired advertising faculty member). The person hired in 2007 advises the Department’s student-run advertising-public relations agency, Morris & Mitchell, which was created in 2009. We on the current site team note that she also has a heavy teaching and advising load and teaches a number of different courses.

A teaching and service load that inhibits traditional scholarship. The university maintains the same 12-credit-hour teaching load (with some reductions for people with other duties) as before. And it expects all faculty members to conduct service. But traditional scholarship by Department faculty members has increased significantly since the last visit. Many more refereed conference papers have

been presented, as a major example, and improvements have taken place in all these categories: awards and honors, internal grants, invited papers, non-refereed articles, and mentored undergraduate research.

7) The self-study is the heart of the accrediting process, and often the quality of that document determines the degree of success of the accrediting visit. Summarize the team members' judgment of the self-study.

The self-study was a readable, clear document that gave an excellent picture of the Department. The narrative was organized according to ACEJMC's nine standards and handsomely presented in a convenient, bound format. The appendices were done well and were presented in a separate bound format. A good job.