

# Report of On-Site Evaluation

ACEJMC

Undergraduate program

2013– 2014

Name of Institution: **Loyola University New Orleans**

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: **President Kevin William Wildes**

Name of Unit: **School of Mass Communication**

Name and Title of Administrator: **Sonya Forte Duhé, Director and Professor**

Date of 2013 - 2014 Accrediting Visit: **January 12 – 15, 2014**

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

Date of the previous accrediting visit:

Recommendation of the previous site visit team:

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council:

Recommendation by 2013 - 2014 Visiting Team: **Accreditation**

*Prepared and submitted by:*

## **Team Chair**

Name and Title: **Will Norton, Jr., Professor and Dean**

Organization/School: **Meek School of Journalism, University of Mississippi**

*Signature* \_\_\_\_\_

## **Team Members**

Name and Title: **Sheri Broyles, Professor**

Organization/School: **Department of Strategic Communications, Mayborn School of Journalism,  
University of North Texas**

*Signature* \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Title: **Michael Limon, Part-time Lecturer**

Organization/School: **School of Communication, Loyola University Chicago**

*Signature* \_\_\_\_\_

## PART I: General information

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.

On July 10, 1912, Louisiana's governor signed the act authorizing Loyola to grant university degrees. According to Loyola University New Orleans' charter and bylaws (amended June 10, 2008), the university is organized exclusively for charitable, religious and educational purposes.

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

- Yes
- No

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

Loyola University New Orleans' School of Mass Communication has never sought ACEJMC accreditation.

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

In the School of Mass Communication, we educate students in the Jesuit tradition to become intellectual, ethical and creative practitioners and leaders in the professions and industries of journalism and mass communication.

(Revised December 2012, Amended February 2013)

Note: The mission itself did not change but the faculty voted to shorten the statement to the above; however, the intent remained the same.

7. What are the type and length of terms?

- Semesters of 16 weeks
- Quarters of \_\_\_\_\_ weeks
- Summer sessions **Two, 4-week sessions or one 8-week session**
- Intersessions of \_\_\_\_\_ weeks

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 by the university for graduation. Specify semester hour or quarter-hour credit.

120 semester hours

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

Students may earn up to three semester hours. Each internship, working approximately 140 hours, is worth one credit 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>
Strategic Communications: Advertising and Public Relations	Dr. Cathy Rogers
Journalism: Online, Electronic and Print	Dr. Leslie Parr

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

Fall 2013	4,764 (3,010 undergraduates)
Fall 2012	5,178 (3,226 undergraduates)

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):

Name of Sequence or Specialty	Undergraduate majors
<b>Spring 2014</b>	
Sequence: Strategic Communications:	
Advertising	56
Public Relations	92
Sequence: Journalism	78
Total Majors	<u>226</u>
Total Minors	24
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>250*</u></b>

**\*These are unofficial numbers for Spring 2014 gathered 1/11/14**

**Fall 2013**

Sequence: Strategic Communications:	
Advertising	52
Public Relations	80
Sequence: Journalism	76
Sequence: Undeclared	35*
Total Majors	<u>243</u>
Total Minors	25
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>268</u></b>

**Fall 2012**

Sequence: Advertising	38
Sequence: Journalism	53
Sequence: Media Studies	2
Sequence: Public Relations	62
Undeclared	93*
Total Majors	<u>248</u>
Total Minors	28
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>276</u></b>

\* The SMC has not mandated that students declare their track until their sophomore year. Starting fall 2013, we are asking students to declare their track no later than the end of their freshman year in order to better plan.

14. Number of students in **each section** of all skills courses (newswriting, 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.

\*All skills classes are limited to no more than 20 students

<b>Spring 2014:</b>	<b>Students enrolled*</b>
CMMN-A101-001, Comm Writing	10
CMMN-A101-002, Comm Writing	13
CMMN-A101-003, Comm Writing	20
CMMN-A101-003, Comm Writing	19
CMMN-A201-001, Digital Communication	20
CMMN-A201-002, Digital Communication	20
CMMN-A201-003, Digital Communication	16
CMMN-A201-004, Digital Communication	16
CMMN-A250-001, Journalism	14
CMMN-A250-002, Journalism	16
CMMN-A260-051, Intro to Layout/Design	20
CMMN-A260-052, Intro to Layout/Design	19
CMMN-A265-001, Photography	16
CMMN-A265-002, Photography	16
CMMN-A266-001, Videography	17
CMMN-A311-001, Advertising Copy Writing	15
CMMN-A350-001 Adv. Journalism	20
CMMN-A359-001 Adv. Journalism Lab	13
CMMN-A380-001, Social Media Strategies	20
CMMN-A414-001, Adv. Capstone: Ad Campaigns	4
CMMN-A414-002, Adv. Capstone: Ad Campaigns	5
CMMN-A415-001, Advanced Ad Campaigns	13
CMMN-A418-001, PR Capstone:PR Campaigns	10
CMMN-A418-002, PR Capstone: PR Campaigns	7
CMMN-A419-001, Advanced PR Campaigns	5
CMMN-A380-051, Adv. Nonprofit Lab	3

\*These numbers reflect unofficial enrollment as of 1/13/14 at 2 p.m.

<b>Fall 2013:</b>	<b>Students enrolled</b>
CMMN-A101-001, Comm Writing	20
CMMN-A101-002, Comm Writing	18
CMMN-A201-001, Digital Communication	20
CMMN-A201-002, Digital Communication	20
CMMN-A201-003, Digital Communication	16
CMMN-A250-001, Journalism	11
CMMN-A250-002, Journalism	16

CMMN-A260-052, Intro to Layout/Design	20
CMMN-A265-001, Photography	16
CMMN-A265-002, Photography	16
CMMN-A266-001, Videography	15
CMMN-A294-001, Adv Nonprofit Lab	4
CMMN-A317-001, Writing for PR	20
CMMN-A380-001, Social Media Strategies	20

15. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2013 – 2014 academic year: Percentage increase or decrease in three years: Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries:

Full-time Salaries and 3 staff: FY 13-14: \$ 929,614\*

Full-time Salaries and 3 staff: FY 12-13: \$1,075,226.\*

Full-times Salaries and 3 staff: FY 11-12: \$1,043,880.\*

\*includes student assistants and adjunct faculty

Operating Budget: FY 13-14: \$94,000 (32 percent increase)

FY 12-13: \$71,150 (8 percent decrease)

FY 11-12: \$77,263

School of Mass Communication also has several endowments to be used for specific items including equipment:

6-24329 Communications Equipment

6-25011 A. L. Read Memorial

6-25130 Frost Communication

6-25440 Costello Endowment

6-25732 Michelle Lima

Professorship funds are to be used by the named professor for scholarly travel, etc.

6-25209 Shawn M. Donnelley Professor for Non Profit Communications

6-25237 The Rev. Aloysius B. Goodspeed, S.J. Beggars Distinguished Professor

6-25242 A. Louis Read Distinguished Professor

6-25255 A. Louis Read Distinguished Professor FY12

2-11382 Loyola Chair, Environmental Communication

The school also has technology funds from a fee collected from students enrolled in the school or those students taking courses that are designated as lab courses. School of Mass Communication full-time students pay \$100 per semester as a technology fee. Non-majors or part-time students taking lab courses pay \$75 per course. These funds can only be used for student technology.

6-24330 Communication Lab Fee \$100 per major per semester; student use only

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

**Full-time Faculty: Spring 2014:**

Sonya Forte Duhé, Ph.D., Director, Professor

Valerie Andrews, M.J., Assistant Professor

Lisa Collins, B.J., Visiting Professor

Lisa Martin, M.A., Instructor

David Myers, Ph.D., Professor

Andrew Nelson, M.A., Visiting Professor

Leslie Parr, Ph.D., Professor

Cathy Rogers, Ph.D., Professor

Robert Thomas, Ph.D., Professor

David Zemmels, Ph.D., Assistant Professor

**Full-time Faculty: Fall 2013:**

Sonya Forte Duhé, Ph.D., Director  
 Valerie Andrews, M.J.  
 Lisa Collins, B.J.  
 Lisa Martin, M.A.  
 David Myers, Ph.D.  
 Andrew Nelson, M.A.  
 Leslie Parr, Ph.D.  
 Cathy Rogers, Ph.D.  
 Robert Thomas, Ph.D.  
 David Zemmels, Ph.D.

17. *List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in fall 2013. Also list names of part-time faculty teaching spring 2013. (If your school has its accreditation visit in spring 2014, please provide the updated list of faculty at time of visit.)*

**Part-time Faculty: Spring 2014:**

Cheryl Dejoie-Lacabe, M.F.A.  
 Michael Giusti, M.B.A.  
 Justin Harrison, J.D.  
 Jeffrey Ory, APR, ABC, B.A.  
 Temple Ruff, M.S.  
 Scott Sternberg, J.D.  
 Reid Steinberg, B.A. (Pro Bono)  
 Tamar Gregorian, M.M.C.

**Part-time Faculty: Fall 2013:**

Cheryl Dejoie-Lacabe, M.F.A.  
 Michael Giusti, M.B.A.  
 Jeffrey Ory, APR, ABC, B.A.  
 Scott Sternberg, J.D.  
 Reid Steinberg, B.A.  
 Tamar Gregorian, M.M.C.

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.

Academic year: 2012 – 2013

Cohort Students who began their academic career at Loyola University

Group	Total Graduates	80 or more semester hours outside major		65 or more hours in liberal arts/sci.	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent

2012-13	60	58	97%	59	98%
2011-12	51	48	94%	50	98%

<b>Group Statistics</b>	<b>Min. Hours</b>	<b>Max. Hours</b>	<b>Avg. Hours</b>	<b>Avg. Hrs Degree</b>
2012-13 Outside the Major	78	113	92	131
2012-13 Liberal Arts/Sci.	63	113	88	131
2011-12 Hrs. Outside the Major	75	139	94	133
2011-12 Hrs. in Liberal Arts/Sci.	60	139	91	133

80 or more semester hours outside of the major: Of the 2012-13 and 2011-12 graduates, 97% and 94% respectively graduated with 80 or more semester hours outside of the major. For the five students with fewer than 80 hours outside the major, the average of the hours was 77.8 hours (with a low of 75 and a high of 79 hours). For each year, the split averaged 30% of the hours within the major and 70% of the hours outside of the major.

65 or more hours in liberal arts/sciences: Of the 2012-13 and 2011-12 graduates who graduated with less than 65 hours in liberal arts/sciences (2 students total), both were marketing minors. Because marketing courses are considered “not liberal arts/sciences,” marketing minors would obviously graduate with fewer hours in the liberal arts/sciences. These minors earned 60 and 63 hours respectively in the liberal arts/sciences, only slightly below the 65-hour requirement.

In Mass Communication, students are required to complete 120 credit hours to complete a bachelor’s degree. In 2012-13 and 2011-12, students earned on average 131 hours and 133 hours, respectively, to complete their degrees. Further analysis revealed that all students (with the exception of one graduated with either a second major or minor causing the average hours for a degree to rise slightly above the 120 required hours).

## A Brief History

Loyola University New Orleans developed its academic program in mass communication from an experimental radio station operated by the physics department before World War I. That station began broadcasting from a physics-lab-turned studio in Marquette Hall in 1922. It became WWL, the first licensed radio station in the Gulf South. The first edition of *The Maroon*, Loyola's student newspaper, was published in 1923.

Journalism courses were added, and the department was renamed the Department of English and Journalism in 1937. A portion of that department would develop into the School of Mass Communication, making the unit more than 75 years old.

In 1952, a Department of Journalism was created with a curriculum that included newswriting and reporting, news editing, advanced editing, feature writing, sportswriting, editorial writing, photography and the history of journalism.

From WWL's earliest years, staff members taught radio announcing, script writing, acting, directing and programming in the English and speech departments. Many continued to teach at Loyola when the Department of Communications was established in 1953. Then, on September 7, 1957, WWL-TV began broadcasting and operating as a department of the university until 1960, when Loyola's board established a broadcasting committee to oversee the station.

In 1961, the Department of Communications added public relations and advertising courses. The Department of Communications and the Department of Journalism merged in 1977 into the Department of Communications/Journalism (renamed the Department of Communications the next year). The department offered degrees in journalism, radio, television and film. In 1981 the faculty created sequences in journalism, public relations, advertising, broadcast journalism, broadcast production and communications studies. A sequence in photojournalism was added in 1988. A graduate program offering a master's degree in mass communication was established in 1989.

That same year, Loyola's board of directors decided it was unwise to allow the university to be so financially dependent on a single investment, and Loyola sold its media holdings.

The department's classroom and laboratories were scattered in three university buildings until 1985, when the Communications/Music Complex opened. The top two floors were designed for the teaching of mass communication courses. As the department responded to changes in the communications industries, the building proved remarkably adaptable to teaching new technologies.

In 1996, the Shawn M. Donnelley Center for Nonprofit Communications was created to help nonprofits in the New Orleans area with communication projects. Also in 1996, the Loyola University Center for Environmental Communication was established. The mission is to distribute information about environmental issues facing Louisiana and beyond.



Because of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, enrollment declined, and the administration responded with a major reorganization. The broadcast journalism, broadcast production, communication studies, film studies sequences and the graduate program were among the programs eliminated. The Department of Communications was renamed the School of Mass Communication.

The school offers students academic choices in two sequences: Journalism for multiple media (including online, electronic and print); and Strategic Communications (with tracks in advertising and public relations).

Graduates of the program include: Maria Celeste Arraras, anchor, Telemundo, co-host Today Show; Brandi Boatner, IBM digital experience manager, New York City; Shawn Donnelley, owner and founder, Strategic Giving, Chicago; Judy Reese Morse, deputy mayor of New Orleans; Rene Sanchez, editor Minneapolis Star Tribune; and Michael Smith, ESPN anchor/reporter.

## PART II — Standard 1: Mission, Governance and Administration

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

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

In 2006, the communications department became a school with an interim director. Sequence chairs serve as advisers to the director, work with the director and student services coordinator to complete teaching schedules and assist in leading the sequence that they oversee.

In the fall of 2009, the faculty adopted a three-year strategic plan that included seeking ACEJMC accreditation. In December 2012, a new three-year strategic plan was approved. It was amended in February 2013.

The director receives exceptional marks from media representatives, alumni and colleagues. She came to Loyola in 2009 as the first director of the school. For 16 years, she was a professor at the University of South Carolina, also serving in administrative positions: sequence chair, special assistant to the provost, special assistant to the president and associate vice president for research. She also worked as the chief faculty editor and anchor at the University of Missouri while earning a doctorate. She previously had worked as a television news reporter and anchor, and as an adjunct instructor at LSU. She reports directly to the interim dean.

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

Faculty in the school voted to establish the organization, mission and operating principles of the school. The school's full-time faculty members form its governing body.

During the 2012-13 academic year, the faculty met 11 times. Normally, meetings are monthly:

- Each semester the faculty meet at least four times, and
- Any full-time faculty member may request a school meeting.

The school has three faculty committees: Curriculum, Sequence Head, as well as Rank and Tenure. Also three ad hoc committees: Technology, Communication Writing and (committee) for the minor.

- (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 director has followed the strategic plan to enact initiatives. She was praised by her various constituencies for her effective leadership. Several called her a "force of nature."

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

The faculty may elect a director from within or request a national search. After this election and a consultation with the faculty of the school, the dean of the College of Social Sciences appoints the director with the approval of the provost.

Faculty, the staff and the dean evaluate the director annually.

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

When students complain to the student services coordinator, she encourages them to meet with the director. The director and the student services coordinator then assess the situation. Assessment may involve the student writing a statement to be included in the faculty member's file or some other resolution that satisfies the student. If concerns are deemed accurate, the director meets with the party involved. The director and student services coordinator also host a "Dine with the Director" event each spring. This allows the director to communicate directly with invited students and request input.

#### A Post-site-visit Narrative

After team members returned to their respective campuses, the team chair received an urgent message from the director of the school asking if the Dean had mentioned any cuts to the program.

"No," the chair responded.

The director then explained to the chair of the site-visit team that about an hour after the team had left the campus, the Dean had told her that she was to cut one faculty member.

The team was stunned upon learning this because in its meetings with the Dean, the Provost and the President, there was no indication that the school would face cuts beyond the temporary freezing of positions. Thus, when the team heard of the cut in a position, there were immediate questions concerning what other decisions would be made in the near future that would challenge the ability of the school to perform. Therefore, the team re-evaluated Standard #1, Standard #4 and Standard #7.

This is a summary of the team's conclusions after additional deliberation:

Loyola New Orleans has a hiring freeze. This was reported in the self-study:

"As the school continued to rebuild from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, the university was hit again in the fall 2013 with a severe drop in enrollment. In fact, the school has seen nearly a 50 percent drop in enrollment since August 2005. By summer 2013, the university had implemented a hiring freeze for full-time employees and hired marketing and enrollment management firms to assist the university in boosting the student population."

Of the three, tenure-track lines that are not filled: two are phased retirements and one is a tenure-track faculty position that was not renewed because of lack of scholarship.

During the visit, the team was assured that when the university's fiscal picture improves, these lines would be filled. No mention was made of further cuts. Thus, the team was surprised to learn that, after it had left the campus, a non-tenure track position was to be cut. However, the director met with the Provost and the Dean the day after the Martin Luther King holiday, and the team received a letter stating that the school would cut \$10,000 of its operating budget, rather than cut a non-tenure line. (The letter is attached at the end of this report.)

A \$10,000 cut is \$50,000 less than the \$60,000 position the school had been asked to lose if the non-tenure line were eliminated. With the \$10,000 cut, the budget for the school would be \$84,000 a year instead of \$94,000.

Before Katrina, when the school had 526 majors, there were 13 full-time faculty and 11 adjuncts.

Now the school has 10 full-time faculty members and eight part-time faculty members for 226 majors and 24 minors:

Pre-Katrina:

Full-time faculty to majors: 1 to 40.5

Post-Katrina:

Full-time faculty to majors and minors: 1 to 23.8

Thus, the team concluded that the faculty ratios are no worse than they were before Katrina. In fact, the team thought the ratios were better.

The most troubling aspect of the visit was the lack of candor by the administration to which the director reports. However, the director was able to get a decisive response concerning proposed budget cuts, and the site team kept its evaluation at compliance because the cut to the school was minimal and because the school had developed such remarkable momentum during the last four years.

## Summary

- The school, in the College of Social Sciences, is the largest undergraduate program on the Loyola New Orleans campus.
- The mission of the School of Mass Communication's mission is to "educate students in the Jesuit tradition to become intellectual, ethical and creative practitioners and leaders in the professions and industries of journalism and mass communication."

- The school has a strategic plan that guides all facets of the school.
- The school has 10 full-time faculty, including the director and two sequence heads, three full-time staff and eight adjuncts.
- The director is an effective leader. She has initiated major improvements in school programs and has been evaluated and renewed in her position as director.
- The site team was blindsided by a lack of transparency on the part of key members of the administration when they proceeded with the budget process after the visit had been completed but did not tell us that cuts would be made in the school's faculty lines.

## **COMPLIANCE**

## PART II — Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

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

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

Although the Accrediting Council has revised this standard to 72 credit hours outside journalism and mass communications, Loyola's self-study used the 80/65 standard. Therefore, the site team is using the 80/65 standard in this evaluation.

Almost all students have a minimum of 80 hours outside the school, 94 percent and 97 percent compliant for the two-year period prior to the site visit. For the five students with fewer than 80 hours outside the major, the average was 77.8 hours. It should be noted that 100 percent would have met the 72-credit requirement. Only one student in each of the last two years did not have 65 or more hours in the liberal arts for 98 percent compliance.

- (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.

Loyola's School of Mass Communication awards a Bachelor of Arts degree in Mass Communications in two sequences, one of which has two tracks: (a) Strategic Communications – Advertising and Public Relations Tracks – and (b) Journalism. There is also an undeclared group for students. In the previous curriculum there had been a Media Studies sequence, which was eliminated because of lack of rigor and lack of student interest. The current undergraduate structure resulted from major curriculum revisions implemented by the school for the Fall 2012 catalog. This was a big leap forward by the faculty. After Katrina, Loyola faced many issues, and programs were dropped from Mass Communication, including the graduate degree and broadcast. Before that, the last major revision of the curriculum was roughly 25 years ago.

The most recent data for Spring 2014 shows the school enrolls 226 undergraduate majors. Of those, 56 are in advertising, 92 in Public Relations, and 78 in Journalism. An

additional 24 minors are in the program. It has a full-time faculty of 10, including the school's director, and eight part-time faculty.

Loyola students may declare the major immediately upon entering the university or transfer into the school. The university has a 51-hour common curriculum. The school requires 40 hours of coursework, 15 hours in the Mass Communication core and 25 hours in the sequence. Students also are required to have a minor, which ranges from 18 to 24 hours. The remaining five to 11 hours are electives. The hours required for a degree are 120. However, students, on average, earn more than 130 hours credit. Students who took more than 120 hours generally did so because of a second major or minor.

After being admitted, students must maintain a 2.0 minimum GPA. If it falls below the 2.0 minimum, he or she is placed on academic probation. The school's probation program is administered by the student services coordinator, who develops an academic probation contract that is signed by the student. They meet once a month to monitor progress.

Students in all sequences and tracks take seven core courses: Introduction to Mass Communication, Communication/Media Writing, Digital Communication, Law of Mass Communication, Seminar in Mass Communication Ethics, Senior Seminar in Mass Communication and an Internship or a Practicum. The Internship or Practicum can be repeated for up to 3 hours credit.

The curriculum is generally balanced between theoretical and skills courses, although the choice of electives allows individual students to choose which they prefer to emphasize. Of the seven required courses of all majors, four would be classified as theoretical and three as skills. The curriculum is also up to date with a Digital Communication class required of all majors. In addition, a "Current Trends" course in Social Media Strategies is available as an elective.

#### PUBLIC RELATIONS

Of the students with declared majors in Spring 2014, 41 percent were in Public Relations. In addition to the core courses listed above that all Mass Communication students take, PR majors enroll in three core classes for Strategic Communications: Layout and Design, Research in Advertising and PR, and Strategic Problem Solving in Advertising and PR. Four other courses are required of PR majors: Journalism, Public Relations, Writing for PR and the capstone, PR Campaigns. Of the 14 required classes, seven are skills and seven are theoretical. For their six hours of electives, PR majors have numerous electives to choose from, both theoretical and skills-based classes.

#### JOURNALISM

There are nearly as many Journalism majors – 34 percent – as there are Public Relations majors. In addition to the core courses listed above that all Mass Communication students take, Journalism majors take six required courses, five of which are skills classes. This makes eight of the 13 required courses skills based and five theoretical. Journalism majors have nine hours of either theoretical or skills-based electives.

## ADVERTISING

Advertising majors make up the smallest sequence, at 25 percent. As with the other sequences, advertising majors take the same core courses listed above. They also take the three core classes for Strategic Communications: Layout and Design, Research in Advertising and PR, and Strategic Problem Solving in Advertising and PR.

There are four additional required classes of Advertising majors: Advertising Principles, Ad Copy, Media Planning and the capstone, Advertising Campaigns. Of the 14 required classes, six are skills and eight are theoretical. Advertising majors have numerous electives to choose from, both theoretical and skills-based classes, for their six hours of electives.

- (c) Instruction, whether on-site or online, is demanding and current, and is responsive to professional expectations of digital, technological and multimedia competencies.

With its new curriculum in place, the school has moved to a more digital focus. Digital Communication, a core class, is required of all students. All advertising and PR students are required to take the Introduction to Layout and Design class, which introduces them to programs such as InDesign, Photoshop and Illustrator. Journalism students work with digital equipment in their photography and videography classes. Journalism, Advanced Journalism and Videography require multi-platform projects. In addition, students may take the Social Media Strategies elective.

To encourage faculty to become more digitally savvy, the school gave each an iPad in Spring 2011.

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

As a private school, Loyola can brag about small class sizes, with a student-to-faculty ratio of 9.5-to-1. The largest classes are around 40 students, with enrollment in skills classes following recommended caps of no section exceeding 20 students. Although team-based classes such as campaigns can have more than 20 students, the capstone classes (e.g., Advertising Campaigns, Public Relations Campaigns) have 20 or fewer.

- (e) The unit advocates and encourages opportunities for internship and other professional experiences outside the classroom and supervises and evaluates them when it awards academic credit. Schools may award academic credit for internships in fields related to journalism and mass communications, but credit should not exceed six semester credits (or nine quarter credit hours). Students may take up to two semester courses (or their quarter equivalent) at an appropriate professional organization where the unit can show ongoing and extensive dual supervision by the unit's faculty and professionals.

All students are required to complete at least one internship for one-hour credit, but may complete up to three for three hours of credit. Students complete 140 hours of work for each hour of credit, although that number may be revised.

Each fall the school hosts a Networking Night to bring in business professionals. The event is open to all students but is especially beneficial to those seeking internships.



Students in the Strategic Event Planning and Promotions class organize the event. In Fall 2013, the goal was to recruit 20 businesses. However, 30 actually participated, and about 150 students attended Networking Night. This event also is a service to other universities in the New Orleans area. Students are invited from area HBCUs (Dillard, Xavier and Southern) and Tulane, which is adjacent to Loyola's campus.

## **COMPLIANCE**

## PART II — Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness

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

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

- (a) The unit has a written 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 school defines diversity in the opening statement at the top of its diversity plan (see *italic*):

The School of Mass Communication, Loyola University New Orleans, is committed to diversity. In keeping with the university's philosophy and commitment, the SMC seeks to promote the overall Jesuit and Catholic tradition of creating and maintaining a campus environment where students, faculty and staff respect our differences. These differences include but are not limited to age, social and economic status, sexual orientation, educational background, marital status, ethnicity, gender, individual traits, ability, race, cultural heritage and religious beliefs.

The plan addresses faculty (Objective 1), student retention of first-generation and minority students (Objective 2), curriculum (Objective 3), diversity in reference to people and cultures in a global society (Objective 4), inclusiveness (Objective 5) and increasing visibility of minority faculty staff, students and alumni (Objective 6).

The diversity plan for 2013-16 was approved in December 2012 and includes measurable strategies. The plan seen by the site team already indicates several have been checked off.

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

The faculty stated that diversity elements are a natural part of all its courses. However, a review of syllabi showed that, except for the ACEJMC competency, only a handful of syllabi included diversity in the schedule of classes. The school does offer three electives that focus on diversity: Media & Gender, American Women Journalists and International Journalism. Meetings with students supported that the curriculum is helping them develop an appreciation for and understanding of gender and cultural differences..

In addition, the university common curriculum requires a course to fulfill its diversity requirement. Students can select from a variety of courses that are outside the school's curriculum. This also helps broaden student understanding of diversity.

Minority professionals often visit campus to serve as guest speakers in classes and at special events. In the year preceding the self-study, 62 speakers came to campus. Fifteen (24 percent) were minorities, and 32 (52 percent) were women. The minorities included African-American, Asian, Hispanic, Middle Eastern, Egyptian and Houma Indian.

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

At the time of the self-study, two African-American women were on the faculty. The contract for one was not renewed, and a search is pending.

Both women and minorities were in previous hiring pools, including two female finalists and one minority finalist. One female was hired.

It should also be noted that when the director had an opportunity to hire a new administrative assistant, she hired an African-American woman.

- (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.

Loyola is one of the more diverse campuses in the United States. Minority student enrollment in the School of Mass Communication (44.6%) exceeds the percentages of minorities in the population of the university (36.8%) and the state of Louisiana (39.6%). In the 2012-13 academic year, students in the school came from 33 states, and there are international students from Guatemala, Honduras and Panama. Louisiana residents comprise 43% of the student population.

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

Loyola University has policies regarding EEO, Affirmative Action and Title IX, as well as a policy that states the university doesn't discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability, veteran's status or national origin. The School adheres to all university policies. It should also be noted that Loyola is a Jesuit school with Catholic values, and the university strives to employ people who will contribute in ways that are consistent to its religious traditions.

## COMPLIANCE

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

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

### **Unit performance with regard to indicators:**

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

The school has strict guidelines to follow in selecting, hiring and evaluating faculty.

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

Nearly all courses taught in the school are by full-time faculty. The school has eight part-time and 10 full-time faculty. Full-time faculty are active in research/creative work and service.

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

Faculty members in the school have significant media experience and solid academic credentials. They are encouraged to attend development meetings and workshops to upgrade their knowledge and skills, and the director has made funding travel a priority.

- (d) The unit regularly evaluates instruction, whether on site or online, using multiple measures that include student input.

Evaluations determining salary and merit raises are based on criteria for teaching, scholarship and research, and service as listed in the faculty handbook.

The annual salary and merit raise evaluations consist of a self-evaluation and a director's evaluation, each using criteria approved by the faculty.

Each faculty member submits an updated curriculum vitae and a self-evaluation form to the school director. The director will review the report and inform the faculty member of any recommended changes in ratings. The director then writes a letter to the dean, communicating the ratings and the rationale for the ratings.

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

The team repeatedly was given four names of faculty who are respected throughout the campus for their detailed teaching, one-on-one mentoring and quality service. Each has a solid record of scholarship.

## Summary

- The school's protocol and the college and university faculty handbooks detail selection, retention and promotion of all faculty.
- Full-time faculty members are expected to teach, produce scholarly and creative works, and perform service.
- During the last three academic years, full-time faculty members have taught 72 percent to 80 percent of all courses.
- Faculty serve on significant university committees, including the Faculty Senate, Strategic Planning Team, the Standing Council for Academic Planning, the Institutional Advancement Committee on the Board of Trustees, the Common Curriculum Committee, the Conciliation Committee and the Capital Campaign Committee.

## COMPLIANCE

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

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

### **Unit performance with regard to indicators:**

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

The unit not only extensively supports such activity, but uses it to determine faculty appointments and advancement.

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

The school is very precise in its delineation of what it expects for research, creative activity and/or professional activity.

Specific faculty totals for scholarship, research, creative and professional activities during the period examined:

- Awards, 16;
- Internal grants received, 7;
- External grants received, 7;
- Scholarly books, 2;
- Book chapters, 5;
- Articles in refereed journals, 15;
- Refereed conference papers, 33;
- Invited academic papers, 3;
- Encyclopedia entries, 5;
- Book reviews, 8;
- Articles in non-refereed publications, 6;
- Juried creative works, 17;
- Non-juried creative works, 60; and
- Invited speaker/presentation, 17.

- (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 school values peer-reviewed scholarship, research and publication as an important requirement for retention, tenure and promotion of members of the faculty. Tenured faculty members are recognized as experts according to their sustained participation in scholarly activities. Although faculty scholarship, research, publications and presentations are evaluated annually, the evaluation is based on productivity during the previous three years.

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

Faculty scholarship is published in academic journals, as well as popular publications. Members are active in service in the community and region, and their service usually is related to their scholarship and research. Presentations, productions, exhibitions, workshops and publications are the norm for this faculty, who are motivated by the Jesuit service ethic.

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

The school is full of energy and activity. It is an environment in which entrepreneurship and initiative are rewarded. As a result, the school has enormous momentum, and scholarship plays an important role in that momentum.

### Summary

- Research and publication, teaching and service are used to determine faculty appointment and advancement.
- During the last six years, faculty members have received 16 awards for teaching research and service. Two faculty received the most prestigious award on campus, the Dux Academicus.
- Faculty members have published books, presented scholarly conference papers, published articles in refereed and non-refereed journals, and produced many juried and non-juried creative works.
- Since 2009, three faculty members have had sabbaticals; one has had academic leave.
- The school has supported every travel request since 2009.

### COMPLIANCE

## PART II — Standard 6: Student Services

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

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The unit considers student advising a strength, and the results from several initiatives carried out during the last several years would seem to support that view. Each student receives academic counseling from an assigned faculty member and from the student services coordinator, whose full-time position was created about four years ago when a new director came onboard. The coordinator assists faculty and is available to students on an as-needed basis. Students interviewed by the site-visit team had high praise for the advising effort, saying it was among their best experiences at Loyola.

Each summer, incoming students are invited to a campus orientation, with a makeup session offered before classes start. Students meet with the coordinator and the director, who review all curricular requirements and confirm that freshmen are enrolled in appropriate classes. In the fall, three weeks after classes begin, the school hosts an event at which faculty members and professional organizations are introduced. Students receive a Resource Manual, which details academic policies, including all degree requirements.

Before registration each semester, 30-minute meetings are scheduled for students to discuss their schedules with their faculty advisers. Formal advising sheets are completed, detailing what classes should be taken and clearing the student for registration.

Additionally, students in their penultimate semester at the school are required to apply for a degree, which triggers an audit that spells out unfinished degree requirements.

Also, the university operates Employola, a career development center offering an array of in-person and online services and resources. All students are required to complete an internship, and they must secure credit through the center. Students told the site team that Employola, which also provides job-search assistance, was indispensable.

Although the university has not established a system for evaluating its advising and counseling services, the unit adopted a form this past semester on which students can rate their experiences.

- (b) Faculty are available and accessible to students.

Loyola New Orleans has an enviable student-to-teacher ratio of 9.5-to-1. Students told the site team that having a faculty adviser was a difference-maker for them academically. Professors, who keep an average of 10 office hours a week and commit to other school-related activities on many nights, in general said their advising duties were



rewarding. Interaction with students is fostered by the fact that all full-time faculty offices are housed within the school, as are those for adjuncts.

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

The unit uses several forms of social media (Pinterest, Facebook, Twitter) and email to convey information, as well as the school website, posters and a plasma screen in the lobby. Students said they mostly relied on the screens.

In 2011-12, the director and student services coordinator established “Dine With the Director,” a spring semester event at which selected students hear about the school’s vision, share perspectives, ask questions and convey concerns.

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

The unit’s efforts provide students access to numerous resources aimed at improving academic performance and enhancing career opportunities. In addition to those mentioned above, the school’s Shawn M. Donnelley Center offers students the opportunity to work with nonprofits to design communications solutions under faculty supervision, and The Lens provides the chance to volunteer at a public-interest, on-campus newsroom dedicated to in-depth reporting projects.

Another specialized center housed in the unit offers instruction on providing news coverage of the environment, and includes elements of biology, sociology and psychology, among other disciplines.

Also on-campus, any student may work at The Maroon, the university’s weekly student-run newspaper, or at The Wolf, the monthly magazine. The former provides experience with making accompanying videos for stories and features new equipment that enables the students to create webcasts.

Students also are encouraged to immerse themselves in campus life by joining or experiencing clubs affiliated with professional organizations ranging from the PRSSA to SPJ.

As mentioned, all students must complete an internship, after which their supervisors generate evaluations. The self-study says student ratings have consistently increased, and professional supervisors confirmed to the site team that interns from the unit are among their best performers.

- (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. Clear and accurate data are published on the accredited unit’s website.

Retention in the unit (and to a lesser extent the university) generally has worsened in the eight-year aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, during which time the department lost several programs. Enrollment has declined as well. Retention at the university for the Class of 2013 (freshman to senior year) was 51 percent for communications majors and 67 percent for all university students. However, retention

of Mass Communication at the university was 74 percent. Five-year graduation rates for the Class of 2012 were similar. The unit and university are embarking on efforts to improve those numbers.

The school has established an Academic Probation Program supervised by the student services coordinator. Students falling below a GPA of 2.0 meet with the coordinator and sign a contract that details an academic plan to improve performance once specific difficulties are ascertained (learning disabilities, irregular attendance, illness, life issues etc.). Monthly meetings are set to gauge progress. Since 2011, nearly 30 percent of the students in the program are either off probation or still enrolled. The program and the unit's advising forms have been adopted for use by the rest of the university.

## **COMPLIANCE**

## PART II — Standard 7: Resources, Facilities and Equipment

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

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The unit's annual salary and operating budgets have held steady at about \$1 million for several years. The allocation process starts with the dean of the College of Social Sciences, of which the unit is a part. The school's money comes from a combination of university-provided and self-generated funds. For years, no capital expenditure funds have been available on campus, so the unit generally has relied on endowment money to renovate its physical space, which was built more than 25 years ago.

The unit collects a lab fee of \$100 a semester for each mass communication major and \$75 a lab course for non-majors. With the money, the school replaces computers in its three labs every three years. One lab is shared with the School of Music, which contributes funding to update technology.

The unit has additional endowed accounts for equipment, including the Frost Communication Equipment Fund and the Michelle Lima endowed fund, and also receives money from the Costello endowed account.

Although the university does not enjoy a real "culture of philanthropy," according to the self-study, the same cannot be said for the unit. Data from the university's development office show that from 1981 to 2008, the school received \$1.23 million in gifts. From 2009 to 2013, it collected another \$500,000 or so. That benevolence could be crucial as the unit and university head into important fundraising campaigns. The silent phase has begun for LUNO's \$100 million "Faith in the Future" effort, designed to generate money for brick-and-mortar construction and renovation, scholarship and athletic funds, faculty support, undergraduate research, and campus life and ministry initiatives. Some of the money will go toward the unit's campaign to raise \$5 million for a broadened multimedia facility, scholarships and non-discretionary funds. Because the university has no capital expenditure funds, the unit says it will use \$1 million of that total to ensure the long-term sustainability of existing facilities.

In the meantime, the unit endeavors to allocate funds based on the school's strategic plan. One of the priorities is to "foster faculty and staff excellence," so money from the operating budget has been used to support travel to academic and professional conferences. Another is to "align resources with strategic requirements," so some fundraising efforts will be aimed at improving physical facilities to levels not seen before.

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

Institutional resources provided to schools and departments at the university vary widely, but the unit's allocations generally have been consistent, if not always equitable. According to the self-study, as the university continues to be buffeted by unstable

economic forces, Loyola endeavors to ensure that each college has sufficient annual funding. With a 75-year history as a well-established program, the unit's faculty salaries, benefits and annual increases are on par with other schools in the College of Social Sciences. However, it has 60 percent fewer administrative staff positions than its comparator, the School of Nursing, which began offering courses online about five years ago and saw a surge in enrollment. To compensate for the disparity, the university and college provide funding to employ work-study students, student assistants and graduate students. With the start-up phase of its online effort past, The School of Nursing is expected to see a funding decrease within the next two years, according to the self-study, but it will outpace the School of Mass Communication. That said, the unit believes it receives adequate support and has the flexibility to request adjustments on an as-needed basis.

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

In the self-study, the unit says it "enjoys ample space for classrooms, state-of-the-art computer laboratories and broadcast quality cameras, a studio and other technology," which was evident during the site visit. Students and faculty said their amenities were among the best on campus.

Housed in the Communications/Music Complex since 1985, the School of Mass Communication has space on the third and fourth floors. In the hurricane aftermath, as the school lost students and the College of Music gained, the latter assumed about half of the fourth floor space and shares a computer lab and studio with the unit.

The unit has done away with its in-house library, and in its place is a very popular student gathering spot known as The Bubble, a glass-walled hangout space featuring four iMacs, comfortable furnishings and, as one student put it, "just a nice chill atmosphere."

- (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 facilities are equal in quality to the equipment. Students said they nurture learning, and the faculty said they have transformed the environment for teaching and research.

All faculty and staff have laptop computers, which are replaced every three years. In 2011, each instructor also was given iPads.

The school has three computer labs, and each computer station (27-inch iMacs) has the most current versions of Adobe Creative Suite, Final Cut Pro and Microsoft Office. There also is access to the online AP Stylebook, Rundown Creator and Survey Monkey.

Each lab features BenQsh910 overhead projection units and white boards, and is equipped with card-access HP 3525 Color Laser Jet Printers. One lab also has an Epson Stylus Pro 4880 printer used for photography and other high-quality printing needs. All three labs have been updated in the past three years.

The Shawn M. Donnelley Center for Nonprofit Communications has 12 13-inch MacBook Pro laptop computers and 24-inch Apple Cinema Displays, a VPL-SX535

Short Throw XGA overhead projector and an HP 5225 Large Format Color Laser Jet printer.

The unit also provides students with access to 17 Canon Rebel DSLRs (with 18-55mm lenses and four telephoto lenses), 30 Kodak Zi10 video cameras and 14 advanced video packages that include Panasonic AG-HMC 80 cameras, Sennheiser G3 wireless transmitters with ME-4 LAV mics, Bescor 40-watt camera mount lights and Libec H22 Fluid Head Tripods. There are also Sennheiser hand-held mics.

The university operates a weekly student-run newspaper and monthly news feature magazine (six times a year). Although the publications are not administered by the unit, they share space and resources with the school, and receive a university student fee of \$20 a year for each student. Revenue, which is used for an adviser's salary and to subsidize operations, has not been sufficient to pay for renovations, which have been covered by the unit.

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

In addition to speaking highly of The Bubble, students told the site team that the entirety of space on the third and fourth floors was conducive to studying, research and networking with others who share their interests. Nearby, in the university's Main Library, there are a variety of journalism and mass communication books and periodicals. Databases and online journals are accessible on- and off-campus to all university students, faculty and staff.

Each school is assigned a librarian, and the one who works with the unit described it as a great partner that works hard to integrate its students' needs with the library's resources.

## COMPLIANCE

## PART II — Standard 8: Professional and Public Service

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

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

Outreach to alumni and industry professionals is achieved through a variety of methods, with varying levels of success. Faculty in specialized fields have built professional relationships with their colleagues in the private sector. Links between other faculty and alumni are mostly informal (emails, social media), but several graduates with whom the site team spoke say they continue to receive advice from instructors many years after leaving the unit. The director, who coordinates relations with alumni, has made “Enhancing Alumni Relations” one of the unit’s strategic goals.

As part of the ongoing effort, the school sends out an email newsletter once a semester, honors alumni with its Den of Distinction program, includes alumni on its development committee for fundraising, engages them in discussions about curriculum and plans to establish a Board of Visitors before 2016.

Alumni with whom the site team spoke said they generally felt connected through the mechanisms in place but would welcome more interaction.

The university’s Career Development Center assists communications alumni by offering one-on-one appointments (in person or over the phone) to discuss job-search strategies. Alumni also have access to the online job/internship posting board, Employola.

As part of assessment, the unit has begun surveying alumni to measure their attitudes toward what they learned and to track employment.

(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.

Alumni and industry professionals play a role in several school-sponsored events. They also participate in the annual student networking night and portfolio review, speak to classes and supervise internships, lead workshop panels, judge contests, serve as adjunct instructors and host foreign journalists.

In line with the university’s mission and commitment to service, the unit pays particular attention to professional and public service activities on a local, state and national level. In addition to being the home to an online nonprofit investigative journalism unit and a center designed to aid nonprofits with communications issues, it:

- Sponsors a center that focuses on challenges facing New Orleans;
- Hosts the Tom Bell Silver Scribe High School Journalism Contest;
- Entertains 20 students from nearby Sophie B. Wright High School as they tour the campus;
- Welcomes an additional 50 high school students in partnership with the Asian-American Journalism Association;
- Hosts regional Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE) Watchdog workshops; and
- Offers leadership training in partnership with New Orleans PR and advertising professionals.

(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.

In general, faculty members have a solid level of involvement in academic organizations and interact with professionals on a variety of levels. Several review or edit journals, others act as jurors and evaluators, many speak to groups or are interviewed regularly by local and national media, some participate in ASNE "sunshine" efforts, and nearly all serve as community volunteers, board members or are active in the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

Faculty regularly attend meetings of the New Orleans Press Club, the New Orleans chapters of PRSA, AAF and IABC among other local professional events, and national and local professional workshops such as PRSA, RTDNA, SPJ and AAF.

According to the school's protocol, "annual evaluations will be conducted by the Rank and Tenure Committee to review (and evaluate) the faculty member's teaching, scholarship, research and service".

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

See (b) above.

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

Every year since 1977, the school has hosted the Tom Bell Silver Scribe High School Journalism Contest. More recently, the school welcomed about 20 students from nearby Sophie B. Wright High School to tour the campus and experience college life.

## COMPLIANCE

## PART II — Standard 9: Assessment of Learning Outcomes

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

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The school uses ACEJMC’s 12 values and competencies to define its learning goals.

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

Faculty approved the revised curriculum in November 2011 and implemented it for Fall 2012. The initial assessment plan was approved in May 2011 and revised in December 2012. The plan begins with recognition that the school faculty understand that “much of the primary assessment of its students’ grasp of specific competencies takes place in the classroom and in the assessment of students’ course-related work. That process is part of the day-to-day educational process.... While students are assessed at an individual level, the school’s overall student learning is evaluated at a comprehensive level.” The school’s assessment plan has both direct and indirect measures.

Three indirect measures are used: (1) the senior exit survey, (2) the university exit survey and (3) the school’s alumni survey. In addition, two indicators were used: (1) awards and (2) student job placement and employment data.

Five direct measures exist: (1) the capstone course, (2) senior portfolio, (3) internship evaluations, (4) the First Amendment principles and law test, and (5) the ethical attitudes.

Another indicator of success is the quality of graduate placement. That includes at newspapers and TV stations, public relations and advertising agencies, museums, health care and publishing companies.

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

Neither the school nor the university formally tracked graduates until the first school graduate survey in Summer 2012. The school plans to continue every three years. The next alumni survey is planned for Summer 2015.

Graduates will be contacted six months after graduation to allow them to reflect on their education, including the 12 competencies and values. Employment information will be gathered at the same time. This will be implemented and analyzed by the student services coordinator.



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

The school has a sound assessment process in place that involves professionals, many of whom are alumni, in the assessment process. That involvement includes: assessing the capstone courses, assessing senior portfolios and supervising internships.

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

As previously noted, the faculty approved the revised curriculum in November 2011 and implemented it for Fall 2012. However, because the two freshman communication courses didn't change, the Fall 2011 cohort was transitioned to the new curriculum. The self-study reflects data from the previous curriculum (2009-2011), as well as data from the revised curriculum (the new cohort).

The school examined available assessment data and talked to both industry leaders and alumni in developing a revised curriculum to present to the full faculty.

Although this new cohort had not completed a four-year cycle before the site team's visit, some of the assessment measures have been used for directing curriculum.

For the 2011-12 academic year, 86 percent of the graduating class employed (37 of 43). Another 4.7 percent went to graduate school (2 of 43) and 9.3 percent are unknown (4 of 43). Many alumni have established distinguished careers in such places as The New York Times, Edelman Worldwide in Chicago, and KNBC in Los Angeles.

## COMPLIANCE

### PART III: Summary by site visit team

- 1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

#### Strengths

- An energetic, capable director with significant media experience, a Ph.D. and a record of scholarship. She is a respected leader who expects enthusiastic entrepreneurship.
- Able, committed faculty members who work well with others and are making a difference in the region and nationally.
- Good, upgraded facilities and equipment that are being enhanced each semester.
- An able and diverse student body; students of color are 40 percent of the school's enrollment.
- A wonderful location in the heart of one of the world's great centers on a campus with rich tradition and quality.
- In line with the university's Jesuit mission, the unit supports three centers that provide direct service to the community: the Shawn M. Donnelley Center for Non-Profit Communication, the Center for the Study of New Orleans and the Loyola University Center for Environmental Communication. Faculty in the school lead each center.

#### Weaknesses

- Only one full-time faculty person of color, even though students of color are 40 percent of enrollment.
- Uncertainty because of the number of crucial decisions that long have been deliberated at the campus level concerning budgets, restructuring and recruitment of students.
- Lack of candor by the administration to which the director reports.

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

Not applicable

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

Not applicable

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

Not applicable

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

Not applicable

- 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.

Not applicable

- 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 meticulous and described the program well. It even included photos. These helped give the site team a sense for the program. It was helpful to have sections of the school's protocol in the self-study and not in an appendix; in some cases the sections seemed longer than necessary.