

**Report of On-Site Evaluation**  
**ACEJMC**  
**Undergraduate program**  
2013– 2014

Name of Institution: San Francisco State University  
Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Leslie Wong, president  
Name of Unit: Department of Journalism  
Name and Title of Administrator: Cristina Azocar, department chair

Date of 2013 - 2014 Accrediting Visit: Nov. 18-20, 2013

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

Date of the previous accrediting visit: February 2008, revisit December 2009

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Reaccreditation

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Provisional Reaccreditation, Reaccreditation

Recommendation by 2013 - 2014 Visiting Team: Reaccreditation

*Prepared and submitted by:*

**Team Chair**

Name and Title: Peter Bhatia

Organization/School: Editor and Vice President/Content, The Oregonian, Portland

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

**Team Members**

Name and Title: Julianne Newton

Organization/School: Interim Dean, School of Journalism and Communication, University of Oregon

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

Name and Title: Jennifer Sizemore

Organization/School: Vice President for Communications, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Seattle

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

## PART I: General information

Name of Institution: San Francisco State University

Name of Unit: Journalism Department

Year of Visit: 2013

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.

California Education Code and the Master Plan (1960) give us the latest authorization to teach at the college level via the California University System. We also received WASC accreditation for the next 10 years (2013-2023).

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: February 2008 (We received provisional status). The revisit was November 2009

5. When was the unit or sequences within the unit first accredited by ACEJMC?  
1967

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

**Mission Statement:** To educate students and provide leadership in an evolving media landscape by promoting integrity, creativity, innovation and social responsibility in accurately telling the stories of a multicultural world. Revised: Fall 2012

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Semesters of 16 weeks

Quarters of \_\_\_\_\_ weeks

Summer sessions of 4 - 8 weeks

Intersessions of 3 weeks

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

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 hour units

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

Up to six semester hour units, but only three can go toward the degree.

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

Two concentrations: Print/Online and Photojournalism

**Name of Concentration**

Print/Online

Photojournalism

**Person in Charge**

Venise Wagner

Ken Kobre

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

29,541

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 Concentration	Undergraduate majors
Photojournalism	50
Print/Online	186
Total	236

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.

<b>Spring 2013</b>		<b>Fall 2013</b>	
J221-01 Newswriting	20	J221-01 Newswriting	19
J221-02 Newswriting	13	J221-02 Newswriting	18
J221-03 Newswriting	19	J221-03 Newswriting	18
J222-01 Newsw Lab	19	J222-01 Newsw Lab	16
J222-02 Newsw Lab	20	J222-02 Newsw Lab	18
J226-01 Digital News	20	J222-03 Newsw Lab	19
J226-02 Digital News	20	J222-04 Newsw Lab	16
J235-01 Photoj I	20	J222-05 Newsw Lab	14
J235-02 Photoj I	20	J226-01 Digital News	18
J235-03 Photoj I	18	J226-02 Digital News	20
J300-01 Reporting	16	J226-03 Digital News	19
J300-02 Reporting	17	J235-01 Photoj I	19
J330-01 Editing	20	J235-02 Photoj I	18
J335-01 Photoj II	11	J235-03 Photoj I	19
J395-01 Intro Online	18	J235-04 Photoj I	12
J395-02 Intro Online	18	J300-01 Reporting	18
J535-01 Photoj IV	12	J300-02 Reporting	16
J580-01 Environ Jour	15	J300-03 Reporting	17
J609-01 Pub Lab	15	J300-04 Reporting	16
J609-02 Pub Lab	2	J330-01 News Editing	20
J609-03 Pub Lab	13	J330-02 News Editing	20
J609-04 Pub Lab	7	J335-01 Photoj II	8
J609-06 Pub Lab	3	J395-01 Online Journalism	18
J635-01 Photoj V	13	J395-02 Online Journalism	13
J667-01 Literary Jour	24	J400-01 Multimedia Jour	18
J680-01 Advanc Multim	16	J426-01 Data Journalism	11
		J560-01 Public Journalism	16
		J570-01 Opinion Writing	15
		J609-01 Pub Lab	14
		J609-02 Pub Lab	20
		J609-03 Pub Lab	12
		J609-04 Pub Lab	11
		J695-01 Senior Seminar	6

15. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2013 – 2014 academic year: \$1,030,000.00  
Percentage increase or decrease in three years: Decrease of 3 percent  
Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries: \$542,392.00

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.

Cristina Azocar, Associate Professor, Chair  
Sachi Cunningham, Assistant Professor  
Yvonne Daley, Professor (Semi-retired. Teaches only in the Spring semester)  
Jon Funabiki, Professor, Director of Renaissance Journalism  
Jesse Garnier, Assistant Professor  
Rachele Kanigel, Associate Professor, Acting Director of Center for Integration and Improvement of Journalism  
Kenneth Kobre, Professor (Semi-retired. Teaches only the Spring semester)  
Venise Wagner, Associate Professor  
Yumi Wilson, Associate Professor (on year leave for academic year 2013-2014)

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.)

**Spring 2013**

Justin Beck  
Harriet Chiang  
Roland De Wolk  
Sibylla Herbrich  
Don Menn  
Beth Renneisen  
Jim Toland  
Scot Tucker  
Jim Wagstaffe

**Fall 2013**

Charla Bear  
Justin Beck  
Trey Bundy  
Harriet Chiang  
Roland De Wolk  
David Greene  
Sibylla Herbrich  
Gary Kamiya  
Don Menn  
Gary Moskowitz  
Raul Ramirez  
Beth Renneisen  
Steve Rubenstein  
Jim Toland  
Scot Tucker

**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	semester 80 or more semester hours outside the major		65 or more hours in liberal arts/sciences	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
2012-2013 academic year	<u>56</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>98</u>	<u>56</u>	<u>100</u>
2011-2012 academic year	<u>56</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>98</u>	<u>56</u>	<u>100</u>



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

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

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

San Francisco State's Journalism program dates to 1960 and has long been well-regarded in Bay Area media circles for its outstanding students and a faculty committed to strong teaching and attuned to the needs of journalism workplaces. The department has been through major reorganizational changes as the university has evolved. Most recently, in 2012, the university reduced the number of colleges from eight to six, in response to the state's ongoing budget crises. Journalism became part of the massive College of Liberal & Creative Arts, home to 24 academic departments and other programs, but it maintained its distinct role separate from the departments of Creative Writing, Communication Studies and Broadcast and Electronic Communication Arts. As the budget woes persisted, decline in faculty numbers was inevitable even as student enrollment continued to grow.

In 2009, after enrollment had surged to 600, the department was granted "impacted" status and was allowed to limit enrollment with a goal of reducing it to 400 students. Students seeking to enter Journalism were required to do an additional application that included an essay and answers to questions gauging interest in the program. After the first year, enrollment surprisingly plummeted to 315, then subsequently fell further before impaction was discontinued. It is hard to precisely explain why the drop was so precipitous. Part of it was as desired: a more rigorous entry process drove some students away. Other factors included

higher than expected numbers of students choosing other majors after expressing interest in Journalism. Enrollment is at 236 in fall of 2013. The department expects it to grow.

The Journalism Department has been a leader in diversity education and practice since the mid-'80s through programs such as the Center for the Integration and Improvement of Journalism and the more recent Renaissance Journalism program that works to create opportunities for community journalism organizations to step into the digital age. The student body and faculty are among the most diverse in the country.

The department's mission statement reads:

To educate students and provide leadership in an evolving media landscape by promoting integrity, creativity, innovation and social responsibility in accurately telling the stories of a multicultural world.

The word "innovation" was recently added.

A new three-year strategic plan was adopted in spring 2013 with these goals:

- Increase number of partnerships with professional journalists and media organizations
- Develop stronger partnerships with current media collaborators
- Develop cross-disciplinary bilingual journalism programs, one in Mandarin, the other in Spanish
- Increase outreach to and collaboration with community colleges and Bay Area high schools
- Integrate use of journalism involving data in the curriculum
- Begin fundraising campaign for an endowed chair of Journalism Technology and for a career service coordinator
- Continue developing stonger alliances with other departments including Broadcast and Electronic Communication Arts, Cinema, Business and Creative Writing.

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

The faculty meets twice monthly during the year and holds daylong faculty retreats before each semester begins. Because of the small faculty numbers, committees are few. Tenured faculty serve on the Retention, Promotion and Tenure Committee. All the faculty sits as a curriculum committee. An Outreach Committee was created this year to work on recruitment of African Americans and Asians. An Internship Committee also was created to evaluate current systems.

*(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 chair is relatively new, serving the first year of her elected term after serving as an interim. She receives good marks from her faculty and from colleagues around the university for the stability and forward thinking she has brought to the department after some leadership turmoil. She is characterized as supportive, well-prepared and engaging. She is a graduate of the program and the only member of the faculty with a Ph.D. She is also a former president of the Native American Journalists Association.

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

Standard process is for the chair to be elected by the faculty every three years, the election to occur the semester prior to the end of the chair's term. Nominations are anonymous and those nominated either accept or decline. The vote is anonymous and tallied by the office manager. This policy is set out by the Academic Senate.

The process has been rather rocky of late, though it did not have noticeable impact on the quality of teaching. The chair elected in 2008 decided she did not want to continue to serve, but consented to re-election in 2011 while she prepared another faculty member to succeed her and ensure a smooth transition. When the chair took sabbatical in spring 2012, the chair-in-waiting was elected interim chair. This proved to be a bad move due to the individual's lack of leadership skills. The chair returned and then took a second leave in spring 2013 to take a visiting professorship for a term. It was at that time that the current chair was elected interim.

The dean of the College acknowledges he considered an outside search at the time because of the tumult.

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

Procedures are in place to handle grievances formal and informal. Student complaints are typically handled by the chair. Formal grievances can advance to a meeting of the student, the chair, a representative of the dean of students and a representative of the College. Grade appeals follow a similar path if they cannot be resolved by the student and instructor. Faculty and staff issues also go to the chair and can advance to the College level. Faculty and staff may file a formal grievance through their union, in which case the chair, a representative from the dean's office, a representative from Human Resources, a representative from the union, and the faculty or staff member meet to seek a resolution. One formal grievance procedure involving a staff member went through the process in the past six years. If the union decides not to take on the case, the faculty member has another recourse through the dean's office, and if the dean's office can't resolve the issue, it is referred to Human Resources.

**SUMMARY:** The department has seen its share of personnel and budget turmoil. While there have been issues of leadership, the department continues to be ambitious and increasingly focused on the future. The new chair has brought stability to the department and is focused on improving the lives of faculty and students.

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

**COMPLIANCE**

## PART II — Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

*(a) The unit requires that students take a minimum of 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.*

Ninety-eight percent of the department's graduating students completed 80 or more semester credit hours outside the major. One-hundred percent completed 65 or more semester credit hours in the liberal arts and sciences. (The department adopted the new ACEJMC 72-credit rule in fall 2013.)

*(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.)*

Although the curriculum focuses on developing students' journalistic skills, the department complements skills-focused courses with three conceptual courses surveying the social impact of journalism (covers the role of journalism in a democratic society, media literacy, media effects theories and journalism history), media law and ethics, and cultural diversity and news media.

The department specifies 12 learning outcomes that address the Accrediting Council's values and competencies to a large extent while also articulating news judgment and visual competence as core desired outcomes. The department's course review matrix indicates curricular strengths are

the emphasis on professional skills and such values as ethics, accuracy, fairness and domestic diversity. Student testimony and alumni success corroborated that coursework meets curricular priorities. Students cited faculty members' excellence of professional expertise while also noting the value of learning ethical principles, media law and cultural diversity. Classroom observation revealed consistent attention to critical and analytical thinking.

The one ACEJMC professional value/competency that needs more attention in the curriculum is global diversity. Observational evidence indicated faculty do include global perspectives in their teaching (for example, the chair noted a multimedia class visiting AlJazeera San Francisco, and international stories were among the top stories noted in a Newswriting class). However, the department's exceptional emphasis on reporting the news through lenses critically focused on a wide range of diverse perspectives could be strengthened with clearer articulation of global content throughout the curriculum.

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

In fall 2009, the department implemented a major curriculum revision, in part to better address demand for digital journalism. Faculty made room to add two digital media courses to the core curriculum by combining history and mass media studies courses into one course and ethics and law courses into one course. All students take a pre-major core of Social Impact of Journalism, Newswriting and a one-credit Newswriting Lab in grammar and AP style. Core requirements for the major are Digital News Gathering, Reporting, News Media Law and Ethics, Online Journalism, and Cultural Diversity and News Media. In fall 2013, the Department added Multimedia Journalism as a core requirement for all Journalism majors. A curricular strength is the Publication Lab, which offers students opportunities for hands-on learning of word and visual reporting, and editing and design skills through work on the department's three print and online publications. Students also are required to take a minor, selected in consultation with an adviser, as part of their outside credits.

Beyond the required 22 credits of pre-major and core courses, students also develop concentrations in Print/Online or Photojournalism.

Curriculum guidelines indicate Print/Online students may choose from nine advanced writing courses and four advanced specialized journalism courses. However, students noted the need for more frequent offerings of additional prerequisite and advanced journalism courses. As one student said, "There are a lot of courses in the catalog that are never taught."

Photojournalism students are required to take a series of four photojournalism classes and may also take a fourth elective from outside the concentration. Students and faculty alike expressed the desire for additional course offerings in photojournalism.

One weakness in the department's curriculum is the inability of students to learn skills specific to broadcast journalism. Curricular guidelines note an informal agreement between the Department of Journalism and the Broadcast and Electronic Communication Arts (BECA) Department allows Journalism students to take a radio news course in BECA, but only "a few . . . majors have taken the course upon obtaining permission of the instructor." Journalism faculty point to the

applicability of their curriculum across media platforms and the emphasis on multimedia journalism as effective preparatory paths for students interested in broadcast journalism careers.

Faculty also note crossover with the Creative Writing department's literary nonfiction emphasis and with coursework in the Cinema department.

Students report that their coursework is rigorous, time consuming and significant to their professional preparation. Meetings with students consistently revealed good-spirited, inspired cohorts who praised the expertise, currency and accessibility of faculty.

Teaching excellence is required for promotion and tenure, and teaching counts .6 of faculty workload. Faculty regularly receives teaching awards and grants. For example, the Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability at S.F. State named Assistant Professor Sachi Cunningham a Longmore Fellow to teach students to produce accessible multimedia profiles for exhibition as part of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Other awards include the Ira A. Brown Adjunct Faculty Award (to Lecturer David Greene), Beverly Kees Journalism Educator Award (Associate Professor Rachele Kanigel), S.F. State Institute for Civic and Community Engagement Scholarship Award (Associate Professor Cristina Azocar), and a 2011 International Adobe Design Achievement Award (Lecturer Beth Renneisen).

Faculty selects one outstanding student for recognition at S.F. State's annual Honors Convocation. Students win top honors in state and national competitions. Examples include first place, Editorial Writing, Society of Professional Journalists Region 11; first place, Best Photo Series, California College Media Association; sixth place, Photojournalism, Hearst Journalism Awards Competition. Student publications regularly win Associated Collegiate Press Pacemaker awards.

*(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.*

One class, Literary Journalism, exceeded the 20-student limit with 24 students enrolled due to the instructor's adding students beyond the enrollment cap. All other skills and labs enrolled 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. (If the unit has more than one sequence, address the opportunities by sequence.)*

The department recommends but does not require internships. Students may earn up to six credits through internships, but they may count only three credits toward their degree requirements.

The unit added in 2009 a capstone experience, Journalism Internship. This gives students the opportunity to receive credit in their major via a rigorous internship experience. Students report that while it can be difficult to find the hours to do this kind of internship, their time spent in a real-world situation is hugely helpful as they begin a job search.

The department specifies a clear process for evaluating internships, requiring students to keep journals, evaluate their experiences, provide work samples, and ask supervisors for evaluations.

Especially noteworthy is the mid-semester evaluation, which not only asks supervisors to describe students' skill levels but also to evaluate students' abilities to apply ethical principles, as well as their sensitivity to diversity issues. Both Print/Online and Photojournalism students must submit work samples at the end of their internships. However, the self-study reports that internship monitoring by faculty has not been effective; the department plans to institute changes to address the issue.

**SUMMARY:** The department offers a rigorous, well-balanced, technologically current curriculum that well prepares both Print/Online and Photojournalism students for successful professional careers. Although the curriculum stresses professional skill development, students express mature understanding of the importance of law, ethics and diversity to their professional preparation. In fact, students so valued the law and ethics course that they recommended it be taken earlier in their coursework and concurrently with Newswriting. They note with pride faculty expertise and accessibility, as well as the strong attention to diversity issues throughout their preparation.

**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.*

In fall 2012, the department revised its Diversity Plan, reaffirming its long-recognized commitment to put diversity at the core of its curriculum and its mission. The commitment to diversity is impossible to miss, from the mission statement to the strategic plan. Based on interviews with staff, faculty and students, and a review of syllabi and curriculum, it appears this written commitment translates to the culture and student experience.

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.*

Diversity is built into much of the curriculum and beginning this semester (fall 2013), all syllabi are required to include a diversity statement. In addition, all students are required to take a Cultural Diversity in the News course that addresses the historical treatment of racial and ethnic groups in the media. In another required class, Reporting, students cover a neighborhood in which they don't live. Students say that reflecting these communities in their reporting is eye-opening. In Social Impact of Journalism, a pre-major requirement, students write a paper discussing media portrayals of people of color and explore the reasons negative portrayals persist.

The unit's Center for Integration and Improvement of Journalism, under its new / current interim director, is working to update its Diversity Style Guide. It was last updated in 2002 and terminology around gender and multi-racial identity has changed dramatically since then. A grant is being sought to build a website linking to all the contributing advocacy groups and to do a limited print distribution to media outlets and journalism classes.

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

The faculty is diverse and recent recruitment efforts yielded a mixed-race professor. The faculty overall is one-third white (majority minority) and majority female. Part-time and adjunct faculty are another picture entirely, mostly white and mostly male. New hires receive guidance on the Retention, Promotion and Tenure track and for more than a decade, no candidates for RTP have been unsuccessful.

(d) *The unit demonstrates effective efforts to help recruit and retain 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.*

Whites represent 39 percent of the unit, 32 percent of the university's student population. The unit has increased its Hispanic/Latino representation since its last accreditation – from 4.9



percent to 30 percent. Students recently formed a chapter of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists. CIIJ has played a key role in recruiting students, particularly through its outreach with the Journalism Association for Community Colleges.

Unfortunately, funding for CIIJ programs has been greatly reduced. When diversity programs were at their height of popularity, the grants flowed and the institute had more than 15 staff members. Now, there is just the interim director. She, however, is extremely enthusiastic and has myriad plans for the future. The CIIJ used to host a two-week residential summer program for high school students, targeting minority and low-income youth in underserved communities; that program was suspended after 2010. CIIJ still holds periodic day-long workshops and does ad hoc outreach, speaking at high schools, the JEA national conference, etc.

The department calls out its own weakness in attracting African American men, of which there are three in the program. They plan to host a summer workshop with the Bay Area Black Journalists Association, beginning next summer, 2014, and they are developing an outreach plan to high schools in Oakland and other parts of the East Bay.

Retention efforts range from mandatory orientation and required advising to a mentoring program that is currently serving 12 students (it has served up to 37) who are matched with an area professional journalist. Many of the mentors are S.F. State alums. The unit encourages freshmen to try different kinds of classes to make sure they will want to stick with the major, and despite this, retention rates for minority first-time freshmen average between 70 and 80 percent.

Graduation rates tell a somewhat different story. Four-year graduation rates are quite low and particularly so for Latinos entering in 2005 and Asians entering in 2007. Four-year retention rates for Latino transfer students are high but graduation rate is low, though better than the university as a whole.

*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.*

In the past review there was some concern about racial, gender and generational differences, and team-building sessions with faculty were created to attempt to address this. Since that work, the faculty has worked hard to maintain an inclusive and comfortable environment. For the most part, faculty aren't just collegial, they seem to truly care about each other. They have continued to hold informal gatherings to celebrate faculty accomplishments in an attempt to maintain this positive momentum.

Faculty members call out the current culture of camaraderie as part of the unit's newly solid footing. Several faculty mentioned a video tribute to a now-deceased longtime lecturer and stalwart of Bay Area journalism – something they pulled together to do and produced in less than a week (proving that together they can do, not just teach, one faculty member said).

**SUMMARY:** Diversity remains a core value and pillar of this program. The faculty and students embody this competency, and the curriculum, planning and ongoing creativity around the issue serve to maintain that foundational strength.

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

**COMPLIANCE**

## 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.*

A five-page document, "Journalism Department RTP Criteria," describes guidelines for retention, tenure and promotion based on three performance categories: teaching effectiveness, professional achievement and growth, and contributions to campus and community. Guidelines stipulate that candidates for tenure and/or promotion "must meet the standard of excellence normally expected of faculty and required by the University [sic]." A 20-page university policy on retention, tenure and promotion presents detailed processes for review committee structures as well as expectations for advancement. The university policy stipulates that departments are responsible for determining and documenting performance excellence. Department forms for peer review of teaching, student evaluations of teaching effectiveness, and performance evaluation are clear and functional. The department does plan to clarify language in the guidelines to specify what is meant by "regional, national or international" impact in terms of productivity by journalism faculty.

Measurements of teaching effectiveness include student course evaluations and peer evaluations of in-class competence, inclusivity and pedagogical innovation.

For the category of professional achievement and growth, faculty must develop programs of research, creative work or a combination of research and creative work. The department defines research as in-depth journalism, journalism criticism and traditional scholarship disseminated through formats ranging from books to websites. The university requires full-time faculty to teach three courses per semester, or .6 of their workload. Research/creative activity counts equally with service contributions in terms of workload, yet department perception and university administrators indicate research/creative activity carry more weight in tenure/promotion reviews. The department addresses this by advising assistant professors to take on minimally demanding service responsibilities. Although faculty do receive course releases for administrative service and grant opportunities, the teaching load combined with the small number of full-time faculty make it difficult for faculty to focus adequately on research and creative activity while also meeting department and university service obligations.

The department communicates expectations for adjunct faculty through the university's "Temporary Faculty Evaluation Form," which specifies teaching effectiveness as the primary criterion for performance review. The form notes that temporary faculty also must maintain currency in their fields and properly discharge "other departmental assignments." Students also complete course evaluations for adjuncts. Peers evaluate teaching performance by lecturers with three-year contracts every three years and annually for others. A full-time load for adjunct faculty, who are called lecturers, is five courses per semester. The highest load carried by current adjunct faculty is three courses.

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

In spite of severe budget and hiring limitations in the university, the department has filled two of the four full-time faculty vacancies that occurred since the last self-study. Nevertheless, full-time faculty (typically on a 3-3 load) taught an average of only 39 percent of courses in the last

three years, dropping from 48 percent in 2010-11 to 32 percent in 2012-13. Administrative responsibilities, stepped retirements and the fact that one full-time faculty member is on leave resulted in only three tenured/tenure-track faculty teaching full time in fall 2013. Faculty-to-student ratio for fall 2013 is 39:1.

The department therefore relies heavily on adjunct faculty. Nine part-time/adjunct faculty taught in spring semester 2013, and 15 part-time adjunct faculty are teaching in fall semester 2013. Fortunately, the availability of outstanding professionals in the San Francisco area turns what could be a serious deficiency into a vibrant opportunity for students to learn from a balanced mix of well-seasoned legacy journalists and leaders of cutting-edge new media organizations. The most serious consequence of having a small full-time faculty is limited potential for research/creative productivity. A handful of full-time faculty carry primary responsibility for administrative and service work in the department.

*(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.*

Both full-time and part-time faculty demonstrate strong professional experience and expertise. Faculty CV's list degrees from top programs. Experience ranges from years of experience working for newspapers and the Associated Press through such innovative work as founding SFBay.ca, a Bay Area-based news website. Faculty regularly participate in professional workshops and are active in both professional and scholarly organizations.

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

Forms for student evaluation of teaching effectiveness rate criteria ranging from clear communication of course objectives and requirements through respectful treatment and fairness. Recent evaluations show rankings in the excellent to good range.

Students consistently describe the faculty as caring, available 24/7, highly knowledgeable and effective.

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

Campus colleagues stress the collaborative spirit and impressive university contributions of Journalism faculty. Campus colleagues also praise Journalism students as good writers, "good to have in class," and effective media workers.

**SUMMARY:** The department lists nine full-time faculty on its roster. However, as part of the university's early retirement program, two of the nine teach only in spring semester. A third faculty member is on leave. A fourth faculty member has course releases to direct two centers and has not taught any courses since spring 2011. A fifth faculty member is department chair and teaches one course. And a sixth faculty member has a course release in fall semester to serve as interim director of a center. Administrative responsibilities, stepped retirements and

the fact that one full-time faculty member is on leave resulted in only three tenured/tenure-track faculty teaching full time in fall 2013. Full-time faculty taught an average of 39 percent of courses in the last three years, dropping from 48 percent in 2010-11 to 32 percent in 2012-13. Faculty-to-student ratio for fall 2013 is 39:1.

While these findings lead to an evaluation of non-compliance, the department's students appear to be thriving, due not only to the dedication of full-time faculty but also to a large complement of outstanding adjunct faculty. The combination of excellent full-time and part-time faculty ensures depth and breadth of credentials, experience and expertise.

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

**NONCOMPLIANCE**

## **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.*

As noted in Standard 4, both the university and the department require excellent professional achievement and growth. The department encourages faculty to apply for external funding and supports sabbaticals, leaves and course releases for professional opportunities. The university also supports faculty with travel awards to present work at professional meetings. Excellence in scholarship, creative work and professional activity is recognized as one criterion for tenure and advancement in rank.

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

The department describes expectations for research/creative/professional activity in the context of a five-page document that also outlines teaching and service expectations. The department requires faculty to produce work “that clearly is major” and defines major in terms of regional, national or international scope; audience; topic and methodological significance; rigor; reviewer stature; breadth, depth and originality; and impact.

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

As noted in Standard 4, the department’s Retention, Promotion and Tenure document effectively describes different paths for advancement by professionally oriented versus research-oriented faculty. The document also specifies criteria for evaluating a faculty member’s program of work, which may be developed through research, creative activity or a combination of the two. Research may include in-depth journalism, journalism criticism or academic scholarship and may be disseminated via such traditional academic forms as books and journal articles or professional publication in a range of legacy and new media. The university provides a 20-page document describing staged processes for review of faculty work at department, college and university levels. The university describes such achievements through three categories: research and publication, creative works and curricular innovations.

*(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.*

A strength of the faculty is individual and collective contributions to the profession of journalism through publication, community service, speaking engagements and leadership in organizations and media. Although the department’s non-teaching activities are in accord with document-specified university expectations, the site team found evidence that the college and university will require greater productivity in scholarly research than creative/professional

work. The unit's heavy teaching load and administrative responsibilities will make this a challenge for full-time faculty.

Under the current mission and guidelines, the faculty's non-teaching activities are varied and plentiful.

Just a sampling:

- Second edition of *The Student Newspaper Survival Guide* published
- "Deadline Every Second," a 60-minute documentary about AP photographers, produced and aired multiple times
- Visiting professorship at Columbia University on covering issues of race and class
- "Activities Among Negroes," published in *Journalism History* (refereed journal)
- iPhone app now in iTunes giving user professional video production capabilities
- *Videojournalism: Multimedia Storytelling*, published as print and e-book
- Multiple papers presented at AEJMC conventions over the accrediting period
- Multiple moderators/organizers at College Media Association conventions over the accrediting period
- "Content Management Systems," published for Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications meeting (refereed conference paper)
- Sixth edition of a leading photojournalism textbook
- Vietnam Reporting Project, collaborative journalism project on Agent Orange (won 18 awards for reporting, photography and documentaries)
- PSA for nationwide beach cleanup, Chile, screened multiple times (juried creative work)
- "The Four Rs of the Journalism Pipeline," published in *Diversity that Works* (monograph)

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

Though the faculty is small in numbers, its composition is diverse. Faculty members come from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines. They are racially diverse and represent a range of age and experience. When the adjuncts/lecturers are included in the mix, the differing points of view are even more apparent. This richly diverse environment manifests inclusivity, stimulates critical analysis and creative problem solving, and facilitates open expression. Dissent seems welcome and is collegially expressed through collaboration and direct conversation. Classroom culture reinforces this open, analytical approach; during one classroom visit, the instructor celebrated participation and debate as much as the precisely correct answer. Classroom observations revealed healthy instructor/student and student-to-student interactions. Students learn from and model this diverse faculty, benefitting from a clear strength of the unit.

**SUMMARY:** Given the small size of the full-time faculty and the heavy teaching and service loads required of them, faculty produce a reasonable amount of scholarly, professional and creative work. Their strongest contributions are to the advancement of the profession of journalism, exhibited through publication, speaking engagements, projects and community engagement.

**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.*

Juniors are required to receive advising about graduation and going-forward plans each spring, and seniors each fall. They cannot register for the next semester without participating.

The unit has added footnotes to the current schedule to address ongoing confusion among students about what courses counted for the required three advanced electives. This appears to be working; while students express a desire for more specialized options, they don't express confusion.

In the past, there was concern about students unable to get into required courses in order to graduate in a timely manner. The size of the unit has decreased so dramatically that this is no longer a problem. What can now be a problem may be the converse – due to a lack of students, some prerequisites will go even three semesters without being offered.

b) *Faculty are available and accessible to students.*

Faculty members are all required to hold one office hour each week for each three-unit course they teach. The chair also must spend six to eight hours per week on advising. Advising is available via the larger university system.

What is striking from conversations with students, alumni and the faculty themselves is how available all the faculty – full-time, adjunct, lecturers – make themselves to the students. “Accessible” is the word used again and again. “The professors are part of my team,” one student said. Multiple stories of being able to call, text or e-mail 24/7 – and receiving responses at all hours – were recounted. And students feel like the faculty – again, whether lecturer or full-time tenured – truly care about them, far beyond the required office hours and beyond any one class. “They teach you; they tell you to breathe,” and it's not just about class or academics, it's about their personal goals and issues as well.

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

The department and CIJ use a variety of methods to inform students of activities, requirements and policies.

Information is posted on the department website as news happens or changes warrant. There are fliers in the classrooms and hallways. And Facebook pages for both enrolled students and alumni include updated announcements.

There is a required orientation for new students. Students all get a student handbook outlining policies.

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.*

As noted in Standard 2, the department requires students to take one year of course work in one of its three laboratory publications: weekly newspaper; thrice-semester magazine; daily online. The publications regularly win national awards, and the newspaper and website are the only outlets for coverage of the 30,000-large S.F. State community. Real, news-breaking journalism is done in these outlets.

One of the department's lecturers started a match-to-mentor program for which he recruited dozens of working journalists from the region. The list is impressive and varied, and many of them are S.F. State alums. The approach to the program is "casual" – the mentor and student are required to first meet in person at the mentor's workplace, and then it's up to them how it proceeds. Some students use their mentor as a backstop for writing assignments; others are seeking moral support and general advice. The 3-year-old program has served up to 37 students (last spring, when participation is generally higher), and is currently serving a dozen students. The lecturer/organizer has two checkpoints in the semester, halfway through and then at the end for an informal assessment.

The new interim CIJ director has turned the center into a more-inwardly focused effort, creating a place where students can just hang out and get internship and career information. CIJ has become the de facto repository for most of the unit's advisement and career coaching responsibilities – sending out a monthly e-newsletter, holding office hours and doing career counseling, including coaching on cover letters and resumes. The new director believes networking may be the key to placing the students in jobs and is working to push a variety of efforts to connect students with each other, alumni and area professionals. She is also partnering with another professor to build a database of internships and careers. The outgoing college dean said he is considering approving a half-time staff member to oversee internships for Journalism students, but that he is waiting to see if CIJ's efforts are sufficient. The professor leading CIJ is enthusiastic, but her efforts alone may not be enough to put rigor around a meaningful internship program.

CIJ used to hold a job fair but that was discontinued in 2009 due to funding cutbacks. The latest programs include "Careerapalooza," a week of activities aimed at helping students and alumni to launch their careers. The larger workshops drew about 75 students, often a mix of a class that went on class time and others who came on their own.

The unit's other institute/program, Renaissance Journalism, also holds events in which students are encouraged to participate, including a storytelling retreat; the Vietnam Reporting Project, in collaboration with Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy and the Ford Foundation (2010-2011); LearningLAB, annual conferences to familiarize ethnic media journalists and others with multimedia production; and the Media Greenhouse, a program to help community-based news outlets integrate new media (2009).

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

In past accreditation visits, the unit's lack of analysis of enrollment, retention and graduation data by segment was noted. The unit has worked hard to both understand and document this

data in the past four to six years.

First-time freshmen retention rates are well-documented by 2005 and 2007 cohorts, and drop-off is traceable to the students' results in the two core classes, Newswriting and Reporting. These classes are designed to filter out students whose talents are better made for a different major, and data and anecdotes suggest that is working. Once these core classes do their filtering work, the department's retention rate is high, and the remaining students say that they are glad for the hard-core initiation and know they're really meant to be in the major after they survive and thrive.

The mission of S.F. State is evolving. While it used to be primarily a commuter campus, it is becoming a destination campus; it retains the possibilities and challenges of both. Many students still work substantial hours to cover the cost of their education; some students are under pressure to finish quickly because of family-imposed time constraints, etc. While it's possible the unit could do more to take advantage of a more residential student body, the department reports most of its students both commute and work many hours. Informal polling of the students supports this.

Community college transfers make up the bulk of the unit's student body and boost the department's retention numbers.

**SUMMARY:** The unit has worked hard to improve its contact and guidance for its students and alumni. It has two active Facebook pages that seem to have a thriving community. It has increased its offerings for real-world and extracurricular experiences. And it is now tracking enrollment, retention and graduation rates – as well as alumni career placement – by race and gender.

Perhaps just as important, students and alumni can't say enough about the accessibility of the faculty; this seems to be an ongoing legacy of the department. Students feel that throughout their college careers, and then later into their professional careers, they can count on their professors, lecturers and adjuncts to be there for them on every level, no matter the day or time.

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

**COMPLIANCE**

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

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

Budgeting for the department is centralized through the College of Liberal & Creative Arts. This includes salary, travel and equipment. Final section counts are also determined in the dean's office, although additions are often made in response to student demand. The outgoing dean has generally been considerate of Journalism's needs, including a recent \$60,000 allocation for new camera equipment for multimedia students. Computer workstations have been replaced on a regular basis. The department generates some additional funds through ad sales in student publications. Faculty travel is funded modestly. Tenured faculty get \$900 a year for one professional trip; untenured get two at \$900 a trip.

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

The department feels it is treated fairly in the allocation of funds by the dean. Journalism generally gets more equipment funding than other departments in the College because of the demands of the craft.

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

The department is housed in comfortable quarters on the third floor of the university's Humanities Building. There are six classrooms, five offices, a resource room/library also used for faculty meetings and the office of the Center for the Integration and Improvement of Journalism. Some faculty offices are on different floors of the same building. Renaissance Journalism is based in downtown San Francisco. The department's space -- other than equipment -- is in need of freshening. Furniture is old and in many cases a little battered.

*(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.*

Macs are plentiful throughout the classrooms. Four classrooms are dedicated to skills courses and two are outfitted with Macs. The classroom dedicated to photojournalism has a large-scale viewing screen. The student publication labs are also well-equipped with Macs. Software is up to date. Three of the classrooms are "smart classrooms" with overhead viewing capabilities.

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

The library liaison to Journalism spoke glowingly of her collaborative relationship with the department and its students. She teaches data research skills to classes on a regular basis.

**SUMMARY:** While the budget situation throughout the California State system has been more than grim in recent years, in general, the budget situation has been stable of late. A supportive dean of the College is a big help as the department received two faculty lines last year to hire professors devoted to multimedia and digital teaching and money for equipment for that teaching. A respected photojournalism professor is on phased retirement and replacing him is seen as crucial.

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

**COMPLIANCE**

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

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The department has a long tradition of recruiting working journalists to work as adjunct, part-time or for one-time speaking engagements. S.F. State is known in the journalism community for its hands-on, real-world approach to teaching, and much of this reputation can be attributed to its contact with the professional working community. As one student said, “They all have so many connections and opportunities for us.”

The department’s recent recruitment of two multimedia professors is an indicator that the department is paying attention to industry trends and proactively addressing the curriculum implications.

In the last accreditation, the department’s poor outreach to alumni was noted – something that was truly a missed opportunity with so many distinguished professionals who are alums. The unit has taken steps to address this since the last visit. It has an active Facebook page for alumni, which is its main point of contact for most alums. It has an annual Alumni Reception and honors a distinguished alumnus at the end-of-year graduation ceremonies. The CIIJ director said there are always at least a couple of more informal, ad hoc alumni activities each school year. A mentorship program, which features many alums, is another touch point; it is being folded into CIIJ.

Virtually all the tenure-track faculty participate in professional journalism organizations, such as the journalism diversity organizations, SPJ, ONA, etc. They also, as they say, “infiltrate” other relevant companies. A professor who is on leave is working at LinkedIn, a relationship she’d nurtured while teaching. One of the new multimedia faculty is a living laboratory of entrepreneurial journalism, running a website he founded, SFBay.ca, a 24-hour news, sports and events website that, while small, is growing rapidly.

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.*

Renaissance Journalism – a new endeavor founded in 2009 -- works with news outlets, philanthropies and nonprofit groups to incubate new journalism practices to strengthen communities. This outreach to underserved parts of the profession widens the department’s scope while also providing a window into what’s really happening in the working world. The program also held a storytelling retreat for Bay Area journalists with support from several foundations.

CIIJ, the unit’s other big program, convened a “21<sup>st</sup> Century Journalism Schools” symposium for educators, journalists and journalism association leaders. CIIJ has also added media entrepreneurship to its portfolio of offerings. Entrepreneurial skills are not part of the curriculum, and through workshops, a freelancing conference and guest speakers, students are exposed to the ideas and competencies needed to succeed in the marketplace. The interim director has been accepted into a fellowship at the Scripps Howard Journalism

Entrepreneurship Institute at ASU's Cronkite School.

*c) The unit contributes to the improvement of journalism and mass communication as academic disciplines by supporting the faculty's involvement in academic associations and related activities.*

Faculty members participate in academic associations, and some assume leadership roles. Examples include president of the Association of College Media, and adviser to the ONA student newsroom.

The CIIJ and Renaissance Journalism carry most of the responsibility for support of the academic disciplines. The unit's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in 2012 invited students and journalism educators to panels and speakers featuring everything from Frontline to Twitter.

*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.*

Most faculty members are also involved in public service activities, and this is of course institutionalized via Renaissance Journalism; its entire mission is about community service. Students truly get out of their comfort zones, even as they make a difference in nearby community efforts.

Faculty is well-traveled in the region, giving speeches and participating in workshops.

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

Scholastic journalism, defined as high school or pre-college education, used to be supported by the unit in a high-profile way via the CIIJ's summer camp for high school journalists of color and from difficult financial situations. However, it was discontinued in 2010. CIIJ now periodically holds one-day conferences for high school students with sessions on libel, visual storytelling, etc. The unit also had a one-year program in 2009 with Oakland Tech High School in which it provided two student coaches.

However, funding issues have all but dried up this outreach. In the meantime, several faculty members do spend time speaking at area high schools like Oakland Tech, and at last year's JEA annual conference several were featured speakers.

**SUMMARY:** Service to journalism, journalism education and to the community continue to define this program. While funding constraints have hurt some of the scholastic outreach, the unit continues to be a vital voice in Bay Area journalism, both academically and within the professional community, even as it designs programs that reach into traditionally underserved neighborhoods.

**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 identified 14 skills and values it wants its graduates to have attained:

Skills	Values
News Judgment	Integrity
Critical Thinking	Flexibility
Cultural Competence	Journalism Ethics
Clarity of Writing	Journalism as agent for social change
Analytical Competence	Fairness
Research and Reporting	Honesty
Media Literacy	Accountability

These were used to develop 12 specific learning outcomes that include the Council’s Values and Competencies:

**News Judgment:** Work demonstrates news judgment that allows them to identify and develop story ideas through observation, reading and paying attention to their environment.

**Critical and Independent Thinking:** Work demonstrates an ability to synthesize information and think independently as students work through problems using inference and logic.

**Cultural Competence:** Work demonstrates an understanding of a variety of cultures and how those cultures influence perspectives, attitudes and personal interaction with the world.

**Writing:** Work demonstrates concise, clear and accurate writing that engages the audience with compelling storytelling.

**Analytical Competence:** Work demonstrates an ability to discern and weigh the quality of information students gather, as well as know how to analyze and interpret it.

**Research and Reporting:** Work demonstrates an ability to methodically find information through the Internet, public documents, personal interviews, etc.

**Media Literacy:** Work demonstrates an ability to competently navigate through a rapidly changing media world—understanding media’s influence on society, community and the democratic process—and that students also understand the power of images in shaping society’s understanding of the world.

**Ethics, Integrity and the Law:** Work demonstrates knowledge and practices of ethical standards and constitutional laws that guide journalism excellence.

**Critical Evaluation:** Work demonstrates students’ critical evaluation of their own work and



that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.

**Data and Numbers:** Work demonstrates ability to apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.

**Technology:** Work demonstrates students' ability to know when and how to apply technology in their professional work.

**Visual Competence:** Work demonstrates an ability to research, find and capture in a technically competent and visually compelling manner the full range of human experience in a variety of formats.

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

**Direct measures:** The department uses entrance, midterm and exit exams in its Newswriting course and entrance and exit exams in its Reporting course. Exam grades while part of the course grade are looked at as a cohort for assessment purposes in Newswriting. The department's Assessment Review Committee (made up of faculty and professionals) randomly reviews portfolios of graduating seniors in the capstone Publications Laboratory class every other year.

**Indirect measures:** Seniors applying for graduation are required to complete a comprehensive exit survey before the department chair signs off on their application. Alumni are surveyed every three years and are asked for a qualitative evaluation of how their experience in the Journalism Department serves them in their professional work.

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

The department's 2009 assessment report saw weakness in student understanding of data and numbers. This led to new modules in editing and newswriting lab courses, and the creation of a data journalism course. Portfolio review revealed the need to address the quality of multimedia courses. Scores have improved and new faculty is onboard. Assessment scores also have been used to provide more standardization across courses with multiple sections and instructors.

Assessment opportunities remain in areas such as advanced internships where oversight was not rigorous enough by the faculty member assigned to it.

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

This was cited as a deficiency by the last site team and significant progress has been made in both alumni outreach via newsletters and Facebook and by recruiting some alums to participate in the portfolio review noted in next item.

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

Several prominent Bay Area media professionals have been recruited to assist in portfolio reviews of students. They range from the local public television station's news director to a Pulitzer-prize winning photographer. A 1-5 rubric is used to grade against the desired competencies listed above.

**SUMMARY:** Assessment has become a part of regular process in the department. While its use of direct measures doesn't exactly fit with ACEJMC recommended practices, it makes sense in a department with a regular heavy transfer cohort and those students beginning their major work as juniors. Assessment is being used as well to adjust course work to make sure students attain the department's desired competencies.

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

**COMPLIANCE**

### **PART III: Summary by site visit team**

*(1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.*

#### **STRENGTHS:**

Faculty (full and part time) is appreciated, respected and admired by grateful students.

Students are generally serious and motivated. They come to S.F. State for journalism.

Diversity remains a deeply held fundamental value.

Student publication/lab opportunity and experience are invaluable.

Curriculum is up to date (for now) and reflects the digital world.

#### **WEAKNESSES:**

Even with enrollment restrictions and smaller student body, faculty is stretched very thin.

Intern/career placement remains a patched-together situation.

More productive scholarship from the faculty needed, even with the department's teaching emphasis.

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

Standard 4, Full-Time and Part-Time Faculty

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

More classes need to be taught by tenured and tenure-line faculty. While the availability of distinguished adjuncts in San Francisco is a wisely utilized asset, the current percentage – less than 40 – cannot endure.

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

Excerpted from the self-study:

**Deficiency:** The department confronted a serious problem with too many students enrolled in skills courses, which is related to an inadequate number of course sections available.

**Solution:** After the site visit we immediately began controlling enrollments through improved advising and prerequisite checks. We also asked then-Provost John Gemello, if we could claim impacted. The CSU system does not allow any program to have a special admissions process unless it is a university-recognized impacted program. We continued to lobby for this status but were not granted approval to implement it until Fall 2009. We began a special admissions process requiring all applicants to submit an additional application to the one they submitted to the university. We had 600 majors at the time and hoped to slowly reduce our numbers to 400. However, realizing that goal eluded us, as it has several other departments at the institution. In the first year, we dropped from 600 to 350. Now we are at 236, and we are having problems filling some of the sections we offer, particularly the advanced classes.

*Note: the 236 enrollment number was updated during the site-team visit.*

**Deficiency:** Internship and job placement infrastructure is weak.

**Solution:** At the time of the previous site visit, many students sought credit toward graduation for internships. Faculty believed it was important for students to have at least two internships prior to graduating and to have internship experiences earlier in the curriculum. Thus, we designed two opportunities for internship credit. The first is a continuation of a previous practice: an internship for up to 3 units credit, working 12 hours a week in a position where duties are journalism-related. The credit for this internship does not count toward units required for the major. The second opportunity for internship credit is for students to take a three-unit course, Jour 617 Journalism Internship. The prerequisite for this course is one semester of Publication Lab so students can hone skills prior to their internship. *Jour 617* counts as a second semester capstone course.

We still do not have a strong job placement or internship placement operation. CIIJ could no longer support those efforts because funding for such projects was not available. The faculty would very much like to hire a career services coordinator, raising money for such a position if that is necessary. In the meantime, we have been using Facebook extensively to transmit information about internships and job prospects to both our students and alumni. It has received enthusiastic response from both groups, and students have secured some excellent internships and jobs as a result.

**Deficiency:** Too much faculty teaching time devoted to advising the student publications.

**Solution:** Immediately after the site team left, we set the next semester's course schedule to reflect a change in staffing of the Publication Lab course, which generates the three student publications. We have divided each publication into one section limited to 20 students. Each

faculty member is responsible for one section except for online and newspaper, which reflects our intention to achieve greater convergence of online and newspaper content.

**Deficiency:** The size of the faculty cannot meet the enrollment demand. The only full-time magazine professor will retire before long, although the magazine sequence is the department's most populous. There is less capacity in online journalism than the rapid changes in the profession would seem to demand.

**Solution:** As mentioned above, we dealt with the enrollment demand, but attrition still plagues the department. We lost two members to retirement, and two additional are now in semi-retirement, which affords them the benefit of teaching half-time while collecting their pensions. Both the professors who are semi-retired teach only in the spring semester. In 2012 we were permitted to make two hires, one to teach online journalism and one for video storytelling. Together, they have contributed substantially to rounding out and broadening our curriculum. Two of our professors continue to run our two centers, which means their teaching time is also limited. In fact, one professor is running two centers, one on behalf of the Journalism Department (Renaissance Journalism), and the other on behalf of the university, perhaps for one more year. Suffice to say, our full-time faculty ranks are still inadequate.

**Deficiency:** Unfortunately, the unit and the university don't maintain retention data by racial or ethnic minority group for the sequences, and this weakness should be addressed in the future. Information about the success of recruitment efforts by race and ethnic minority groups was not available. It would benefit the program to establish tracking systems.

**Solution:** Before the site team arrived, faculty had voted to merge the sequences from four to two. In doing so, we created concentrations, which means that the university's Office of Institutional Research can track retention and racial/ethnic data on each concentration.

**Deficiency:** Advising needs more structure and quality control.

**Solution:** Because we were changing the number of sequences/concentrations, we knew we had to redesign our advising folders. And because we changed our curriculum again to add more digital requirements, we had to change our advising folders again. So, we have been using three different sets of folders depending on when students started our program. Most of the two earlier curricula have now been phased out and we are now following one. But we are about to go through another curriculum revision and will again change the folder to reflect those changes.

We also instituted mandatory advising for juniors and seniors. Juniors have mandatory advising in the Spring semester and seniors have mandatory advising in the Fall semester. This has helped keep our students on track.

**Deficiency:** Few fund-raising efforts in the department, which are needed because funding from the university is so Spartan.

**Solution:** The faculty has worked hard in this area and has seen somewhat heartening results. It takes time to develop relationships with people and induce them to give money. We have also found that many of our alumni don't have the resources to give. Nonetheless, we put much effort into reaching out to prospective donors and have worked closely with the Development Office. We received two generous, ongoing donations from two people for scholarships. One of these donors also gave \$25,000 in funds over three years for equipment.

Additionally, we have worked closely with the originator of one scholarship fund to reignite interest and giving. We have started a newsletter for recipients and alumni of and donors to this scholarship.

**Deficiency:** Lack of connection with alumni from the department.

**Solution:** We have invested considerable effort in this area. We started a biannual e-newsletter, letting alumni know what is going on in the department. We also started a Facebook group for alumni (now at 799 members) so that they can communicate with each other and with us. This has been a great way for faculty to stay in touch with former students. We also began choosing one or two high-achieving alumni to honor each year at a reception the Friday before May's graduation ceremony. Participation has been high (approximately 75 attendees in 2013), and our alumni indicated how much they enjoy connecting in person with professors and each other. In addition, we have reached out more to alumni to serve as mentors and to offer workshops for our students.

**Deficiency:** Lack of an assessment plan and use of data from assessment to make changes to the program.

**Solution:** We established an e-portfolio review as well as standardized tests across sections of the core course, Jour 300 Reporting, and the introduction to that course, Jour 221 Newswriting. Each year an assessment report is written and shared with faculty. The report is discussed at the Fall faculty retreat and changes in pedagogy, approach and curriculum are proposed.

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 thorough and candid about the issues the department confronts. We were surprised by the number of typos and that whole passages were repeated verbatim.