

Report of On-Site Evaluation

ACEJMC

Undergraduate program

2014- 2015

Name of Institution: Texas State University

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Denise M. Trauth, President

Name of Unit: School of Journalism and Mass Communication

Name and Title of Administrator: Judith Oskam, Director

Date of 2014 - 2015 Accrediting Visit: November 16-19, 2014

Date of the previous accrediting visit: November 9-12, 2008

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Reaccreditation

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Reaccreditation

Recommendation by 2014 - 2015 Visiting Team: Reaccreditation

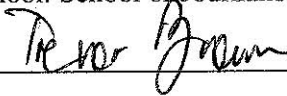
Prepared and submitted by:

Team Chair

Name and Title: Trevor R. Brown, Professor Emeritus

Organization/School: School of Journalism, Indiana University

Signature



Team Members

Name and Title: Clark Bell, Journalism Program Director

Organization/School: McCormick Foundation

Signature



Name and Title: John Cochran, Senior Correspondent (retired)

Organization/School: ABC News

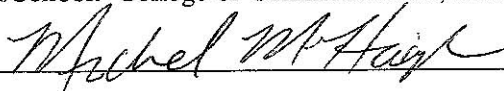
Signature



Name and Title: Michel M. Haigh, Associate Professor

Organization/School: College of Communication, Pennsylvania State University

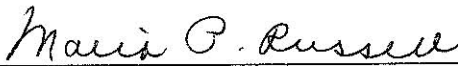
Signature



Name and Title: Maria P. Russell, Professor

Organization/School: S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications

Signature



PART I: General information

Name of Institution: Texas State University

Name of Unit: School of Journalism and Mass Communication

Year of Visit: 2014

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.

Texas State University receives degree-granting authority through the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and the Texas State University System (TSUS), two boards empowered by the State of Texas. This narrative provides evidence of compliance by highlighting statutes recorded in the Texas Education Code that grant authority to the THECB and the TSUS and describing Texas State's relationship with the THECB and the TSUS.

Governance in the State of Texas is vested in the hands of an elected state house of representatives, state senate, and governor. Approved statutes related to education are compiled in the Texas Education Code. Chapter 61, Section 61.051, of the Texas Education Code indicates that the THECB is "the highest authority in the state in matters of public higher education and is charged with the duty to take an active part in promoting quality education in the various regions of the state." The section also defines the THECB's responsibility for authorizing "the initiation, consolidation, or elimination of degree or certificate programs" providing that "No new department, school, degree program, or certificate program may be added at any public institution of higher education except with specific prior approval of the board."

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: November 2008

5. When was the unit or sequences within the unit first accredited by ACEJMC?
2003

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

The mission of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication is to pursue excellence. Our programs strive to cultivate strong professional, research, theoretical, critical and ethical skills in a diverse and engaging environment that prepares students to be socially responsible media professionals, scholars and citizens. *Last revised in 2008. Reviewed annually.*

Our mission, reviewed annually, continues to serve our evolving industry and is consistent with the Texas State University mission and strategic plan.

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Semesters of 16 weeks

Quarters of _____ weeks

Summer sessions of 5 (most common) and 8 & 10 weeks

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. List the specific degrees being reviewed by ACEJMC. *Indicate online degrees.

Degree programs (fall 2012-current)

B.S., Advertising and Mass Communication

B.S., Electronic Media and Mass Communication

B.S., Journalism and Mass Communication

B.S., Public Relations and Mass Communication

B.A., Mass Communication

These degree programs are being phased out and are generally only available for students that began the degree programs before the change to the B.S. They will be completely phased out in 2018.

- B.A., Mass Communication-Advertising
- B.A., Mass Communication-Electronic Media
- B.A., Mass Communication-Journalism
- B.A., Mass Communication-Public Relations

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

120 semester hours

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

Students may earn a maximum of six semester credit hours for all internship experiences.

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

<u>Name of Sequence or Specialty</u>	<u>Person in Charge</u>
Advertising	Alexander Muk
Electronic Media	Tim England
Mass Communication (General)	Kate Peirce
Journalism	Kym Fox
Public Relations	Olga Wilson

13. Number of full-time students enrolled in the institution: 28,185

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

FALL 2014

B.S., Advertising and Mass Communication	174
B.S., Electronic Media and Mass Communication	179
B.S., Journalism and Mass Communication	60
B.S., Public Relations and Mass Communication	282
B.A., Mass Communication	61
B.A., Mass Communication-Advertising	38
B.A., Mass Communication-Electronic Media	47
B.A., Mass Communication-Journalism	20
B.A., Mass Communication-Public Relations	67
Pre-majors	1,180
Total Undergraduate	2,108

15. 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. Include a separate list for online courses.

Prefix	Course #	Section	Title	Enrollment
MC	1313	L01	Writing for the Mass Media	17
MC	1313	L02	Writing for the Mass Media	17
MC	1313	L05	Writing for the Mass Media	17
MC	1313	L07	Writing for the Mass Media	15
MC	1313	L08	Writing for the Mass Media	17
MC	1313	L09	Writing for the Mass Media	17
MC	1313	L10	Writing for the Mass Media	17
MC	1313	L11	Writing for the Mass Media	17
MC	1313	L12	Writing for the Mass Media	16
MC	1313	L13	Writing for the Mass Media	14
MC	1313	L14	Writing for the Mass Media	15
MC	3306	L01	Writing for Electronic Media	13
MC	3306	L02	Writing for Electronic Media	16
MC	3306	L03	Writing for Electronic Media	15
MC	3306	L04	Writing for Electronic Media	16
MC	3307	L01	Audio Production	19
MC	3311	L01	Video Production	14
MC	3311	L02	Video Production	14
MC	3311	L03	Video Production	14
MC	3312	L01	Television News	13
MC	3312	L02	Television News	14
MC	3312	L03	Television News	13
MC	3312	L04	Television News	11
MC	3321	L01	Newswriting and Reporting 1	12
MC	3321	L02	Newswriting and Reporting 1	15
MC	3321	L03	Newswriting and Reporting 1	10
MC	3383	L02	Editing for Clear Communication	16
MC	3383	L03	Editing for Clear Communication	16
MC	3383	L07	Editing for Clear Communication	15
MC	3383	L08	Editing for Clear Communication	15
MC	3383	L15	Editing for Clear Communication	15
MC	3390	L01	Media Design	19
MC	3390	L02	Media Design	19
MC	3390	L03	Media Design	19
MC	4312	L01	Photojournalism	17

Prefix	Course #	Section	Title	Enrollment
MC	4312	L02	Photojournalism	17
MC	4313	L02	Writing for Public Relations	16
MC	4313	L03	Writing for Public Relations	17
MC	4313	L04	Writing for Public Relations	15
MC	4313	L05	Writing for Public Relations	15
MC	4313	L06	Writing for Public Relations	14
MC	4313	L10	Writing for Public Relations	13
MC	4315	1	Web Design and Publishing	20
MC	4315	3	Web Design and Publishing	18
MC	4315	5	Web Design and Publishing	18
MC	4315	6	Web Design and Publishing	18
MC	4316G	L01	Ad Copy and Layout 1	16
MC	4316G	L03	Ad Copy and Layout 1	17
MC	4316G	L04	Ad Copy and Layout 1	15
MC	4316H	L01	Ad Copy and Layout 2	10
MC	4321	L03	Newswriting and Reporting 2	15
MC	4356I	1	Visual Storytelling	15
MC	4356I	2	Visual Storytelling	16
MC	4356I	3	Visual Storytelling	18
MC	4356I	4	Visual Storytelling	18
MC	4382O	81	Travel Journalism	15
MC	4382T	1	Coding and Data Skills for Comm.	8
MC	4386	1	Journalism Project	11
Hybrid	Courses		Online every other week.	
MC	4381	L01	Fund. Digital and Online Media	18
MC	4381	L02	Fund. Digital and Online Media	18
MC	4381	L03	Fund. Digital and Online Media	18
MC	4381	L04	Fund. Digital and Online Media	18
MC	4381	L05	Fund. Digital and Online Media	20
MC	4381	L06	Fund. Digital and Online Media	20
MC	4381	L07	Fund. Digital and Online Media	19
MC	4381	L08	Fund. Digital and Online Media	18
MC	4381	L09	Fund. Digital and Online Media	20
MC	4381	L10	Fund. Digital and Online Media	20
MC	4381	L11	Fund. Digital and Online Media	13
MC	4381	L12	Fund. Digital and Online Media	12
MC	4381	L13	Fund. Digital and Online Media	18
MC	4381	L14	Fund. Digital and Online Media	18

Prefix	Course #	Section	Title	Enrollment
MC	4381	L15	Fund. Digital and Online Media	19
MC	4381	L16	Fund. Digital and Online Media	20
MC	4381	L17	Fund. Digital and Online Media	18
MC	4381	L18	Fund. Digital and Online Media	13
MC	4381	L19	Fund. Digital and Online Media	20
MC	4381	L20	Fund. Digital and Online Media	17
Online	Courses			
MC	1313	L81	Writing for the Mass Media	19
MC	3306	L08	Writing for Electronic Media	18
MC	3383	L10	Editing for Clear Communication	18
MC	4316G	L02	Ad Copy and Layout 1	15

Spring 2014

Prefix	Course #	Section	Title	Enrollment
MC	1313	L01	Writing for the Mass Media	20
MC	1313	L03	Writing for the Mass Media	20
MC	1313	L04	Writing for the Mass Media	20
MC	1313	L05	Writing for the Mass Media	20
MC	1313	L08	Writing for the Mass Media	20
MC	1313	L09	Writing for the Mass Media	20
MC	1313	L10	Writing for the Mass Media	19
MC	1313	L11	Writing for the Mass Media	16
MC	1313	L12	Writing for the Mass Media	20
MC	1313	L13	Writing for the Mass Media	20
MC	1313	L14	Writing for the Mass Media	19
MC	3306	L01	Writing for Electronic Media	18
MC	3306	L02	Writing for Electronic Media	16
MC	3306	L03	Writing for Electronic Media	19
MC	3307	L01	Audio Production	17
MC	3311	L01	Video Production	14
MC	3311	L02	Video Production	14
MC	3311	L03	Video Production	13
MC	3312	L01	Television News	14
MC	3312	L02	Television News	13
MC	3312	L03	Television News	12
MC	3312	L04	Television News	14
MC	3321	L01	Newswriting and Reporting 1	17

Prefix	Course #	Section	Title	Enrollment
MC	3383	L02	Editing for Clear Communication	14
MC	3383	L03	Editing for Clear Communication	13
MC	3383	L05	Editing for Clear Communication	14
MC	3383	L60	Editing for Clear Communication	12
MC	3383	L61	Editing for Clear Communication	11
MC	3390	L01	Media Design	20
MC	4312	L51	Photojournalism	15
MC	4312	L52	Photojournalism	18
MC	4313	L03	Writing for Public Relations	17
MC	4313	L04	Writing for Public Relations	10
MC	4313	L05	Writing for Public Relations	16
MC	4313	L06	Writing for Public Relations	12
MC	4315	252	Web Design and Publishing	18
MC	4315	253	Web Design and Publishing	19
MC	4315	254	Web Design and Publishing	20
MC	4315	255	Web Design and Publishing	14
MC	4316G	L03	Ad Copy and Layout 1	15
MC	4316G	L04	Ad Copy and Layout 1	15
MC	4316H	L01	Ad Copy and Layout 2	14
MC	4316H	L02	Ad Copy and Layout 2	10
MC	4316H	L03	Ad Copy and Layout 2	14
MC	4321	L02	Newswriting and Reporting 2	11
MC	4321	L03	Newswriting and Reporting 2	16
MC	4356I	251	Visual Storytelling	16
MC	4356I	252	Visual Storytelling	18
MC	4356I	254	Visual Storytelling	17
MC	4357	L01	Sports as News	18
MC	4386	251	Journalism Project	20
Online	Courses			
MC	3383	L04	Editing for Clear Communication	14
MC	3383	L08	Editing for Clear Communication	14
MC	4316G	L02	Ad Copy and Layout 1	18
MC	4382L	D01	Feature Writing	16

16. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2014 – 2015 academic year:

\$3,000, 000+

Percentage increase or decrease in three years: 23% increase

Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries: \$1,513,136

Our unit generates additional funding from Distance/Online course fees. The electronic course fee was established by the Texas State University System Board of Regents to provide support for the development and maintenance of online and hybrid courses. Students are assessed a fee of \$50 per credit hour for courses taught via the internet or hybrid instructional method. Seventy-five percent of electronic course fees generated are disbursed back to the academic departments for expenditures directly related to the development, maintenance, and delivery of distance education. We use these funds to support hybrid/online development, technology and professional development opportunities.

Fee Revenue Growth - Distance course fees:

FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
\$27,900	\$59,175	\$65,137	\$82, 350

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

Emmeline Aguirre	Lecturer
Robert Bajackson*	Senior Lecturer
Dale Blasingame	Lecturer
Harry Bowers*	Senior Lecturer
Larry Carlson	Senior Lecturer
Elizabeth Clark	Senior Lecturer
Emily Ehmer	Assistant Professor
Tim England	Associate Professor
Laurie Fluker*	Associate Professor
Kym Fox	Senior Lecturer
Tom Grimes	Professor
Vanessa Higgins	Assistant Professor
Chuck Kaufman*	Senior Lecturer
Gilbert Martinez*	Senior Lecturer
Alexander Muk	Associate Professor
Ray Niekamp	Associate Professor
David Nolan	Senior Lecturer

Judy Oskam	Professor
Kate Peirce	Professor
Sandhya Rao*	Professor
Cindy Royal	Associate Professor
Daniel Schumacher*	Senior Lecturer
Bruce Smith	Professor
Elizabeth Taylor	Assistant Professor
Denise Trauth*	Professor
Frank Walsh	Associate Professor
Susan Weill	Associate Professor
Olga Mayoral Wilson	Senior Lecturer
Jacie Yang	Assistant Professor
Jon Zmikly	Senior Lecturer

*Bajackson, Bowers, Kaufman, Schumacher and Trauth are listed as full-time faculty because they have full-time appointments, but they serve additional roles at the university. Bowers serves as an assistant director and teaches quarter time during the long semesters. Martinez is an assistant director and receives a one-course release. Bajackson is the director of student publications (adviser for the student newspaper) and Schumacher is the general manager of KTSW 89.9-FM, the student radio station – both are listed as one-quarter faculty. Kaufman is the Internship, Scholarship and Career Development Coordinator and teaches only quarter time during the long semesters. Trauth is the university president and does not teach. In addition, Rao services half time as associate dean of the Graduate College. Fluker serves as an associate dean in the College of Fine Arts and Communication.

Full time temporary*:

Patricia Baldwin	Lecturer
Jenny Buschhorn	Lecturer
Grace Capwell	Lecturer
Gale Wiley	Lecturer
Holly Wise	Lecturer
Paul Villagran	Lecturer

*Baldwin is 75% time. These faculty were hired in, full-time, 9-month emergency positions. Starting fall 2014, Baldwin, Buschhorn, Capwell and Wiley were approved for a 3-year term, renewable annually. Villagran was hired to cover while a search is conducted for a tenure track line in FY 15. Wise was moved to full time temporary to cover writing courses. In November 2014, the university approved our request to continue Wise and Villagran as 9 month lecturers for another academic year (FY 16).

18. List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in fall 2014. Also list names of part-time faculty teaching spring 2014. (If your school has its accreditation visit in spring 2015, please provide the updated list of faculty at time of visit.)

Fall 2014

Carole Barasch	Part-time Lecturer
Terry Bertling	Part-time Lecturer
Vianna Risa Davila	Part-time Lecturer
Keri Fitzgerald	Part-time Lecturer
Salwa Kahn	Part-time Lecturer
Michael McBride	Part-time Lecturer
Caitlin McCrory	Part-time Lecturer
Tino Mauricio	Part-time Lecturer
Kelsey Nuckolls	Part-time Lecturer
David Short	Part-time Lecturer
Ryan Sheehy	Part-time Lecturer
Alan Schaefer	Part-time Lecturer
Jennifer Scharlach	Part-time Lecturer
Christa Ward	Part-time Lecturer
Nancy Wilson	Part-time Lecturer
Micah Wright	Part-time Lecturer

Spring 2014

Todd Bensman	Part-time Lecturer
Terry Bertling	Part-time Lecturer
Vianna Risa Davila	Part-time Lecturer
Trey Hatt	Part-time Lecturer
Salwa Kahn	Part-time Lecturer
Tino Mauricio	Part-time Lecturer
Kelsey Nuckolls	Part-time Lecturer
Jennifer Scharlach	Part-time Lecturer
Ryan Sheehy	Part-time Lecturer
David Short	Part-time Lecturer
Gale Wiley	Part-time Lecturer
Micah Wright	Part-time Lecturer

19. Schools on the semester system:

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

Year	72 or more semester hours outside of journalism and mass communications		
	Total Graduates	Number	Percent
2013-2014 academic year	<u>402*</u>	<u>401</u>	<u>99.9%</u>
2012-2013 academic year	<u>308*</u>	<u>308</u>	<u>100%</u>

*Excludes 2nd degree seeking students. These are students who already hold a baccalaureate degree. Texas State allows these students to complete a second degree in as little as thirty hours. We typically have less than five degrees awarded to post-baccalaureate students each academic year.

PART II – Standard 1: Mission, Governance and Administration

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

The Department of Journalism was established in 1948 and began a graduate program in 1997. The Department was first accredited in 2003. It became the School of Journalism and Mass Communication in 2004, expanding to offer a general mass communications major on the Round Rock campus. The present director, appointed in July 2012, is the third to serve in that position.

The School is one of five units in the College of Fine Arts and Communication, which includes the School of Art and Design, the School of Music, the Department of Theatre and Dance and the Department of Communication Studies.

Growth and the resources to accommodate it have been the defining challenge for the University and the School. Undergraduate enrollment has increased almost 30 percent since the previous accreditation in 2008.

	Fall 2008	Fall 2014	% Increase
Undergrads. at Tx State	22,038	28,185	27.89
Majors in the School	1,642	2,108	28.38
Graduates	337	402	19.29
Full-time Faculty	27	35*	29.63

*Includes six full-time temporary lecturers

As it contends with growth, the School also has had to adjust to internal and external change. Texas State is moving from a mainly teaching-service institution to an “Emerging Research University.” The communication industry is developing professional and business practices that respond to audiences’ use of digital and mobile technologies for news, information and entertainment.

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

The School last revised its mission statement in 2008. The self-study states: “Our mission, reviewed annually, continues to serve our evolving industry and is consistent with the Texas State University mission and strategic plan.”

The School lists as its top five priorities in its 2012-17 plan:

- Add faculty and staff lines to implement B.S. and M.A. degree curriculum changes
- Provide adequate instructional resources (facilities, equipment, course format) to execute B.S. and M.A. degree curriculum changes
- Enhance faculty research/creative productivity
- Solicit major external fundraising gifts
- Develop a feasibility study for the creation of a Center for Digital/Online Media

The plan defines specific goals for each year, including the cost for each item.

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

The University's Policy and Procedures Statement System defines the responsibilities and authority of unit heads and the rights and responsibilities of the faculty in governance. The School's faculty serve on a range of standing and ad hoc committees and normally meet once a month in regular semesters. Committees include Curriculum, Diversity, Technology and Facilities, Graduate Program and Research, Personnel, Assessment, and Advisory/Alumni. Each sequence is led by a coordinator.

Despite the changes and challenges, the School's administrators and faculty members report they administer and govern in a civil and collegial manner.

(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.

To address the challenges of growth and change, the director reorganized the administrative structure of the School. The director is assisted by an:

Associate director for the graduate program who advises graduate students and manages the graduate program with the support of the Graduate Program and Research Committee

Assistant director for undergraduate programs who coordinates advising, program and course review and assessment

Assistant director for operations who works with adjunct faculty, teaching effectiveness and student media

School faculty and staff praise the director's vision for the School and her leadership and managerial style. They report that she is open to all points of view but is comfortable deciding, persisting and acting with as much deliberate speed as an institution of higher education can tolerate. The interim dean and provost share this assessment.

Administrators and faculty members attending the Monday lunch endorsed this evaluation and praised the director's outreach and spirit of cooperation.

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

The University's policy manual defines the procedure for hiring unit administrators. The dean of the College and the vice president for academic affairs first determine when a national search is warranted. Tenured and tenure-track faculty vote by ballot on candidates. The dean and the vice president make the appointment.

The College dean evaluates the director annually, including a performance-based instrument of questions sent to faculty members in the assessment. The dean conducts a more comprehensive, summative review at least once every four years. The director will receive her first such review in 2016.

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

The School encourages faculty, staff and students to express their concerns and grievances to an appropriate administrator (faculty committee, sequence coordinator, supervisor, assistant director and the director). The University policies and procedures address issues of prohibited conduct (academic dishonesty, harassment, hazing, and civil rights issues).

Summary

Enrollment growth, internal cultural change and relentless technological and professional change in an environment of limited resources have taxed the agility of administrators and faculty members to adjust and improvise. A consultative and decisive director, supported by able assistant directors, and a collegial faculty are enabling the School to keep faith with its mission and strategic plan, repurpose cramped quarters and prepare students for the communication professions in the digital world.

COMPLIANCE

PART II – Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication is 100 percent in compliance with this rule for the two academic years preceding the site visit.

- (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.)**

The program offers students an undergraduate curriculum with a balance of theory and practice across five sequences (Advertising and Mass Communication, Electronic Media and Mass Communication, Journalism and Mass Communication, Public Relations and Mass Communication and Mass Communication - general). The School of Journalism and Mass Communication has identified courses to meet each of the 12 ACEJMC professional values and competencies.

The current curriculum requires 40 credits in the major and 72 credits outside. A total of 120 credits are needed for the degree; 42 of these are the core curriculum of Arts and Sciences. Electives satisfy any remaining hours needed to reach the 120 total degree hours for the 40 credit B.S. or 33 credit B.A. In 2012, the mass communication core decreased from 15 to 12 hours while the major sequence requirements increased from 18 to 28 hours. Students in both the B.A. and B.S. programs also select a minor from 69 options.

The PUG (Punctuation, Usage, and Grammar) is required for all majors. Students must pass a grammar-test before they can be classified as a mass communication major. The School removed the three-time limit. They also offer a one-hour class – Grammar for Journalists - and integrated the PUG content into the class.

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication has a group of core courses: Introduction to Mass Communication (MC 1301), Writing for the Mass Media (MC

1313), Mass Communication Law and Ethics (MC 4301) and Fundamentals of Digital and Online Media (MC 4381). It has made efforts to update curriculum to address rapidly changing professions.

Advertising and Mass Communication: Students must take these five courses: Principles of Advertising (MC 3367), Advertising Copy and Layout 1 (MC 4316G), Advertising Media Planning (MC 3372), Advertising Account Planning (MC 4317) and Advertising Campaigns (MC 4307). Students also select 12 hours of Mass Communication courses of their choice based on their interest or career goals. Lastly students select a one-hour course from an internship, media practicum or special topics course.

Electronic Media and Mass Communication: Students must take these courses: Writing for the Electronic Media (MC 3306), Video Production (MC 3311) or Visual Storytelling MC 4356I), Television News (MC 3312) and Management of the Electronic Media (MC 3394). In addition students are required to take a course of their choice from the following: Audio Production, Electronic Media Programming, Sports as News, Internship or Visual Storytelling. Students also select 12 hours of Mass Communication courses of their choice based on interest or career goals. Students also select a one-hour course from an internship, media practicum or special topics course.

Journalism and Mass Communication: Students must take News Writing and Reporting I (MC 3321), Editing for Clear Communication (MC 3383), News Writing and Reporting II (MC 4321) and Journalism Project (MC 4386). Students also take one design course either: Media Design (MC 3390) or Web Design and Publishing (MC 4315). Students also select 12 hours of Mass Communication coursework of their choice based on interest or career goals. Students select a one-hour course from an internship, media practicum or special topics course.

Public Relations and Mass Communication: Students must take these courses: Introduction to Public Relations (MC 3343), Public Relations Research (MC 3360), Editing for Clear Communication (MC 3383), Writing for Public Relations (MC 4313) and Public Relations Campaigns (MC 4320). Students also select 12 hours of Mass Communication coursework based on interest or career goals. Students select a one-hour course from an internship, media practicum or special topics course.

Mass Communication: Students must take these courses: Mass Media and Society (MC 3355), Public Relations Research (MC 3360), Editing for Clear Communication (MC 3383) and Theories of Mass Communication (MC 4305). Students also take a course of their choice from Visual Communication, Video Production, Media Design, Advertising Portfolio, Photojournalism, Visual Literacy: Film or Web Design and Publishing. In addition, students are required to take six hours of Mass Communication courses of their choice.

- (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. (If the unit has more than one sequence, address the quality of instruction by sequence.)**

In 2014 faculty approved 9-hour concentrations in Digital Media and also in Multimedia Production to provide students with additional competencies.

Advertising and Mass Communication: The curriculum is responsive to professional expectations of digital technologies. For example, in one recent case a faculty member received a \$40,000 grant from a software company to make sure students used an industry-level media planning software for their course projects. Faculty members said up-to-date software and facilities provide students with a seamless transition from classroom to industry.

Students said their courses prepare them for careers. However, students voiced concerns about classes being lecture-oriented rather than hands-on in some instances (e.g., Advertising Copy and Layout 1). They also thought a stronger partnership with the communication design program would benefit those interested in the creative side. Access to Adobe Creative Suite was a major concern as there is no designated open lab space in Old Main for students to work on projects, and computer labs elsewhere on campus may not have the latest version of the software. They also expressed concern about course offerings and availability.

The School regularly participates and is successful in the AAF competition. In 2010, Texas State won 2nd place and was recognized for best media plan. In 2011, Texas State won 3rd runner-up. In 2012 the team won 3rd place and best promotional tactics. In 2013, Texas State won Best Promotion. In November 2013, Professor Aguirre accompanied 10 student members to the Houston Ad Fed Conference and Student Competition. Texas State students were divided into groups with students from other universities. One student was on the team that placed second in the 8-hour competition.

Electronic Media and Mass Communication: Curriculum is adjusted to stay current with industry trends by tweaking assignments and examples in course work. Faculty members said up-to-date software and facilities provide students with a seamless transition from classroom to industry.

Students said their courses are rigorous and encourage creativity and critical thinking. They praised faculty for staying current and for strong industry ties, including inviting visiting professionals into the classroom.

Journalism and Mass Communication: The curriculum is evolving to meet the demands of the changing industry. The students are learning how to tell a story using

a variety of methods. Students praised the instructors and the courses for preparing them for internships and the workforce. Some students felt they should be required to take audio-visual courses before Visual Storytelling. Student projects have been recognized by: the Society of Professional Journalists Region 8, the Collegiate Broadcasters Inc. National College Media Convention, Texas Intercollegiate Press Association and the Houston Press Club Lone Star Awards.

Public Relations and Mass Communication: Curriculum is adjusted to stay current with industry trends by tweaking assignments and examples in course work. Faculty members said up-to-date software and facilities provide students with a seamless transition from classroom to industry.

Students said that they valued the experience the faculty bring from industry, but some faculty need to be better at transferring that information through class assignments and lectures. Students thought that there could be more consistency across course sections.

Public Relations students have been able to compete in the Bateman National Case Study Team for eight years. In 2013, they were recognized with the Honorable Mention award. Students can also take part in a student firm. Bobcat Promotions continues to attract clients and teaches students how to work in a professional, entrepreneurial environment. The experience promotes a strong work ethic and leadership for a diverse group of students and clients.

Mass Communication General: This degree is more flexible and allows students to explore a variety of areas. The curriculum evolves as the industry evolves. As the School grows and may have to explore the use of enrollment controls, this degree program may grow.

Achievements in teaching and learning are recognized and valued. In 2013, two faculty received the Presidential Award for Excellence in Teaching, the University's highest recognition for teaching. One was also named the AEJMC Scripps Howard Mass Communication Teacher of the Year in 2013.

With the move to distance education, faculty are trained to develop and deliver courses online. As of 2014, four faculty members have earned the Online Teaching Certificate, and two are currently enrolled in this national program. Two faculty members have also completed the University's Guidance for Online Learning Design or GOLD program.

- (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.***

The School is in compliance with this rule.

- (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. Students may take up to three semester courses (or their quarter equivalent) at a professional media outlet owned and operated by the institution where full-time faculty are in charge and where the primary function of the media outlet is to instruct students.**

Internships are not required in the School curricula, but they are an elective in each sequence. Students are eligible to receive up to six hours of internship credit. Students are granted one-, two-, and three-hour credits based on minimum semester workloads of 100-, 150- and 180-hours. Students who take internships for course credit are graded on a basis of A to F. The grading rubric contains eight elements, including a portfolio of work from the internship, a journal, a mid-term report, and an organization profile. Supervisors must complete a two-page evaluation with both objective and subjective questions. This semester there are 93 students taking internships.

About half of the student's grade is based on a portfolio; the employer outlines specific tasks that lead to work samples. The internship coordinator meets with each intern for a "midterm meeting," which is used to assess the productivity of each internship. During this session, the coordinator determines whether the student is maximizing the experience; whether he or she wishes to expand the experience; or whether corrective measures need to be taken to make the internship more productive.

The grading of the portfolio is based on both qualitative and quantitative evaluation criteria by the internship coordinator. Since all internships are different, the evaluation process is highly subjective based on unique expectations at different work sites and wide-ranging job descriptions. The following examples were provided in the self-study: "Newspaper internships will yield abundant clips; electronic media internships will yield ample, yet limited numbers of packages, although news directors will make sure they have significant work (B-roll, script writing) that they can show on the students' reels. Public relations interns have numerous work samples ranging from news releases, media relations, pitches, PR plans, media lists, social media posts (tweets) and blogs; and research and analytics. Advertising students submit portfolios with a variety of creative

work (ad copy, design work, web branding, media planning, research, and various components of ad campaign work). Portfolios are graded, not the individual assignments. Supervisors work with their respective interns on a regular basis. Their oversight is evident in their end-of-semester evaluations.”

Summary

The School has a strong core curriculum. The strengths of the curriculum include: students have the opportunity to work on real-world issues during class (depending on the section enrolled), they learn how to be entrepreneurs with their stories, and the course content reflects the changing industry. Curriculum weaknesses include: multiple sections of the same course not having the same objectives spelled out in the syllabi, the class content varies widely, and some courses with multiple sections do not have the same assessment of learning outcomes. For example, in the Public Relations Campaigns course, the number of campaigns required differs across sections and one section actually requires an internship and campaign as part of the course. It is important that moving forward, especially as the School continues to grow, course and learning objectives match across sections. The course descriptions, course and learning objectives should match across all sections of the course.

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 diversity plan should focus on domestic minority groups and, where applicable, international groups. The written plan must include the unit's definition of diversity and identify the under-represented groups.**

The School adopted its Diversity Plan in February 2001. It was revised and amended in April 2008, and again in September 2014. Like the University, the School fully supports Federal and State laws governing discriminatory practices. Its goal is to “foster a constructive workplace environment that encourages and facilitates the contributions of individuals and groups.” The term “diversity” applies to race, color, age, national origin, sex, disability, veterans’ status, or sexual orientation. Texas State University was recognized as a Hispanic Serving Institution in 2011, meaning that its enrollment of Hispanic students is at least 25 percent of undergraduate full-time equivalent students. In addition, the School recognizes the increasingly international and multicultural society and the interdependent relations among nations and groups that require college graduates to have a global perspective. The plan addresses three major objectives: Faculty Diversity, Student Diversity and Programmatic Diversity. The School’s director and the D. D. Hachar Committee (the Diversity Committee) conduct an annual diversity audit at the end of each calendar year and present a report and recommendations to the full faculty. In 2011 the School received the AEJMC Equity and Diversity Award, as a program that is working toward, and having attained measurable success, in increasing equity and diversity. In August 2013, the College of Fine Arts and Communication elevated the School’s Center for the Study of Latino Media and Markets to establish a comprehensive college-level research center.

- (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.**

Two of the School’s core courses carry the University’s approved designation as “Multicultural Perspective” or “Multicultural Content.” These are Writing for the Mass Media (MC 1313) and some sections of Introduction to Mass Media (MC 1301). Other courses deal specifically with diverse and multicultural themes, including Mass Media and Society (MC 3355); International Advertising (MC 4303); Women and Minorities in the Media (MC 4308); International Communication (MC 4310); and Latinas/Latinos and the Media (MC 4382). Students report that issues of diversity and inclusiveness are

woven throughout their courses, though a review of syllabi finds an inconsistent emphasis of these topics as course objectives or learning outcomes. Each year, the School hosts Mass Comm Week as a way to bring global and multicultural issues to the forefront, inviting a wide variety of experts. While it seems that few students can take advantage of semester-long study abroad programs due to cost and work obligations, the School has countered this by offering short (two week) study abroad programs that can earn elective credit. The first was in the summer of 2014, with a trip to the United Kingdom; in the summer of 2015, faculty will escort students to London and Paris and Barcelona and Madrid.

(c) The unit demonstrates effective efforts to recruit women and domestic minority faculty and professional staff and, where feasible, recruits international faculty and professional staff.

The School's faculty is comprised of 22 males and 28 females. Among those serving in 2014 as faculty were 37 classified as White; two African-Americans; six Latino/Latina; and six Asian or Pacific Islander. Faculty members are natives of Puerto Rico, Brazil, Taiwan, China and India. In recent years, the faculty included natives of Mexico and South Korea. The president of the University also serves as a member of the School's faculty.

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

The School's primary geographic service area is the State of Texas. Ninety-eight percent of the University's enrollment is comprised of in-state students and the School's enrollment is no exception. Students come from all over Texas. The majority of the counties in the State are reflected in the student population. However, much of the School's enrollment is from such urban areas, such as the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex; the Austin-San Antonio Corridor; and Houston and the Rio Grande Valley. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the following groups/percentages represent the population of the School's geographic service area: White: 44 percent; Hispanic/Latino: 38.4 percent; Black/African American: 12.4 percent; Asian: 4.3 percent; American Indian/Alaskan Native: 1 percent; Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander: .1 percent.

Correspondingly, the School's undergraduate enrolled populations are these: White: 54 percent; Hispanic/Latino: 31 percent; Black African American: 9 percent; Asian: 1.3 percent; American Indian/Alaskan Native: .4 percent; Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander 0.1 percent.

In addition to University-wide programs to recruit students from under-represented groups, the School has a number of specific efforts, including: The D.D. Hachar Visiting Hispanic Media Professionals Program that has hosted more than 800 Hispanic and African-American high school students to visit the School in the past 10 years. Tours by

the *University Star* student newspaper and KSW-FM Radio aim for prospective students in middle school and high school.

(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.

While the School's plan expresses a commitment to "the promotion of an inclusive educational workplace," the self-study provided few examples of this indicator. However, members of the School faculty took advantage of the opportunity to complete a training session regarding LGBTQ issues. Those completing this Allies training become part of a campus-wide support system.

In addition, Associate Professor Sue Weill, who represents the College as a University Senator, advocated for diversity and equality for all faculty members by proposing the addition of "gender and identity expression" to the Texas State University non-discrimination statement. She also advocated for the extension of spousal benefits to faculty in all federally recognized marriages. The former has been endorsed by the Faculty Senate and approved by the University President. The latter was adopted by the Faculty Senate but is contingent on Texas law.

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 of Journalism and Mass Communication follows detailed search and hiring processes for faculty positions. All relevant statements and documents were made available to the site team.

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

The School currently has a good balance of full-time and part-time instructors, including tenured, tenure track, senior lecturers and adjuncts. The School is able to hire “emergency” faculty when the timing of a resignation will not allow sufficient time to conduct a full search.

A related concern mentioned frequently by individual faculty members related to the tremendous growth spurt of the University and of the School. While many were excited and proud that this growth is occurring, the concern is that the balance between full and part-time faculty may be skewed by the need to add multiple sections of courses to accommodate increased enrollments. In academic year 2011-12, 88 percent of the School's courses were taught by full-time faculty; in 2012-13, the percentage was 84; in 2013-14, the percentage was 81.

Another issue is individual course enrollments may be increased in such a way that seminar classes that allow for full and robust interaction turn into lecture classes. Along these same lines, when there are multiple sections of a course, it is important that the sequence head or other full-time faculty take the lead in ensuring there are common course objectives, learning outcomes and content.

(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.

At the time of the self-study, the School reported 21 of its faculty members have earned Ph.Ds or Ed.Ds; 27 have master's degrees; two have J.D.s; one has an MBA; two have an MFA.

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

The School has a robust process for evaluating the teaching, scholarly/creative activities and service of full-time faculty, both tenured and tenure track. These faculty members submit a self-description of these areas; students provide input by regularly administered evaluations; course syllabi are reviewed by the Personnel Committee, assistant directors and director; and teaching-related accomplishments (e.g., course curricula development, textbook publications, etc.) are reviewed.

Part-time /per course faculty and non-tenure track faculty are reviewed by the newly appointed assistant director. He provides feedback to these individuals and the School's director; these reports are shared with the Personnel Committee.

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

The site team met with a variety of campus administrators representing enrollment management and marketing, academic affairs, institutional effectiveness, the Honors College, the Study Abroad Program, the Council of Academic Chairs and other faculty members with knowledge of the School's students. The feedback was highly complimentary to the students, their academic preparation, work ethic and ability to contribute to team collaborative projects, including national competitions.

In addition, faculty are considered good citizens of the University. They are frequently invited to speak at campus events and serve on University-wide committees and Faculty Senate.

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.

In January 2012, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board reclassified Texas State as an Emerging Research University, allowing it to join seven other state universities eligible to tap into special state funds designed to bolster higher education research. The School has been involved in a number of initiatives to help bolster research and creative activity across the University. For example, the College of Fine Arts and Communication (COFAC) elevated the School of Journalism and Mass Communication's Center for the Study of Latino Media and Markets to establish a comprehensive, college-level research center. The Center for Communication, Collaboration & Creativity (C3) will expand faculty and student opportunities to meet the growing needs of the college as an Emerging Research University. A research coordinator was hired to provide grant assistance and support in 2014. Professor Tom Grimes is working with the Provost to develop a monthly video series called "Impact Factor." The series is produced in the University's television studio and aired on the cable television channel, YouTube channel and various other digital platforms. The goal of the series is to explain to faculty why research is important. There is an evolving research culture due to the elevated status at the state level. The video series takes the place of a traditional brown bag session.

The School is working to meet the University-wide initiative of elevating research and creative activity.

At the University level, Texas State's Research Enhancement Program is an internally funded grant competition intended to encourage and provide support for faculty research and other creative activities. All full-time Texas State faculty members, tenured or tenure-track, are eligible to apply. Individuals are eligible to apply for a maximum of \$8,000; two or more eligible faculty, for a maximum of \$16,000. Since 2010, six faculty from the School have been awarded these grants.

The University also sponsors Presidential Excellence Awards for teaching, research and service. Senior and junior faculty members from each school or department may be nominated for awards in each of the three categories. Nominees are considered first at the College level. College-wide nominees are then considered at the University-wide level.

A faculty member who is chosen as a University-wide winner for research receives a stipend of \$5,000. All college nominees whose names are sent forward for consideration at the University-wide level receive \$2,000. Individuals who are runners-up at the

college-level receive a \$1,000 stipend. School of Journalism and Mass Communication faculty have received the \$1,000 and \$2,000 awards but no one has won the University-wide scholarship.

The dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication provides supplemental support for faculty whose research or conference participation requires international travel. Amounts have varied but have averaged at \$1,000 per faculty member per trip. One or two school faculty members per year have received this supplemental travel support, which is dependent on recommendation of the School director and the support of the dean.

Since 2007-2008, the School has provided a fund of \$5,000 for research-related activities for the academic year. Funding can be requested to conduct research; for travel in connection with a research activity such as applying for a grant or collecting data; or to bring a scholar to campus to share/discuss research interests. However, preference is given to projects leading to publication of peer-reviewed research.

The maximum award level for individuals applying for grants is \$750. Collaborative projects involving two or more eligible applicants can be awarded in excess of \$750. Applications are submitted to the chair of the Graduate and Research Committee, which makes recommendations to the director for funding decisions. Recipients of these awards must submit a written final report by September 1 following the grant termination date.

Faculty on tenure track commented there was money to support their research and creative activity. Many used the money to travel to multiple conferences to present research findings or traveled to collect research data.

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

The criteria for promotion, tenure and merit recognize research, creative activity and/or professional activity. The School requires a doctorate or other terminal degree for all tenure and tenure track positions. Hiring, promotion and tenure criteria for all tenure or tenure track faculty members emphasizes scholarly research and creative scholarship.

Tenure track faculty are reviewed at Year 1 and Year 3 by the Personnel Committee in the School as well as annually. Tenure track faculty commented that they receive mentoring, know exactly where they stand in regards to promotion and tenure, and feel the School does a good job guiding them through the tenure process.

Faculty who hold lecturer or senior lecturer (3-year contract) positions are evaluated for hiring and merit based on teaching and professional activity and service. Traditional scholarship and research are not required, although their continuing professional work in the field of journalism or mass communication is valued as an extension of their teaching and service expectations.

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

Because of the professional nature of the program, faculty members can demonstrate achievement through accomplishments in either research/creative activity or in professional achievement.

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

The level of scholarship, research, and creative activity has increased. Over the past six years, the faculty have produced: 28 refereed journal articles, 44 refereed conference papers, 14 book reviews, 6 non-juried creative works, 5 Encyclopedia entries, 7 scholarly books and textbooks, 1 edited book, 13 book chapters, 17 articles in non-refereed publications, and 8 invited academic papers. They also indicated 28 items in the category of "other."

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

To promote intellectual and professional inquiry and discussion, the School leads the charge in creating the video series "Impact Factor." The Center for Communication, Collaboration & Creativity (C3) will also play a major role in the College moving forward.

Summary

The School is well on its way to meeting the demands of an Emerging Research University. It has procedures in place to provide tenure track faculty with feedback, mentoring and financial support. And, although it is not required of those in lecturer positions, many faculty with that title are also playing a role in research, creative and professional activity.

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.

Texas State University and its School of Journalism and Mass Communication have registered significant enrollment growth in the six years since the last accreditation process. The advising staff working with majors has increased to keep pace, including an adviser at the Round Rock campus. Freshmen begin their advising process at the University's Personalized Academic and Career Exploration (PACE). Some students expressed frustration with the expertise and feedback received by the PACE staff. In contrast, students seemed better served by the College of Fine Arts and Communication advising staff, especially those advisers familiar with SJMC requirements. The College's advising center employs 10 full-time staff advisers and a supervisor. On balance, advisers and faculty members keep students adequately informed on activities, requirements, policies and opportunities.

Certain pre-majors are required to meet with advisers every semester before they can register (senior pre-majors, students on probation, junior pre-majors 2.35 or less GPA and students in PACE the previous year). Students are able to register for full-major courses once they pass a grammar test or earn a C grade or better in a Grammar for Journalists mass communication class. When students reach their last 30 hours before graduation, they are encouraged to meet with an adviser for a final "checks and balances" review. Career counseling is available through the School's Career Development Coordinator or through a University center that offers resume reviews, etiquette dinners and mock interviews.

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

Members of the faculty are required to offer at least five office hours per week specifically for student conferences. Many faculty members serve as advisers to the wide variety of student media outlets and membership organizations. Students gave faculty strong marks for its ability to offer timely advice on career preparation. Some faculty members have developed strong mentoring relationships with promising or struggling students.

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

Students interviewed said the School is effective in meeting this indicator, although some students said they received unclear information on requirements and course transfers. TRACS is a dependable information system used for news and information of interest to students, faculty and staff. Pertinent policies regarding an honor code, drop dates and students with special needs are written into course syllabi that are available in hard copy form and on TRACS class sites. Bulletin board placements and class announcements also keep students informed.

(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.

Student media opportunities include *The University Star* (published thrice weekly), KTSW 89.9 FM, Bobcat Update/Channel 23 News and Bobcat Promotions, a student-run public relations services agency. In addition, there are student chapters of the Association for Women in Communications, Latino Communications Association, Society of Professional Journalists, Texas State Ad Club, Public Relations Student Society of America, Texas State Broadcasting Society, National Press Photographers Association and the newly formed Association of Hispanic Journalists. Students and faculty attend regional and national meetings. As outlined in the self-study, Texas State students have a history of performing well in regional and national competitions.

The School also employs an internship, scholarship and career development coordinator. He is a senior lecturer on a 12-month contract position and a limited teaching workload. About 65 percent of the coordinator's time is spent on internships and career matters. This semester, 93 students are participating in internships. The University's Career Services Office hosts SJMC career fairs in the fall and spring semesters. The October 2014 event drew 53 employers and nearly 400 students.

(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 retention and graduation information on its website.

Retention data and graduation rates are collected and maintained by the University's Office of Institutional Research and Planning. The School's website posts freshmen retention rates, four-year graduation rates and six-year graduation rates. A few recent changes have been made after review and analysis by the unit's leadership and Curriculum Committee. In the past, students would have three chances to pass the important Punctuation, Spelling and Grammar test (PUG) before graduating. Many students would defer the test as long as possible. Now, admission to the SJMC requires passing the test or earning a C or higher in a new Grammar for Journalists course. Furthermore, the number of hours required to enter the program was reduced from 45

hours to 30 hours. The challenge of students commuting and holding down jobs is leading the unit to deliver instruction in a format more conducive to meet student needs while maintaining quality standards and curriculum. Online and hybrid courses were offered in about 40 sections in the last academic year, a number that is expected to increase to 60 sections in the 2014-15 academic year. To assist students in reaching a more timely graduation, the School is positioning summer as a “third semester” by making course offerings and budget planning more efficient.

Summary

The School is performing well in student services. Despite some of the dissatisfaction with the advising process, the feedback has been very positive among those students completing an electronic advising assessment. When asked in a survey if they were satisfied with their advising session, 94 percent either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement. Seven of ten alumni surveyed one year after graduation said the quality of advising received as students was very good or good.

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 School's budget planning aligns with the goals of the School, the College and the University. Decisions regarding, for example, faculty travel and funds for research and scholarship were tied to the strategic plan.

Primary responsibility for developing and managing the budget falls to the director with input on major expenditures from the faculty personnel committee and, on occasion, sequence coordinators. In FY 2008 the University offset the elimination of course fees with a tuition increase. However, electronic course fees have provided additional funding for faculty research and training related to online teaching.

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

The School competes successfully with the four other units in the College. In determining allocation of funds the College takes into account the size of each school, credit hours generated, new programs and initiatives, competitive faculty salaries and teaching needs for each course. The self-study provided a look at the 2014 operating budgets for each of the five units. It appears that, relatively speaking, the School has done well. From 2011-12 to 2013-14 its budget grew by \$ 431,000, an increase of more than 16 percent.

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

The School prides itself on having its primary location in Old Main, a venerable (built in 1899), attractive, recently refurbished, high-ceilinged, hilltop building it shares with offices of the College of Fine Arts and Communication. It was here that former president Lyndon Johnson attended classes and edited the campus newspaper. The School also occupies space in three other buildings on the San Marcos campus and two offices about an hour's drive away at the Round Rock campus. The previous site team report noted that "...lack of space is a continuing concern for the School" and that the University "...hopes that within five years the School will be able to move to a larger building." Those hopes have not been realized. The School has had to carve additional space outside of Old Main, but it clearly needs a much larger space, preferably one where the entire School can work out of the same building. That appears unlikely at present. One of the current

drawbacks is the limited lab space, which students cite as a continuing problem. An area originally slated for an open lab is now also used for classes. The result is few “open” hours to use the expensive software that most students cannot afford for their personal computers. Computers are also available in the nearby main library and other buildings. But those computers lack the software often needed by advertising and public relations students. The School is seriously considering repurposing a large room in Old Main so that it will serve only as an open lab.

The 10,000 watt FM station housed in Old Main is, like the campus newspaper, supported by fees from all of the University’s students. One proposal under consideration is moving the station to *The Star’s* building. This would free up space in Old Main while boosting convergence by having the radio and newspaper students under the same roof.

(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.

Unlike the situation with space, the School feels it has been provided with more than adequate equipment. Since 2012, the University has provided more than \$90,000 in equipment and technology for the School and student media properties. Audio, video and other equipment seem to meet the needs of students both in the classroom and at the student-run properties. The School does not have primary, written responsibility for equipment at those properties but does make recommendations and contributions, such as by donating to the campus newspaper computers that the School has used and replaced with newer models to the campus newspaper and radio station.

Should audio-visual equipment not be available, students can obtain it from the main library for a modest rental fee. Students rarely, if ever, have to resort to that option. The School’s equipment is well maintained.

The School rents the high-tech TV studio from the University for a nominal sum (\$3,000 a year) and neither owns nor maintains the equipment. However, its suggestions for improvements are taken seriously and often are acted upon. Students produce two newscasts weekly, which can be seen on two community access cable channels.

Instructors on the main campus have two-way audio-visual transmission technology, which enables them to teach students at the Round Rock campus.

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

More than sufficient library and information resources are available both in the main university library and online. We heard no complaints from faculty or students.

Summary

The School is well equipped and adequately funded for the most part, especially relative to other units in the College. However, lack of space limits access to some of the equipment in labs. This is especially disappointing, because there has been little improvement in this area since the last site team visit. The goal of a single dedicated space for the entire School seems to be a distant one. Still, the School has been imaginative in repurposing what space has been available.

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.

Since the last site visit, the School has made limited progress in its alumni outreach efforts. The biggest advances were last year's re-establishment of an advisory council and the recent formation of an Association of Hispanic Journalists, which is developing close ties to the robust San Antonio Association of Hispanic Journalists.

Mass Comm Week is a signature School event that invites highly regarded alumni and professionals to participate in a full week of keynote presentations, panel discussions and events. Students and faculty lauded the educational value and campus-wide interest in the Oct. 20-24, 2014 event, which included representatives from Google News, Tumblr, *People* magazine, *Texas Tribune* and Vox Media. In total, the four-day event had 42 sessions and 53 speakers. Bobcat Promotions and 10 student organizations were involved in the development, promotion and coverage of Mass Comm Week. In addition, the D.D. Hachar Foundation sponsored speakers and the cost of bringing nearly 100 representatives from high schools in Laredo, Texas.

The School director, faculty members and the coordinator for internships/scholarships/career development make regular visits to professional groups and news operations throughout Texas to discuss curriculum and expectations for student learning. Alumni and professionals are integral parts of internship development and evaluation. They also volunteer to critique sessions of student media organizations. Faculty members are active in at least 18 professional organizations. Including the American Advertising Federation, Associated Press Managing Editors, National Association of Hispanic Journalists and the Texas Association of Black Personnel in Higher Education. Several faculty members have earned leadership positions in professional organizations and advisory councils.

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

The National Press Photographers Association hosts the annual Advanced Storytelling Workshop on campus. About 40 photo and video journalists from around the world participate. The professionals break into groups to produce video packages that are critiqued by a judging panel. The School's faculty and students assist and observe the work.

Faculty members judge student contests and address First Amendment issues. One faculty member recently concluded her second term as a national board member and campus adviser at-large position for the Society of Professional Journalists. She is the co-author of an upcoming book on teaching of high school journalism, which will include findings of a new national survey on the state of scholastic journalism.

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

The School provides an appropriate travel budget and support for faculty attending relevant academic and professional organization meetings. The School also has hosted a number of journalism conferences on campus.

Faculty members have leadership positions in the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, American Journalism Historians Association, Broadcast Education Association and the Texas Intercollegiate Press Association. One faculty member was elected teaching standards chair for the International Communication Division of AEJMC. Another is the past president of the Southwest Education Council for Journalism and Mass Communication.

(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.

Service to the University, profession and community is expected for faculty members to advance their careers at Texas State. Many of the student club and class projects include public and community service. An outstanding record of teaching, leadership and service is expected for promotion to full professor. A faculty member co-founded the Austin chapters of the Online News Association and Hacks/Hackers. She was among the first recipients of a \$35,000 Challenge Fund grant for innovation in journalism education. The project includes media and campus partners. It is teaching students coding techniques and how to apply them to data projects about music in Texas. It is designed to help the School develop data journalism curriculum.

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

The School is an active supporter of scholastic journalism activities, especially those that address issues of diversity. For example, many of the Laredo high school students who attend Mass Comm Week activities have little knowledge of college life. In most years, at least two of the visiting students end up attending Texas State.

After a one-year hiatus, the School is expected to again host a summer workshop for about 80 yearbook editors and advisers. The yearbook publishing company Balfour sponsors the four-day workshop. Faculty members also teach at two urban journalism conferences in San Antonio. The School also attends the Texas Association of High School Journalism Educators' annual conference.

Summary

The School's strong performance in professional and public service continues to generate more opportunities for alumni outreach and fund-raising activities.

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’s first assessment plan in 1998 through two revisions in 2008 listed ACEJMC’s 11 professional values and competencies as guides to the learning outcomes of the core and required curriculum. The September 2014 revision still lists these 11 values and competencies, despite the fact that ACEJMC had expanded them to 12 in 2010-11. However, the School’s report on Standard 3 shows that the School is addressing issues and perspectives in both domestic and global diversity in a range of courses.

As noted in the team’s report on Standard 2, consistent definition of learning outcomes in the syllabi of multiple sections of the same courses may be a casualty of rapid enrollment growth and the need to hire more adjunct instructors with little time for orienting and guiding them. The School is aware of this challenge and has appointed an assistant director to develop the teaching skills and course management of adjunct faculty.

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

The September 2014 assessment plan describes the School’s three main direct measures: senior portfolios, an exit exam and course embedded measures. Led by its coordinator, each sequence administers these measures to its majors, analyzes the findings and decides how best to address weaknesses in students’ mastery of the learning objectives.

Early in its use of the portfolio, the School had prepared a check sheet of items students should include in their portfolio, providing a consistent base for comparison and assessment. In 2014, the School was testing an ePortfolio tool for accumulating these items online. The School plans to include the ePortfolio in the capstone course in each sequence.

The School administers its two main indirect measures, an alumni survey and internship supervisor evaluations, at the unit rather than sequence level.

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

The sequence coordinator submits an annual report on the findings and actions to the chair of the Assessment Committee. The chair combines the reports from each sequence into a comprehensive account of the School’s assessment findings and actions for the year.

The School's internship coordinator aggregates the evaluations of intern supervisors and presents them to the faculty.

(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 uses three sources of alumni information and commentary: summer surveys of the most recent graduates conducted by the University's Office of Institutional Research; the Annual Survey of Journalism and Mass Communication Graduates compiled by the University of Georgia; and Exit Cohort Reports from the Higher Education Coordinating Board's Automated Student and Adult Learning Follow-Up System. These sources are more useful as accounts of employment than as measures of learning outcomes and guides for improving curriculum and instruction.

The School may wish to consider engaging alumni from its Advisory Council to participate in the evaluation of portfolios and other appropriate direct and indirect measures.

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

The main involvement of professionals in assessment is through intern evaluations. Supervisors assess approximately 90 interns a semester. As is typical of evaluation forms, they tend to focus more on behavior than professional competency. The School may wish to consider incorporating more evaluation of individual competencies drawn from ACEJMC's list.

Professionals participate in evaluating student performance and skills in advertising and public relations campaigns in which they act as clients for student projects.

Summary

Presenting ACEJMC's pre-2010 list of 11 values and competencies as the focus of the School's 2014 plan raised initial concerns about the School's attention to assessment. Inconsistency in definitions of learning outcomes for multiple sections of core and required courses further undermined confidence in the rigor of the assessment program. The annual program of assessment and reporting of assessment findings and actions by each sequence put most of these concerns to rest.

COMPLIANCE

PART III: Summary by site visit team

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

Strengths

- A lively student body proud of its work ethic and can-do commitment to professional performance
- An impressive record of student accomplishment in national, regional and state competitions in all sequences
- A faculty well balanced in academic and professional experience and expertise and committed to educating and mentoring students for productive careers in the digital world
- A student body and faculty reflective of the diversity of the University's service area
- Action-oriented leadership creative in extracting the most out of limited space and resources

Weaknesses

- Inconsistency in the purpose and learning outcomes of multiple sections of core and required courses
- Problems in advising outside the School and in offering required courses and pre-requisite courses in advertising and public relations that meet student scheduling needs
- Uneven preparation of adjuncts for organizing, managing and teaching courses
- Underdeveloped relationships with alumni for participation in assessment and fundraising
- Persistent challenges in accommodating enrollment growth in limited space and in achieving the School's mission of excellence

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

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

Although all standards are in compliance, the School should address the inconsistencies in multiple sections of courses to ensure standard objectives and learning outcomes.

The School, College and University should discuss whether continued enrollment growth is consistent with the School's aspirations to excellence and its potential for distinction in Texas and nationally.

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

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

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

The previous report noted the constraints of space in a culture of growth. The School has been marvelously creative in repurposing limited space, particularly in the construction of two hybrid classrooms. The University has also given the School a suite of eight offices in a nearby building. However, the distribution of faculty members into other buildings works against collegiality and collaboration. The possibility of a new or renovated building is beguiling but seems no nearer reality than it was in 2008.

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

The self-study was thorough, well organized, and nicely mined with evidence. The team had little need to spend time pursuing information and could focus on conversation with administrators, faculty, staff and students.