

# Report of On-Site Evaluation

ACEJMC

Undergraduate program

2014– 2015

Name of Institution: University of Oklahoma

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: David Boren, President

Name of Unit: Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication

Name and Title of Administrator: Joe Foote, Dean

Date of 2014 - 2015 Accrediting Visit: November 9-12, 2014

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

Date of the previous accrediting visit: 2009

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Re-accreditation

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Re-accreditation

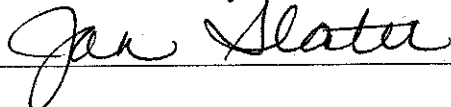
Recommendation by 2014 - 2015 Visiting Team: Re-accreditation

*Prepared and submitted by:*

## Team Chair

Name and Title: Jan Slater, Dean


Organization/School: University of Illinois

Signature  \_\_\_\_\_

## Team Members

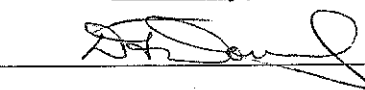
Name and Title: Earnest L. Perry, Associate Professor

Organization/School: University of Missouri School of Journalism

Signature  \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Title: Denise Dowling, Associate Professor

Organization/School: University of Montana School of Journalism

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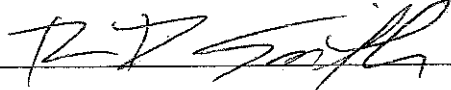
Name and Title: Helen Katz, Senior Vice President-Director of Research

Organization/School: Starcom Mediavest Group

Signature  \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Title: Ronald D. Smith, Professor of Public Communication

Organization/School: SUNY Buffalo State

Signature  \_\_\_\_\_

## PART I: General information

Name of Institution: The University of Oklahoma University  
Name of Unit Gaylord College 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.

The first Oklahoma Territorial Legislature authorized the University of Oklahoma as an institution of higher education in 1890. Since 1941, when the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education was established, all OU degrees are authorized by OSRHE under its constitutional authority. OU's status as a state-supported public institution is established by the Oklahoma Constitution and supported by policies and procedures of OSRHE, which controls statewide resource allocation and authorization of new degree programs. Constitutional, enabling, and authorization documents of the legislature and regents are attached **(Attachments I.3)**. They include Oklahoma Constitution, Article XIII, Section 8 and Article XIII-A; 70 Oklahoma Statutes, Sections 3201 et seq., and Sections 3301 et seq.; and the following portions of the Policy Manual of the Board of Regents, Section 1, Part 1, p. I-1 Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 2, p. II-2-17 to 20. Chapter 2, Section 4, p. II-2-24 to 26.

### 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: 2009

### 5. When was the unit or sequences within the unit first accredited by ACEJMC? 1949

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

"To educate consumers and producers of existing and emerging forms of public communication. Our graduates will:

1. value freedom of expression and intellectual and cultural diversity,
2. exercise critical thinking, and
3. be creative, ethical, skilled and socially responsible." Adopted Oct. 2002

**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 - 4 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.**

Bachelor of Arts in Journalism

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

124 hours, on a semester-hour basis.

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

Six (6) credit hours

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

Name of Sequence or Specialty	Person in Charge
Strategic Communication (Advertising/ Public Relations)	Debbie Yount
Media Arts (Broadcasting & Electronic Media/Professional Writing)	Ralph Beliveau
Journalism	Elanie Steyn

**13. Number of full-time students enrolled in the institution: 24,044**

**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):**

<u>Name of Sequence or Specialty</u>	<u>Undergraduate majors</u>
Advertising	207
Broadcasting and Electronic Media	166
Journalism	248
Professional Writing	74
Public Relations	382

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.

**Gaylord College Skill Courses--Fall 2014**

<b>Sub</b>	<b>Course</b>	<b>Sec</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Actual</b>
JMC	2033	10	Writing for the Mass Media	139
JMC	2033	11	Lab-JMC 2033-010	16
JMC	2033	12	Lab-JMC 2033-010	16
JMC	2033	13	Lab-JMC 2033-010	16
JMC	2033	14	Lab-JMC 2033-010	16
JMC	2033	15	Lab-JMC 2033-010	16
JMC	2033	16	Lab-JMC 2033-010	16
JMC	2033	17	Lab-JMC 2033-010	15
JMC	2033	18	Lab-JMC 2033-010	14
JMC	2033	19	Lab-JMC 2033-010	14
JMC	2623	1	Electronic Media Writing	16
JMC	2644	10	Intro to Video Production	37
JMC	2644	11	Lab-JMC 2644-010	11
JMC	2644	12	Lab-JMC 2644-010	13
JMC	2644	13	Lab-JMC 2644-010	13
JMC	2683	1	Survey of Electronic Media	26
JMC	3003	1	Multimedia Journalism	17
JMC	3003	2	Multimedia Journalism	16
JMC	3003	900	Multimedia Journalism	8
JMC	3011	7	TV News Editorial	2
JMC	3011	8	TV News Editorial	2
JMC	3011	9	TV News Production Crew	5
JMC	3011	11	TV News Production Crew	3
JMC	3013	10	Multimedia News Gathering	22
JMC	3013	11	Lab-JMC 3013-010	8
JMC	3013	12	Lab-JMC 3013-010	14
JMC	3013	13	Lab-JMC 3013-010	0
JMC	3023	1	Feature Writing	8
JMC	3143	1	Basic News Photography	13
JMC	3353	1	Advertising Copy and Layout	20
JMC	3353	2	Advertising Copy and Layout	16
JMC	3423	1	Public Relations Writing	8
JMC	3423	2	Public Relations Writing	17
JMC	3423	3	Public Relations Writing	11
JMC	3433	1	Public Relations Publications	16
JMC	3433	2	Public Relations Publications	0
JMC	3433	3	Public Relations Publications	19

JMC	3433	4	Public Relations Publications	5
JMC	3613	1	Electronic Field Production	11
JMC	3613	2	Electronic Field Production	11
JMC	3633	900	Audio Production	14
JMC	3663	1	Electronic News Gathering Tech	13
JMC	3673	900	Radio-Television Sales	16
JMC	3683	1	Interactive Multimedia	10
JMC	3763	900	Visual Writing & Aesthetics	22
JMC	3773	10	Television News	13
JMC	3773	11	Lab-JMC 3773-010	3
JMC	3773	12	Lab-JMC 3773-010	2
JMC	3773	13	Lab-JMC 3773-010	2
JMC	3773	14	Lab-JMC 3773-010	1
JMC	3773	15	Lab-JMC 3773-010	0
JMC	3773	16	Lab-JMC 3773-010	1
JMC	3773	17	Lab-JMC 3773-010	2
JMC	3773	18	Lab-JMC 3773-010	2
JMC	4013	1	Reporting Public Affairs	4
JMC	4033	900	Magazine Production	13
JMC	4183	1	Adv Multimedia Journalism	6
JMC	4503	1	Tutorial in Writing	6
JMC	4633	1	Advanced Video Production	16
JMC	4633	2	Advanced Video Production	8
JMC	4673	10	Advanced Broadcast News	8
JMC	4673	11	Lab-JMC 4673-010	3
JMC	4673	12	Lab-JMC 4673-010	0
JMC	4673	13	Lab-JMC 4673-010	2
JMC	4673	14	Lab-JMC 4673-010	1
JMC	4673	15	Lab-JMC 4673-010	0
JMC	4673	16	Lab-JMC 4673-010	0
JMC	4673	17	Lab-JMC 4673-010	1
JMC	4673	18	Lab-JMC 4673-010	1
JMC	4683	1	Multimedia Content Management	11
JMC	4773	1	Post Production and Graphics	16
JMC	4803	1	History of Journalism	35

**16. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2014 – 2015 academic year:** \$7,500,000 (includes 1.4M for high definition television upgrade in 2014)

**Percentage increase or decrease in three years:** -15% (regular costs do not include HD upgrade)

**Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries:** \$2,658,263

**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.**

Jim Avery, Professor and Gaylord Family Professor

Fred Beard, Professor and Gaylord Family Professor  
Ralph Beliveau, Associate Professor  
Kyle Bergersen, Assistant Professor  
Mike Boettcher, Professor and Gaylord Family Visiting Professional  
Meta Carstarphen, Professor  
Suzanne Chandler, Assistant Professor  
Deborah Chester, Professor and John. L. Crain Presidential Professor  
David Craig, Professor and Associate Dean  
J. Madison Davis, Professor  
Kenneth Fischer, Instructor  
Joe Foote, Professor and Edward L. Gaylord Chair  
George Lynn Franklin, Instructor  
Peter Gade, Professor and Gaylord Chair  
Scott Hodgson, Professor and Gaylord Family Professor  
Kathleen Johnson, McMahan Centennial Professor  
Julie Jones, Associate Professor  
Michael Kent, Associate Professor  
Robert Kerr, Professor & Edith Kinney Gaylord Presidential Professor  
Christopher Krug, Instructor  
Owen Kulemeka, Assistant Professor  
Jaime Loke, Assistant Professor  
Mel Odom, Instructor  
Robert Pritchard, Instructor  
John Schmeltzer, Engleman/Livermore Professor in Community Journalism  
Elanie Steyn, Associate Professor  
David Tarpenning, Instructor  
Maureen Taylor, Professor and Gaylord Family Chair  
Katerina Tsetsura, Associate Professor  
Melanie Wilderman, Assistant Professor  
Phil Willet, Assistant Professor  
Doyle Yoon, Associate Professor

**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.)**

Win Blevins	Nick Jungman
Brian Brus	Mark Kaplan
Leslie Cermak	Kini Kay
Carol Cole-Frowe	Rick Lippert
Jeremy Cowen	Timothy McGinnis
Dennis Davis	Sam Moorthy
Al Eschbach	Kenneth Mossman
Kent Graham	Dwight Normile
Rochelle Hines	Justin Poirot
Heather Howard	Seth Prince

**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	_149____	__149__	100%_____
2012-2013 academic year	_154____	__154__	__100%__

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

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

Journalism education has a long history at the University of Oklahoma. Courses were first offered on campus in 1908 in the Department of English. Housed in the College of Arts & Sciences, the School of Journalism was formed in 1913. Over the next eight decades, the School would expand its offerings to include advertising, public relations, professional writing and television. In 2000, the School of Journalism received college status with the establishment of the Gaylord College, made possible by a generous gift of \$22 million from the Edward L. Gaylord family. The current dean was named interim in 2004 and received the permanent title in 2005. The College is housed in Gaylord Hall, an impressive structure that opened in fall 2004 with an addition of 46,000 square feet completed in 2009. This handsome facility is equipped with top-of-the-line studios, labs and equipment, expansive classrooms and an abundance of faculty and student collaborative space.

The Gaylord College grants a B.A. in Journalism; it has an undergraduate enrollment of 1077 at the time of the visit, divided across five sequences: advertising, broadcasting and electronic media, journalism, professional writing and public relations. Enrollment is down from a high of 1500 students. The College purposefully enhanced its enrollment standards to reduce the size of the population. However, enrollment declined more than was expected and the College is currently discussing reducing the admissions requirement. The College also has a Master of Arts in Journalism and Mass Communication, a Master of Professional Writing as well as a Ph.D. program. That said, in discussions with the provost, it was clear that campus administration views the Gaylord College as an example of the University's commitment to undergraduate education.

1. The Gaylord College's mission is: "to educate producers and consumers of existing and emerging forms of public communication, and instill in them the value of freedom of expression, intellectual and cultural diversity, critical thinking, creativity, ethics, professional skills and social responsibility." While the vision and mission of the College is provided within the Policies and Procedures manual, the strategic goals are developed annually by the dean and presented to faculty at the annual retreat. For 2014-2015, the goals identified are tactical in nature, and while specific in terms of actions, lack measurable expectations of outcomes.
2. Implement initiatives for flipped, hybrid, Janux and online classes and create a reward structure for faculty investment in these activities.
3. Galvanize ideas for undergraduate and graduate certificates through expansion of partnerships with other OU academic units.
4. Complete revitalization of the college's introductory course with the goal of entering the general education curriculum and begin an overhaul of the college's core writing course.



5. Pursue other curricular options that serve the entire university community.
6. Reposition and promote the M.A. program with possible movement towards specialization and alternative course delivery while streamlining the M.A. admissions process.
7. Hire more female faculty, recruit stronger pools of minority faculty and staff applicants, and diversify the adjunct faculty.
8. Mount an undergraduate recruiting strategy in concert with Student Recruitment Services, focusing on visits to feeder high schools with media programs.
9. Continue the Board of Visitors-led marketing effort to increase the college's national visibility and reputation.
10. Make a large, more integral contribution to the university's research mission.
11. Fulfill Gaylord's goal for the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary capital campaign.
12. Expand opportunities for stimulating, relevant undergraduate co-curricular involvement.

The College has developed many new initiatives, which provide students professional, co-curricular activities. There are 30 such programs, including Sooner Sports Pad, Lindsey+Asp (student-run advertising and pr agency), OU Nightly and the Wire, an Internet radio station. Students appreciate these opportunities, but the dean realizes the strain these put on already burdened faculty. Additionally, the programs generate little to no revenue, which College administration acknowledges may make these expensive programs difficult to sustain in tight budget years.

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

Faculty governance takes the form of standing committees within the College. Committee A is composed of three tenured faculty elected college-wide to staggered three-year terms. This committee provides annual faculty performance reviews which are submitted to the dean who writes the annual review letter. Other committees include: student services, diversity, technology, curriculum, graduate, faculty development, and selected search committees and task force committees.

**(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 dean is serving his tenth year in the position. The Board of Visitors praises his tenacity and credits him for making the Gaylord College what it is today. Campus administration describes the dean as "tireless" and specifically points to his responsiveness to matters that are important to campus. He is well respected among other deans and works collaboratively across campus. Faculty, on the other hand, say he is non-communicative, ignores their input, and claim that while he gets things done, he does so without including faculty in the decisions. Campus is positive about the dean's reactions to opportunities, however the faculty views this as being unable to stick to a plan of action.

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

According to the University Faculty Handbook, the Provost appoints the dean and the dean appoints the associate dean, assistant dean and area heads. There doesn't seem to be much, if any input from faculty regarding these appointments.

The dean is evaluated according to the administrator evaluation process articulated in the OU Faculty Handbook and the assistant dean is evaluated according to the OU process for evaluation of staff. Committee A evaluates the associate dean and area heads in conjunction with the dean. The dean's evaluation is conducted each year, and includes a self-assessment by the dean, confidential evaluation by the faculty, and a report to the Provost from the college faculty and staff regarding that evaluation. A comprehensive performance evaluation of the dean occurs at least every five years.

The procedure for selection of the dean is outlined in the University Faculty Handbook. A search committee is comprised of faculty, student and staff representatives. The process for how the search committee works and makes a recommendation is unclear, as is the process for how the Provost obtains faculty input.

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

There are processes in place within the College for faculty, staff and student complaints to be addressed. These are outlined in the OU Faculty Handbook as well as the Policies and Procedure Manual of the College.

**Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: 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 per cent of the graduating classes in the two academic years preceding an accreditation visit to meet these requirements.**

In the 2013-2014 academic year Gaylord College graduated 245 students across five sequences: Advertising, Broadcasting & Electronic Media, Journalism, Professional Writing, and Public Relations. In the fall of 2013, the College reduced the number of credits needed to graduate; from 130 to 124. The College adopted the ACEJMC reduction in hours required outside the major at the same time, reducing outside credits from 80 to 72. At the same time, a requirement was added for a minor for students in all sequences in order to ensure students meet the ACEJMC requirements for credits outside the College.

The College reports 100 percent of those graduating met the 72 outside hours required. A review of a sampling of 2014 graduates showed no students out of compliance.

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

The College has sequences in advertising, broadcasting & electronic media, journalism, professional writing and public relations.

At the conclusion of the 2013-14 academic year, the unit reported 1,141 total students with a student-faculty ratio of 35:1, well above the university’s reported average of 17:1. The ratio in Public Relations was above the College average with an astronomical ratio of 68:1.

	Students	% of student body
Advertising	245	21%
Broadcasting & Electronic Media	175	15%
Journalism	230	20%
Professional Writing	80	7%
Public Relations	410	36%

The five individual sequences have different requirements in terms of courses and credit hours, yet each sequence requires a mix of theoretical and skills courses. Students in all five sequences must complete core requirements including Intro to Mass Communication, Writing for the Mass

Media and Mass Communication Law. Students across all sequences expressed concern about the journalistic focus of the introductory writing course and expressed a desire to have the course expose them to other forms of writing foundational to their areas of study.

The College instituted requirements for a minor in fall 2011, requiring all students to complete a minor outside the College. In addition to the University's General Education requirements, undergraduates in the College must prove intermediate foreign language skills and successfully complete two upper division courses in Western Civilization.

The self-study states that the Council's core competencies "manifest themselves in instructional delivery through a variety of strategies." However, a review of syllabi found inconsistencies among learning objectives across lab sections of the same course, and many learning objectives identified in syllabi lacked identifiable and measurable outcomes. Many faculty claimed no knowledge of the competencies expected and said there has been no faculty-wide discussion of how and where the competencies are being taught. Nor, according to faculty, is there a universal norming process to ensure similar outcomes and expectations across sections.

Students, when asked where the core values and competencies were taught, were not able to point out specific instruction in required courses with the exception of diversity. Discussions with students reinforced a disparity in the way labs and different sections of the same courses were approached. Students complained the experience in one lab or course section might be wildly different from the instruction, assignments and expectations in another.

**Advertising: In addition to the three core courses common to all Gaylord students, the advertising sequence requires students to take Introduction to Advertising, Advertising Research, Copy & Layout, Advertising Media, Contemporary Problems and Campaigns (capstone). Students must add nine elective hours from a list of options, though only four are offered annually. Those that are offered at least annually include Digital Advertising, Advertising Account Planning, Advertising NSAC Competition, and Social Media Marketing. Students feel that there are enough electives available to them. Many classes involve group projects working on specific brands or campaigns, which students find helpful both to solidify the knowledge gained in the class and to help prepare them well for internships or future jobs.**

There is a strong emphasis on professional and practical experience, both internally at the student-run Lindsey+Asp advertising/pr agency, and externally through multiple internships. Students can receive up to three credit hours for these activities, but many take more internships for the additional experiences. The ad agency is open to about 60 students in total, but they are now opening it up to both freshmen and sophomores (in specific task-oriented roles) to be more inclusive and lower the level of intimidation that some students expressed as underclassmen. Several faculty members take students to visit companies in key advertising markets (New York, San Francisco, etc.), with funding available for students who could not otherwise afford the trip. Students can also take advantage of every-other-year study abroad opportunities, to countries in Europe and Asia, including projects working with students in Pakistan (in 2013).

**Broadcasting & Electronic Media:** Students in the broadcasting & electronic media sequence (BEM) complete the three core courses; other core requirements are Electronic Media Writing, Intro to Video Production, Survey of Electronic Media, Electronic Field Production and Issues & Ethics in Electronic Media (capstone), Mass Media Practicum and six elective hours. Students must choose a track inside the BEM sequence including Audio Production, Corporate & Commercial Media Design, Documentary Production, Electronic Film Making, Interactive

Multimedia & Graphics, Video Production or a self-designed program. A track requires 9-10 prescribed course credits and students may choose more than one track.

The BEM sequence was reviewed and reconstructed in 2006 after a drop in student numbers and recognition that the program had lost its identity and focus. The reconstruction introduced new curriculum units in 2007 including motion-media, documentary film, radio, entertainment and commercial production, music and sports programs. Student numbers in the sequence have, however, continued to fall, with 66 seniors in the BEM major, 47 juniors and 30 sophomores at the time of the visit.

Students reported there was a good balance of theory and skills courses, but expressed a desire that the required capstone course incorporate more skills. They requested a place to “put it all together” in terms of showcasing the education they’d received.

Students were very complimentary of the practicums offered, but they wanted the opportunity to work more across sequences. Additionally, they felt the one-hour credit given for the practicum did not equate with the time spent to successfully complete a one-credit course.

**Journalism:** Students in the journalism sequence complete the core courses and take courses in Multimedia Journalism, Multimedia News Gathering, History of Journalism and Journalism, Ethics & Democracy (capstone). Journalism students must choose a skills stream - broadcast, online or print - with ten required credit hours in the stream plus an additional nine hours of electives.

The journalism curriculum provides a foundation in conceptual knowledge and skills required for digital, multiple platform journalism. In spring 2008, a substantially revised curriculum was adopted, which requires all majors to take a two-course sequence in multimedia journalism immediately following the entry-level media writing course. The logic of the redesign was to make cross-platform, digital journalism a core element from the beginning of the educational experience. The senior capstone, Journalism, Ethics and Democracy, explores contemporary issues and developments through the context of history, normative theory, ethics and economics.

Other goals of the curriculum revision were to create a stronger balance between conceptual and skills courses – with the creation of a conceptual core to provide students a broader knowledge base that informs journalism roles and functions in society. Students are also able to develop specialization through skills stream options and have scheduling flexibility and customized programs of study through a wide range of electives such as entrepreneurship, sports reporting and magazine courses and an advanced-level multimedia course.

**Professional Writing:** Students in the Professional Writing sequence take a total of nine courses to earn the degree, three of which are the core courses across the sequences. In addition, students must complete Introduction to Professional Writing, Writing the Short Story, Writing the Novel, History of Journalism, and Theories of Professional Writing (capstone), and an elective. Students are then allowed to choose from a wide range of electives in the College.

The professional writing program focuses on preparing students to write marketable screenplays, short stories, magazine articles and novels. It differs from creative writing in English in its focus on practical skills dealing with marketability, as well as a philosophical approach to storytelling as a craft and a profession.

The sequence is served by a small (3) but highly committed faculty. Students report much admiration for the faculty, whom they find readily available for mentoring. The downside of this

small and intimate program is that a student can proceed through the program having taken all required courses taught by the same instructor.

The student-faculty ratio is 27:1, though it should be noted that a pending retirement will change this to 40:1 without an immediate hire.

**Public Relations:** In addition to the nine credits required College-wide, students in Public Relations must complete Introduction to Public Relations, Public Relations Writing, Public Relations Publications, Public Relations Research, and Public Relations Campaigns (capstone), as well as one other required course from among five offered. They must choose nine or ten elective hours inside the College and complete an outside minor. Internships are allowed but not required and there are no tracks or concentrations within the Public Relations sequence.

Interviews with students in Public Relations repeated comments by students drawn from all College majors in expressing frustration with the Writing for the Mass Media course and (to a lesser extent) Introduction to Mass Communication and Mass Communication Law. Their criticism is that the writing course in particular is primarily focused on journalistic writing, with only minimal attention (one chapter) for Public Relations writing. However, seniors did indicate in hindsight they did see the relevance of the content for Public Relations. Several students requested more rigor and higher standards in their Public Relations courses.

Students reported they would like more electives related to Public Relations and that few are available in any given semester. They also asked for more opportunities to learn some of the software in the Adobe Creative Suite that they are expected to use during various courses.

On paper, there seems to be a balance between theory and skills courses. However, both students and faculty indicated that it depends on who teaches the course. The site visit found inconsistencies among various sections of courses, from student learning outcomes to work output to grading standards. Both students and faculty reported that professionally oriented faculty tended to focus more on skills rather than a full discussion of the underlying concepts and theories.

Students indicated feeling “on their own” in terms of internships. Several reported that they had to find an internship through their own networking. All reported that, once at the internship, they were out of contact with the College, other than the requirement that they submit weekly work logs.

Students and faculty alike praised the student agency Lindsey + Asp. Several said it was a better experience than their internships. The only criticism was that enrollment is limited to a small number of students. As stated previously, this issue is being addressed in the sequences.

**(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.)**

Students had varied opinions of the responsiveness of the curriculum to current trends in the media.

Journalism, professional writing and advertising students generally expressed satisfaction with the instruction and felt the professors in those tracks were up-to-date.

The BEM and Public Relations students expressed dissatisfaction in the responsiveness of the faculty to media trends, especially in terms of technology and software. The students appreciated faculty members who had stayed current and found they flocked to those professors’ courses. Faculty members considered “out of the loop” seemed to rely on the students’ internship experiences to bring new information to the classroom. Certain classes focused on the use of

social and multimedia; however, those content areas did not appear to be taught across the curriculum.

While the College does not have a specific plan for helping faculty members stay current, faculty do receive funding to attend conferences and workshops. The perception among faculty is that pool of money is drying up. The College currently offers no online courses. While there is not a developed plan to incorporate online offerings, college leadership, as one of its top goals, issued a call in October for faculty proposals to develop online courses, with financial support. The self-study noted that the College does not currently offer any service courses for the University, but discussions about repositioning courses for general education use are ongoing and a roster of courses has been targeted for this purpose.

The College opened a new addition to Gaylord Hall in the fall of 2009 with updated facilities. In the fall of 2014, the College embarked on a high-definition upgrade of that facility with expected completion in 2015. The improvements in technology will be further addressed in the facilities section of this report, but the technology upgrade has improved the College's ability to stay current in some areas of teaching.

The College has hosted a number of workshops to help faculty stay current on technology, offering short courses on topics ranging from using iTunesU to Adobe products to Final Cut software. One faculty member has created a series of online tutorials to teach software in a "flipped" curriculum. Students applauded this approach and asked for more opportunities to learn software both inside and outside the classroom. Faculty members have also attended national conferences that foster teaching development.

The College requires outstanding teaching for tenure and promotion. Since the last accreditation, the University has strengthened its campus teaching support center to provide help with instructional design, integration of technology and course development. One faculty member reported using the Center extensively in revamping the Introduction to Mass Communications course and was very pleased with the result. The University has also instituted a new faculty seminar that meets weekly during the fall of a faculty member's first year on campus. The seminar includes some sessions on teaching. Not all new faculty are able to take advantage of this seminar due to conflicting teaching schedules.

The College lists 11 faculty members who have received recognition for their teaching through awards, grants or academic publication/presentation. The College's alumni association gives the JayMac Teaching Award each year. The University offers grants to develop a Presidential Dream Course; four faculty members are listed as having won one of these grants since the last accreditation. One faculty member who earned a Dream Course grant lamented the award, saying he had no staff or administrative support outside the grant and found too much work on his plate to do the excellent job he intended.

Professors have gained accolades from outside entities such as the AEJMC, the National Communication Association and the Society of Professional Journalists and earned grants from the Online News Association, OG&E and AEJMC/Knight. Professors have published papers on teaching in venues such as The Community College Journalist, the Public Relations Review and The Journal for Learning through the Arts.

### **Sequence Specific Instruction**

**Advertising:** Students find their professors very approachable and responsive. They say they enjoy being challenged by them in all classes, and that they feel very well prepared for life after college. They feel that their classes prepare them well for internships, which faculty often help

them secure. The ‘capstone’ class (either Advertising Campaigns or NSAC) provides an effective culmination of all their prior classes, helping them put the pieces together. Students did express concerns that there was no access to current sources needed in the Advertising Media course. And both faculty and students desire more emphasis on/classes in creative, to include more advanced offerings such as Advanced Copywriting or Art Direction. The Area Head is planning to test combining a basic ad copy class with public relations publishing into a single class to free up faculty to provide additional offerings.

The relationship that advertising students develop with the faculty appears to continue beyond their years on campus. Students noted how excited alumni are to see their former professors when they return to campus or when students visit the companies where those alumni work.

### **Broadcast & Electronic Media:**

Students were concerned about the lack of knowledge of equipment and software among the faculty members and expressed a desire for all professors to use and teach the same technology. BEM students claimed they were “on their own” in learning editing programs and cameras and wanted a way to gain this knowledge within classes or labs.

That said, student productions have received awards from local, regional and national organizations attesting to the quality of instruction and student engagement in the new curriculum. The BEM faculty is launching a new curriculum review in Fall 2014. Students now produce a 30-minute live weekly sports program called “Sooner Sports Pad,” which airs on Fox Sports Southwest, available in nine million households. The College also produces a daily 30-minute newscast broadcast on campus, to the local community and across 40 percent of the state through Cox. Students say faculty direct almost all BEM students to news and sports broadcasting practicums, focusing little attention on creative fiction and non-fiction.

BEM students were vocal in expressing they “don’t feel they belong” in the College and that they’ve succeeded in spite of their classroom experiences.

**Journalism:** The introduction of a new curriculum has improved the currency of the journalism offerings. Students said the new curriculum has prepared them for internships both on and off campus. One student said the multimedia training gave her an advantage over students from other journalism programs at a recent boot camp offered by professionals. The students also said the early writing courses prepared them for the rigors of writing on deadline and for presenting information to multiple audiences.

Faculty are considering some changes to the curriculum that may require all students to take courses in news editing and/or public affairs reporting, which would create less flexibility for students, but it would address news judgment, language skills and public service deficiencies identified in recent assessments.

**Professional Writing:** Students expressed admiration for the faculty in the professional writing sequence and their instruction in current issues and trends facing professional writers. The faculty was up-to-date on the options available for internships and did a good job placing students in rewarding internships. Students also appreciated the faculty members’ continuing work as professional writers, with all of them continuing a freelance career while teaching full time. The faculty were praised for their knowledge of new trends in self-publishing, electronic publication and self-promotion and distribution.



**Public Relations:** Students and faculty in Public Relations were not confident in the courses being up-to-date with the industry and profession. In terms of the currency of the curriculum, students and faculty agreed that it depended mainly on who was teaching a course. There is no common syllabus from which faculty draw and, based on a review of course syllabi, no common expectations on student learning outcomes, course rigor, or much of the course content, especially as it relates to core values and competencies.

**(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.\***

In the fall of 2014, the College offered 71 skills courses. Only two courses, Survey of Electronic Media (26) and Visual Writing & Aesthetics (22) show registration over the 20-student limit with no corresponding lab. (The self-study listed Survey of Electronic Media as a skills course, however, a review of the syllabus suggests this may not be appropriate.)

**(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.**

Students in all five sequences may, but are not required to, take an internship. Students must have earned at least 75 credit hours (15 of those credits in the College) and a GPA of at least 3.0 before applying to the internship program. Students may enroll for two or three credits per internship, with a maximum of six internship credits allowed over the course of a student's undergraduate career. The self-study claims a faculty internship supervisor oversees interns and reviews progress during the internship, however there was no evidence of that on site.

Students in some sequences said their faculty members were very helpful in terms of landing an internship and informing students of opportunities. Internship hosts said they had no official communication with the College except through the interns themselves and requested more direct contact from the College up front with information on what was expected of the intern and what was expected of the supervisor.

In the fall of 2013 and spring and summer of 2014, 125 students completed internships for credit, which equates to fewer than nine percent of the student body. Almost all students visited by the site team reported doing multiple internships, meaning a great majority do not take those internships for credit and are therefore not supervised nor assessed by the College. The supervisors' evaluations are gathered at the College, but the results were not fully tabulated in the self-study. Faculty claimed they do not see the results of those evaluations and curricula are not reviewed in order to address deficiencies. Internship hosts that were contacted by the site team were enthusiastic about the quality of the interns' work, saying most were very able, hard-working and well-prepared for their internship.

**Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: 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 Gaylord College has had a diversity plan since 1996; it was revised in 2002 and again in 2008. The 2009 site team cited deficiencies in women and minority hiring and there has been no improvement in that area. At the time of the visit, the Diversity Committee was in the process of presenting a revised plan, but several faculty members said they had not seen the revision and were unaware of the 2008 plan. The Dean explained that the new plan had been presented to the faculty at a recent faculty meeting and the revised proposal is scheduled for a faculty vote in December 2014. Those who knew of the new plan voiced skepticism and questioned whether it would make a difference. While the 2008 plan proposed more sensitivity to issues of diversity and more of a commitment to increasing diversity in the college, conversations with faculty and students exposed the perception that the only reason the current revision is in the works was to meet accreditation requirements.

- (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.**

While there are some inconsistencies within various syllabi regarding diversity, overall review of course syllabi, and observations and conversations with students and faculty show that issues of diversity have been integrated throughout the curriculum. The Writing for Mass Media course provides approaches and innovative ways to facilitate the discussion of diversity and its importance for all five areas. Specifically, students are assigned a project where they attend a meeting or service of a group or faith different from their own. Journalism students in three Gaylord College courses, Introduction to Broadcast Journalism, Advanced Multimedia Journalism, and Multimedia Newsgathering, are working together to actively engage two ethnic neighborhoods in Oklahoma City and its residents, one predominantly African American, the other predominantly Hispanic, using mobile video journalism to elevate the discussion among city leaders about poverty. This project is in association with Oklahoma Watch through a challenge grant from the Online News Association. In the Broadcast News Practicum, students produce a weekly news insert in Spanish, which is aired over the Telemundo Network affiliate in Oklahoma City and OUTV Channel 124. Anchors have been both Latino and Anglo students who are bilingual in Spanish and English. The College also has been effective in hosting guest speakers with diverse issues and sponsoring campus and community forums focusing on issues that foster a diverse community. The College regularly offers a course titled Race, Gender and the Media, that explores diverse publics and the role music, television, movies, and advertising play in constructing our attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors to one another. The course is not required, but has consistently drawn students from across the college.

**(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.**

In the 2002 accreditation visit, the unit was cited as having a deficiency in diversity due to a lack of diversity among faculty. In the 2009 visit, the site team reported that the College had made “tremendous improvements” moving from 24 full-time faculty (five women and one minority) in 2002, to 32 full-time faculty (10 women and seven minorities) in 2009. At the time of this visit, there were 10 women on a full-time faculty of 35 and five minority faculty. Despite a growth in faculty, the number of women faculty has remained the same, and the number of minority faculty have decreased. For the five openings for full-time faculty in the past three years, one minority female, one minority male and one non-minority female were hired. That is less than 50 percent, when the College has continually stated that there needs to be more minority representation on the faculty.

Although the college states that hiring a diverse part-time faculty is a priority, of the 19 part-time faculty members, only three are women and only one is a minority. This was a deficiency in 2009 and the problem persists. One minority professor, a woman, was promoted to full professor in 2013. Two other women faculty members have been promoted to area head positions. The Student Services staff is exclusively female. None are ethnic minority. Overall in the College, 56 percent of the administrative and support staff members in the Gaylord College are female.

Students complained about the lack of diversity among the faculty. In particular, several students said they received little or no support from the college in promoting ethnic minority journalism programs and the small numbers of women and minority faculty limit mentorship opportunities. Several faculty members said a lack of transparency in the hiring process hinders the recruitment of minority candidates. In all of its previous diversity plans and self-studies the College has stated increased hiring of women and minorities as a major goal. However, there has been very little positive movement and in fact, faculty and students openly commented that they have seen little progress in this area. Although the proposed plan is more detailed and provides financial support, those who were aware of it said they are skeptical about its success based on previous experiences. The proposed plan has the potential to move this metric, however, the college administration must be committed to engaging the faculty in taking ownership in creating and instituting a plan to achieve this goal.

**(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.**

Since the last re-accreditation cycle, the College’s Caucasian population decreased, though it is still larger than the University of Oklahoma Caucasian population as a whole, largely due to the lack of international and Asian students within the Gaylord College. African American and Native American populations are down slightly in the College, though they are at roughly the same percentage as the university. The Hispanic student population of the College has increased and the College continues to recruit more underrepresented students through its sponsorship of the Oklahoma Institute for Diversity in Journalism (OIDJ). The residential camp gives, on average, 15 students, predominantly from underrepresented groups, an opportunity to experience journalism firsthand. The Native American Journalists Association is housed on the OU campus and OU students participate in the NAJA program “Native Student Voices” in conjunction with their annual conference. The Dean currently is working with the university’s Senior Vice

President for Administration to expand the university's Latino recruitment in south Oklahoma City. The College is also working with the university Office of Admission on a plan to target recruiting of minority high school students in North Texas and other areas of Oklahoma.

The College provides little support of minority student media groups on campus. Students complained that students in groups such as National Association of Black Journalists, Native American Journalists Association and National Association of Hispanic Journalists received more national support and recognition than on campus, and they have difficulty in getting faculty to advise the student groups. Several students said Asian American Journalists Association was an organization on paper only. The self-study states that this group is not currently active within the College. Asian American students felt they had no representation within the College. Students also said campus and college recruiting representatives need to be more diverse.

- (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.**

No climate of sexual harassment or discrimination exists. However, faculty and students were concerned about the lack of women and ethnic minority faculty members in the college.

**Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: Non-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 Policies and Procedures handbook does show the criteria upon which full-time and part-time faculty are selected and hired. Part-time faculty hiring appears more ad hoc, based on personal relationships. Opportunities exist here to broaden the pool and bring greater diversity to the overall faculty, in terms of race, ethnicity, and gender.

Performance evaluations of all full-time faculty are handled exclusively by Committee A. It is made up of three tenured faculty members who are elected for three-year terms. The assessment occurs annually. There are three areas included: teaching, research/creative activity, and service, with numerical ratings and comments assigned to each faculty member. Results of each individual's evaluation are sent to the Dean, who then sends a letter to the faculty member with his or her results. One faculty member noted his appreciation for this process, and for the Dean's involvement in it. Others, especially more junior faculty, expressed a desire for more feedback to help guide them better in the tenure process.

Junior faculty expressed concerns that they did not receive sufficient guidance on the tenure process, particularly with the third-year review. One faculty member reported having asked for such a review and never receiving it.

There was no explanation of how part-time adjunct faculty are evaluated.

Examples of job announcements were included in the self-study and are displayed prominently on the Gaylord College website, but several faculty noted that they wished they could provide input into those before they were released.

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

The majority of classes are taught by full-time faculty. Research-focused faculty teach a 2:2 load; teaching-focused faculty teach a 3:3 load (fall and spring). Lecturers typically teach four classes per semester. These loads are identified in faculty contracts. In very few cases faculty have "voluntarily" taught an overload with pay or have been able to load shift. All faculty are expected to work in the three listed areas (teaching, research/creative activity, and service), and, overall, they appear to be doing so.

As stated previously, in some sequences, there are so few faculty, student may take most if not all of their classes from just one or two professors. This is currently problematic for students in Broadcasting and Electronic Media, and Professional Writing.

**(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.**

The full-time faculty is fairly well balanced between professional and scholarly experience. The balance does vary by discipline, with Journalism having the most doctoral-level faculty. The research-focused faculty is actively publishing and presenting at national conferences. Those with more professional experience remain involved in their fields, which students seem to appreciate both for keeping the instruction up to date and also for enhancing internship opportunities. The majority of the adjunct faculty (19 of them) is made up of professionals.

Members of the faculty do make an effort to stay current in their field, whether through consulting, connections with their relevant industries, or professional and scholarly organizations.

Some classes (notably, Advertising) use adjuncts who are not present on campus, which requires weekend and evening online and/or Skype sessions to teach the course. For example, one elective class in Account Management was taught by a professional based in India. While this expands opportunity, and provides a global element to the class, it can present hurdles to students who do not want to take classes or need to work over a Sunday.

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

The primary means of evaluating instruction is through end-of-semester written evaluations that students complete. It is not clear what happens with these evaluations, as faculty reported they do not know whether or how they are used by the College. The self-study noted that evaluations are factored into the annual performance review of each faculty member, but there was no information on how the College as a whole, and the Area Heads within it, are using the data collected from the students to enhance the classes. There is opportunity here to reinforce greater consistency across sections of a class, for example. As stated previously, this was noted by numerous students as an area of frustration for them, in that there is no reliable system in place to ensure that different instructors of the same class provide consistent experiences (curriculum, assignments, grading). Administration states that course coordinators are designated for any course with multiple sections.

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

Gaylord College continues to be highly praised across the OU campus, at both faculty and student levels. The faculty is welcoming of and interested in collaborating with many other departments (including computer science, fine arts, business), as well as providing resources and facilities for campus-wide special student programs related to contemporary issues (Ferguson, Trayvon Martin). The students feel privileged to be a part of this College.

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

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

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The college's tenure and promotion guidelines indicate that scholarship is expected and required.

Faculty members who engage in substantial traditional scholarship or creative works and choose research/creative activity as their area of excellence are typically assigned a two course per semester teaching load with 40 percent of their time devoted to research/creative activity. Some faculty members under this criteria said their teaching load and other teaching related responsibilities have hindered research and creative activity productivity.

Faculty who engage in professional activities and/or choose teaching as their area of excellence are typically assigned a three course per semester teaching load with 20 percent devoted to research/creative activity.

Several faculty members said there is a lack of transparency in teaching loads and its impact on expectations in research and creative activities. Some faculty members are on a two-course teaching load and others on a three-course load, but the research/creative activity expectations appear to be the same. Untenured faculty members complained that research and/or creative activity expectations have changed over time without explanation. As stated previously, the College clearly delineates teaching load requirements in faculty contracts.

Faculty members can apply for travel and research and/or creative activity grants through the college of up to \$6,000. Additional funding is available through the university.

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

Ads for hiring indicate that research, creative activity and/or professional activity are necessary for continued employment. A record of research and creative activity is listed in the Promotion and Tenure materials and it states that this is an integral part of the evaluation process. Some faculty however, claimed the evaluation process is poorly communicated.

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

Although the College's Promotion and Tenure guidelines state that "each area will provide supplemental guidelines on how the criteria for judging outstanding achievement will be applied. The area will follow a standardized format developed by the college for articulating the guidelines," several faculty members said this did not match their experience with the process. There appeared to be confusion among the faculty about what counted as research and/or creative activity and how it would be evaluated. Untenured faculty members requested more direction on what is expected of them in the area of research and/or creative activity. Several said they requested a more detailed three-year review, outlining expectations going forward, but did

not receive it. There is a perception among the untenured faculty that tenure decisions are made based on unspecified measurements that are not consistent across tenured faculty members.

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

Faculty members have produced a significant amount of research and creative activity during the self-study period. Research productivity among the untenured faculty was particularly high, while the tenured faculty continued to produce at an effective rate. The faculty's 136 refereed journal articles and 243 conference papers are both up substantially from the previous six-year period. Papers included numerous top-paper awards at conferences. Senior faculty contributed further to scholarly discussion through panels at academic conferences. Internal grants supported many of the paper presentations at conferences internationally as well as nationally. External grants were primarily for professional training and journalism education initiatives, including U.S. State Department grants for work with journalists, educators or students in several South Asian countries, but have also led to some faculty research projects. Output of creative works also increased from the previous six years. In particular there was a jump in national awards in juried competitions. Professional activity included professional seminars in the advertising industry and panel presentations and articles for PRSA/PRSSA.

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

The self-study reports that various viewpoints are represented in the research and creative activity conducted by the faculty. Some faculty members are engaged in quantitative research, others in qualitative and others in critical cultural and historical research. The creative activity spans fiction and non-fiction and is distributed in print, online and digitally.

Guest speakers talk on a variety of topics with various viewpoints. Some presentations are open to the public, but a majority occurs in classes, both in person and through Skype or other forms of live digital media.

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



## **PART II — Standard 6: Student Services**

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The process of advising consists of three full-time academic advisers, each of whom specializes in one or more areas. All students must communicate with their adviser every semester, either in person or via email. Seniors must meet their adviser in person within the first two weeks of each semester to ensure they are on track to graduate. Advisers offer in-person appointments two weeks out, which can be difficult at times for students, though there is always opportunity to walk in without an appointment. The quality of advising does appear to vary by discipline. In Advertising, the adviser is considered by students to be highly responsive, putting no time limit on the meetings. She also follows up on whether students like their classes to be better prepared to advise other students about those classes. In other areas of the College, however, students expressed dissatisfaction with their advisers, noting that they had at times been given incorrect guidance; the adviser lacked knowledge about classes; or students could not get into classes outside of Gaylord College due to ‘holds’ being placed on them that their advisers did not help them remove. The report from the students onsite does not coincide with the positive advising comments from students in discussions in the Dialogue with the Deans qualitative student satisfaction assessment measure in senior capstone courses.

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

Faculty do make themselves available to students, with times posted on individual offices and in all class syllabi. Many faculty are also providing academic or career advice to students on a walk-in basis.

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

The three academic advisers keep students informed in each of these areas when they meet with all students each semester. In addition, the Student Services Office plays an important role here, communicating with students via email, and through the weekly email newsletter, The Gaylord Extra.

**(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.**

There are many extra-curricular opportunities for students in Gaylord College. These include the Oklahoma Daily student newspaper and website, Sooner yearbook, OU Nightly student newscast and WIRE online radio station, Lindsey+Asp student ad and pr agency, and OU Sooner Sport Pad, a weekly sports magazine live TV program that is produced at Gaylord. In addition, there are 12 professional organizations to which students can belong, including AdClub, PRSSA,

Professional Writing Students Association, SPJ, and National Association of Hispanic Journalists.

- (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.**

The grade-point-average requirement for Gaylord College, at 2.75, is above the University's overall. This was done, in part, to manage enrollment. The College is now considering reducing these levels to allow more students in because of some declines in enrollments. Student retention and graduation rates are monitored, and continue to compare favorably, overall, to the University of Oklahoma campus-wide averages. In particular, the first-year retention rate is at an all-time high of 96.5 percent (for students entering in 2009). Retention after the second and third year remains high as well (around 90 percent). The four-year graduation rate remains higher than the OU average, but at 49.8 percent in 2007, it has dropped from the previous two years (54.7 percent in 2006, and 59.9 percent in 2005). The recent reduction of required hours is intended to improve the four-year graduation rate. The six-year graduation rate remains strong and is on the rise.

In terms of assessing the effectiveness of its advising services, Gaylord College reviews student response in the University's Student Satisfaction Survey. The scores have risen from a 3.69 (out of 7.0) in 2008 to 4.87 in 2013.

**Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: 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 dean works closely with the provost's office in creating a budget. The College is given a base allocation comprising tuition, fees and state appropriations. Gaylord students are assessed technology and course fees annually. Currently, the College is working to raise those fees. To determine additional funding needs, the leadership team of the College prepares an internal review of long-term goals. Faculty can work with area heads to discuss specific needs, which area heads take to the dean. The dean and provost work together to determine a final budget.

The unit has had to absorb more than \$750,000 in budget cuts during the time since its last accreditation. The College instituted across the board reductions and was forced to move some employee lines to fee accounts. Ultimately, this increases the cost because the unit must pay for the fringe benefits. The unit has also lost one staff position and two faculty positions because of the cutbacks.

The state contributes a robust 60 percent of the funding of the annual budget. Private gifts make up 25 percent while student fees add 15 percent of the funding. Student fees have risen substantially over the past three years, increasing by 21 percent from FY11 to FY14. Foundation funds are more sporadic due to market shifts, but income from these funds showed an increase in FY14, up 38 percent from FY12. The College's overall budget is up 14 percent since FY12.

**(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 College states the University has been exceptionally generous in terms of funding for facilities and technology, calling its program the envy of campus. The College opened a new building in 2004 and an addition to that building in 2009 while keeping space for student media in its former campus home. The Regents also approved a \$1.4 million upgrade to the College's television facilities in 2014, allowing the unit to bring high-definition television equipment to the students and faculty.

The Gaylord College is also fortunate to have a strong endowment and it has become more dependent on those funds. Endowment income, along with student fees, have kept it stable during some difficult financial times and reductions of state allocations. The college continues to provide intensive and extensive co-curricular activities to its students, with a relatively small staff and faculty, and little financial support from campus for these programs that have a very high community profile.

In comparison with other colleges at OU, Gaylord looks to be one of the most efficiently run, which means they are doing more with less. While the college is working hard to increase majors and credit hours in hopes of boosting its allocation, it will need additional financial support from the campus and intensive fundraising efforts to maintain the quality and the quantity of programs it provides to the profession, the campus and the State of Oklahoma.

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

The College opened a new building in fall of 2004 with a second phase of construction resulting in a new wing in 2009. The new building boasts a student-run public relations and advertising agency, a sound stage, auditorium, computer labs, offices and study space. The unit retained its space in its former home and still uses the lab area, Foley stage and student media center. The College teaches all but one of its courses in the new facility.

The College calls the student-run advertising and PR agency a “showpiece of the College,” and reports students have increased internship and job placements because of their experience in the agency. The space is filled with workrooms, pods and computer stations. Faculty and students agreed “Lindsey + Asp,” as the agency is known, is a magnet for students, faculty and the greater campus community.

Additionally, a live sports program now called “Sooner Sports Pad” was created in 2012, using facilities in the new building. Students work with the athletic department in producing the weekly, 30-minute live program that airs on Fox Sports Southwest. Students and faculty also produce a 30-minute daily news broadcast aired on OUTV and available to a large population of the state through the Cox interconnect. Students are able to originate a live signal from any studio in the building with ties to Fox Sports, Cox and other outside entities airing the productions. The student radio station is available on a live stream and has plans to begin broadcasting a low-power FM signal. The programs originating out of the College have raised its profile while adding a valuable live experience for students.

Students say they have adequate access to labs and meeting spaces and faculty say the new facility meets all their expectations in terms of teaching and creative/scholarly activity. One comment made by several students in terms of ways that services could be enhanced in the College was the simple one of providing more vending machines. Given the long hours that many students spend within the building, it would be helpful for them to have easier access to drinks and snacks rather than forcing them to seek refreshments elsewhere on campus.

**(d) The institution and the unit provide faculty and students with equipment or access to equipment to support its curriculum and the research, creative and professional activities of the faculty.**

The College provides students with abundant work stations throughout the facility. Software for students in all tracks is available at more than 400 sites in the system. Students have access to software for word processing, design, photo editing, graphics and video editing.

In 2011, the College became an Apple “Distinguished Program,” which allows students and faculty to contribute to iTunesU. The unit has a “Stream Team” which allows live, streaming coverage of any event on campus. Faculty are producing iBooks, iTunes course content and iPad photo and video. Additionally, students have access to cell packs to originate live content from the field.

Students and faculty seem pleased with the amount of field gear available. Students felt the need for more discussion of which courses were allowed to use which gear so they had access to the equipment needed for particular projects. They hoped for some sort of proficiency test before students were allowed to take out the cameras as well as communication among professors so major assignments wouldn’t all be in the field at the same time, putting a strain on the equipment scheduling. Students wanted Gaylord students, familiar with the equipment, to staff checkout and

conduct a cursory check of the equipment when checked back in and before being checked out again.

Students and faculty expressed concern about student use of field gear such as video and DSLR cameras, light kits and audio recorders. Students said the online reservation system does not work and they must physically go to “the cage” in order to reserve gear. Gear may only be checked out for four hours at a time without getting special permission from a faculty member, which was not adequate for many students. Students said there is no repercussion for losing, damaging, or the late return of equipment.

The hire of an engineer has helped in the upkeep of the equipment, but that lone engineer is responsible for the high-definition conversion currently underway at the College. Students complain they never know what kind of shape they’ll find the gear in and there are no incentives to treat the gear with care. Students also said professors were not required to check out gear to use in class instruction and often took and kept gear students were counting on to complete assignments. The administration acknowledges this is a problem and is looking to hire a manager to bring some order to the situation.

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

The unit provides excellent access to electronic information resources in the College. A reading room/library in the College showed adequate periodicals and other materials. The OU library has a healthy electronic database, journals, branches and special collections.

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

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

*The unit and its faculty advance journalism and mass communication professions and fulfill 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.**

The College has as an enthusiastic Board of Visitors that includes liaison with alumni and media professionals from around the nation. This group engages with students, faculty and staff as well as the other alumni and the business community on behalf of the College. The College also is served by a JayMac board, primarily alumni in the Oklahoma City area. Both groups serve as sounding boards for curricular, professional and financial advancement of the College.

The faculty is energetic in providing professional opportunities for students. Full-time and adjunct faculty and visiting speakers offer such opportunities, as do the faculty's involvement in professional organizations. Advertising and Public Relations faculty lead student field trips to agencies in New York, Chicago, Kansas City, Dallas, San Francisco and elsewhere that link students with alumni and media professionals.

The College publishes "Pulse," an alumni annual magazine. It publishes an unnamed email newsletter for alumni as well as students and other constituencies. It also features an alumni page at its Facebook site.

- (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 self-study provided an impressive listing of multiple professional and public service activities—professional memberships, presentations, lectures, publication reviews, etc.—by its faculty during the past six years.

The College features many professional service activities, including the Oklahoma Scholastic Media involving high school journalism teachers, advisers and students, and the Immigration in the Heartland program for professional journalists and student fellows.

Workshops include activities such as the Oklahoma Scholastic Media Initiative workshops for high school educators; New Media in Indian Country Conference; AEJMC Mid-Winter Conferences, the FCC Native Broadband and Telecom Training Workshop; and the National Press Photographers Association Annual News Video Workshop.

The College also houses the Native American Journalists Association, the Oklahoma Watch center for investigative journalism and the Oklahoma Institute for Diversity in Journalism.

Additionally, its Lindsey + Asp advertising and public relations agency offers client-based services provided by Gaylord students.

In an international environment, Gaylord hosts the Edward R. Murrow Fellows Program that brings journalists from Latin and Central America; the World Journalism Education Council is

headquartered at the College; an institute for South Asian student leaders in new media; partnerships with Pakistan's University of Gujrat; journalism training for Urdu-speaking journalists from Pakistan; and several grants involving Bangladeshi and Nepali young entrepreneurs and media professionals.

Media production includes Telemundo News Inserts program in which broadcasting journalism students prepare news reports. A Public Broadcasting radio station and a College-run student television broadcast gives students many professional opportunities. An arrangement between the College and Fox Sports provides student-produced programming to audiences throughout several states.

During the site visit, interviews with students confirmed that they appreciate and participate in such activities.

**(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 College provides up to \$1,250 travel allotment for faculty to present papers or serve in leadership positions or \$500 to attend conferences without duties. Additional funds are available for international travel. The College has an articulated process for how faculty members request travel support.

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

The College's Strategic Communications area (Advertising and Public Relations) operates a student-run agency. Lindsey + Asp (named for the streets facing the Gaylord building) offers repeatable one-credit practicum experiences as well as volunteer opportunities for students to work with area nonprofit and corporate clients. They develop and sometimes implement integrated advertising/public relations campaigns for these clients. Students indicate that this is a popular and competitive professional opportunity.

Journalism and BEM students produced televised forums on the social reaction to the Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown shootings, as well as an "OU Nightly" news broadcast and live audio stream of campus events.

Additionally, many of the professional courses provide experience for students who work with both on-campus and off-campus clients.

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

The College houses the Oklahoma Scholastic Media Association, which sponsors workshops for up to 600 high school students each year.

The College also sponsors a summer workshop for high school students through the Oklahoma Institute for Diversity in Journalism.

**Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: 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 College does have a written assessment plan that articulates six goals for student learning which, taken together, subsume the Council’s 12 values and competencies. The plan was revised in 2007. The plan includes some procedural elements that are not necessarily measuring learning outcomes, and there are some inconsistencies within how the sequences implement, report and use the data.

For instance, goal 1 states, “Graduates will complete successfully a common core of mass communication, writing and law courses, and a rigorous, approved, major-specific upper-division program of study.” In these terms, the goal focuses on student enrollment in certain courses, rather than understanding, mastering, applying or otherwise showing that they have learned the associated concepts.

The 2009 visit identified “learning objectives appear in a sporadic fashion in course syllabi” as a weakness. During the 2014 visit, the team reviewed a selection of course syllabi, finding that only eight of 20 courses (40 percent) included student learning outcomes, and another eight included teaching goals (“learn about,” “review,” “learn how to”) that are not measures for assessment purposes. Only two specifically reference core values and competencies.

Other inconsistencies exist in the plan itself. For example, it requires a Senior Exit Exam, but does not indicate the benchmark for determining achievement. The Outcomes Assessment Report identifies a mean score of 58 percent on this exam, yet there is no indication if this is considered acceptable, and what, if anything, is being done to improve the score. Additionally, the plan calls for review of student portfolios by faculty only, despite the ACEJMC evidence expectation that media professionals and alumni should be involved. Elsewhere in the Program Outcomes Assessment Report for 2012-13 there are indications that some sequences involve professionals in the portfolio review assessment process. The self-study states that “three of the five majors invite a professional to review student portfolios annually.” However, there was no evidence of this in any portfolio overviews for Journalism, Professional Writing, or Broadcasting and Electronic Media, nor is there any indication why this apparently is only a voluntary action and not part of the assessment protocols. During the site visit, the College explained that it is up to each sequence how to review portfolios, and whether to involve professionals and, if so, to what extent. As a direct measure, the inconsistency among the assessment protocols for portfolio evaluation calls into question the validity or usefulness of the information for assessment purposes.

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

The College’s assessment plan includes both direct measures and indirect measures. The 2009 visit indicated that there were 4 indirect and two direct measures. Indirect measures included student satisfaction survey, internship feedback, student awards, and alumni survey. Direct measures



were portfolio review and senior exam. The current measurements include four direct measures and two indirect measures. The self-study indicates the following direct measurements:

- Exit Exam: The College administers an exit exam (39 multiple-choice items), assessing law, concepts/theories, diversity, history and ethics. The 2009 site team report quoted the College as judging this to be “the crudest” of its assessment measures because it is “neither comprehensive nor deep enough to provide meaningful results. The exam is a work in progress.” The College continues to use the exam to gather learning outcome data and the overall mean scores from the exam have dropped from 64 percent in fall 2007 to 53.6 percent in spring 2013. The plan does not provide expected benchmarks, so it is unclear if the College considers a 10 percent decrease acceptable. Onsite, the College administration dismissed the exam as unreliable, because the data run counter to administrative observations. While the College is now committed to reworking this instrument, the data collected has basically been ignored.
- Senior Portfolio: The portfolio assessment is required for each sequence. The journalism portfolio evaluation included in the self-study is an excellent model for using portfolios as a measurement and the assessment identifies strengths and weaknesses and calls for renewed attention in several areas (ethics, research, technology, multimedia, and course rigor). It is clear that journalism uses this measurement for introspection and insight toward data-based curricular improvement. The most recent assessment by the Strategic Communication sequence also is comprehensive, though it was not part of the self-study and provided during the visit.
- Internship Evaluation: The College gathers assessment feedback from supervisors of internships taken for credit. Students are not required to do internships, and the site team determined that only 9 percent of Gaylord students do internships for credit. As a direct measure, it is difficult to claim this is representative of the population for assessment purposes. The survey data, which reports data from only one semester, featured a listing of strengths, weaknesses and skills needed for interns, but it does not provide the College’s synthesis of the data or its actions in response to this data.
- Student Award Competitions: While the self-study reports an impressive listing of 120 student awards for the 2013-14 academic year, awards are considered indirect measures of student learning.

Two indirect measures are included in the assessment program.

- Student Satisfaction Survey: This bi-annual survey indicates a generally steady increase in positive responses between the 2008 and 2012 surveys. The plan does not indicate a benchmark for what the College considers (expects) as an acceptable mean. Meanwhile, the qualitative supplement to the satisfaction survey, based on several “Dialogue with the Dean” sessions, yielded 72 specific and actionable recommendations from students. Examples include: more opportunities to exercise creative abilities; less agency focus in public relations and advertising sequences; software training; more graphic design courses; less repetition within tracks; common website to showcase student work. There is no indication how this information is shared with faculty and how faculty are involved in using this information for improvements in curriculum.
- Alumni Survey: The College conducts an annual alumni survey, with a current response rate of 13 percent. The recent survey indicates satisfaction with equipment/facilities and course/ethics, and dissatisfaction with financial assistance. The College views the survey as a positive snapshot of the program.

Together, the direct and indirect measures seem inconsistent in delivering measureable, meaningful outcomes of learning, with significant variance among the sequences, an over-reliance on opinion rather than measured data, little evidence of general use of alumni and media

professionals in evaluations, and inconsistent reports from faculty that they have access to and act on the data. College administration reports that there is systematic distribution of the data and academic improvements have been made based on the data collected

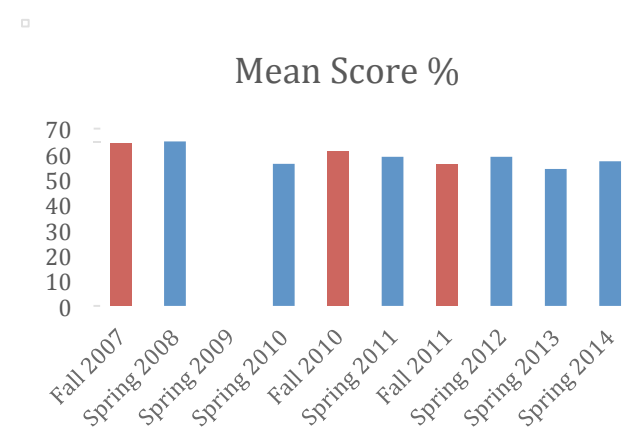
**(c) The unit collects and reports data from its assessment activities and applies the data to improve curriculum and instruction.**

The self-study indicates that data from the College’s assessment has led to various changes and lists 29 specific curricular and administrative developments based on diverse measures. The self-study reports that this data is shared with the College deans, area heads and the College faculty. Area heads are tasked with developing appropriate action plans and responses. However, it is not clear how this data is synthesized, distributed to faculty, or how the faculty use this information to make curricular decisions across the sequences. The site team heard repeatedly from faculty that they are unaware of the assessment findings and have had little input into making changes based on the findings.

The 2009 visit identified as a weakness that “professionals said students are most often deficient in ‘soft skill’ competencies. These include professional demeanor, appropriate dress, time management, and conflict resolution in the workplace.” The report indicated that the College’s internship and career services coordinator would offer voluntary workshops on such workplace skills.

The 2014 visit found no specific examples in which the College has addressed the previously expressed weaknesses and the career services coordinator position has been eliminated. Furthermore, the internship supervisor surveys indicated that the problem with “soft competencies” continues.

The 2009 visit cited the senior exit exam as a weakness. The 2014 visit found that measure less reliable than the previous version, noting that the results of the exam generally have been ignored. The overall mean scores have fallen overall in the past seven years. There is no information that there have been any actions or attempts to improve these scores, and the current response is to discard the findings and change the instrument.



**(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 College maintains contact with alumni to assess their experiences after they graduate and to gain feedback toward improving curriculum and instruction. Specifically, its Board of Visitors serves as an advisory council for the College. Its agenda regularly includes professional input into media trends, visiting with faculty and students, and advising the dean on current issues.

Concerning employment among graduates three years out, the College reports an impressive list of graduates working in jobs related to their undergraduate major. A spot check shows that 60 percent of advertising graduates are working in their field. Among journalism graduates, 45 percent are working in some aspect of communication (26 percent in journalism and 19 percent in non-journalism jobs, mainly in public relations and advertising).

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

The College's assessment plan indicates that faculty will evaluate senior portfolios. There is only mild evidence of a role for media professionals in assessment. The plan does not require professional evaluators, and only some sequences include them. Likewise, there is no indication that alumni participate in this portfolio review, nor does the assessment plan call for this.

The College does require written feedback and surveys from supervisors of students who do internships for credit. As stated before, this comprises approximately nine percent of the student population. Site team interviews with supervisors indicated they would welcome more interaction with and direction of expectations from the College, beyond just the midterm and final report they submit.

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

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

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

##### Strengths:

- Enviable facilities equipped with up-to-date technology, professional laboratories and studios, and collaborative space for students and faculty;
- Dedicated and productive faculty who receive high marks from their students for their availability, expertise, and professional advice;
- Strong campus and community profile with fervent campus support.

##### Weaknesses:

- Need for a faculty-driven strategic plan that integrates goals and objectives with tactical strategies and measurable outcomes;
- Need for more diverse (race and gender) faculty and administration;
- More faculty involvement in diversity issues, especially recruitment of faculty;
- Development and implementation of an assessment plan that is consistent across sequences in measuring learning outcomes, not course requirements.

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

Standard #3 Diversity and Inclusiveness

Standard #9 Assessment of Learning Outcomes

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

The unit needs to address its lack of diversity in the faculty. As hiring occurs, diversity should be a focus. Passing and implementing the newly drafted diversity plan is expected to assist in this matter. Furthermore, a more diverse faculty should address students' concerns about lack of mentoring and assistance with ethnic student organizations. Administration will need to address both issues.

The unit needs to clarify its direct and indirect measures to ensure they are measuring learning outcomes, not opinions; that benchmarks for learning outcomes have been determined; that the instruments that are being used in assessment are valid and reliable; that professionals are consistently part of the assessment process; that assessment is consistent across the sequences; and that faculty are involved in the process, have access to the data, and participate in determining the actions for improvement.

#### **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 site report asked for more evidence of embracing diversity. The college continues to struggle in this area and while administration appears committed to increasing diversity, there has been little movement in the numbers. Faculty report they are not wholly included in discussions and strategies regarding diversity, but they say they are willing to do what needs to be done to improve the diversity among the faculty ranks. Student recruitment remains a challenge but College leaders are working diligently with campus administration to improve those numbers.

**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 lacked some cohesion in its narrative and details were often difficult to decipher. At times, the self-study was difficult to navigate and could have benefited from better organization.



*The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA.*  
*Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication*  
February 23, 2015

Ms. Susanne Shaw  
Executive Director  
Accrediting Council for Journalism & Mass Communications  
1435 Jayhawk Blvd  
University of Kansas  
Lawrence, KS 66045-7515

Dear Susanne:

I wanted to share some of the College's thoughts on Standard 9 and clarify some confusion that may have occurred during the site visit. We strive to use our assessment measures as a significant pathway to positive change in our programs. We are confident that we have accomplished this goal. Based on assessment findings, we have implemented positive, impactful programmatic change.

The self-studies sent to our site team were collated incorrectly, leaving pages of our 2012-13 assessment report out of order. When the team arrived, we provided the most recent assessment report (2013-14) that had just been submitted and employed a slightly different format. Together, these two things might have created an exaggerated impression of inconsistency. Therefore, we want to clarify our assessment processes and demonstrate how productive they have been the past six years in improving our program.

Having been in compliance with all standards on our last two site visits and having had our direct and indirect assessment measures validated by the previous site team, we focused primarily during this accreditation cycle on using solid assessment findings to make improvements and strengthen our program. We have seven assessment measures: senior portfolio assessment, senior exit exam, awards evaluation, student satisfaction survey (quantitative and qualitative), alumni satisfaction survey and an internship employer survey. A "dialogue with the deans" senior exit interview is the qualitative element of the student satisfaction survey and is reported separately in this letter.

As with most assessment measures, some are more productive than others. Three of our measures have been primary generators of change: the senior portfolios every student in the college submits as evidence of summative work in the major, the "dialogue with the deans" exit interviews conducted in seven capstone courses each semester with graduating seniors, and the student satisfaction survey administered to all seniors. Other measures have supplemented and reinforced information derived



from the others. The alumni survey has paralleled closely the student satisfaction survey. The internship employer evaluations and awards tabulations have generally corroborated data from the portfolios. Here are some specific actions taken as a result of what was learned from the three most productive measures:

### **Senior Portfolios**

- Requirement that all advertising majors take account planning, stemming from knowledge differences demonstrated in portfolios by students who had and had not taken the planning course.
- Creation of a lighting course in Broadcasting and Electronic Media based on weaknesses found in student portfolios.
- Development of a broader and more diverse set of writing assignments in advertising and public relations courses after portfolio assessments revealed students lacking in persuasive writing skills needed for an effective campaign.
- Creation of a senior project component in Broadcast and Electronic Media so that each student has full responsibility for a production to demonstrate their skill sets as individuals (as opposed to group work), adding specific measurable competencies (lighting, sound, composition, storytelling, editing) to what is demonstrated in the portfolio.
- Establishment of a reading group in strategic communication in response to portfolio assessments that showed the need for a deeper culture of critical thinking to guide conversations about industry issues.
- Introduction of a new capstone course in Professional Writing, the Business of Professional Writing, after portfolios failed to show a consistent level of understanding of professional business and marketing practices that students would need to publish their work.
- Requirement of evidence of preliminary research and story idea outlines for all writing assignments in journalism after writing examined in the portfolios raised questions about the critical thinking process used to develop stories. The portfolios also showed the need for more faculty involvement at the early stages of developing story ideas.
- Requirement of a minor for all students after portfolio assessments showed that students needed more subject area depth in the development of campaign projects, video treatments and long-form stories.

### **Dialogue with the Deans**

- Creation of the Lindsey+Asp student-run public relations/advertising agency following student comments about the lack of professional outlets for strategic communication students.
- Creation of a co-curricular orientation in beginning public relations and advertising classes for strategic communication students based on students' lack of understanding of professional opportunities available within the college and beyond.
- Advocating for a university site license for Lynda.com after student feedback and portfolio assessments revealed that students struggled to learn the

software needed to complete the curriculum. This assessment finding from Gaylord College was a key point in convincing the central administration to purchase the site license.

- Creation of a social media marketing class and greater integration of social media into the curriculum after students pushed for more emphasis on social media and portfolios demonstrated the need as well.
- Establishment of consultation meetings between JMC faculty and advisers based on student feedback that advisers needed more knowledge of the majors they were advising. A need was also realized to have advisers better grounded in job opportunities and internships in the major.
- Reform of the centralized equipment checkout and the addition of an equipment supervisor position after student feedback revealed frustration with the current system.

### **Student Satisfaction Survey**

- Creation of an annual Gaylord Jobs Fair and a stronger partnership with OU Career Services in response to lower ratings by students and alumni to a question by job placement assistance.
- Creation of an annual two-day “Top Jobs” event for strategic communication majors featuring agency HR directors from across the nation, based on low satisfaction with job placement assistance.
- Increased Board of Visitor direct contact with students in response to the low satisfaction scores with job placement. This board consists of alumni who are also professionals either in our related industries or in a position using parallel skill sets in other professional situations (i.e., a communication manager for a corporation). The board now does mock interviews or major-specific counseling sessions twice a year for students at the end of every board meeting.
- Changes in our advising system after student satisfaction scores dipped sharply in the year when a new system was introduced. After modifying the advising system, satisfaction scores returned quickly to the norms of previous years.

In addition to our established assessment measures, we also rely on university-wide measures that inform our process. We monitor retention and graduation rates carefully and seek opportunities for improvement. We have one of the highest retention and graduation rates on campus. When Gaylord College’s four-year graduation rate started to dip three years ago, we reduced the number of hours required for graduation from 130 to 124 to provide impetus for students to finish in four years. We will be watching the next graduation rate report closely to see what difference this change is making.

We also wanted to clarify the involvement faculty have in the assessment process. All faculty submit a form detailing how each class they teach relates to ACEJMC’s 12 competencies. Their suggestions were provided in the Standard 2 Appendices, which may have been placed too obscurely to register in the assessment evaluation.



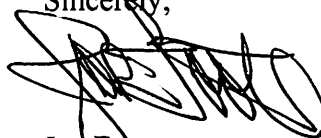
Faculty from all majors participate in the portfolio review that is done consistently each academic year in each major. Faculty recommendations from portfolio assessments have resulted in much of the curricular change listed above. Area Heads are involved in every Dialogue with the Deans session, and they are charged with providing results to the faculty. A complete list of issues and recommendations is also included in the annual University of Oklahoma assessment report. In response to the site team comments, we are redoubling efforts to insure that all faculty are knowledgeable about the broader assessment process.

Another Standard 9 issue raised by the site team was involvement of alumni/professionals. We actively have involved professionals in the portfolio evaluation for three of our five majors (journalism, public relations, advertising). Broadcast & Electronic Media have involved professional in portfolio reviews, but not consistently. They are doing so this semester. Professionals participate in the evaluation of all interns and submit a questionnaire tied to the 12 professional values and competencies. The annual assessment reports have focused on general satisfaction of employers with interns and have not fully focused on synthesis of data connected with the values and competencies, but these data are now being mined more thoroughly. The Board of Visitors conducts its own assessment at its meetings by evaluating an area of the curriculum and engaging in a robust, frank discussion with faculty and administrators.

Like many assessment efforts, ours is a combination of reaping significant tangible benefits from most of our measures and continual assessment and retooling of the measures that are not as productive. A measure of the maturity of our assessment efforts is that we are able to evaluate critically elements we do not think are working. As the site team observed and we self-diagnosed, there is a need to improve the effectiveness of the exit exam administered to all students in an upper level core class. Since the university hired an assessment coordinator last year, we have worked with him closely to make the exam more comprehensive and to increase the reliability of the findings. We are expanding the exam from three core courses to the courses specific to each of our majors. Thus, parts of the exam this spring are tailored to individual majors and part taken from core courses. While we know from experience that gleaning meaningful results from an exam such as this is challenging, we are committed to improving it.

We are proud of the substantive changes that our assessment efforts have produced. They have clearly made a difference in the quality of our program. At the same time, we realize that we must work just as hard to make the other measures as robust and productive.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joe Foote', written over a white background.

Joe Foote  
Dean