

Report of On-Site Evaluation

ACEJMC
Undergraduate program
2014– 2015

Name of Institution: University of Washington

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Michael K. Young

Name of Unit: Department of Communication/Journalism Emphasis

Name and Title of Administrator: David Domke, chair, Department of Communication

Date of 2014 - 2015 Accrediting Visit: Jan. 20-23, 2015

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

Date of the previous accrediting visit: Feb. 8-11, 2009

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Reaccreditation

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Reaccreditation

Recommendation by 2014 - 2015 Visiting Team: Reaccreditation

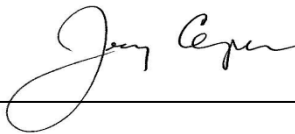
Prepared and submitted by:

Team Chair

Name and Title: Jerry Ceppos, Dean

Organization/School: Manship School of Mass Communication, Louisiana State University

Signature _____



Team Members

Name and Title: Andy Alexander, Visiting Professional

Organization/School: E.W. Scripps School of Journalism, Ohio University

Signature _____



Name and Title: Rose Ann Robertson

Organization/School: Associate Dean for Academic Administration, School of Communication,
American University

Signature _____



Part I: General Information

Name of Institution: University of Washington

Name of Unit: Department of Communication

Year of Visit: 2015

[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 University of Washington is established in Title 28B Revised Code of Washington (RCW) as a public institution of higher education. RCW 28B.20.010 stipulates: "The state university located and established in Seattle, King County, shall be designated the University of Washington." RCW 28B.20.020 reads: "The aim and purpose of the University of Washington shall be to provide a liberal education in literature, science, art, medicine, military science, and such other fields as may be established therein from time to time by the board of regents or by law."

[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: Feb. 8-11, 2009

[5] When was the unit or sequences within the unit first accredited by ACEJMC? 1956

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

Attached at end of this section. Last revised in 2014.

[7] What are the type and length of terms?

Semesters of _____ weeks

Quarters of 10 weeks

Summer sessions of 4 or 8 weeks

Intersessions of 4 or 8 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.

B.A. Communication/Journalism Emphasis

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

180 quarter credits

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

4 Communication quarter credits, none of which fulfill Journalism requirements but do apply as credits toward a Bachelor's degree.

[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

Journalism

David Domke, *Department chair*
Andrea Otanez and Jessica Partnow,
Journalism Program coordinators

[13] Number of full-time students enrolled in the institution:

29,655 undergraduates (Seattle campus, Autumn 2014, start of term)

[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>
Journalism	104 (February 2015)
Communication Studies (not under review for accreditation)	712 (February 2015)
Pre-majors	None
Total	816 * (February 2015)

- *The number of undergraduate Communication majors typically peaks at about 900 during an academic year, of which about 135 are in the Journalism Program.*

[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.

Winter, 2015 (Figures reflect student enrollment as of the fifth day of the term)

Com360 Foundations of Multiplatform Journalism	20
Com361 Advanced Multiplatform Journalism	13
Com362 Community Journalism: News Lab	16
Com364 Journalism in a Diverse Society	16
Com457 Journalism Portfolio	16
Com459 Narrative Journalism	16
Com460 Spec Topics-Writing With Voice	13
Com465 Legislative Reporting/Olympia	5

Autumn, 2014 (Figures reflect student enrollment as of the fifth day of the term)

COM360 (Foundations of Multiplatform Journalism):	13
COM361 (Advanced Multiplatform Journalism):	16
COM362 (Community Journalism: News Lab):	16
COM364 (Journalism in a Diverse Society):	10
COM459 (Narrative Journalism):	13 Journalism, 4 Comparative History of Ideas
COM460 (Special Topics-Data Journalism):	11

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

Our total budgetary expenditures planned for 2014-15 for the Journalism Program are \$1,586,963.

Percentage increase or decrease in three years:

This is an increase of 7% on 2013-14 and an increase of 34% over the past three years, since 2011-12.

Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries:

Of the amount budgeted for 2014-15, \$787,999 is dedicated to full-time teaching faculty salaries.

[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.

- Gerald J. Baldasty professor (not teaching; 80% time in Provost’s Office)
- Randal A. Beam professor
- Caley Cook lecturer
- Anita Verna Crofts lecturer (internship coordinator, instructor; online course)
- David Domke, professor (not teaching Winter term)
- Kathleen Fearn-Banks associate professor
- Richard Kielbowicz associate professor
- Andrea Otanez lecturer (in Olympia part time during Winter term)
- Matthew Powers assistant professor
- Doug Underwood 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.)

- Carole Carmichael part-time lecturer (“adjunct”; teaching Spring 2015 term only)
- Justin Mayo part-time lecturer (“adjunct”; teaching Autumn 2014 term only)
- Jessica Partnow artist-in-residence
- Joanne Silberner artist-in-residence (teaches Autumn and Spring terms; 50% appointment)
- Roger Simpson emeritus professor (teaches only Spring term; 40% appointment)
- Sarah Stuteville artist-in-residence
- Alex Stonehill artist-in-residence

[19] Schools on the quarter system:

For each of the last two academic years, please give the number and percentage of graduates who earned 104 or more quarter hours outside of journalism and mass communications.

Year	104 or more quarter hours outside of journalism and mass communications		
	<u>Total</u> <u>Graduates</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
2013-2014 academic year	49*	48	98%
2012-2013 academic year	52	52	100%

Note: Our figures, reported above, differ by two students from those provided by Academic Data Services for Table 1 in Part II of the self-study. Our count shows 49 students; ADS shows 47 students with conferred Communication: Journalism degrees.

Mission Statement *Adopted 2002, Updated 2014*

The mission of the University of Washington Department of Communication's Journalism Program is to teach its students to think critically, to communicate effectively, and to develop professional values dedicated to serving the public at large, their communities, and their society. Our goal is to produce students with analytical and communication skills who will be able to perform successfully in their journalism careers and as engaged citizens, who will produce content in creative, entrepreneurial ways, and who will demonstrate a commitment to professional excellence in all that they do. This includes foundations in writing, curiosity, adaptability, and collaboration. At the same time, we believe the development of journalism skills must be balanced with the development of intellect and character in the student. This means our task is to teach our students about the importance of the public service mission of journalism and the contributions that media and the journalist must make if a democratic society is to survive and flourish.

To accomplish this, we have five chief goals:

1. To impart the journalistic skills and the professional values that will allow our students to gain employment and to create entrepreneurial pathways as journalism evolves.
2. To cultivate in our students an understanding of the importance of journalism's role in a diverse society.
3. To contextualize journalism by providing a grounding in historical, cultural, and intellectual developments, both within journalism and, in general, that have shaped the modern media environment.
4. To expose our students to a broad, liberal arts education that will ensure that they have a knowledgeable and critical understanding of the institutions that are the framework of public and private life and an informed perspective on the events of an increasingly complex world.
5. To infuse a mindset that helps our students to be adaptive in rapidly changing media and cultural environments.

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.

The University of Washington first offered instruction in journalism in 1907 and was one of only four institutions with a journalism department or school before 1910. From the start, the program was less vocationally oriented than many others, being grounded in the liberal arts and academics. Today, the journalism program is part of the Department of Communication, which itself is one of 14 units in the Social Sciences Division of the College of Arts and Sciences. Formed in 2002 by the merger of the School of Communications and the Department of Speech Communication, the 900-undergraduate Department of Communication (that number is the approximate peak each year) is the largest department in the division and the second-largest department in the college. The structure “insulates the journalism program from some of the financial pressures typically felt by smaller units offering comparatively expensive courses,” the unit wrote in the self-study. Journalism had 81 undergraduate majors in Fall 2014.

Journalism’s mission statement, adopted first in 2002 and updated most recently in 2014, cites five goals: imparting journalistic skills and professional values so that students will be hired; cultivating an understanding of the importance of journalism’s role; contextualizing journalism by providing a grounding in historical, cultural and intellectual developments; exposing students to a broad liberal-arts education, and infusing “a mindset that helps our students to be adaptive.”

Journalism’s most recent “strategic/long-range plan” was adopted in Fall 2012 and updated in Winter 2014. It calls for emphasizing multiplatform journalism, a phrase frequently used by faculty members; immersive learning; an entrepreneurial mindset; engagement with publics and audience; integrating “digital media dynamics” in every class; expanding the commitment to understanding a diverse society; building alumni relations; expanding partnerships; overhauling the Olympia reporting program, and expanding international and cross-cultural opportunities.

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

The Department of Communication has policy manuals or statements for teaching, general administration, graduate students, spouse/partner conflicts of interest and visiting scholars. The department’s faculty determines general educational policies, including program focus, curriculum and admissions standards as well as hiring of full- and part-time faculty.

(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.

Faculty members, colleagues from around the university and administrators described the chair of the Department of Communication, who comes from the journalism faculty, as a strong leader who involves the faculty. (Written on his whiteboard during our stay were the words "Respect. Empower, Include.") One faculty member said that he "has created a remarkable sense of community where faculty feel like they are members of a small college while at a large research university." Faculty members repeatedly described the department as a good place to work. A member of the administration praised the director for being willing to spend "political capital" on critical issues.

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

The dean and divisional dean appoint the chair. When the chair's term is ending, the dean appoints a committee of two external members and one internal member to interview faculty, students and staff. They report on the status of the department and forward confidential recommendations of at least two finalists to the dean, who, with the divisional dean, holds further interviews with faculty members before appointing the chair. The chair selects the coordinators of the Journalism, Communication Studies and Graduate programs following consultation with faculty.

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

Procedures are in place for all three sorts of complaints. Most student complaints deal with grades and almost all are resolved by the instructor and student or through a grade appeal to the chair and ultimately to the divisional dean. Since 2009, no appeals have involved Journalism. Complaints from staff have been few and have been addressed by discussion. Complaints by faculty also are few and generally are resolved with the chair. Since 2009, no faculty complaints have gone to the divisional dean. We examined a small file of complaints that had been dealt with satisfactorily.

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 percent of the graduating classes in the two academic years preceding an accreditation visit to meet these requirements.

Journalism students are required to take 55 credit hours for the degree. However, both the University and ACEJMC allow higher credit limits (70 and 76 respectively). Journalism students are allowed to take classes in the Communication Studies and the Journalism program, but are discouraged from taking more than five or 10 additional credits. There are now 30 double majors among 84 majors. The average number of Com credits beyond 55 was 13.8 in AY 12-13 and 15.5 in A13-14. The reasoning behind the limit is to encourage double majors, to maintain consistency with the Communication major, which requires 50 credits, and to encourage students to graduate within four years.

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

The program provides a balance between theoretical and conceptual courses and skills courses. Skills courses include Foundations of Multiplatform Journalism, Advanced Multiplatform Journalism, Community Journalism: News Lab and Journalism in a Diverse Society. The theoretical/conceptual courses include a required Methods of Inquiry course, Mass Media Law, and Media Ethics. Advanced skills options include Reporting Global Issues, Writing With Voice, and Feature Writing.

(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.)

The Journalism program introduced a new curriculum in fall 2013 after several years of study. One faculty member says the new curriculum was designed to allow individual faculty to adapt and change the courses easily to incorporate a changing industry. Faculty are working to eliminate duplication in the courses by talking regularly about what's covered in each of the courses. While the multiplatform emphasis of the new curriculum is admirable, one area is missing: broadcast facilities and training. Administrators pointed out that the legislature long ago anointed Washington State as the broadcast-

education center of the state. However, any multiplatform education requires at least some broadcast training.

Faculty say the new curriculum doesn't sacrifice the core elements of journalism such as values and ethics, and that the curriculum revamp was designed to make the immersive experience more integral and in response to students who said they wanted real world experiences sooner.

Students were given the option of completing the old curriculum or switching to the new when it was implemented in fall 2013. The journalism adviser said that most students opted to take the new curriculum. Because there are few prerequisites, students have more flexibility in deciding when they will take the majority of courses. All required skills courses are offered every quarter; only one section of each course is offered each quarter. The overall transition to the new curriculum appears to have been smooth.

The majority of the core courses have a strong professional emphasis, with students producing content for external outlets both in Com 361, Advanced Multiplatform Journalism, and Com 362, Community Journalism: News Lab. The Seattle Globalist is the outlet for Com 361 while students in Com 362 write for a variety of outlets, including the online Seattle Post Intelligencer and the independent student newspaper, The Daily. Faculty see this class as strengthening the ties between the program and the newspaper, which is located in the same building. Com 362 focuses on community reporting, with students producing about six stories in 10 weeks. All assignments are vetted through faculty before going to the outlet. Some class meetings are held at the PI newsroom to give students the feel of a professional outlet. All students are required to produce packages for each assignment, which could include photos or video. Faculty note that they usually require more sources than the outlet for which the assignment is being done. Editing is done via Google Docs and faculty push students to develop more complete projects. About 98 percent of all the student work is published. Stories are graded several times during the process. Faculty often meet individually with students to discuss projects. One faculty member described the program's teaching style as a coaching method.

The Seattle Globalist is an entrepreneurial venture that its founders say would not exist without the partnership with the program and the University. The chair and the program committed to the entrepreneurial project in 2010, a time when a number of journalists, many from the former print Seattle Post Intelligencer were beginning news startups, and talked with several projects. After deciding on what was then called The Common Language Project, the program provided space for the project and hired the three co-founders as artists in residence, which gave each a part-time appointment as well as benefits. The three teach a total of six classes over the academic year. The Globalist, launched in 2012, is an online publication and is a 501(c)(3). It has two part-time staff and more than 300 freelancers, about a quarter of whom are UW students. The Globalist was an essential part of the curriculum revision. Students in the Globalist class, in effect, take over the newsroom, come up with story ideas, produce multiplatform content, edit, and do social media and analytics as part of the course. Most, but not all, stories are published. The faculty member serves as the final editor. Faculty for bringing in the Globalist and using the little-known artist in residence classification to hire the three co-founders praised the chair. The chair, one faculty member said, had a vision and then made it happen.

(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.*

All core classes meet the criterion of not exceeding the 20-1 ratio. Because each core class is offered every quarter and because most of the courses do not have prerequisites, most core classes have fewer than 20 students. Com 360, Foundations of Multiplatform Journalism had 20 students in the winter term 2015, while there were 16 students in each of four other classes and 13 in two others.

(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.

The program has gone from having students simply do internships with on-site supervision to a more academic experience with additional faculty oversight that requires two meetings during the quarter as well as assigned readings, written assignments and peer review. Faculty believe the redesign enhanced the internship experience. Students may complete up to a total of four credits of internship. However, Com 395 internships do not fulfill Journalism program requirements but do count as general Communication credit.

From Autumn 2010 through Autumn 2014, about 110 students were placed in internships at media organizations such as The Seattle Times, the Seattle Weekly, KING-5's digital site, and seattlepi.com. The program also offers "premier" internships, to which students apply directly through the department. The program also offers the Olympia Legislative Reporting Internship, in which students join veteran journalists in covering the Washington state legislature.

The Foreign Intrigue program sends about five students abroad each summer for 10-12 weeks. Alumni contributors have provided funding that pays the students' airfare and housing and the university pays the tuition for the 12-credit course, which allows students to afford to apply and participate. Students have been sent to Sierra Leone, India, Cambodia and Indonesia. The purpose of the program, one co-founder said, was to send students to areas that are not the usual study abroad sites, such as London or Paris. The University did make the decision in summer 2014 to pull a student out of Sierra Leone because of the Ebola outbreak.

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 self-study states that attention to diversity and inclusiveness is a core value of the program. The site team found ample evidence to support this. The self-study meets the accreditation requirements of having a diversity plan that delineates goals and progress toward achieving them. The self-study also complied with requirements to provide evidence of diversity awareness through syllabi and course materials, as well as data on faculty/staff hiring, promotion, recruitment and speakers.

(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.

Beyond the numbers, the journalism program has made a sustained effort to infuse diversity and inclusiveness into the learning environment. The self-study states that the program aims to “create a community in which diversity and inclusiveness are an expectation, not an exception.” Interviews with faculty and students generally supported this. “We define diversity very broadly. . . beyond the numbers,” said one instructor. “Diversity is part of everything we do. It’s discussed in every setting, on or off-line.” Added a student: “All of the professors in the journalism (program) push students to tell the story of diversity in Seattle.”

Six of the program’s required courses address diversity and inclusiveness. For example, in Com361 (“Advanced Multiplatform Journalism”) students engage in an immersive learning experience with The Seattle Globalist, producing content that is focused on immigrants, international communities and global connections to Seattle.

(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.

Numbers tell part of the story. While improvement is desirable in some areas, over-all hiring and enrollment trend lines are either positive or within an acceptable range—on a very small base. Twenty percent of the full-time faculty in the journalism program is non-white—but the actual number is small, only two. The percentage of full-time white female faculty is lower than in the Department of Communication as a whole (and, conversely, the percentage of full-time white male faculty is higher than the department as a whole). Yet when looking at “Black/African American” and “Hispanic/Latino” full-time faculty, the percentages are comfortably higher than the Department of Communication as a whole. The self-study asserts that most of the program’s part-time hires have been women and/or

people of color. Because recent hires have been diverse, the trend is toward a more diverse faculty mix by gender, ethnicity and age.

(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.

Data in the self-study indicate that the total number of non-white undergraduate students (not counting international) in the journalism program is roughly 6.5 percentage points less than the university as a whole. But it is higher than the percentage for non-whites in the state's population.

Looking specifically at international students, the percentage enrolled in the program (8.5) is less than for the university as a whole (13.4). That said, the overall number of international students is small; modest yearly fluctuations can sharply alter the percentages.

Several faculty thought the journalism program (and, more broadly, the Department of Communication) could do a better job of recruiting African American students. "There could be more targeted recruitment," suggested one. African Americans in the journalism program comprise 5.7 percent of its total undergraduate student enrollment. (For context, this is higher than the 2.5 percent of African American undergraduates in the University as a whole, and higher than the 3.6 percent of the state's population of African Americans.)

Also, the self-study noted a goal of improving student retention in the program. "Our journalism retention rates compare favorably with (the University) as a whole, though our retention rates for students of color are slightly below Caucasian students in the 2010-11 cohort."

(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.

A review of diversity-related complaints from faculty or students in the Department of Communication found none involving the journalism program. The Department of Communication has a Diversity Committee, formed in 2010, that meets to discuss ways to enhance diversity and inclusiveness. It includes representatives from the journalism program. One of those faculty members said the committee meets monthly and has made valuable recommendations for speakers and programs to elevate the importance of diversity awareness. The committee also has reviewed departmental courses to ensure that they comply with university-wide content requirements.

In addition, the committee (with representation from the journalism program) helped create the new Center on Communication, Difference and Equity, expected to be launched during the current academic year.

Cultural awareness is enhanced through the program's Foreign Intrigue international internships, which allow five students each summer to report from countries in Asia, the Middle East and Africa. The program and the broader department regularly host guest speakers, including numerous people of color. And a review of faculty research indicates an impressive breadth of topics related to race, ethnicity and gender equity.

Also, several University faculty, administrators and non-academic employees noted the role of the program and the Department of Communication in creating and hosting seminars on civil rights that have been open to the community.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: 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:

The Department of Communication consists of two programs: Journalism and Communication Studies. The journalism program has 10 full-time faculty, four “artists-in-residence” and one emeritus professor. They are integrated into the broader faculty of the Department of Communication. Collectively, the department has 29 full-time faculty or lecturers.

Journalism instructors teach the majority of journalism courses and are primarily responsible for the focus and breadth of the program. But all full-time journalism faculty members also teach courses in Communication Studies. This is important to understanding the relationship between Journalism and Communication Studies. In many ways, faculty consider themselves integrated in a Department of Communication that embraces a broad definition of communication.

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

The self-study clearly outlined the process for evaluations of full-time and part-time faculty, as well as procedures for determining promotions and raises. Those written criteria, as well as supplemental documents explaining procedures, were made available to the site team.

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

The University of Washington promotes itself as a research institution, and that extends to the journalism program. The self-study notes that “scholarly research is the primary criterion for assessing performance in the professional ranks at all levels.” This research mandate does not apply to lecturers, but they are encouraged to conduct research or engage in professional activities outside the University.

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

A balance exists between faculty steeped in research and teaching experience, and more recent hires who have brought a practitioner's perspective. The latter is embodied in the four “artists-in-residence.” Among them are three founders and principals of The Seattle Globalist. This non-profit online news outlet, housed in the Department of Communication, provides students with an immersive journalistic experience producing content about immigration and connections between Seattle and the world. These “artists-in-residence” split their time between producing the Globalist, working with freelance journalists and teaching students.

In addition to the 10 full-time journalism faculty, the department employs a handful of part-time faculty with multiyear commitments. These include the artists-in-residence, who work closely with journalism students. All full-time and part-time faculty with multiyear commitments are expected to

fulfill service obligations within the department. This also extends to public service, such as speaking to outside groups or working with community organizations on communication problems.

In the past several years, three full-time journalism faculty have been hired. In addition to providing new blood, these hires have enhanced diversity. In a group discussion with students, several juniors and seniors noted that the new hires had brought renewed vigor to the journalism faculty. They applauded the hiring of instructors with “real-world” experience.

Extensive relationships exist between the journalism faculty and outside news organizations and professional groups and associations. Discussions with faculty indicated an ongoing engagement with what is happening in the news industry and with media innovation and entrepreneurship.

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

At the beginning of each course, students fill out a “pre-test” that asks, among other things, their expectations for learning outcomes. A similar inquiry is made of all students at the conclusion of the course to determine if their expectations were met. These two mandatory inquiries have a standard set of questions, but instructors often supplement them with their own questions to further determine the student expectations and ways the class can be improved.

In addition, as a basis for determining merit raises, each faculty member completes a Yearly Activity Report (YAR), required by the University, that is submitted to the chair of the Department of Communication. Higher-ranking faculty review these YARs and offer anonymous feedback. There is a further review involving the chair and selected faculty. The process leads to recommendations for merit raises, but also serves as a method of evaluating performance and offering guidance for improvement.

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

Members of the site team discussed the quality and commitment of the journalism faculty with University administrators, students, local media professionals and those who work in other departments on campus. There was broad praise for the journalism faculty’s involvement with the broader University through committees, campus-wide programs and service to the community. In interviews with individual journalism faculty members, the site team found them knowledgeable and engaged in their areas of expertise. There was a sense of collegiality and interest in students and the future of journalism. That was reflected in a group discussion with students, who said they felt instructors were committed to their success. “They want you to succeed,” said one. “They want you to go off and do well and then come back here and share what you’ve learned.”

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.

Since the last reaccreditation visit, the journalism faculty have written nine books; 55 book chapters, refereed articles, monographs, conference papers or invited research papers, and more than 60 articles for non-refereed publications, many of which are prominent regional or national publications. Other faculty produced a 25-minute documentary film, served on the editorial boards of seven journals and received 14 awards related to scholarly, creative or professional work. All faculty in the Department of Communication seeking tenure and/or promotion in the last six years have been successful. One faculty member had a full quarter sabbatical in 2012 that was spent at the libraries of Franklin Roosevelt and Herbert Hoover researching presidential press secretaries.

The department offers travel support to faculty whose papers have been accepted at academic conferences, and normally covers the entire cost of attending at least one academic conference annually and supports travel to other conferences when possible. Of the \$50,000 budgeted for AY13-14 by the Department for faculty travel, \$12,000 was allocated to journalism faculty,

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

The University of Washington Faculty Code describes institutional expectations for hiring, promotion and tenure and the self-study notes that “[s]cholarship and creative and professional activity are valued highly by the department and the University.” Promotion, tenure and merit raises are closely linked to the quality of a faculty member’s scholarship, research, and creative and professional activities, which the self-study says are “broadly defined.” Faculty are reviewed periodically by the department chair, when each faculty member’s specific roles and responsibilities are taken into account.

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

The University and the program utilize faculty appointments that include tenure/tenure track as well as instructor/lecturers. While tenure/tenure track faculty have traditional scholarly requirements for tenure and promotion, the University also has provided a path that allows lecturers to be promoted. One lecturer in the program was promoted last year to senior lecturer. The principal criterion for lecturers is excellence in teaching. However, the self-study notes that “the culture of the department is such that lecturers ... routinely engage in scholarly, creative and professional projects.”

(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 have published or presented their research in a variety of outlets, including Newspaper Research Journal, the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication annual conference, the International Association of Media and Communication Research, and the International Journal of Communication. Non-refereed outlets have included Colors Northwest magazine, Crosscut, and the Seattle Times. Topics range from “Is the Internet homogenizing or diversifying the news?” to “Straddling the Fact-Fiction Boundaries: Literary Journalism, Journalistic Literature, and Hybrid Approach to Studying Journalism’s Influence upon the Literary Canon,” to “When Women Run the Newsroom: Management change, gender and the news,” to “School of Yum,” to “The Historical Dictionary of African-American Television.”

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

The wide range of intellectual interests indicate that the department and program support intellectual curiosity and critical analysis. There was no indication that differing viewpoints were discouraged.

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 department, which has peak undergraduate enrollment each year of about 900 students, has two full-time professional advisers. A new adviser was hired in 2014 after the retirement of a staff member who had held the job for 30 years. The new adviser was assigned to advise all journalism students in an effort to provide better support and consistency. Students are responsible for their own registration and keeping track of the DARS report, which tracks how they are meeting program and University requirements. The journalism adviser also has responsibility for some Department of Communication majors, as does the other adviser. The second adviser also has responsibilities that include scheduling. Advisers have drop-in hours as well as scheduled 30-minute appointments, with most appointments made in the first part of the quarter by students who want to drop or add classes. The program does allow some waivers for required courses, but the adviser consults with faculty before approving waivers. One example involved a student who was near graduation and whose schedule did not allow him to take the newly required class on diversity. A faculty member reviewed the student's work related to the issue of diversity and agreed that he could substitute another class for the requirement.

The journalism adviser says that she's "definitely busy," but that the advising staff is not overwhelmed and that they are serving their students.

While students said academic advisers were helpful, some complained that it was difficult to schedule appointments during peak times and that the walk-in hours scheduled in the morning were not as effective as actually scheduling appointments might be. One student reported having to wait three weeks for an appointment with an adviser. Students noted that the DARS report is online and that students are able to map out all four years. However, several students noted that the DARS report did not reflect the recent changes in curriculum, thus causing problems for graduating seniors. Once the advising staff was made aware of the issue, it was resolved on individual reports. The remaining veteran adviser was praised for work during the curriculum revision as well as her work while the other position was being filled. Several students said the program could benefit from another adviser, even someone part-time during peak periods.

(b) Faculty are available and accessible to students.

Faculty hold regular office hours (faculty who are teaching must hold two office hours per week) and say they meet frequently with students during non-office hours. Students praised faculty for their accessibility and willingness to provide one-on-one coaching.

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

The advising office was reorganized in 2013 to the Communication Commons, which provides a gathering space for students who want to see advisers, meet with faculty, or get career advice. It is a bright, inviting space that encourages student/faculty/staff interaction and was designed to give students a sense of community and encourage engagement.

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

The program communicates with students via a Facebook site and provides myriad extracurricular opportunities, including a Civil Rights Pilgrimage to Selma, Career Kickstart, book talks, alumni visits, and the Koru Networking Workshop.

(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 unit publishes its most recent retention and graduation data on its website. The program reports high retention and graduation rates. The self-study cites an 85 percent retention rate through graduation. By comparison, the University's four-year graduation rate fluctuates between 55 percent and 60 percent, with a six-year graduation rate of 80 percent.

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 Journalism program is part of the Department of Communication. The department's budget has risen from \$2.4 million in 2002 to \$4.27 million in 2014. The program also benefits from University-wide technology funds, which are used to upgrade hardware and software. All databases are provided via the University library. The equipment budget has remained steady at \$30,000 per year since AY11-12, with the equipment maintenance budget set at \$8,000, \$5,000, and \$10,000 for AY 11-12, 12-13, and 13-14, respectively.

(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 program has four media labs equipped with computers and printers used for class. Students also may access the rooms and equipment when classes are not in session. After-hours access is available via a door code. The Communications Building is equipped with wireless technology. Three full-time and one part-time employee staff the lab areas as well as the equipment room. The equipment room, which allows students to check out audio and video equipment, has posted hours. The most recent equipment budget was \$80,000. Students and faculty say the equipment is high quality and easily accessible. Students say the labs are sufficient, but that software could be updated more frequently. Faculty say most of the labs provide good teaching space and are easily booked for classes. The lab supervisor was highly praised for her competence, responsiveness, and knowledge. However, some of the lab furniture is old and shabby, and most of the lab chairs do not provide ergonomic support, which can be important for students and faculty working on lengthy audio or video projects. Room 322, in particular, has very old chairs as well as a time-worn table.

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

Students say the labs are sufficient, but that software could be updated more frequently. Faculty say most of the labs provide good teaching space and are easily booked for classes. The program is well aware of the ever-changing need for updated technology and places that at the top of its priority list in addition to adding new equipment. The program believes that while it has adequate space, the student experience could be enhanced with a modern newsroom space that would foster creativity. The self-study notes that classroom space could be improved with the addition of whiteboards or "teaching walls" that would be painted to allow them to be written on. Finally, while a sound stage is in the works, the unit does not truly have broadcast facilities.

(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.

Journalism students have access to the equipment room. All full-time faculty have private offices with adequate space to meet with students. All full-time and multi-year faculty are provided a University computer and may choose a laptop or desktop. Part-time faculty have a shared office equipped with four computers. The self-study notes that journalism technology requests are routinely granted by the University, and notes that recent purchases have included 20 Zoom and Tascam recorders for radio and reporting students and 20 DSLR cameras for photo and video needs.

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

The Odegaard Undergraduate Library Computing Commons has high-end workstations and video and audio recording studios. There also are general access computing labs in the undergraduate library and Mary Gates Hall. The self-study notes that the University of Washington Libraries provide substantial support both for the department and the Journalism program.

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 alumni, professionals and professional associations to keep curriculum and teaching, whether on site or online, current and to promote the exchange of ideas.

The program has its own alumni relations manager, which was described as unusual for an individual (and small) department. The Communication Department's alumni board helps plan alumni events such as the spring Leadership Luncheon and organize mentorship workshops. Alumni donate, especially to scholarships and internships, including the Foreign Intrigue Journalism Endowment, a study-abroad program run with The Seattle Globalist. Alumni are helping identify new areas for internships, such as with organizations dealing with the environment and health. Alumni also have helped with new partnerships and with identifying new donors. Twenty to 30 alums and other young professionals speak at career workshops and mentoring events each year. A display listing members of the Alumni Hall of Fame hangs in the hallway outside the chair's office.

(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.

It is difficult to sort out the activities run by the journalism program and by the umbrella Department of Communication, but many of them have a strong journalism angle, often covering three or four issues that seem to permeate the unit: diversity (including civil rights), international subjects and media coverage of suicide and other mental-health areas.

The department chair has organized three civil rights pilgrimages to the South, with students, faculty and staff from three institutions—UW, Bellevue College and the University of Nebraska-Kearney. The groups visited four states, met with civil-rights leaders and foot soldiers, studied the media and communication techniques of the movement and set up internship relationships with organizations in Alabama and Mississippi.

One of the department's most interesting ventures is with The Globalist, an online, nonprofit website whose staff members teach in the department and edit student work for the site. In addition, The Globalist has two or three teaching workshops each year through the World Affairs Council, bringing journalists, scholars, activities and young people to Seattle.

The program also has a deep relationship with Forefront, an organization housed primarily in the School of Social Work that seeks new methods of suicide prevention. Two faculty members serve on the Media Committee of Forefront. The program is a sponsor of Forefront's annual award recognizing excellence in reporting about mental health and suicide.

The program serves the public and the profession in many other ways, but these three areas seem to be of enduring interest to the unit.

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

Faculty are regularly funded to attend conferences related to their research and teaching. The unit pays expenses for at least one a year and possibly more if the faculty member is presenting or otherwise appearing on the program. Within the last three years, all full-time and permanent part-time faculty have received funding to attend academic and professional meetings, conferences or workshops. The self-study candidly noted that the unit realized that its involvement with AEJMC has drifted downward in recent years and plans to correct that.

(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.

Again, many activities are undertaken as part of the entire Department of Communication or with other campus departments. For example, the Center for Communication and Civic Engagement, sponsored jointly by Communication and Political Science, focuses on citizen resources and student-designed learning experiences to encourage citizen involvement in politics and social life. The Native Voices Film Festival, housed in the department, offers a graduate degree in indigenous documentary filmmaking and digital media. The Globalist's three artists-in-residence offer numerous activities for students and for the public.

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

The program each fall holds the Washington Journalism Education Association's Journalism Day. Almost 1,000 students attend sessions presented by professionals and faculty members. The Globalist has offered workshops for low-income high school students in Western Washington for the past four years. These all-day sessions combine entrepreneurial work in online journalism as well as skills-based assessments.

Over-all 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:

The journalism program has undergone significant change in recent years. The process leading to a revised curriculum and a “digital first” focus was heavily influenced by input from students, alumni and professionals. At the same time, there were initiatives to improve the quality and expand the scope of assessment of learning outcomes.

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

The site team was provided a detailed assessment plan that had last been revised in 2014. This plan clearly lays out a “digital first philosophy” that serves as an overarching guidepost for what the journalism program is trying to achieve. It also provides new methods for evaluating data about learning outcomes, as well as new ways to involve students in the assessment process. Given the pace of change in journalism and media, it was heartening that the self-study regards the plan as an “ongoing project” subject to frequent revision. “If the past is prologue, we’re likely to find that some of the most recent changes in our curriculum and our accompanying assessment plan don’t work exactly as we expect,” the self-study reads. “If that’s the case, we will change them.”

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

The revised assessment plan relies on a variety of measurements ranging from expanded feedback from alumni, professionals and students, as well as new emphasis on analyzing assessment data. Significantly, the plan gives added weight to what students say about their learning experience. For example, it includes mandatory “pre-tests” and “post-tests” in which students provide feedback on expectations and levels of satisfaction at the beginning and conclusions of each core course. Each spring, a member of the journalism faculty is assigned to conduct short (typically 15-30 minute) individual “exit interviews” with a small group of graduating seniors to gather feedback on their learning experience and evaluate their level of satisfaction with the quality and relevance of instruction. While some might question the value of such a small sampling, it nonetheless offers valuable input. In the past, summaries of the spring exit interviews were distributed to all faculty by the first journalism meeting of the following fall. In the future, they will be discussed at the annual assessment retreat in winter quarter. In addition, the journalism coordinator attempts to survey all graduating journalism seniors by asking them to participate in an online survey about their experience.

Alumni and professionals are used to provide feedback on curriculum and to assess the quality of the work being produced by students. Also, the program has begun the annual “assessment retreat” at which summaries of a variety of assessment measurements are shared and discussed with faculty.

In the winter of this year, a new one-credit “Journalism Portfolio” course is being offered. Students are required to create and evaluate a portfolio of professional and academic work they have produced during their time in the journalism program. Then, working with the instructor, the portfolio will be assessed with the help of professionals and alumni.

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

Assessment data are routinely collected and distributed. The program's revised assessment plan includes a new "reporting system for tracking any changes we make in course learning goals and for documenting course-level changes we make as a result of our analysis of pre- and post-tests in required and elective Journalism courses, as well as self-assessments of learning that students do for those courses."

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

Contact with professionals is maintained through meetings with the Department of Communication Alumni Board. More specific to journalism, faculty and professionals alike reported strong and ongoing interactions. Alumni and professionals were consulted as part of the process that led to the "digital first" focus in the revised journalism curriculum implemented in the 2013-14 academic year. Since 2010, more than 200 professionals or alumni have visited to speak with students. The self-study also said that in the Winter term of 2014, "we started sending brief surveys to alumni or professionals who visited the smaller-enrollment Journalism courses that focus on skills and competencies."

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

As noted above, professionals have an ongoing involvement with the program and have input that affects its curriculum and programs. In advance of revising the curriculum, for example, input was sought from alumni and professionals at The Seattle Times, KUOW public radio, KING-TV, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times and other outlets.

Over-all evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

PART III: Summary by site visit team

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

STRENGTHS

1. Strong student focus.
2. Willingness to innovate the curriculum so that it has a digital-first focus.
3. Good leadership.
4. Strong support from university administration.
5. Faculty collegiality.
6. Good combination of traditional scholars and professionals with strong backgrounds.
7. Strong experiential focus.

WEAKNESSES

1. Capacity for advising, complexity of navigating the system, lack of clarity of requirements.
2. Lack of broadcast instruction.

2) List the standards with which the unit is not in compliance. NONE

3) Summarize the problems or deficiencies that must be addressed before the next evaluation (i.e., related to non-compliance with standards). NONE

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

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

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

NONE

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

The self-study was complete and well organized.