

Report of On-Site Evaluation

ACEJMC

Undergraduate program

2015-2016

Name of Institution: Ball State University

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Terry King, Acting President

Name of Unit: Department of Journalism

Name and Title of Administrator: Dan Waechter, Interim Department Chair

Date of 2015 - 2016 Accrediting Visit: Jan. 31- Feb. 3, 2016

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

Date of the previous accrediting visit: Feb. 7-10, 2010

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Re-Accreditation

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Re-Accreditation

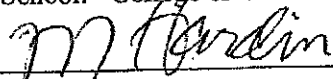
Recommendation by 2015 - 2016 Visiting Team: Re-Accreditation

Prepared and submitted by:

Team Chair

Name and Title: Marie Hardin, Dean

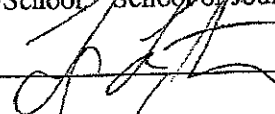
Organization/School: College of Communications, Penn State University

Signature 

Team Members


Name and Title: Loup Langton, Director

Organization/School: School of Journalism and Broadcasting, Western Kentucky University

Signature 

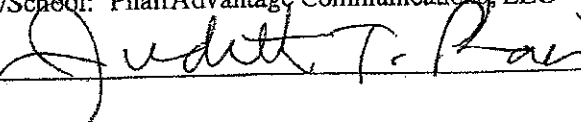
Name and Title: Ken Paulson, Dean

Organization/School: College of Media and Entertainment, Middle Tennessee State University

Signature 


Name and Title: Judy Phair, President

Organization/School: PhairAdvantage Communications, LLC

Signature 

Name and Title: Janet Rose, Professor of the Practice and Director, The Agency

Organization/School: William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications,
University of Kansas

Signature 

Name of Institution: **Ball State University**

Name of Unit: **Department of Journalism**

Year of Visit: **2016**

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.

Please see Part I, Appendix A

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: 2010

5. When was the unit or sequences within the unit first accredited by ACEJMC?
1979

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

Department of Journalism Vision

The Department of Journalism will be a national leader in innovative approaches to advertising, journalism, and public relations teaching, learning and scholarship designed to advance knowledge and improve economic vitality and quality of life.

Department of Journalism Mission

The Department of Journalism produces graduates who have the theoretical, professional and critical thinking skills necessary to compete, to succeed and to lead in an increasingly diverse and global communications industry.

Vision and Mission revised and adopted 10/06/2014. See also Part I, Appendix B.

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Semesters of 16 weeks (includes 5-week and 10-week courses)

Summer sessions of 5 and 10 weeks

Intersessions: Not applicable

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

Bachelor's degree

Master's degree

Ph.D. degree

9. List the specific degrees being reviewed by ACEJMC. *Indicate online degrees [none].

Advertising

Journalism Graphics

News

Magazine Media

Photojournalism

Public Relations

10. Credit hours required by the university for an undergraduate degree:

120 semester credit hours.

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

Students may earn a maximum of three (3) semester hours.

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

<u>Name of Sequence or Specialty</u>	<u>Person in Charge</u>
Advertising	Michael Hanley
Journalism Graphics	Ryan Sparrow
Journalism Secondary Education	Brian Hayes
News	Mary Spillman
Magazine Media	Brad King
Photojournalism	Tom Price
Public Relations	Debbie Davis

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

16,091 full-time graduate and undergraduate students were enrolled at Ball State University in the fall of 2015. The university official enrollment is 20,425 full- and part-time students.

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, Spring 2016</u>
Advertising	158
Journalism Secondary Education	6
Journalism Graphics	51
Magazine Media	61
News	294
Photojournalism	64
Public Relations	294
TOTAL:	928

15. Number of students in each section of all skills courses (newswriting, reporting, editing, photography, advertising copy, broadcast news, public relations writing, 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 skills courses, which also must meet the 20-1 ratio. (*The Council has ruled that campaigns courses are exempt from the 20-1 ratio.)

Spring 2016			
<i>Course</i>	<i>Section</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Students</i>
JOUR 103	1	Introduction to Visual Communication and Web Development	20
JOUR 103	2		20
JOUR 103	3		20
JOUR 103	4		20
JOUR 103	6		20
JOUR 103	7		19
JOUR 104	1	Strategic Writing	15
JOUR 104	2		19
JOUR 104	3		20
JOUR 106	1	Introduction to Digital Media	20
JOUR 234	1	Design 1	18
JOUR 236	1	Photojournalism Lighting	16
JOUR 241	1	Design 2	13
JOUR 265	1	Public Relations Writing and Publicity Techniques	13
JOUR 265	2		13
JOUR 265	3		20
JOUR 280	1	Feature and Magazine Writing	12
JOUR 311	1	News Feature Writing	20
JOUR 312	1	Opinion Writing	20
JOUR 320	1	Media Art Direction and the Creative Process	10
JOUR 323	1	Magazine Design	12
JOUR 354	1	Advertising Copy and Layout	20
JOUR 368	1	Public Relations Design and Production	20
	2		19
	3		18
JOUR 385	1	Advanced Writing and Design for Strategic Communications	19
JOUR 413	1	Advanced Newswriting and Reporting	16
	2		13
JOUR 427	1	Advanced Magazine Writing	11
JOUR 434	1	Advanced Photojournalism Illustration	9
JOUR 437	1	Long-form Photojournalism	11
JOUR 454	1	Advanced Copy Writing and Layout	15
NEWS 105	10K	Journalistic Storytelling: Introduction	20
NEWS 105	11K		20
NEWS 105	12K		20
NEWS 105	13K		20
NEWS 105	14K		20
NEWS 131	10K	Multimedia: Stills	19
NEWS 131	20K		20
NEWS 131	21K		14
NEWS 131	30K		20

NEWS 132	10K	Multimedia: Audio	20
NEWS 132	20K		20
NEWS 132	30K		20
NEWS 133	10K	Multimedia: Video	20
NEWS 133	11K		20
NEWS 133	20K		20
NEWS 133	30K		20
NEWS 215	1	News Editing	20
NEWS 215	2		20
NEWS 215	3		20
NEWS 221	1	Storytelling: Covering Issues	20
NEWS 221	2		12
NEWS 233	1	Multimedia: Reporting	20
NEWS 233	2		20
Fall 2015			
Course	Section	Title	Students
JOUR 103	1	Introduction to Visual Communication	20
JOUR 103	2		20
JOUR 103	3		20
JOUR 103	4		19
JOUR 103	5		18
JOUR 103	6		19
JOUR 104	1	Strategic Writing	18
JOUR 104	2		14
JOUR 104	3		19
JOUR 104	4		15
JOUR 234	1	Design 1	18
JOUR 235	1	Introduction to Photojournalism	18
JOUR 241	1	Design 2	12
JOUR 265	1	Public Relations Writing and Publicity Techniques	20
JOUR 265	2		20
JOUR 312	1	Opinion Writing	20
JOUR 320	1	Media Art Direction and the Creative Process	13
JOUR 322	1	Sportswriting and Reporting	18
JOUR 323	1	Magazine Design	10
JOUR 328	1	Long-form Feature Writing	12
JOUR 332	1	Photojournalism Managing and Editing	12
JOUR 335	1	Assignment Photojournalism	15
JOUR 345	1	Visual Reporting	11
JOUR 354	1	Advertising Copy and Layout	20
JOUR 368	1	Public Relations Design and Production	20
JOUR 368	2		20
JOUR 380	1	Long-form Digital Storytelling	11
JOUR 385	1	Advanced Writing and Design for Strategic Communications	9
JOUR 385	2		20
JOUR 413	1	Advanced Newswriting and Reporting	20
JOUR 454	1	Advanced Copy Writing and Layout	12
NEWS 105	11K	Journalistic Storytelling: Introduction	20
NEWS 105	12K		20
NEWS 105	13K		20

NEWS 105	14K		20
NEWS 105	15K		20
NEWS 105	16K		20
NEWS 105	17K		20
NEWS 131	10K	Multimedia: Stills	20
NEWS 131	12K		16
NEWS 131	20K		20
NEWS 131	22K		19
NEWS 131	30K		20
NEWS 131	32K		20
NEWS 132	10K	Multimedia: Audio	18
NEWS 132	11K		17
NEWS 132	12K		18
NEWS 132	20K		18
NEWS 133	10K	Multimedia: Video	18
NEWS 133	11K		19
NEWS 133	20K		20
NEWS 133	21K		18
NEWS 133	31K		19
NEWS 215	1	News Editing	20
NEWS 215	2		20
NEWS 221	1	Storytelling: Covering Issues	14
NEWS 221	2		15
NEWS 221	3		18
NEWS 233	1	Multimedia: Reporting	18
Spring 2016 Online			
Course	Section	Title	Students
JOUR 385	800	Advanced Writing and Design for Strategic Communications	22
NEWS 131	810K	Multimedia: Stills	7
NEWS 132	830	Multimedia: Audio	20
NEWS 133	820	Multimedia: Video	17
NEWS 221	800	Storytelling: Covering Issues	17
Fall 2015 Online			
JOUR 385	800	Advanced Writing and Design for Strategic Communications	19

16. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2015 – 2016 academic year:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Budget Amount</u>
Administrative salaries (chairperson)	\$146,076
Teaching salaries (full time)	1,586,757
Teaching salaries (part time/adjunct)	52,500
Clerical salaries	69,280
Equipment	92,561
Supplies	40,845
Library resources	9,167
Travel	38,200*
<i>Other</i>	
Graduate Assistants-non-teaching	82,236
Professional Staff	115,551
Student Wages	31,311
TOTAL	\$2,264,484

*includes a one-time travel fund supplement of \$25,000 for promotion of a new graduate program

Percentage increase or decrease in three years:

<u>Academic Year</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Percentage change from previous year</u>
2015-2016 (planned)	\$2,264,484	7.2%
2014-2015	\$2,112,474	3.5%
2013-2014	\$2,040,823	-2.7%
2012-2013	\$2,097,294	

Net change 2012-2013 to 2014-2015: 0.7%

Net change 2012-2013 to 2015-2016 (planned): 8.0%

Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries: **\$1,586,757**

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.

Blom, Robin	Assistant Professor
Davis, Deborah "Debbie"	Assistant Professor
Green, Kimberly "Kim"	Instructor
Hanley, Michael	Associate Professor (sabbatical spring 2016)
Hayes, Brian	Instructor
Hendricks, Nicole	Instructor
Jesse, Kathy	Instructor
Kim, Hyuksoo	Assistant Professor
King, John "Brad"	Associate Professor

Kuban, Adam	Assistant Professor
Lee, YoungAh	Assistant Professor
Masse', Mark	Professor (sabbatical fall 2015)
McDonald, Becky	Assistant Professor
McNames, Megan	Instructor
Newton, Jeffrey	Instructor
O'Malley, Michelle	Instructor
Palilonis, Jennifer	Distinguished Professor
Price, Thomas	Assistant Professor
Shanks, David	Instructor
Smith-Rodden, Martin	Assistant Professor
Sparrow, Ryan	Instructor
Spillman, Mary	Associate Professor
Steffen, Colleen	Instructor
Strauss, John	Instructor
Swingley, Sheryl	Instructor
Waechter, Daniel	Assistant Professor

The following is a list of full-time faculty from the Department of Telecommunication who taught at least one NEWS class with the Department of Journalism during the Fall 2015 semester:

Phil Bremen	Associate professor
Dom Caristi	Professor
Terry Heifetz	Instructor
Susan Smith	Associate professor
Michael Spillman	Instructor
Chris Taylor	Lecturer
Tim Underhill	Instructor

18. List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in fall 2015. Also list names of part-time faculty teaching spring 2015. (If your school has its accreditation visit in spring 2016, please provide the updated list of faculty at time of visit).

Fall 2015

Ahlersmeyer, Betsy	Instructor
Berfanger, Rebecca	Instructor
Campbell, Julie	Instructor
Cummings, Jill	Instructor
Disher, John	Instructor
Dittmer, Robert	Instructor
Gayda, Thomas	Instructor
Griffin, Anne	Instructor
McTague, Karen	Instructor
Metzger, Juli	Instructor

Meyer, Betsy	Instructor
Miller, Ashley	Instructor
Shoemaker, Richard	Instructor

Spring 2015

Betsy Ahlersmeyer	Instructor
Rebecca Berfanger	Instructor
Katherine Elliott	Instructor
John Disher	Instructor
Thomas Gayda	Instructor
Michael Jesse	Instructor
Michael Marker	Instructor
Karen McTague	Instructor
Elizabeth Meyer	Instructor
Richard Shoemaker	Instructor

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
2014-2015 academic year	188	185	98.4%
2013-2014 academic year	194	191	98.5%

Department of Journalism Vision, Mission & Values Statement

Department of Journalism Vision

The Department of Journalism will be a national leader in innovative approaches to advertising, journalism, and public relations teaching, learning and scholarship designed to advance knowledge and improve economic vitality and quality of life.

Department of Journalism Mission

The Department of Journalism produces graduates who have the theoretical, professional and critical thinking skills necessary to compete, to succeed and to lead in an increasingly diverse and global communications industry.

Department of Journalism Values

We value ethical behavior that promotes diversity, intellectual freedom and First Amendment rights.

In our *learning community*, we value:

- Clear, concise and accurate writing and visual skills
- Excellent presentational skills
- Critical, strategic and creative thinking
- Collaboration
- Leadership and vision

In our *discovery of knowledge*, we value:

- Inquiry and investigation
- Innovation and creativity
- Intellectual freedom

In our *integration of learning experiences*, we value:

- Peer and industry collaboration
- Innovative approaches to learning
- Experiential, immersive opportunities

In our *civic and professional leadership*, we value:

- Demonstration of social responsibility and integrity
- Community, state, national and international involvement
- Industry and professional contribution

Revised and adopted 10/06/2014

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.

The Department of Journalism approved a new strategic plan in January 2016, after the close of the accreditation review period and before the site team arrived. It had not updated its plan since 2009. The Department's vision, mission, and values statements were updated in October 2014 and are provided in Part 1 of this report.

The self-study notes that "several administrative processes have been interrupted during leadership turnover. The Department is large and complex and resources for administrative processes are limited. The strategic plan is outdated."

Faculty members said the lack of an updated strategic plan has not been an obstacle to departmental progress. One professor observed, "The Journalism Department has always had a pretty clear vision and a real commitment to our values."

The new strategic plan established new goals for the Department, drawing on the themes of "Focus, Simplify, Renew." The self-study notes that this reflects "the challenges of moving a large and complex department forward with limited personnel resources and an exceptionally lean leadership and staff structure." A new Chair should be able to offer both stability and accountability in implementing the strategic plan.

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

Faculty committees are active and engaged, with 10 faculty meetings in the most recent academic year and between four and six meetings each for the Assessment, Diversity, Graduate Policies, Promotion and Tenure, Sequence Coordinator and Undergraduate Policies committees. In terms of curriculum, faculty members approve course proposals and curriculum revisions for subsequent review by college chairpersons and the University Curriculum Committee.

The Department maintains a current Faculty and Professional Handbook outlining faculty personnel policies, professional opportunities and academic policies and procedures. Faculty governance appears to be well established and respected.

(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.

Since Marilyn Weaver’s departure as Chair in 2010, the Department has gone without consistent leadership in the top role. Weaver’s successor developed health problems after a year and was replaced by Assistant Chair Dan Waechter. He served as an Interim Chair for two years until Michael Holmes was appointed in 2013. He in turn resigned at the close of the 2015 fall semester due to family considerations.

While this turnover would typically create a void and hamper the Department’s progress, faculty members repeatedly asserted that it had not. Assistant Chair Waechter and administrative coordinator Arlene Shirk were cited as strong, steadying influences, and a largely collegial and collaborative faculty showed initiative in advancing the Department’s work. Waechter was praised as a “strong force” and someone whose commitment to the Department has allowed it to thrive.

Even with changes in leadership, the Department has made progress on almost all fronts, including in keeping its curriculum up-to-date, launching new initiatives and developing a strong assessment plan. “We’re not looking for a Chair to come up with ideas (or) to be a visionary,” said one faculty member.

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

A Department search committee is elected and screens potential candidates, recommending finalists to the full faculty. Faculty members participate in interviews, and enfranchised faculty members cast ballots. The vote for a preferred candidate is relayed to the dean, who in turn forwards his recommendation to the provost and president.

During the 2010 accreditation visit, it was noted that there was significant tension between tenure-line faculty members and contract faculty members. Every department in the university is allowed to decide who is enfranchised to vote on department issues, and the tenured faculty in the Department of Journalism permitted only contract faculty with five years of experience to vote on a chair recommendation.

In the fall of 2015, anticipating a new chair selection, the tenured faculty voted to reduce that requirement to three years of experience. It’s possible that re-opening the issue reinforced the tensions. Several contract faculty members cited the vote as a reminder that they’re not universally viewed as academic equals. Still, most acknowledged that the tensions had been reduced with the turnover of senior faculty.

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

Faculty, staff and students can take their concerns to the Chair, who also serves as a mediator in disputes between faculty or staff members. University policy requires that students meet with their professor about a grade dispute before appealing to the chairperson and the university.

Summary of findings:

- Although the Department's strategic plan was updated only after the self-study was submitted, the Department has kept its mission, vision and values statements current, and it has moved forward on initiatives in line with those statements.
- Despite the turnover in the Chair's position, the Department has lost little ground in making curricular progress and meeting other goals. Faculty members credit the long-time Assistant Chair (now Interim Chair) for much of its stability.
- Faculty members across the Department play substantive roles in its direction.

Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE

Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The Journalism Department requires that students complete 72 credit hours outside the unit and the Telecommunications Department, which offers classes in the news sequence. The requirement is outlined in the undergraduate catalog, is tracked in “DegreeWorks” audits used by students to plan their course schedules, and is part of a four-year planning form used in advising sessions with students.

(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.)

News

There is a hands-on skills orientation in the News sequence, with a full slate of multimedia courses and strong encouragement to participate in student media. That is complemented by a significant number of courses exploring current issues, government, politics and the social sciences.

Photojournalism

The photojournalism sequence provides a balance among theoretical and conceptual courses, professional skills courses, and courses that integrate theory and skills to achieve the range of student competencies listed by the Council. During interviews, students confirmed that they are required to take a variety of courses that include skills, theories and concepts.

Journalism Graphics

The courses in the Journalism Graphics sequence provide values or competencies identified by ACEJMC. As a group, the required courses in this sequence cover all of the ACEJMC competencies and provide a balance among theoretical and conceptual courses, professional skills courses, and courses that integrate theory and skills to achieve the range of student competencies listed by the Council.

Magazine Media

The Media Magazine sequence includes a full slate of multimedia instruction but also encompasses foundational courses in economics, the social sciences and U.S. History, 1877 to Present.

Public Relations

The Public Relations sequence is Certified in Education in Public Relations (CEPR) by the Public Relations Society of America. The curriculum of this nationally recognized unit aims to “incorporate theory, practical skills, and ethical foundations.” All students in the sequence take a core set of courses covering theory and professional skills.

Advertising

Advertising courses stress both concepts and practices in the field including research, strategy, creative and media planning. All Advertising students are required to complete a campaigns course with a “real world” client. Students also have the opportunity to participate in student-led agencies. The Department’s physical spaces and technology facilitate collaboration.

(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.)

News

The News sequence is impressively contemporary and reflects a good understanding of shifting media trends. A vibrant student media environment encourages the application of new skills and techniques.

Photojournalism

Instruction in the photojournalism sequence provides students with a top-notch education. Students say that working with student media adds currency, as does working with video. Faculty members reported that their aim is to keep the curriculum evolving and set consistently high standards for students.

Journalism Graphics

The Journalism Graphics sequence involves a demanding, current curriculum and is responsive to professional expectations of digital, technological and multimedia competencies. Students say they appreciate new, interactive design courses and “dedicated faculty.”

Magazine Media

Instruction in the Magazine Media concentration has successfully moved from the traditional format to a forward-thinking multi-platform approach, drawing on Ball State University’s traditional strengths in graphics.

Public Relations

Students expressed appreciation for the quality of teaching in Public Relations with special praise for faculty “who are still practicing public relations and can bring that to the class.” The program benefits from campaigns coursework and new courses in analytics, design and development, and intercultural communications.

Advertising

The Advertising sequence benefits from the Department’s recent commitment to breadth and depth in multimedia and multi-platform technology. This approach enables the Department to focus on training students to be skilled and nimble across multiple evolving competencies. Coursework and experiential learning integrates digital, multimedia and emerging media technology.

(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. (Campaigns classes are exempt from the 20-1 ratio.)

The self-study reports – and informal observations of lab classrooms and of class meetings confirm – that skills and laboratory sections include 20 or fewer students, with rare exception. (Just one of more than 120 such sections offered during this academic year and Spring enrolled more than 20 students.)

(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.

The Department requires that students in all sequences complete at least one internship (paid or unpaid) for credit. An internship coordinator oversees the Department’s efforts to post internship opportunities and to guide students through the process of securing and completing an internship.

The process is the same for students across the Department. All sequences: Seek and secure an internship with the help of the Department’s updated website and with guidance from faculty members and the Internship coordinator; register for course credit; then complete the internship, which includes assignments that are submitted to the Department. Although the on-site supervisor provides feedback that is used when a grade is assigned, grades are in the purview of the Internship Coordinator.

The Department’s Unified Media Lab brings together a variety of student-run publications and media outlets to provide experience with the guidance of well-qualified faculty members. Students in the News concentration are required to take a 100-level, one-credit course in the lab, which allows them to get introductory experience with student media. Many students then opt to gain more outside-the-classroom (non-credit) opportunities through work with the daily newspaper, magazines, or broadcast and digital outlets housed together in the lab. The Unified Media Lab – and the experience students

acquire in it – is a point of pride for the Department and for its students, many of whom say the experience they get there has been critical to their experience at Ball State.

Other outside-the-classroom experiences are also available. Students can opt to participate in what the Department describes as “student agencies.” They include *Adapt*, a student-run advertising agency; *Ball State Digital Publishing Studio*, a student team that develops apps for various constituents; Cardinal Communications, a student-run public relations agency, and the *Unified Media Research and Analytics Agency* that provides training for basic web and social media analytics. Students may join campus chapters of a number of professional organizations.

Summary of findings:

- The curricula for all sequences puts ACEJMC values and competencies “front and center,” ensuring a balance of conceptual and skills courses for students.
- Faculty members take pride in offering current, cutting-edge material in classes, emphasizing multimedia and technological competencies.
- Lab and skills classes do not exceed ACEJMC limits, and students are required to take 72 hours outside the Department.

Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE

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 Department of Journalism has a written diversity plan that was initially drafted in July 2009 and revised on September 12, 2014. It establishes five goals, including recruitment and retention of diverse faculty and staff, a curriculum that emphasizes the contributions of diverse populations, recruitment and retention of diverse students, building an awareness of diversity issues among students and faculty, and an annual review of these goals. It’s a reasonably comprehensive, general approach that refers to “gender, ethnic and racial minorities.” It doesn’t address any specific challenges to addressing diversity in Muncie, Indiana, or cite specific minorities for recruitment or inclusion.

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

The curriculum includes the one-credit course *News 270 Audience Analysis: Communities*, which is described as an “exploration of the relationship between news organizations and the communities they serve with emphasis on how to produce content that reflects cultural, ethnic, racial and gender diversity.” An ongoing partnership with the BlackExpo Summer Celebration in Indianapolis also offers students the opportunity to do hands-on reporting concerning the social and economic issues involving African Americans.

The Department of Journalism also requires that students take a diversity elective course outside the Department.

Beyond the curriculum, there are few speakers or campus visitors who bring diversity awareness to the Department. Over the past three years, there have been programs on “Eastern Orthodox Christianity and the Media,” “Islam and the Media” and “Reporting in a Multicultural World,” but diversity programming shouldn’t have to be seen only through a media lens. We repeatedly asked students whether they could name a program or speaker who brought diversity to the Department, but students were unable to cite an example. One student in a meeting pointedly noted what he saw as a lack of diversity in

the overall program, observing that the News 270 course “doesn’t really give you a world view.” Another student, in a randomly selected group that included two African-American students and several international students, noted, “This is the most diverse classroom I’ve ever been in” in the Journalism Department.

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

The Department recruitment effort largely consists of advertising on websites and publications “that might be viewed by women and minorities.” The self-study says faculty members are also encouraged to reach out to colleagues at other institutions to encourage a more diverse pool. There were 26 full-time professors in the academic year 2014-2015, with fairly even distribution of gender – 12 women and 14 men. There was one Asian professor from South Korea, but no African Americans, American Indians or Hispanics. A Hispanic faculty member joined the Department on a contract basis in Fall 2015. Among the 12 part-time/adjunct faculty members, there were 6 women and 6 men and no minorities.

The outreach doesn’t seem to be generating enough applications. Between 2012- 2015 there were a total of only 3 minorities in the hiring pool and no minority finalists considered. There were 2 minorities in the hiring pool in 2014-2015, so some modest progress is being made, while clearly not enough to ensure diversity.

Our discussions with the dean and Interim Chairperson suggest two causes for the Department’s failure to recruit professors of diverse backgrounds. Muncie, Indiana is not a diverse community and may not appeal to candidates of color. The Department also acknowledges that salaries may not be high enough to effectively compete for these candidates.

We believe that the Department has a strong philosophical commitment to diversity and is sincerely trying to address the issue, but the lack of diversity among professors was cited as a major problem in the 2009-2010 review and remains one today. In fact, the Department had three fewer full-time minority faculty members in the 2015-2016 accreditation period than it did during the review six years ago. The Department participates in the Pathways to the Ph.D. program, which provides mentors to minority undergraduate students identified as prospects for graduate education so that they might return to Ball State as a faculty member.

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

The Department has done a good job of recruiting students of color. 10.1 percent of the undergraduate student population is African American, more than the 9.1 percent in the area population and 7.3 percent in the university as a whole. 4.3 percent of the student population is Hispanic, compared to 6.0 in the area population and 3.8 percent in the university population.

The Department's recruitment efforts include scholarships given to minority students for the summer high school workshop and the recruitment of under-represented students for *Explore Ball State Day*. The Department has also had extensive contact with minority students at the Broad Ripple Media Magnet High School, setting up training workshops and assisting with instruction.

(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.

Faculty members say they see no signs of harassment or discrimination in the Department.

Summary of findings:

- The Department has a sound multi-tiered plan to address diversity.
- Real progress has been made in recruiting and retaining minority students.
- Evidence that programming, events and speakers provide students with an understanding and appreciation of diversity was scant to non-existent.
- After being found in non-compliance in the previous report, the Department has lost ground in hiring minority professors, with less diversity among faculty members than six years ago. This will only be fixed when the Department makes diversity hiring a top priority

Overall evaluation: NON-COMPLIANCE

Table 6. Faculty Populations, Full-time and Part-time**Academic year: 2014 – 2015 Full-time faculty**

Group	Female	% of total faculty	Male	% of total faculty
Black/African American	0	0	0	0
White	12	46.1	14	53.9
American Indian/Alaskan native	0	0	0	0
Asian	1	0.4	1	0.4
Hispanic/Latino (any race)*	0	0	0	0
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
Two or more races	0	0	0	0
Other race	0	0	0	0
International (any race)	1	0.4	2	0.8

**One Hispanic faculty member joined the department in Fall 2015 but is not shown above due to the time frame specified for Table 6.*

Academic year: 2014 – 2015 Part-time/adjunct faculty

Group	Female	% of total faculty	Male	% of total faculty
Black/African American	0	0	0	0
White	6	50.0	6	50.0
American Indian/Alaskan native	0	0	0	0
Asian	0	0	0	0
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	0	0	0	0
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
Two or more races	0	0	0	0
Other race	0	0	0	0
International (any race)	0	0	0	0

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 Department has a history of effective administrative procedures regarding faculty and staff selection and evaluation. The Department revised its promotion and tenure document in 2015. This 21-page document details standards and procedures across three guidelines: Teaching, Scholarship and Service. It includes processes and templates for peer evaluation and for promotion and tenure evaluation. Faculty members may submit a teaching portfolio once a year for review or ask a peer or Department Chair to observe their teaching. The Department also incorporates guidelines from the 2015-2016 Ball State University Personnel Handbook for contract faculty and staff.

The Department's procedures and processes are clear and explicit. One faculty member described the Department and the university as operating "by the book."

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

The Department's full-time faculty members teach 12 hours per semester on average, with course releases regularly provided for scholarly activity.

The Department places increasing emphasis on research and creative scholarship. Full-time faculty members are engaged in various research projects representing both their own areas of interest and the Department's focus on emerging media scholarship, digital technologies and "immersive learning."

Full-time, tenured faculty and contract faculty members provide service at the Department and at the college and university levels. They also provide professional service in the community. This activity is expected among all faculty members in the Department. For instance, they serve as advisers to multiple student organizations and groups such as to the Department's advertising agency, its public relations agency, and its Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) chapter. Faculty members also work with the directors of student media outlets in its Unified Media Lab, including The Ball State Daily News.

(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 Department currently has 26 full-time faculty members. Of these, 35% (9) hold a doctoral degree (Ph.D., Ed.D.) and 65% (17) hold a Master’s degree (M.A., M. J., M. S.). There are two full professors, three associate professors, nine assistant professors, and 12 instructors. The total does not include the CCIM dean, who holds a faculty appointment in the Department but does not provide teaching, research or departmental service.

Faculty members represent a range of experience in and exposure to the professions. This includes experience in media planning, public relations, advertising campaigns, cross-media platforms, and digital/emerging media. Keeping current on industry and professional trends is valued and supported in the Department. Faculty members report attending workshops and conferences, such as those for the Online News Association, to hone their skills.

Both full-time and contract faculty members have won teaching awards, published in refereed journals, made industry conference presentations and received grants for teaching and teaching development programs.

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

All courses and instructors are evaluated each semester by students through an online platform. Evaluations include university-standard questions and questions created by the Department. Faculty members have access to course evaluations. In addition, faculty members can select additional supplemental questions for evaluations. Faculty members can also request that a peer evaluate their classroom instruction, and those evaluations can go into their teaching portfolios. The Department Chair reviews course evaluations, peer reviews and portfolios.

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

Interviews and conversations with faculty and staff members across the university consistently showed the Department to be held in high regard among peers and colleagues. The Acting Provost referred to the College of Communication, Information, and Media, in which the Department of Journalism is housed, as one of the two most creative colleges at the university. University administration, staff and colleagues refer to the Department as forward thinking and comprehensive. The Department’s initiatives in digital, analytics and emerging media are well known and respected across campus.

The Department offers “immersive experience” courses, consistent with Ball State University’s emphasis on this type of experiential learning and also of particular value to

the Department's focus on the professions.

University stakeholders, faculty, administration, staff and students affirm the Department's quality of teaching and contributions. University peers acknowledged contributions of many Department-sponsored news outlets and student-led agencies to campus life, and representatives from other academic units at Ball State said they appreciated the initiative and skills students in the Department bring to their classes.

Summary of findings:

- Qualified, multi-faceted faculty members are engaged in teaching, scholarship and service.
- Faculty members have academic and professional qualifications representing expertise across Departmental focus areas.
- Faculty members are engaged in current professional and academic practices, research and professional involvement.
- Faculty and instruction, including on-site and online, is evaluated regularly by peers, students and the Department Chair.

Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE

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.

Ball State has been classified by The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education as a doctoral university with “higher research activity,” and the university announced in its most recent strategic plan that it plans to increase externally funded scholarship and “refereed/juried achievements” by faculty members. The university recognizes traditional academic scholarship and creative activity; promotion and tenure guidelines at the university level also recognize the efforts of faculty members toward “experiential learning in all its forms.” Tenure-related requirements by the College of Communications, Information and Media and the Journalism Department are in line with those of the university.

The Department supports and rewards scholarly productivity in two key ways: By offering teaching releases and by providing funding for travel. Tenure-line faculty members regularly secure at least a one-course teaching release for scholarly/creative activity. The university also offers a number of resources to faculty members, including internal grants and assistance in securing external funding. During the review period, most Journalism Department faculty members who requested internal grants from the university received those grants. One faculty member won a “Distinguished Researcher” award from the college in 2013.

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

Position announcements for tenure-track appointments during the review period specify that candidates possess a “well-defined research area” and, preferably, demonstrate a “record of creative endeavors with successful peer review or a scholarly research record with corresponding publications,” indicative of the expectations beyond teaching and service. The expectations for tenure and promotion to associate professor (which are considered simultaneously) are specified in the Department’s P&T document. They include a variety of forms of scholarship, which can occur in four areas also specified in the university’s and the college’s P&T guidelines: discovery, integration, application, and teaching. Examples of such scholarship mentioned in the Department document include peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, photojournalism, grant-writing, articles in trade journals, presentations at professional conferences, workshops “focusing on teaching issues and practices,” and “articles in education-oriented publications.” Faculty

members on the tenure track indicate a high degree of confidence in their understanding of the expectations around scholarship.

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

University, college, and departmental criteria for promotion and merit allow for an adequate array of activities and accomplishment that align with the scholarly, creative, and professional specializations of 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.

Although tenure-track faculty members are most active, some contract faculty members are also regularly engaged in workshops, conferences and in publishing in trade and scholarly publications. Much of the scholarly activity by faculty members reflects the program's emphasis on digital/multimedia and technology and on immersive ("experiential") learning. Examples include presentations and articles on the responses of students to experiential learning and to the use of tablets in the curriculum; content delivery on mobile devices; drone journalism; eye-tracking and the use of second screens; and the influence of technology on news content.

Although faculty members do not generally publish in high-tier mass communication journals, they do publish in refereed journals in the education and media technology areas and maintain a presence at a variety of conferences, including those of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication and the Broadcast Education Association. The dean of the college praised the Department's scholarly and creative activity. "Our research leadership comes from Journalism," he said.

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

Faculty members say they see the Department as a place where new ideas are welcome and cultivated and where senior faculty members encourage their junior colleagues to express their ideas and goals.

Summary of findings:

- There is consensus among faculty members and administrators that the unit's expectations for scholarly/creative productivity align with those of the college and university. These are outlined in promotion and tenure guidelines.
- The Department and university both require and support scholarly activity through teaching releases, travel support, and internal grants.

- Faculty members are engaged in activity, including the pursuit of external grants along with research and creative activity, that supports the focus of the Department and aligns with the mission of the university.

Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE

Scholarship table (provided by unit):

Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activities	Total from Unit*	Individuals				Totals (46)
		Full Professors (7)	Associate Professor s (7)	Assistant Professor s (12)	Other Faculty** (20)	
Awards and Honors	44	4	19	6	16	45
Grants Received Internal	38	5	7	18	11	41
Grants Received External	12	1	5	3	5	14
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co-authored	5	2	2	1	1	5
Book Chapters	9	1	9	0	1	11
Articles in Refereed Journals	31	4	24	9	2	39
Refereed Conference Papers	131	21	78	49	5	153
Invited Academic Papers	6	1	0	5	0	6
Encyclopedia Entries	2	0	0	2	0	2
Book Reviews	0	0	0	0	0	0
Articles in Non-refereed Publications	9	1	6	3	0	10
Juried Creative Works	10	0	10	0	0	10
Non-juried Creative Works		0	0	1	0	1
Other						
Institute-published white papers	1	0	1	0	0	1
Invited professional presentations	23	1	14	4	4	23
Invited presentations and workshops	22	0	0	0	24	24
Panel respondent service	2	2	0	0	0	0

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.

Freshmen (less than 30 hours earned) and first-year students are advised through a university center. Students who have earned 30 hours or more or who begin their second year, whichever comes last, meet with the Assistant Chair of the Department for all formal advising and with the sequence head for informal advising and general information about the program, internships and other opportunities. A university upper-division advising resource center provides logistical support to departments and works directly with students on issues related to course transfer and graduation.

Virtually all students responded positively to the advising process and credited the Assistant Chair (currently the Interim Chair) for making the process efficient and successful. Sequence heads also praise him for his advising work and like the process because it frees them from the formal tasks associated with advising and allows them more time to talk with students about career paths, internships and other issues associated with the individual areas of concentration.

(b) Faculty are available and accessible to students.

Faculty members hold office hours and list them on the syllabus of each course. Students overwhelmingly said that faculty members are very accessible and helpful. The self-report indicated some students complain that some faculty members do not respond quickly enough to emails, but during the site visit, no students made that complaint. Instead, students said faculty members are accessible both during and outside office hours. A number of students praised faculty members for helping with internships and job opportunities.

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

Students did not express any complaints or concerns about the ways in which they are informed about activities, requirements and policies. Posters are hung throughout the building that announce various events, opportunities and deadlines. Perhaps most important to students, they also receive messages through social networking, particularly through Instagram.

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 Department offers a variety of options for students to develop their professional skills through work with student media and encourages them to seek internships with professional organizations.

Cross-platform storytelling, convergence, collaboration and “mobile first” are identified as touchstones for the student media, which are collectively housed in the Unified Media Lab, prominently located in the Department.

A number of outlets are housed together in the lab. The student newspaper, *The Daily News*, publishes content from multiple student media, and all student media are active in a variety of social media platforms. Students are provided choices among a number of student media including *Ball Bearings*, a print and online publication that features stories about national issues from a student perspective; *Byte*, an online magazine “dedicated to video gaming and geek culture,” and *Newslink Indiana*, a local cable nightly newscast.

Students can also opt to participate in what the Department describes as “student agencies.” They include *Adapt*, a student-run advertising agency; *Ball State Digital Publishing Studio*, a student team that develops apps for various constituents; Cardinal Communications, a student-run public relations agency, and the *Unified Media Research and Analytics Agency* that provides training for basic web and social media analytics. Students may join campus chapters of a number of professional organizations.

Students who actively participate in student media indicated that the student media experience provides cross-platform opportunities, practice meeting deadlines, in-depth software training and, for visual journalists, good caption writing. Students also said that collaborative concepts are an important part of the student media experience. One upper division student said, “When I first started here all of the sequences were very separated, but now because of the Unified Media Lab, I feel good about going to everyone for ideas and advice.” Students and faculty who are involved in the lab said they wished more students would get the experience.

Two alumni who were interviewed and who are employed as designers for *Time* magazine praised the program for preparing them well. One said, “I can’t believe all of the preparation and experience that Ball State provided. I’ve talked with people from other universities who never had the real-world experience that we had. I can’t thank them enough.” An internship supervisor from 21st Century Fox, Fox Business Network said, “I’ve worked with one intern from Ball State. She was great, someone with a very good working knowledge of the TV industry. I usually have to do some handholding, but not with her. She was totally prepared.” An internship supervisor from the *L.A. Times* said, “We look forward to Ball State applicants.”

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

Retention and graduation information is published on the unit's website and is easily searchable and presented clearly.

Summary of findings:

- Students receive thorough and conscientious advising through a layered approach.
- Faculty members are highly committed to their students, making themselves available outside of class hours and office hours for advising and teaching.
- Students are well informed regarding department and institutional information through social media and more traditional means.
- Student media made available to all students provide excellent opportunities to get hands-on experience in a cutting edge, collaborative environment.

Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE

Standard 7: Resources, Facilities and Equipment

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

Unit performances 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.

In general, the Department has aligned its strategic initiatives to the university strategic plan and has reported its accomplishments supporting that plan to the university administration. In January 2016 the Department approved a new strategic plan in alignment with a recently revised university plan.

The departmental process for developing a detailed annual budget is straightforward and relatively simple. Faculty input is minimal. Discretionary funds are limited, and expenditures from the general pool are basically stable from year to year.

The most detailed portion of the budget is for equipment and computers that are funded from three sources: the university's IT allocation to departments, the provost's instructional equipment allocation and a lab fee paid by journalism and telecommunications majors each semester. The equipment proposal reflects and contributes to the university's 10-year equipment plan, which projects both short and long-term equipment spending needs.

The Department is eligible for some university-wide scholarships and has received some donations from alumni and others. The Chair who departed at the end of 2015 had proposed hiring a fundraising professional for the Department.

Over-expenditures are subtracted at the end of each fiscal year from dollars available for the following year. Up to 20 percent of pool dollars may be carried over to the next year to cover anticipated special expenses.

(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 Interim Chair and faculty members agree that the university and college supply the Department with resources sufficient to meet current funding requirements for instruction, equipment, and general supplies. Construction of the Holden Learning Center, housing several student-centered activities, was funded by a major donation that also covered a large part of the renovation costs for the Unified Media Lab that serves all students in the Department. The university general fund and dean's discretionary fund covered the remainder of renovation and equipment costs.

In relation to other units within the College of Communication, Information, and Media, the Department of Journalism receives a “fair share” of budget dollars compared to other units, according to the Interim Chair.

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

The Art and Journalism Building, a \$33-million structure that opened in 2001, provides a highly attractive and functional home for the Department of Journalism. The 207,141-square-foot facility encompasses individual offices for faculty members, the main department office, an office for adjunct faculty, and group offices for graduate assistants. It also features three general classrooms and a 227-seat lecture hall that are equipped with LCD projectors linked to a teaching console at the front of the classroom. The department also has two graphics labs, a visual imaging lab, a writing lab and a Special Projects/Integrated Media Lab.

The recently renovated Unified Media Lab includes 50 writing, editing, and design stations, a video news studio, a flash cam for newsroom live shots, a control room, audio room and meeting space and some faculty offices. The Holden Strategic Communications Center provides space for the Ball State student-centered publications, agencies, and organizations.

(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.

Equipment is easily available and well-maintained, supporting the Department’s mission and the research, creative, and professional needs of students and faculty. Equipment in computer labs is replaced on a four-year cycle. Computers assigned to students and faculty are replaced every four years. In addition, the Department maintains a sizable inventory of digital audio equipment, along with cameras and video recorders. Unified Media Services, part of the university IT division, manages the checkout process for most equipment. Student media members may also access additional equipment in the Unified Media Lab. Students have 24-hour access to the Special Projects Laboratory in the Art and Journalism Building.

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

Journalism and mass communications books and periodicals are located in Bracken Library, the university’s central library, across the street from the Art and Journalism Building. Copies of all journalism and public relations graduate theses are available for students to view online.

Summary of findings:

- The Department has resources sufficient to meet current funding requirements for instruction, equipment, and general supplies. Departmental strengths include extremely attractive, well-equipped, and open modern physical facilities – especially the Holden Center and Unified Media Lab.
- Among the greatest needs are more faculty lines to support teaching and research in mobile communications and media analytics, more travel funding for faculty, and more support for collaborative, field-based immersive learning classes, especially those with international travel.

Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE

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 Department encourages interaction with alumni and also encourages alumni involvement with the Department and its students. Formal efforts to involve alumni include outreach to solicit feedback on programs and initiatives. The Department's 2016 Strategic Plan includes creating a plan to expand alumni outreach.

The Department maintains involvement and interaction with professionals and professional associations including alumni, advisory boards for news, magazine, journalism graphics, public relations and journalism. Alumni and visiting professionals are invited to speak with classes and attend Department lecture series and award ceremonies.

(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 Department sponsors scholastic journalism in the region and offers annual workshops for students and educators. The Department also sponsors High School Journalism Day and Junior High Journalism Day, along with summer workshops taught by faculty members. These events are led through the Department's Journalism Workshops Office. Department faculty members serve on the Journalism Education Association's Certification Committee.

The Department and faculty members host the Indiana Associated Press Managing Editors and Hoosier State Press Association Job Fair every other year.

(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 Department supports faculty involvement in journalism and mass communications through providing facilities for meetings, travel stipends for conference attendance, and providing access to visiting professionals and alumni. Faculty involvement in

professional organizations and activities includes journalism, journalism education, broadcast education, mass and visual communications, advertising, public relations, digital media and graphic design.

(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.

Immersion, experiential learning and campaigns classes engage with community and business organizations through projects. Coursework in the Department includes experiential learning service projects for organizations and events such as creating strategic communications plans for community groups such as the Omaha Nation Community Response Team, the Indiana Black Expo and others.

News immersion projects have included programs to familiarize students with on-the-ground work of police departments, have focused on environmental and geological projects on water quality and environmental regulation, and on communicating science to the public.

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

The Department sponsors a Professional-in-Residence lecture series to provide students and faculty with exposure to working professionals. It also sponsors the David Letterman Professional Lecture and Workshop Series and hosts a distinguished lectureship in public relations that brings professionals to the Ball State campus. Professionals also are available to faculty and to visit classrooms as guest lecturers.

Summary of findings:

- Faculty members are actively engaged with local, regional and national professionals and scholarly organizations.
- The Department maintains a robust program to serve high school students across the state through workshops and a summer institute program.
- Department and faculty facilitate, sponsor and support service projects of benefit to non-profit organizations and community-building initiatives.
- The Department sponsors lectures, workshops and professional development for faculty and students to encourage ongoing professional education and development.

Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE

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 Department developed 14 learning goals for all sequences in the major. Objectives for all advertising, journalism, and public relations students include the ACEJMC core values and competencies, and individual sequences have additional learning objectives. The learning objectives have been “mapped” onto courses in the curriculum.

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

The Department’s written assessment plan, most recently revised and adopted in 2014, includes a combination of direct and indirect measures. Indirect measures include exit interviews and surveys of graduating students; alumni surveys; focus groups; and evaluation of student awards. Direct measures include senior portfolio review; a survey of internship supervisors; a university-mandated writing proficiency exam; and a language proficiency exam. The Department has put significant effort into development and pretesting of an online assessment tool that will involve evaluation of student work by professionals, including alumni, using faculty-developed rubrics for each ACEJMC competency. That tool will launch for full-scale assessment use in Fall 2016.

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

The Department’s process, called “Close the Loop” and displayed on posters in the faculty meeting room and elsewhere, involves six distinct steps, from “Define values and competencies” to “Document the change.” An assessment officer, with the support of a faculty committee, systematically examines results of assessment efforts and shares them with faculty members. Members of the Department cite changes to the curriculum as a result of the assessment process. For instance, after students in focus groups reported that they believed a 400-level class came too late to be of value to them, the class was changed to a 100-level course. Performance on elements of a grammar exam completed by all students has also led to strengthening instruction on language precision in courses. Faculty members said the course outcomes mapping exercise helped them align their courses with learning objectives.

(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 Department's Journalism Alumni Society board meets at least three times a year at the university. Members of the group sometimes visit classes while on campus and discuss issues and trends in the professions with faculty members. The Public Relations sequence has reactivated an alumni advisory board that meets with students and faculty.

The Department has no mechanism for broad, systematic contact with its alumni, but faculty members report regular interaction with alumni and professionals. Classroom visits also take place through programs such as the Professional-in-Residence and participation by the Department in an annual "alumni takeover" day in the college each fall.

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

The Department annually surveys alumni about their employment and about the skills and knowledge they believe should be part of the Journalism curriculum. For instance, the 2014-15 assessment report included feedback from a survey of the class of 2012. Fifty-four alumni responded to the survey and provided suggestions that included more emphasis on social media, search-engine optimization and analytics. The Department's online assessment tool, with faculty-designed rubrics for each learning objective, has been pre-tested. Faculty members have been encouraged to recruit alumni and other qualified professionals to participate in the evaluation of student work on the site beginning in Fall 2016.

Summary of findings:

- The Department's learning goals align with ACEJMC values and competencies, and these goals have been thoughtfully mapped into the curriculum.
- The Department's plan involves a robust combination of measures. Its online assessment tool will add another important data point that will further engage alumni and professionals in curricular improvement efforts.
- Faculty members apply the concept of "closing the loop" and have made demonstrable improvements in the curriculum from their assessment efforts.

Overall evaluation: COMPLIANCE

Summary by site visit team

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

Strengths

- *A forward-looking curriculum.* The Department's curriculum is thoroughly contemporary and embraces a bold vision for the future of media.
- *"Gold-standard" facilities and technology.* The commitment to providing consistently updated labs, software, and hardware in a space designed for collaboration is evident.
- *Media, agencies, and organizations at the center of the student experience.* The Department's design literally puts clubs, organizations and unified media at its center, and students respond.
- *A strong second-in-command who has enabled the Department to move forward.* The Assistant Chair (now Interim Chair) for the Department was, to a person, praised for his dedication and effective management of this large unit.
- *An effective, faculty-driven assessment process.* Faculty members are knowledgeable and committed to an assessment process that improves learning.
- *An engaged faculty who invest themselves in staying current and in student success.* Faculty members have taken ownership of learning new skills and integrating them into the classroom. This faculty prides itself on preparing students for media careers and connecting them to the professions.
- *A multi-layered advising system praised by students.* A combination of university advising services, an effective online tool, and strong advising at the Department level have led to student satisfaction.

Weaknesses and challenges

- *Lack of consistent leadership.* The Department needs consistent leadership at the top to move forward with its newly approved strategic plan.
- *Faculty turnover.* For a number of reasons, the faculty composition in the Department has changed over the past six years. Stability in the faculty ranks will also help the unit meet its strategic goals.
- *Resources for faculty development.* Departmental funds for travel and other professional development have not been increased in more than a decade.

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

Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness

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

The Department needs to prepare students for their future roles in an increasingly diverse society. *This means diversifying the faculty, maintaining diversity in the student population, and systematically ensuring that diversity is prioritized in the student experience.*

- 4) In the case of a recommendation for provisional accreditation, list the deficiencies that should 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.**

Diversity: See above. This standard was out of compliance on the last review.

Anxiety between the two types of faculty members (tenure-track and contract): The Interim Department Chair and faculty members confirm that the “anxiety” has lessened considerably in recent years. This is addressed in Standard 1 of this report.

The amount of research and scholarship in the Department could be improved: The ratio of faculty members with terminal degrees has grown since the last review, to more than one-third of the Department. Every promotion and tenure case in the Department has been successful at the college and university level since the last review, also indicating that the Department is meeting university expectations for research and creative activity. The dean singled out the Journalism Department as a leader in the college for scholarly productivity.

The Department needs a director of the new, unified media: This was accomplished in 2012 when a coordinator was hired for the Unified Media Lab. The coordinator reports to the dean and teaches a course in the Department.

- 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 adequate; the team did not report errors or find that key information was missing. Much in “supplementary material” was repeated in the main section of the document, but this was not seen as a deficiency in the study’s presentation. The team appreciated the forthright tone of the self-study.