

# Report of On-Site Evaluation

ACEJMC

Undergraduate program

2014– 2015

Name of Institution: Brigham Young University

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Kevin J. Worthen, President

Name of Unit: Department of Communications

Name and Title of Administrator: Ed Adams, Department Chair

Date of 2014 - 2015 Accrediting Visit: October 12 – 15, 2014

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

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

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Reaccreditation

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Reaccreditation

Recommendation by 2014 - 2015 Visiting Team:

*Prepared and submitted by:*

## Team Chair

Name and Title: Ann M. Brill, Dean

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

Signature  \_\_\_\_\_

## Team Members

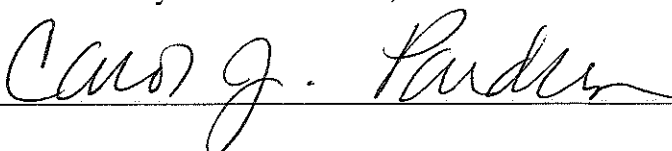
Name and Title: Michael Bugeja, Director

Organization/School: Iowa State University, Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication

Signature  \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Title: Carol J. Pardun, Professor

Organization/School: University of South Carolina, School of Journalism and Mass Communications

Signature  \_\_\_\_\_

## **PART I: General information**

Name of Institution: Brigham Young University  
Name of Unit: Department of Communications  
Year of Visit: 2014

### **1. Check regional association by which the institution now is accredited.**

- Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools
- New England Association of Schools and Colleges
- North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
- ✓ Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges

### **2. Indicate the institution's type of control; check more than one if necessary.**

- ✓ Private
- Public
- Other (specify)

**3. Provide assurance that the institution has legal authorization to provide education beyond the secondary level in your state. It is not necessary to include entire authorizing documents. Public institutions may cite legislative acts; private institutions may cite charters or other authorizing documents.**

State of Utah Department of Commerce, File No. CO 026397

**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:** 2008 – 09

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

1984 – 85

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

*Mission Statement*

“Recognizing the crucial need to truthfully inform and be informed, the BYU Department of Communications seeks excellence in communications by stressing personal integrity, rigorous scholarship, moral values, professional competence and ethical conduct. The Department: (1) broadly educates men and women; (2) fosters respect for free, responsible and truthful expression; (3) champions democratic values; (4) prepares graduates who will effectively serve their professions, their communities, and their nations.” --- 2008

**7. What are the type and length of terms?**

2 semesters of 15 weeks

2 summer sessions of 7.5 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. In Communications

**10. Give the number of credit hours required by the university for graduation.**

**Specify semester-hour or quarter-hour credit.** 120 semester hour credits

**11. Give the number of credit hours students may earn for internship experience.**

**Specify semester-hour or quarter-hour credit.**

4 semester-hour credits for required internship

1 semester-hour credit for subsequent internship

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

We have only one degree program in Communications. We have emphasis areas within that degree, but we don't have a designated position for "person in charge," such as a

coordinator or director. The person responsible for undergraduate studies is associate chair Dale Cressman. Faculty serving on the undergraduate studies committee have stewardship for coordinating the undergraduate affairs of each emphasis and are considered the “emphasis leaders” by other faculty in each emphasis. These positions serve for three years and rotate through the emphasis faculty. But it’s not a formal designation. The current emphasis coordinators are as follows:

Sequence or specialty	Person in charge
Advertising sequence	Doug McKinlay
Journalism sequence	Robert Walz
Public Relations sequence	Rob Wakefield
Core/Electives specialty	Clark Callahan

There are still some students remaining in the discontinued communications studies emphasis and they are under the core/electives designation for their needs.

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

As of Fall 2013: 24,823 undergraduate full-time-equivalent students  
2,368 graduate full-time-equivalent 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):**

We are only reporting “active” students, meaning students currently taking classes in our department. We have a list of “inactive” students that includes students admitted to our program who are currently away from the school, such as those serving full-time volunteer missions.

Figures below are as of Fall 2013

Sequence	Undergraduate majors
Advertising sequence	214
Journalism sequence	126
Public Relations sequence	168
Communications Studies sequence*	40
Pre-majors	658
Total	1,206

\*discontinued

**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.**

	Course number	Title	Section	Enrollment
Winter 2014 SMSC Courses and Enrollments	Comms 211	Media Writing	1	18
			2	16
			3	17
			4	17
			5	17
			7	18
			8	15
			9	20
			11	18
			13	6
				Comms 308
			2	15
	Comms 317	Advertising Research Methods	1	20
			2	20
			4	14
Winter 2014 SMSC Courses and Enrollments (continued)	Comms 318	PR Research and Measurement	1	18
			2	19
			3	20
	Comms 321	News Reporting	1	8
			2	7
			3	7
			4	7
			5	4
			6	6
			7	10
	Comms 322	Video and Audio News Production	1	9
			2	9
			3	5

	Course number	Title	Section	Enrollment
	Comms 324	Feature Writing	1	11
	Comms 325	Broadcast Reporting	1	0
			2	2
			3	2
			4	3
			5	1
	Comms 335	TV Commercial Production	1	19
	Comms 337	Advertising Account Management	1	18
	Comms 365	Photojournalism	1	21
	Comms 383	Online News Editing	1	2
			2	2
			3	2
			4	2
			5	2
			6	2
			7	2
			8	1
			9	2
			10	2
	Comms 385	Television News Producing	1	5
			2	4
			3	4
			5	0
	Comms 388	Publication Graphics and Production	1	18
			2	18
	Comms 420	Advanced Print Reporting	1	3
Winter 2014 SMSC Courses and Enrollments (continued)	Comms 421	Public Relations Writing and Production	1	20
			2	19
	Comms 432	Account Planning Management	1	20
			2	16
	Comms 433	Advanced Advertising Concepting Portfolio	1	11
	Comms 486	Advanced Broadcast Reporting	1	3
			2	3

	Course number	Title	Section	Enrollment
			3	1
			4	3
			5	1
	Comms 488	Advanced Broadcast Producing	1	3
			2	3
			3	0
			4	1
	Course number	Title	Section	Enrollment
Spring 2014 SMSC Courses and Enrollments	Comms 211	Media Writing	1	19
	Comms 308	Research Methods for Journalism	1	18
	Comms 317	Advertising Research Methods	1	20
			2	18
	Comms 318	PR Research and Measurement	1	18
	Comms 321	News Reporting	1	4
			2	5
			3	5
			4	5
			8	9
	Comms 322	Video and Audio News Production	1	10
	Comms 325	Broadcast Reporting	1	3
			2	3
	Comms 337	Advertising Account Management	1	12
	Comms 432	Account Planning Management	1	9
	Comms 487	Advanced Multiplatform Journalism	1	9
Summer 2014 SMSC Courses and Enrollments	Comms 211	Media Writing	2	18
	Comms 321	News Reporting	5	6
			6	10

	Course number	Title	Section	Enrollment
			7	7
	Course number	Title	Section	Enrollment
Fall 2014 SMSC Courses and Enrollments	Comms 211	Media Writing	1	18
			2	18
			3	18
			4	18
			5	18
			6	18
			7	18
			8	8
			9	18
			10	18
			11	6
	Comms 308	Research Methods for Journalism	1	12
			2	20
	Comms 317	Advertising Research Methods	1	4
			2	20
			4	9
	Comms 318	PR Research and Measurement	1	20
			2	20
			3	20
	Comms 321	News Reporting	1	7
			2	7
			3	7
			4	7
			5	7
			6	7
	Comms 322	Video and Audio News Production	1	9
			2	8



	Course number	Title	Section	Enrollment
			3	4
	Comms 324	Feature Writing	1	9
Fall 2014 SMSC Courses and Enrollments (continued)	Comms 325	Broadcast Reporting	1	4
			2	2
			3	5
			4	5
			5	6
	Comms 328	Backpack Journalism	1	4
	Comms 335	TV Commercial Production	1	7
	Comms 337	Advertising Account Management	1	20
			2	1
	Comms 365	Photojournalism	1	5
	Comms 383	Online News Editing	1	2
			2	2
			3	2
			4	2
			5	2
			6	2
			7	2
			8	1
	Comms 385	Television News Producing	1	5
			2	5
			3	3
	Comms 388	Publication Graphics and Production	1	4
	Comms 420	Advanced Print Reporting	1	2
	Comms 421	Public Relations Writing and Production	1	20
			2	20
			3	20
	Comms 432	Account Planning Management	1	20
			2	20
	Comms 433	Advanced Advertising Concepting Portfolio	1	13

	Course number	Title	Section	Enrollment
	Comms 486	Advanced Broadcast Reporting	1	3
			2	3
			3	1
			4	3
			5	3
	Comms 487	Advanced Multiplatform Journalism	1	6
Fall 2014 SMSC Courses and Enrollments (continued)	Comms 488	Advanced Broadcast Producing	1	3
			2	0
			3	1
			4	1

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

\$3,033,487

**Percentage increase or decrease in three years:** 4.4% increase

**Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries:** \$2,188,126

**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.**

Faculty	Rank
Ed Adams	Professor
Sherry Baker	Professor
Kris Boyle	Assistant Professor
Pamela Brubaker	Assistant Professor
Clark Callahan	Associate Professor
Mark Callister	Professor
Joel Campbell	Associate Teaching Professor

Faculty	Rank
Ed Carter	Associate Professor
Dale Cressman	Associate Professor
Chris Cutri	Associate Professor
John Davies	Assistant Professor
John Hughes	Teaching Professor
Kevin Kelly	Associate Teaching Professor
Doug McKinlay	Associate Teaching Professor
Joseph Ogden	Associate Teaching Professor
Ken Plowman	Associate Professor
Quint Randle	Associate Professor
Othello Richards	Visiting Instructor
Tom Robinson	Professor
Steve Thomsen	Professor
Rob Wakefield	Associate Professor
Robert Walz	Associate Teaching Professor
Chris Wilson	Assistant 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.**

**Adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in Winter, Spring and Fall 2014**

<i>Winter 2014</i>	Jeffrey Allred Derek Brown Nate Carlisle William Christensen Scott Church Tracie Cudworth	Larry Macfarlane Carrie Moore Burke Olsen John Sears Jeff Sheets Blake Stowell
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	Patrick Doyle Kim Farah Emily Haleck Todd Hollingshead Kevin John Jordan Karpowitz	Joseph Tolman Susan Tuckett Andrew Watson Ben Whisenant Brinton Wilkins
<i>Spring/Summer 2014</i>	Kevin John Larry Macfarlane	Daniel Souza Lisa Swenson
<i>Fall 2014</i>	Norma Collett Tracie Cudworth Kim Farah Timothy Hawkes Clark Hirschi Todd Hollingshead Michelle Hyde Randall Jeppesen Kevin John	Larry Macfarlane Carrie Moore Timothy Robinson John Sears Jeff Sheets Blake Stowell Susan Tuckett Andrew Watson Ben Whisenant

**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.**

72 or more semester hours outside of journalism and mass communications	Academic year	Total graduates	Number	Percentage
	2013 – 2014	331	331	100%
	2012 – 2013	285	285	100%

In fact, we have been 100% compliant with this standard for the three consecutive accreditation site visits. Full transcripts are available for review by the site-visit team.

## 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 unit has both a written mission statement and a written strategic plan. The mission is primarily undergraduate education, in addition to its scholarship, creative and professional expectations. The mission statement complements the university's succinct statement on education as a means "to assist individuals in their quest for perfection and eternal life." Character and service are themes in the unit's mission statement as well. "Recognizing the crucial need to truthfully inform and be informed, the BYU Department of Communications seeks excellence in communications by stressing personal integrity, rigorous scholarship, moral values, professional competence and ethical conduct." In discussions with faculty, they often stressed personal and professional integrity with a strong sense of carrying that into professional activities. They spoke of instilling a sense of responsibility in students regarding their coursework and creating a reputation for high standards in professional work. The unit is clear and consistent in its mission statement and in how that is carried out in teaching, research and service.

The unit's long-range plan derives from its mission statement and the five goals, objectives and strategies all align with its mission statement. The strategic plan is reviewed annually and submitted to the dean of the college. It also is posted online.

<https://cfac.byu.edu/comms/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/StrategicPlan2013.pdf>

The unit's first goal is improving student learning and mentoring. The unit recently completed a revision to curriculum that includes changing the program in "Journalism" to "Digital News." That program sees an increased focus on the future of news and newsrooms. The curriculum revisions will be submitted to the dean and academic vice president for approval. Student learning through labs is a stated objective and the unit has enhanced opportunities for student learning through its campus media, advertising and public relations labs. The facilities housing those labs are well-designed, interactive spaces that bring students into collaborative environments with each other and lab instructors.

The second goal addresses diversity and some specific objectives for the unit, including more study abroad opportunities. That is being realized in new programs in New Zealand and Frankfurt, Germany, which involve internships and service. The goal also speaks about "aggressively" recruiting full-time and adjunct women and minority faculty members. The unit chair says that charge is given to every search committee. The goal also directs the unit to financially help graduate students under its "grow your own" faculty program, which has met with limited success. The unit has had more success in its plan and hiring of women and minorities as adjuncts. The unit has lower rates for women and minority full-time faculty; it has higher rates in adjuncts and students of color than university and area populations.

Goal three addresses increasing the level of faculty scholarship and the unit has clearly met the objectives listed under awareness, productivity and using resources to support and enhance scholarly productivity.

Goal four speaks to the unit's outreach efforts, including a stronger web presence, increased mentoring and creating a board of advisers. The unit has taken elements from its third goal of diversity to build its advisory board in which the majority of members are women and people of color.

The fifth goal is the most recent addition and proposes to elevate the department to school status. The dean and academic vice president are aware of the unit's goal and are encouraging the unit to specifically address reasons for the status change.

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

The unit's organizational chart describes the relationships between the unit, its leadership, committees, and the university administration. The unit's governance structure was created in 2001. Previously, governance was centralized in a faculty council. Now, the unit has a more decentralized committee system. Each committee reports to the unit chair or associate chairs. Committees make recommendations to the full faculty for discussion and the full faculty votes. All curriculum issues, policy and procedure changes, and other decisions affecting the full faculty come through this route. The unit chair and associate chairs describe their leadership style as "management by walk about." Faculty lauded the chair's practice of wandering into their offices for conversations about unit governance.

The unit's Faculty Policy Manual contains further details about faculty oversight of policies and curriculum. Faculty members repeatedly said during the site team visit that there are clear and precise policies that are communicated to each of them. They said faculty collegiality is strong.

**(c) The unit's administration provides effective leadership within the unit and effectively represents it in dealings with university administration outside the unit and constituencies external to the university.**

The unit leader has strong support from the faculty and campus administrators. He has spent 14 of his 15 years at the university in administration. He served as the department's associate chair from 2000 until 2003, unit chair from 2003 – 2008, associate dean for the college from 2008 to 2011 and returned to the department as chair in 2012.

Campus administrators speak highly of the chair in terms of governance, interactions with other unit's faculty and respect for faculty, staff and students. They also cite his success in development work.

The academic vice president has high regard for the unit chair. He said the department is one of the largest on campus and aspires to "school" status. He said the unit chair is a "visionary who would rather build a program than make a name for himself." The unit chair also is known for his ability to attract resources in terms of space, funding and personnel at a university where all three are in high demand and low availability.

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

The university often selects its department chairs through an internal search process. The process involves a candidate expressing willingness to serve as chair and then a series of interviews and inquiries by the dean who seeks advice and information about the unit and its leadership needs. The dean asks the faculty for a recommendation but is not bound by that. The dean will then consult and negotiate with the preferred candidate. Unit chairs are appointed for a three-year term and there is no limit on the number of times the chair's term can be renewed.

The chair is reviewed every three years, using a questionnaire and individual faculty and staff interviews. In late 2013, at the instigation of the chair, the unit created a five-point Likert scale for a mid-term evaluation of the chair. The questionnaire was reviewed by the dean's office and administered

to faculty and staff. Of the 27 (out of 28 possible respondents), the average score on the 54 questions was 4.42 out of 5.

Random comments included: “The chair is absolutely doing an excellent job.” “Appreciate the chair’s support of initiatives and outward/reach focus of faculty research and creative activities.” “While some of us applaud the ‘reducing committees and streamlining processes’ in some ways it has had negative effects as well.” The overwhelming majority of comments commended the chair for the job he is doing and many mentioned his “walkabout” style with appreciation.

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

The unit has informal and formal processes for faculty and staff to express concerns. In addition to the “open door” of the chair’s office, the chair has scheduled himself and the associate chairs to ensure that one of them is usually in the office. The process often begins with an appointment with the chair, the faculty relations office or a member of the Faculty Advisory Council. The council serves as a voice and advisory council to administration. Each college has two representatives; the unit has one faculty member who serves on this council.

When concerns are formally submitted to the chair, the appropriate committee meets to resolve the issue. The unit adheres to university policy.

**Compliance**

## PART II — Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The unit remained with the older and more restrictive 80/65 rule for this accreditation cycle and are at 100% compliance in every year since the last site visit.

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

The unit offers one degree at the undergraduate level, the bachelor's of arts in communications. Within this degree are three emphases: advertising, journalism and public relations. In 2011, broadcast and print were combined into "journalism"; communications studies started to phase out (there are a few students currently completing the emphasis). All sequences offer a balance between theoretical and conceptual courses.

The sequences begin with two core classes: Mass Communications (Comms 101) and Media Writing (Comms 211). The students take these courses as pre-majors, then progress to their introductory sequence-specific class. They are then able to apply for major status. Admittance to the major is not guaranteed and is competitive. In 2013, 77% of the students who applied were accepted into the major. This percentage has decreased every year since 2011 (data that were provided), effectively making acceptance more competitive.

**Journalism:** The journalism emphasis includes the two beginning core classes and the Principles of Journalism course (Comms 239). Then, after being accepted into the major, students proceed to Media Ethics and Law (Comms 300), Visual Literacy (Comms 303), Research Methods Journalism (Comms 306), then either News Reporting (Comms 321) or Video & Audio News Production (Comms 322). From that point on, journalism majors choose classes from particular groupings of courses. Three of the courses are skills based (12 courses from which to choose) with the remaining two courses being conceptual. These include courses such as Media & Their Audiences; Media & The First Amendment; Gender, Race & Class; and Media & World Religions (and other conceptual courses). Students are required to include a four-hour internship in their course of study.

**Advertising:** The advertising emphasis begins with the core (Mass Communications and Society and Media Writing) followed by the Introduction to Advertising (Comms 230) class. After being admitted into the major, students then complete the rest of the unit core (Media Ethics and Law and Visual Literacy). They then move to the Advertising Research Methods (Comms 317) course followed by two conceptual courses chosen from a group of 12 electives.

Advertising majors must choose a track within the emphasis: either management or creative. In the management track, they take either Advertising Concepts—Portfolio 1 (Comms 330) or Comms 337 (Advertising Account Management). In addition, all the management track students take Marketing Management (Bus M 241), Marketing Media Planning/Strategy (Comms 332), Account Planning Management (Comms 432) and Strategic Advertising Campaigns (Comms 489). The creative students



also take the portfolio class and then complete Portfolio 2 (Comms 331), Portfolio 3 (Comms 453) and Strategic Advertising Campaigns (Comms 489). The creative students are further designated as art directors or copywriters. The art directors are required to minor in Advertising Design and the copywriters minor in English (or take a series of other approved classes). The advertising students are required to complete a four-hour internship.

Public Relations: Public Relations students begin their emphasis with the beginning core (Mass Communications and Society and Media Writing) followed by the Introduction to Public Relations. After being admitted to the major, they complete the rest of the unit's core (Media Ethics and Law and Visual Literacy). Public Relations students are required to take two conceptual courses (the same list for the other emphases) and the following skills courses: PR Research & Measurement (Comms 316), News Reporting (Comms 321), Strategic Planning & Problem Solving (Comms 336), Public Relations Writing and Production (Comms 421) and Strategic Public Relations Campaigns (Comms 485). They are required to complete a four-hour internship as well as Principles of Accounting (Acc 200) and Marketing Management (Bus M 241).

From the observations in classrooms and talking with students, it was clear that the students were engaged and knowledgeable. The unit has a detailed curriculum map that outlines the competencies required by the Council.

**(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 curriculum and the faculty who teach the classes are current and digitally competent. Students were well versed in digital concepts. The opportunities for social media analytics, for example, are advanced compared to what other accredited programs are able to provide. The unit's required visual literacy course embraces technology including students' access to Lynda.com, which help students learn technological skills necessary for visual communicators.

A review of the syllabi and classroom visits indicated that the faculty who teach in the unit are highly competent in their respective areas. In the student meeting, students overwhelmingly confirmed their professors' knowledge in digital techniques as well as the requirements in the classroom for using digital tools.

Journalism: Journalism students have many opportunities to demonstrate digital, technological and multimedia competencies. They work in the digital first multimedia newsroom, *The Universe*; they receive instruction on social media analytics; they have options to learn advanced skills in multiplatform journalism. All students take at least nine academic credit hours (three courses) focused on the students' newscast or *The Universe*. They have options for their capstone experiences, ranging from continuation in the student publication area, or branching out to more advanced opportunities within or outside the university.

Advertising: Advertising students have many opportunities to learn and demonstrate digital capabilities. Even in the early classes students work in the digital space. For example, in the Portfolio 1 class, students have at least one assignment where they create an entire advertising campaign for an actual client that is strictly digital. The advertising faculty are committed to keeping current in the field. One faculty member (an experienced advertising professional), for example, took a summer internship in an advertising agency in order to learn up-to-date skills. While the AdLab (student-run advertising agency) is not required, at least half the students spend at least one semester working in the lab. All of the advertising classes (after the introduction class) have at least one real client experience.

Public Relations: The public relations sequence is more regimented than the other emphases, but closely follows recommendations of PRSA. The required skills classes are technologically up to date, giving students real client opportunities throughout the curriculum. They have access to high level

digital information such as “real time” social media analytics that allow for instruction that is current and extremely relevant to the needs in the professions. Several of the faculty have excellent client contacts that have given students unique opportunities for professional development. The student-run agency allows for additional real world experiences. All public relations students are required to complete at least one internship.

**(d) Student-faculty classroom ratios facilitate effective teaching and learning in all courses; the ratio in skills and laboratory sections, whether on-site or online, should not exceed 20-1.\***

The self study indicates that all skills classes are taught at the 20-1 ratio. Some classes have even fewer than 20 students. Even the introduction class is rather small compared to other large lecture courses (according to student comments). These numbers were corroborated by classroom visits, speaking with the faculty, and talking with students across the various emphases.

**(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.

Journalism: All journalism students are required to take one academic internship for four credit hours. Many students graduate with multiple internships. Faculty members work closely with the students during their internship experiences. Students spoke enthusiastically about their professional experiences both on and off campus.

Advertising: All advertising students are required to complete at least one academic internship. In addition, they have the opportunity to work in the AdLab, a real client student-run agency.

Public Relations: All public relations students are required to complete at least one academic internship. Many complete multiple internships. Many students also work in the student-run public relations agency.

## **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:

By way of background, the department was found in non-compliance in this standard in 2008-9. The site team then recommended re-accreditation as this was the only standard in non-compliance. However, the Accrediting Committee voted 4-10 against this recommendation and then voted 12-2 in favor of provisional accreditation. The department responded with these key statements:

Congress enacted two provisions that, taken together, emphasize that religious institutions such as BYU may give preference to members of the school's sponsoring faith in hiring practices and decisions. The department then cited Section 702(a) ("the religious organization exemption"). The legal arguments continued with the Supreme Court rejecting a challenge to the constitutionality of section 702(s) against the LDS church.

Upon considering this and other departmental arguments, the Accrediting Council voted unanimously, with one member abstaining, to reverse the Committee's provisional recommendation and grant full reaccreditation.

It was important for the site team to recognize the history of this issue in determining its decision on compliance or non-compliance.

**(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 unit's diversity plan defines diversity as embracing responsibility to create and maintain an environment of inclusiveness.

The core statement of the department's diversity plan categorically opposes prejudice and rejects behavior that "marginalizes or is derisive of others" and embraces "principles of justice, inclusion and equity." However, that statement also contains this caveat: "[W]e will not support practices contrary to doctrines of the LDS Church or policies of BYU."

The plan has three sections: Faculty Hiring, Student Recruitment, Teaching and Experiencing Diversity.

**(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 unit's assessment plan maps diversity, including assessing diversity experienced while on internships. In employer surveys assessing success of internships, supervisors gave majors a high score for respect for diversity. Out of a 5.0 scale, employers awarded majors 4.9 or more for knowing diversity and applying it in their work.

The department found that 30 percent of class syllabi reflected instruction about diverse cultures. As a result the department hired Lillian Dunlap of Communication Research Enterprises to help incorporate diversity and inclusivity across the curriculum.

It also has plans to develop another diversity class and also added international components to a number of courses.

Diversity content exists in one class of the core and in five courses of the advertising program; in 13 journalism classes; and in 8 public relations classes. Also, every syllabus has statements about sexual harassment and ADA compliance.

As such, there is evidence that diversity exists as a significant component of class work.

The interview with students was particularly enlightening in explaining to the site team the various methods used to convey diversity in the classroom and beyond. Students gave several examples of how they learn about and experience diversity. One spoke about the several internships and Ad/PR projects that involve agencies in urban areas, exposing them to diverse clients and expectations. One, in particular, had to learn about the Hispanic/Latino cultures in working on a project for the Arizona Diamondbacks. (You can easily discern the expectations by visiting its multilingual website: <http://arizona.diamondbacks.mlb.com/>.) Others spoke about reaching diverse audiences in public relations, again through projects and work with outside professionals. Another spoke about non-profits and content directed at disabled viewers. A student made the connection between law class and diversity, citing content on hate speech. Others spoke about diverse content in Popular Culture and Media classes and in stand-alone courses on diversity, such as Gender, Race and Class.

More than 40 students were present during the student open session and all complimented the unit on espousing the importance of diversity. However, when the site team asked what the unit should look for in a future hire, one student immediately stated: “A woman!” And others nodded in agreement.

**(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.**

After the last site visit, the department updated its diversity plan. Concerning faculty hiring, it aspired to identify diverse candidates who would be acceptable to the LDS Church and help them financially to obtain a Ph.D. (This is known as “Grow Your Own” program.) The unit also aspired to take an active role in contacting all possible female and minority faculty for full-time positions. The plan sought to aggressively recruit female and minority faculty for full-time positions.

The 2008-09 report noted that in 1997 four of 21 faculty members were women. Despite efforts to achieve balance, the previous site team noted that the department’s proportion of women faculty “has further decreased to 15 percent (20 men and 4 women). At the time of our site visit, the breakdown included two women in a cohort of 21 instructors with faculty status, or 9 percent. (Note: One of the two women will be retiring after this year.) There is also an African-American visiting professor who has begun his first semester teaching in Fall 2014 while earning his master’s degree in the unit. As such he is a visiting professor and graduate student. He and a female assistant professor are part of the department’s “Grow Your Own” philosophy that takes into account prospective employees and/or alumni who are members of the LDS Church and encourages them to pursue advanced degrees and then consider joining the BYU faculty.

The university reports 20.1% women and 79.9% men are employed as tenured/tenure-eligible faculty, as opposed to the unit’s 9%.

The previous report documented the university’s policy of giving preference in hiring to Church members, which “appears to make these outcomes inevitable.” The previous site team noted the cases of two minority Mormon females who were excluded presumably because they did not meet “ecclesiastical requirements.” Although similar cases in this accrediting cycle did not occur, the selection process for candidate hires has not changed.

Another reason for the lack of women also was stated in the 2008-09 report, noting that female candidates often choose a traditional path of marriage and raising a family. This was also the reason provided to the current site team. However, in subsequent interviews with representatives of other units and programs, it was suggested that this culture was true but in the process of change with more women seeing a dual role for husband and mother raising children and working outside the home.

Adjunct faculty in the unit do not have to be LDS members (but must honor the culture). Adjuncts typically teach one or two courses per year. Here the percentage of female to male instructors is much

greater, with 10 of 24 instructors, women, including two Asians and one Hispanic/Latino employed since the last re-accreditation visit in 2008 – 2009.

Make-up of the adjunct faculty at the time of the site visit in fall 2014 was 10 male and 9 female.

**(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.**

When it comes to percentage of minorities in the student body, the data are more inclusive than those pertaining to the faculty's gender and ethnic makeup. Of the 588 majors in the unit, a total 10.6% are domestic minorities compared with 9% in the institution. When two or more races are added to the departmental total, the result is 15%, compared with 13.3% for the institution. When international students are added, the department shows 18% diversity with 82% white compared with 16.5% for the institution with 83.4% white.

In its student recruitment section, the unit sought to recruit from large cities across the United States, identifying promising minorities interested in communication. It sought to provide scholarships for minorities to attend summer workshops and other recruitment strategies in concert with institutional programs.

Concerning teaching and experiencing diversity, it developed field trips to Harlem and Manhattan, to develop study abroad programs, to enrich the curricula, and assess curricular diversity via its assessment plan.

Here are accomplishments related to those goals:

- Established a Board of Advisors to help with diversity efforts. Also, 18 of the 21 members of the group are women and/or minorities.
- Participated in recruitment trips to seek out Mormon minorities in Brooklyn, Harlem, New York; Newark, New Jersey; and Detroit and Flint, Mich.
- Worked with BYU's Multicultural office to recruit more minority students eligible for admission to the institution.
- Documented that 74% of BYU students speak a second language with additional documentation of 395 majors visiting 67 countries.
- Increased diversity and multicultural activities in student media and advertising/PR student functions. For instance, Adlab students work with corporate partnerships in urban areas, such as New York City, and handle client/accounts that involve diverse audiences.
- Infused courses with global media issues and inclusivity.
- Chronicled more than 40 pieces of scholarship that dealt with diversity, international communication and/or global society.
- Offered generous scholarships to prospective minority students.
- Noted that six students were chosen for American Advertising Federation minority awards.
- Staffed evening classes with diverse professionals. Since 2008, 62.5 percent of adjunct hires have been women and/or minorities.

- Hosted nearly 70 guest speakers who either were minorities or addressed minority and other diverse, multicultural issues.
- Established a short-term (one week) minority/BYU exchange program with Morgan State University.
- Other efforts to comply with two of its three diversity plan sections (student recruitment and experience diversity).

**(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 and students knew of no instances of harassment and discrimination based on status or disability. Neither did the team hear of any such complaints in its visits with faculty and students. All syllabi state that harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. The department accommodates disability but the team found this startling statement in the self-study: “Since we are a deadline driven profession, we have been granted an exception ... not to make accommodation for students with learning disabilities that require extra time on assignments.” Although the unit has been granted this accommodation by the University, it has never exercised it. The unit expended \$2,000 to accommodate key fob after-hours building access for students using wheelchairs who needed to work in the lab, and has purchased and installed standing desks for as many faculty and students who requested that accommodation.

While the department did not hire a more diverse full-time faculty, it made gains in visiting professors, adjunct ranks, guest speakers and created an Advisory Board of mostly women and minorities. Two other sections of the diversity plan involving student recruitment efforts and curricular infusion of diverse topics appear to be met, with significant progress since the last re-accreditation.

## **Compliance**

## PART II — Standard 4: Full-Time and Part-Time Faculty

*The unit hires, supports and evaluates a capable faculty with a balance of academic and professional credentials appropriate for the unit's mission.*

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The unit's criteria for selection of faculty is spelled out in the rank and status documents as well as the unit's Faculty Policy Manual. The manual states that the university provides equal opportunity to all qualified personnel without regard to color, race, sex, national origin, age, veteran status or disability. However, it also states that the university exercises the "religious" exemption granted in Chapter 60, Title 41, Part 60 of the Code of Federal Regulations. The unit adheres to the university's policy on strong preference for hiring of members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

In the last three years, the unit has searched to fill seven full-time faculty positions. Two were for one-year visiting professors. In addition to advertising in traditional academic publications for faculty, the unit sends mailings of openings to its network of alumni and Church members. The Academic Vice President told the site team there are no new faculty lines being created. When a unit has a "new" line, it is the result of the university's annual evaluation of programs and growth. After the unit receives permission to conduct a faculty search, the chair works with the area program to draft a position description. Approval of the description is needed at the unit, college and university level. All job announcements include the qualifier: "Preference is given to qualified candidates who are members in good standing of the affiliated church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Successful candidates are expected to support and contribute to the academic and religious missions of the university within the context of the principles and doctrine of the affiliated church."

The unit creates a search committee that narrows the pool to qualified candidates. Upon faculty approval, the names are submitted to the university for approval to interview. If the candidate is a member of the Church, the candidate's information is also sent to the bishop who evaluates the candidate's standing in the Church and determines Church qualifications regarding hiring practices. The candidate must receive "ecclesiastical" approval from her or his bishop in order to be brought to campus. At least two candidates for every position are brought to campus. After the visits, the faculty meets to discuss the candidates and votes on offers. To be hired, candidates must receive a majority of faculty votes, and then be approved by the unit chair, the dean, the academic vice president, the president and the Board of Trustees.

Rank and status for unit faculty is governed by the university standards and criteria. Both scholarly and professional track faculty members are under university policy. Both undergo an annual review and the chair receives a report of faculty progress toward the next rank and status, if applicable. The manual was revised and approved by faculty in 2010. All teaching faculty are evaluated by course evaluations at the end of each semester. Rank and status documents are posted online, but are password protected. Full-time faculty do have access to those documents. Faculty must demonstrate excellence in teaching, research and service, although the unit concedes the balance among the three may vary from year to year. Faculty members are required to keep a teaching portfolio that also is part of the annual review process.

Faculty undergo a third-year review and one faculty member was dismissed recently following a negative third-year review. The university considers itself a teaching university with a strong research mission. The unit says that all three faculty members who did not receive tenure since the last site visit had "unresolved problems with teaching" that contributed to that decision.

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

The university defines the typical teaching load for research track faculty as 12 credit hours per semester and six credits during spring or summer terms (3/3/2). Professional track faculty teach a 4/4/2 load. The unit does have some determination in allocating effort for teaching. New faculty are generally given a course reduction in their first year. Faculty members with administrative responsibilities also have a reallocation of teaching.

In the last three years, the percentage of courses taught by full-time faculty and staff has varied from 75 percent to 100 percent. The average is 83 percent over the last three years.

The full-time research faculty have a research allocation that varies but is typically 35 percent of their allocation of effort. Considering the teaching allocation, the research faculty is highly productive in scholarship.

All unit administrators are full-time research faculty members.

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

The full-time faculty is either research or professional designated. In addition, there are professional staff members who teach, such as the media laboratory instructors. At the time of the site team visit, there were six full professors, 11 associate professors (five of whom are professional track), four assistant professors and one visiting professor. Other than the visiting professor, all full-time faculty are tenure-track. The university mandates that no more than 10 percent of faculty can be professional track. The unit exceeds the university standard since 23 percent of its faculty are professional track. The unit does have permission based on its high level of professional classes to exceed the university standard. For research faculty, the unit requires a terminal degree. In the professional track, a master's degree is preferred but not required. They must bring significant professional experience, as well as an appreciation of the scholarly mission of the university. The unit values professional experience among its entire faculty and among its full-time research faculty, the unit has nearly 130 years of professional experience.

Adjunct faculty hires have expectations of high professional experience as well as advanced degrees. In the 2013 – 2014 academic year, the university established new requirements for adjuncts. Positions are now advertised through a university announcement and job site rather than at the initiation and approval of the unit. The unit still has determination of what is needed and final hiring approval but the overall process is more formal.

Full-time faculty have many opportunities for continuing academic and professional development. The unit has an adequate travel budget for conferences and workshops. The faculty member who travels to New York with the students for internships is encouraged to obtain an internship experience or develop a scholarly or research agenda. The unit has some discretionary funds available for research and the unit participates in an interdisciplinary project within the College for creative and research work involving faculty and students. The unit's rank and status documents state the expectation that faculty members are contributing to knowledge through published work and /or creative work. Those documents also call for a "maturing" of the faculty member's work, including leadership in professional and academic organizations.



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

The unit mandates students evaluate all courses. That applies for full-time as well as adjuncts. Teaching evaluations are strongly considered in making determinations of rank and status for full-time faculty. In addition, faculty members conduct annual peer reviews of teaching.

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

Service and citizenship are expected of every employee in the unit. Faculty are expected to contribute through service on university, professional and academic committees. While the unit has reduced its expectations of service for new faculty, encouraging them to focus initially on teaching and research, the unit has strong expectations for engagement within the unit, on campus and in the professional and academic disciplines. Senior faculty, in particular, are encouraged to serve the unit through leadership positions. The academic vice president said leadership on campus usually rotates among qualified individuals with most returning to faculty positions after serving in leadership roles.

**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.**

Sessions with select faculty members indicated the unit not only supports publication and productivity but also underwrites it. Course releases are given to productive scholars. Five faculty members enjoyed sabbaticals since the last re-accreditation to complete research and book projects. No funding request for financial support to pursue scholarship has been denied in six years. Travel and other support also is faculty driven in part, with requests going to the department's Travel, Research and Activities Committee. The unit pays for membership in at least one association. The department has several lucrative funds supporting scholarship and equipment for research, including its Scripps Fund with a balance of \$391,095; the Ashton Fund, \$456,598; the Madsen Fund, \$466,903; and other spending accounts.

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

Interviews with faculty indicate there are clear expectations for scholarship/professional contributions. Junior faculty are expected to be productive scholars carving out an upward trajectory to be continued and promoted within the unit. Senior professors are expected to be mature scholars contributing to the disciplines and professions. There seems to be no prejudice concerning one type of productivity being valued over another. Professional track faculty are expected to take more of a teaching role in the unit and maintain active and influential in the industry. Expectations to be continued include at least one peer-reviewed publication per year, with some of those in top-tier journals.

As a check concerning progress toward continuing status, the unit's Rank and Status Committee reviews each faculty member and provides feedback concerning whether they are on course for promotion. In addition to scholarship, faculty are also evaluated on teaching and citizenship.

The unit has six full professors, 11 associates (including 5 professional track) and four assistant professors. Since the last reaccreditation, three assistant professors were denied continuing status.

### **(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 unit mandates that scholarship contribute to a climate of learning and curiosity. Since the last reaccreditation, the unit has revised its rank and status documents so that expectations are clear. While they may differ according to discipline (journalism, advertising, public relations), junior faculty are specifically advised to present papers at major conferences and then turn those into publishable works. Senior faculty are expected to be leaders in their disciplines and also serve on editorial boards and as officers in associations.

Professional track faculty have varied obligations, spelled out specifically in their hiring documents. Some were hired for creative advertising; others, for professional contacts; still others for internship preparation. In general, they are expected to contribute to the industry and infuse practical applications throughout the curriculum.

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

The department has woven scholarly productivity into its culture. Currently, it documented 98 refereed articles, 110 conference papers, 4 books, 14 book chapters, 21 non-refereed publications, 13 juried works, 29 non-juried works and a host of other creative, scholarly and professional contributions that show depth and vision. Article publications are especially diverse ranging from *British Journal of Social Psychology* and *NYU Journal of Intellectual Property and Entertainment Law* to *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* and *Communication Quarterly*.

Most faculty hold memberships in multiple associations, with many developing papers for conferences and then turning those presentations into peer-reviewed scholarship. Faculty are members of editorial boards of some of the discipline's esteemed journals, including *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, *Journal of Public Relations Research*, *Journalism History* and *Journal of Media and Religion*.

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

This is a remarkably collegial department that shows respect for all contributions, both scholarly and professional. The lengthy publication list of faculty members in the self-study document a unit that not only fosters critical analysis but also disseminates that information through a variety of research creative and professional outlets. In this requirement, the unit truly shines.

## **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.**

Several factors address this standard, affirmed by students in their meeting with the site team:

- Students were aware of the College of Fine Arts and Communications Advisement Center where they visit as pre-majors (including a comprehensive orientation into degree requirements).
- Students worked closely with the one academic adviser assigned to the Department of Communication, visiting her during office hours and feeling comfortable contacting her concerning any curricular issue or deadline that might need to be resolved.
- Students took advantage of the online BYU OneStop, an academic and career counseling resource that includes scholarship information as well as advice on majors.
- Students used MyMap accounts that chart their progress toward the degree and keep them on track concerning what courses to take.
- Faculty have an open-door policy with advisees. (This is elaborated upon in section [b] below.)

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

Students confer with faculty advisers regularly not only on professional matters, such as internship selection, but also on courses they may want to take to fulfill their career aspirations. Faculty schedule a minimum of two hours, twice a week, during which they are expected to be in their offices for advising. They also are available by phone, email or text (the student-preferred method) to make appointments or for immediate feedback. The main office also monitors closely the number of hours each faculty member is expected to have each week for advising sessions.

In a meeting with the site team, students had high praise for the college advising center, for the unit's academic adviser and, mostly, for the open-door policy of the faculty. Several students recited times they believed they missed deadlines or were in danger of undermining their academic progress. In each case, the faculty adviser or advising centers came to the rescue. Students were accustomed to charting their degree progress through MyMap, a program that identifies what needs to be completed for the degree. No one in the student session, which included more than 40 majors, had anything negative to say about the quality of advising. Indeed, they touted the close interpersonal contract they enjoyed with their advisers, both academic and faculty. They noted faculty also play a key role in helping them obtain internships and jobs.

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

The unit uses online resources to augment the interpersonal contact of students with their academic and faculty advisers. Students can learn about general education courses, advancement in their emphases and/or degrees, and graduation requirements from a variety of web guides, newsletters and other content, all pointing them toward commencement. The unit also promotes the institution's registration system that allows students to register for classes in limited enrollment courses, informing them when

seats are available. There also is an internship and career center, which also guides students. The unit also states: “A lot of career advising naturally takes place in the strategic practice labs where students are being mentored by faculty and the lab staff as their work on projects with clients” (see “d” below).

**(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 department uses social media to keep students informed, relying on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Snapshot and other venues to stay connected with majors. Email blasts also are common. During the site visit, we saw an example of this:

“Today our department was featured in a blog by Carolyn Hadlock. Carolyn is a Principal and Executive Creative Director of *Young & Laramore* in Indianapolis. Their clients include Steak and Shake Restaurants, Angie's List, Stanley Steemer, New Balance and ConAgra. Check out [her feature about AdLab](#). ...”

The unit has an up-to-date newsroom (*The Universe*), broadcast studio, PR creative space and Advertising Lab and encourages participation in AAF, PRSSA and SPJ. *The Universe* has gone from a daily to a weekly with an online daily presence. Its facilities are exemplary. Broadcast students enjoy a new set and produce a news show for KBTU-TV, a PBS station. The Rulon L. Bradley Agency is recognized as a top PR student program that provides students with real-world clients, as does the AdLab. The latter is a world-class teaching laboratory featuring 100-plus students who gain professional experience in large market centers such as New York, Chicago and Los Angeles. The Universe, Broadcast Studio, Bradley Agency and AdLab all are advised by administrative staff who help educate, recruit and establish contacts for majors.

**(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 features a public accountability page on its website:

<https://cfac.byu.edu/comms/about/accountability/>

It contains information on enrollment (342 advertising, 311 public relations, 372 journalism, 109 communication studies) for a total of 1,134 majors and pre-majors. However, this includes 658 pre-majors (77% of those who apply were accepted in the last cycle). Enrollment of majors, then, totals 558 at the time of the site visit. As a limited enrollment program, most of the unit's majors enter the program with around 64 credits, just before their junior year. Many students become majors after they have done missionary work. The average age of majors when they enter the program is 21.

The program also counsels majors to register with the university's placement center. “Most students find job opportunities as a result of faculty and alumni connections,” the self-study asserts. Openings are posted by the Internship and Career Office.

The public accountability page also has a retention table showing that 97% of its freshman cohort is retained after the first year in the program. BYU has a freshman retention rate of about 89%. The unit's 97% retention rate is outstanding.

Because BYU students typically do two years of missionary work, the four-year graduation rate of 57% (earlier years show similar percentages at the four-year level) is not truly indicative of the program's effectiveness. Suffice to say that 92% - 95% if all majors eventually graduate within a seven-year time period.

The self-study lacked a table showing placement rates. However, the unit was able to procure and post updated stats during the site team's visit. These data below show that BYU Communications graduates employed inside and outside the communications field full- and part-time:

2013 survey (2012 cohort): 75.8% (plus 6.2% part-time)

2014 survey (2013 cohort): 73.6% (plus 5% part-time)

## **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 unit is part of a private institution that does not disclose its budget. However, the site team did have access to the current appropriated budget and teaching lab expenditures, as well as for the previous two years for the unit. The university made this information available for accreditation purposes only with the caveat that the data not be made public. The unit believes that the university is appropriate and even “generously supports the department with significant resources.” Having viewed the budget documents and met with university administrators, the site team agrees with that evaluation.

The budget appears in line with the unit’s strategic plan. Since the last site team visit, it received a one-time grant from the University to upgrade the broadcast lab from analog to high Definition. The equipment budget has remained relatively constant. The strategic plan also requires students to bring their own computers. Classrooms were modified for students to plug in their own laptops and/or tablets. Reallocation of resources also sent increased funding to websites and social media outlets, per the strategic plan.

**(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.**

Students, faculty, staff and administration agree that the unit receives adequate and fair allocation of resources. Perusal of the budget, facilities and hiring practices support that conclusion. Again, the unit does not have access to other academic units’ budgets. However, within the College of Fine Arts and Communication, the unit has less dependency on higher administration for travel and research budgets than does the typical unit within the College. The unit’s development activity has provided “generous funding” for these endeavors. One example might be the unit’s use of NUVI software that tracks social media conversations. While a typical unit might spend \$20,000 or more annually, the unit spends about \$3600 since the founders of the company are alumni and located nearby in Salt Lake City. Administrators on campus said other units are envious of the resources enjoyed by the unit.

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

The remodeled Brimhall building is a beautiful facility. Remodeled in 2005, with upgrades in 2012 and 2014, the building houses the unit exclusively. It is one of two units on campus with its own building. The ground floor houses the unit’s laboratories, including the campus newspaper and broadcast outlets, and the public relations and advertising agencies. The second floor is classrooms and the “Mac” lab. The third floor is administration and faculty offices. Between the first and second floor is an atrium that is used as an informal student gathering space and as a venue for speakers. Faculty members cite the shared floor as fostering opportunities for discussion of curriculum, research and governance.

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

The unit provides impressive office and equipment to its faculty. The large and airy faculty offices were part of the building redesign. The site team was treated to a demonstration of the NUVI software that is being used for faculty research. The unit also recently updated its eye-tracking lab, investing an additional \$20,000 in the unit.

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

The Harold B. Lee Library, the Marriott School of Management library and the Howard W. Hunter Library on campus service the unit as well as other areas. The libraries provide access to all databases and periodicals. Wireless access through the unit's building also provides online access to those resources. The main library has more than six million items in its collection and in 2013 was ranked behind Harvard and Columbia universities as third in the nation. The unit has a librarian assigned as a liaison who also works with faculty members on research and other projects.

**Compliance**



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

*The unit and its faculty advance journalism and mass communication professions and fulfills obligations to its community, alumni and the greater public.*

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The unit is closely connected to its alumni base, many of whom provide the pipeline that leads to professional visits in the classroom, student internships and, ultimately, entry-level jobs. The unit keeps a close tab on its graduates. In recent years, the unit has moved to a more social media focus in order to maintain contact with alumni. For instance, the unit maintains a LinkedIn group in order for faculty and alumni to interact about internships, potential jobs for students and general information about the department. In addition, many of its media outlets such as the student paper, *The Universe*, has moved toward a more digitally focused environment, in part to allow the alumni a more convenient method to keep informed about both the unit and the university.

The faculty have worked hard to maintain contact with professionals and have been able to use those connections to create opportunities to keep current in the field. For example, one faculty member recently completed a summer internship in order to improve his social media analytics ability. His new-found skill set was immediately applied in the classroom setting.

**(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.**

While there is not evidence in the self-study of providing systematic continuing education opportunities to the community, there is evidence of individual faculty members doing so. For example, one faculty member created a seminar for area high school teachers. Another has served as a consultant to the Police Department. Others have consulted with companies, helping them improve their strategic communication efforts.

The university has a continuing education unit that provides evening classes to those on and off campus. Many communications faculty teach the communications courses; all have enjoyed healthy enrollment. Among the courses available as continuing education is the Media Law class, which is taken by majors and non-majors alike.

**(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 unit is generous in the support of faculty's involvement in the academy. Faculty are assured of at least one fully funded academic conference per year and many faculty attend multiple conferences at full funding. The faculty are involved in academic associations such as AEJMC, ICA, NCA and other national associations. They are also involved in discipline specific professional organizations such as PRSA, SPJ, AAF, etc. Many have served in leadership positions. They are fully engaged in associations in other ways as well including reviewing conference papers, leading panels, etc.

**(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.**

All the faculty members of the unit are highly involved in service projects both with students and on their own initiatives. Since the last self-study, faculty and students have been involved in projects such as Habitat for Humanity, United Way, pro bono attorney services for immigrants, and other groups. Both the unit's student-run advertising agency and public relations agency engage in both for-fee and pro bono work to benefit groups in Provo and beyond.

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

The unit is committed to scholastic journalism and hosts (or co-hosts) high school workshops. Both alumni and faculty have been involved in these workshops. They also have a high school journalism camp.

**COMPLIANCE**

## PART II — Standard 9: Assessment of Learning Outcomes

*The unit regularly assesses student learning and applies results to improve curriculum and instruction.*

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The unit defines its learning goals for students with an extensive curriculum map that shows which classes cover the specific values and competencies of the ACEJMC Council.

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

The unit has a written assessment plan. It is not much different from the assessment plan of the last accreditation report nor does it offer much detail. It lists its direct measures as: course assignments evaluated by “faculty and outside reviewers using an established rubric”; “knowledge testing” defined as “self evaluation by students, and evaluation by faculty and outside reviewers using established rubrics”; and “internship evaluations” by internship supervisors. Not all of these measures appear to be true direct measures. For example, in the “knowledge testing,” there is no measure that shows what students knew before taking the course of study so it is impossible to know whether they gained knowledge or already had the knowledge.

The indirect measures are: awards and recognition, the senior exit survey (university driven), an alumni survey (university driven, but includes 10 departmental learning outcomes) and NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement) to judge baseline data. The department says it will compare this data annually.

The assessment plan is limited in several areas. For example, it does not include a timeline that indicates when the measures will be collected and analyzed. The assessment plan does not include a curriculum map (although one was included in the self study, but not as part of the plan). The plan states that issues will be discussed during the department’s yearly “assessment retreat” as well as “program emphasis” meetings, but does not provide detail about what happens after those meetings.

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

The unit works on “assessment activities” during the year and makes plans to improve the curriculum and instruction, but it is not clear from the self study (and it is not included in the assessment plan) what the process is for this or how the conclusions were determined other than faculty determination.

There assessment activities include some surveys but the data focus on opinions rather than any kind of measure of expertise gained through the curriculum.

The self study includes a comparison chart based on a university alumni survey of 2004 and 2009 graduates. In most cases, students graduating in 2009 ranked their experience in the unit higher than those in 2004. However, these data are again based on perception.

**(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 unit maintains close contact with alumni and asks alumni to help assess students’ work on a regular basis. They also often provide suggestions for improving the curriculum. The self study indicates that professionals evaluate students’ portfolios in a systematic manner, but when asked in the

student meeting, students did not think that the portfolio review was required but instead was available to anyone wanting input. As enthusiastically as students spoke about the quality of their education, they were not able to articulate any kind of systematic assessment process that measured their knowledge and competencies other than typical indirect measures such as project evaluations by professors.

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

The unit is in close contact with members of the profession and seeks their input on a regular basis, but as discussed above, it was not clear how the professional community participated in assessment in a regular, systematic way. There is little in the assessment plan that indicates how members of journalism and mass communication professions are involved in the assessment process other than with project evaluation. The self study indicated that there were rubrics that professionals would use to evaluate students' work, but no rubrics were included in the self study.

**COMPLIANCE**

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

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

##### Strengths:

- Students were articulate, intelligent and passionate about their education in the unit. They take advantage of all opportunities, from working in the labs to extra internships to engaging with visitors. They are well positioned at graduation to meet their career goals.
- The unit has an accessible and highly regarded chair who has been with the university for 15 years. He is known for his “walkabouts” in which he visits with faculty and students, listening and noting any concerns.
- The integration throughout the curriculum of “laboratory” experiences provides students with supervised, exemplary “real world” activities that built their portfolios.
- Faculty who are fully engaged in teaching and scholarship, and maintain current skills.
- The level and engagement of faculty scholarship is commendable, especially given the unit’s primary mission as an undergraduate teaching unit.
- Students laud the high level of support in terms of advising, both from professional advisers and the faculty mentors.
- The unit’s facilities are enviable. The art deco building is one of three on campus that houses a department and is discussed with envy by others on campus. Faculty offices are larger than the norm, student laboratories are wonderful collaborative spaces, and classrooms use space and furnishings creatively.
- Faculty and students are committed to academic and community outreach, including off site internships and interdisciplinary projects.

##### Weaknesses:

- The unit has made progress in two of its three deficiencies related to diversity. More work needs to be done. As students and faculty readily acknowledge, the unit must meet its diversity goals in hiring full-time faculty. This was cited as a non-compliance in the previous visit and while the current site team appreciates the progress made, the hiring of full-time diverse faculty remains a serious issue.
- The unit’s assessment plan lacks details about how to collect and use data in a timely manner that could improve learning outcomes. The plan exhibits some confusion over direct and indirect measures.

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

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

NA

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

NA

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

NA

**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.**

In the previous site team visit, the unit was found in non-compliance for Standard Three: Diversity. The unit was directed to improve the diversity of full-time faculty, part-time faculty, and increase curriculum issues related to diversity. During the time of that visit and the current visit, the unit has made progress in hiring of women and minorities as part-time faculty as well as shown progress in meeting the goals of its diversity plan related to curriculum. However, the lack of full-time diverse faculty members, particularly women, remains a very serious weakness. The site team was persuaded that the unit will make good on its hope in the next search process to have two of the three hires as meeting its diversity goals. The chair received approval to proceed with the searches and advertise the positions while the site team was on campus.

**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 beautifully designed. However, the site team also found redundancies and critical information missing. The unit was able to provide most of the information while the site team was on campus.