

# Report of On-Site Evaluation

ACEJMC

Undergraduate program

2014– 2015

Name of Institution: Baylor University

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Judge Ken Starr, President

Name of Unit: Department of Journalism, Public Relations and New Media

Name and Title of Administrator: Sara Stone, Chair

Date of 2014 - 2015 Accrediting Visit: October 5-8, 2014

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

Date of the previous accrediting visit: October 12-15, 2008

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Re-accreditation

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Re-accreditation

Recommendation by 2014 - 2015 Visiting Team: Re-accreditation

*Prepared and submitted by:*

## Team Chair

Name and Title: Trevor R. Brown, Professor Emeritus

Organization/School: School of Journalism, Indiana University

Signature



## Team Members

Name and Title: Heidi de Laubenfels, Vice President for Communications and External Relations

Organization/School: McKinstry

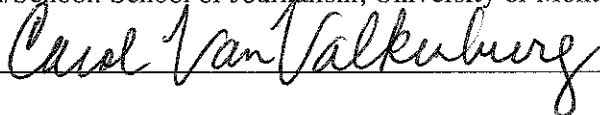
Signature



Name and Title: Carol van Valkenburg,

Organization/School: School of Journalism, University of Montana

Signature



Name and Title:

Organization/School:

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Organization/School:

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## PART I: General information

Name of Institution: Baylor University

Name of Unit: Department of Journalism, Public Relations and New Media

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

*If the unit seeking accreditation is located outside the United States, provide the name(s) of the appropriate recognition or accreditation entities:*

### 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.

V.T.C.A., Education Code Sec. 61.303, reaffirmed, 8/18/92. Requisite authority to grant degree and offer courses covers Baylor University's Articles of Incorporation, specifically, Article 11. . . The (BU) corporation shall have the authority through its Board of Directors, upon the recommendation of the faculty, to confer on any student of the University, or upon other person, any of the degrees usually conferred by similar institutions, and to grant diplomas of such degrees, and in all other respects to exercise the functions of the most favored of educational institutions.

### 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: Oct. 12-15, 2008

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

1996-97

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

The Journalism, Public Relations and New Media department is dedicated to educating students to communicate information and ideas that enable people to fulfill their responsibilities as citizens in a diverse, democratic society and to protect their rights and interests as individuals. To that end, the mission of the department is to offer theory-based, professionally current instruction in journalism, including journalistic writing and editing for print, broadcast and the Internet; newspaper and magazine production; public relations; international communication; photojournalism and advertising.

Our goals are to provide a high quality education for demanding communications professions; to instruct non-majors in the mechanics of and the reasons for contemporary journalism practice; to provide high quality academic and career counseling; to provide useful services to journalists and other professional communicators in our region; to conduct research in journalism and mass communication; to serve society and the Christian church by educating enlightened, ethical, well-prepared journalists and other communicators, and to stimulate and participate in professional development and research designed to enlarge our understanding of communication in society and in the Christian faith.

*(Revised in 2010 to reflect change of the department name from Journalism to Journalism, Public Relations and New Media. The mission statement was adopted at least 20 years ago.)*

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

Semesters of 15 weeks

Summer sessions of 5 weeks

Intersessions of 3 weeks

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

Four-year program leading to Bachelor's degree

Graduate work leading to Master's degree

Graduate work leading to Ph.D. degree

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

Bachelor of Arts in Journalism

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

124 semester hours

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

Students may earn 3 hours of internship credit twice for a total of 6 semester hours.

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

Name of Sequence or Specialty	Person in Charge
News-Editorial	Sara Stone
Public Relations	Sara Stone
New Media	Sara Stone
Graduate Program	Mia Moody-Ramirez

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

16,014 total enrollment (13,859 undergraduate)

**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):**

Name of Sequence or Specialty	Undergraduate majors
News-Editorial	71
Public Relations	230
New Media	37
Undecided	12
Pre-majors	0
Total	350

**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.**

**Fall 2014**

JOU 2303-01	Newswriting	15
JOU 2303-02	Newswriting	cancelled
JOU 2303-03	Newswriting	14
JOU 2303-04	Newswriting	14
JOU 2303-05	Newswriting	15
JOU 2303-06	Newswriting	15
JOU 2303-07	Newswriting	11
JOU 3310-01	Sports Writing	16
JOU/FDM 3315-01	Electronic News Reporting	12
JOU 3325-01	Editing	13
JOU 3325-02	Editing	14
JOU 3325-03	Editing	15
JOU 3325-04	Editing	15
JOU 3325-05	Editing	15
JOU 3325-06	Editing	15
JOU 3355-01	Media Photography I	15
JOU 3355-02	Media Photography I	15
JOU 3355-03	Media Photography I	15
JOU 3356-01	Media Photography II	11
JOU 3358-01	Video Journalism	12
JOU 3369-01	Media Design	15
JOU 3369-02	Media Design	15
JOU 3370-01	Public Relations Agency	8
JOU/FDM 3372-01	Writing for Media Markets	15
JOU/FDM 3372-02	Writing for Media Markets	14
JOU/FDM 3372-03	Writing for Media Markets	16
JOU/FDM 3372-04	Writing for Media Markets	15
JOU/FDM 3372-05	Writing for Media Markets	15
JOU/FDM 3372-06	Writing for Media Markets	10

JOU/FDM 3372-07	Writing for Media Markets	15	
JOU/FDM 3372-08	Writing for Media Markets	15	
JOU/FDM 3372-09	Writing for Media Markets	14	
JOU/FDM 3372-10	Writing for Media Markets	15	
JOU/FDM 3372-11	Writing for Media Markets	14	
JOU/FDM 3372-12	Writing for Media Markets	14	
JOU 3375-01	Advanced Reporting	6	
JOU 3375-02	Advanced Reporting	5	
JOU 3389-01	Magazine & Feature Writing	7	
JOU 4325-01	Advanced Editing	17	
JOU 4340-01	Writing/Editing for On-Line Media	15	
JOU 4340-02	Writing/Editing for On-Line Media	15	
JOU 4368-01	Advanced Public Relations	20	
JOU 4368-02	Advanced Public Relations	22	
JOU 4371-01	Public Relations Media Programming	20	
JOU 4371-02	Public Relations Media Programming	17	

### **Spring 2014**

JOU 2303-01	Newswriting	15	
JOU 2303-02	Newswriting	15	
JOU 2303-03	Newswriting	15	
JOU 2303-04	Newswriting	15	
JOU 2303-05	Newswriting	15	
JOU 2303-06	Newswriting	15	
JOU 2303-07	Newswriting	15	
JOU/FDM 3315-01	Electronic News Reporting	12	
JOU 3321-01	Advertising Copywriting		15
JOU 3325-01	Editing	15	
JOU 3325-02	Editing	16	
JOU 3325-03	Editing	16	
JOU 3325-04	Editing	15	
JOU 3325-05	Editing	16	

JOU 3355-01	Media Photography I	14
JOU 3355-02	Media Photography I	17
JOU 3355-03	Media Photography I	15
JOU 3357-01	Media Photo III, Advanced	11
JOU 3358-01	Video Journalism	12
JOU 3369-01	Media Design	16
JOU 3369-02	Media Design	14
JOU 3370-01	Public Relations Agency	13
JOU/FDM 3372-01	Writing for Media Markets	15
JOU/FDM 3372-02	Writing for Media Markets	15
JOU/FDM 3372-03	Writing for Media Markets	15
JOU/FDM 3372-04	Writing for Media Markets	15
JOU/FDM 3372-05	Writing for Media Markets	15
JOU/FDM 3372-06	Writing for Media Markets	15
JOU/FDM 3372-07	Writing for Media Markets	15
JOU/FDM 3372-08	Writing for Media Markets	15
JOU/FDM 3372-09	Writing for Media Markets	15
JOU/FDM 3372-10	Writing for Media Markets	15
JOU/FDM 3372-11	Writing for Media Markets	15
JOU/FDM 3372-12	Writing for Media Markets	15
JOU 3375-01	Advanced Reporting	11
JOU 3375-02	Advanced Reporting	10
JOU 3389-01	Magazine & Feature Writing	13
JOU 4340-01	Writing/Editing for On-Line Media	13
JOU 4340-02	Writing/Editing for On-Line Media	15
JOU 4368-01	Advanced Public Relations	18
JOU 4368-02	Advanced Public Relations	20
JOU 4371-01	Public Relations Media Programming	23
JOU 4371-02	Public Relations Media Programming	20

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

\$2,090,384

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

5 percent increase

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

\$1,227,214

**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.**

As of Fall 2014:

Dr. Clark Baker, associate professor  
Dr. Liz Bates, assistant professor  
Sharon Bracken, senior lecturer  
Dr. Cassy Burlison, senior lecturer  
Curtis Callaway, lecturer  
Bob Darden, associate professor (on research leave Fall 2014)  
Macarena Hernandez, Fred Hartman Professor of Journalism  
Matt MacVeigh, lecturer  
Dr. Mia Moody-Ramirez, associate professor  
Dr. Marlene Neill, assistant professor  
Dr. Brad Owens, senior lecturer  
Maxey Parrish, senior lecturer  
Carol Perry, senior lecturer  
Dr. Sara Stone, professor and chair of the department  
Kevin Tankersley, senior lecturer

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

Fall 2014

Amber Adamson, marketing and communications consultant  
Rod Aydelotte, chief photographer, Waco Tribune-Herald  
Rick Bradfield, managing editor, KWTX-TV (CBS affiliate) Waco  
Paul Carr, student publications director, Baylor University  
Eric Eckert, media communications specialist, Baylor University



Bruce Gietzen, news anchor, KXXV-TV, (ABC affiliate) Waco  
 Megan Henderson, director of communications, event services, Baylor University  
 Amanda Hill, director of strategic development, Lewis Public Relations  
 Suzanne Parrish, teacher, Bosqueville Independent School District  
 Matt Reed, reporter/producer, KCEN-TV, (NBC affiliate) Waco  
 Amy Starnes, city editor, Waco Tribune-Herald

Spring 2014

Amber Adamson, marketing and communications consultant  
 Rod Aydelotte, chief photographer, Waco Tribune-Herald  
 Rick Bradfield, managing editor, KWTX-TV (CBS affiliate) Waco  
 Paul Carr, student publications director, Baylor University  
 Eric Eckert, media communications specialist, Baylor University  
 Bruce Gietzen, news anchor, KXXV-TV, (ABC affiliate) Waco  
 Megan Henderson, director of communications, event services, Baylor University  
 Suzanne Parrish, teacher, Bosqueville Independent School District  
 Amy Starnes, city editor, Waco Tribune-Herald

**19. Schools on the semester system:**

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

Year	72 or more semester hours outside of journalism and mass communications		
	Total Graduates	Number	Percent
2013-2014 academic year	<u>96</u>	<u>96</u>	<u>100</u>
2012-2013 academic year	<u>69</u>	<u>69</u>	<u>100</u>

## **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.*

### **Introduction**

In 2007, the Departments of Journalism, Communication Studies, and Film and Digital Media proposed becoming a School of Communication. Shortly before the accreditation visit in October 2008, Baylor University decided not to accept that proposal. In October 2008, the Department of Journalism offered three sequences: News-Editorial, Public Relations, and Business Journalism. It graduated 97 students in 2007-08 and enrolled 347 majors in 2008-09. It had 13 full-time faculty members and the Fred Hartman Professor of Journalism. Its budget was \$1,655,221.

In 2010, the Department of Journalism changed its name to the Department of Journalism, Public Relations and New Media to respond to professional expectations of digital, technological and multimedia knowledge and skills.

In October 2014, the Department of Journalism, Public Relations and New Media was the seventh largest of 26 departments in the College of Arts and Sciences and offered a Bachelor of Arts degree, a Master of Arts degree and a Master of International Journalism degree. The major for the B.A. degree has three sequences: News-Editorial, Public Relations, and New Media. It graduated 96 students in 2013-14 and enrolled 350 students in fall 2014. It had 14 full-time faculty members and the Fred Hartman Professor of Journalism. Its budget for 2014-15 was \$2,090,384.

The chair in October 2008 had been appointed in 2007 and served until 2012. The chair in October 2014 had been appointed interim chair in February 2012 and chair in fall 2013.

### **Unit performance with regard to indicators:**

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

The University states:

Baylor holds firm to the conviction that the world needs a preeminent research university that is unambiguously Christian, where such a commitment requires scholarship and creative endeavors at the highest levels of quality to complement and inform its teaching and service.

The Department states in the self-study that “we’re proud to be one of only a handful of nationally accredited faith-based programs accredited through ACEJMC,” and its mission statement continues to express the University’s Christian convictions. In 2010, the Department revised its mission “adopted at least 20 years ago” to reflect changes in digital media, mainly by including “professionally current instruction in journalism” and by adding “the Internet” to the list of media platforms.

After rejection of the 2007 proposal for a School of Communication as part of Baylor University’s Vision 2012 strategic plan for 2002 to 2012, the Department developed a new plan for 2010 to 2015 that defined goals in four areas: marketing and visibility; faculty, staff and student recruitment and retention in diverse populations; facility improvements; and curriculum updates.

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

The self-study reports that before 1996, the Department had standing committees but has since favored a less structured approach. Nevertheless, it lists 13 committees that “meet regularly to work on such important issues as diversity, outcome-based assessments, marketing and curricular review.” (No assessment committee is listed among the 13.) Each has three or four faculty members, but no chair is identified. Faculty meetings “are held at least three times each semester.”

This informal, collegial system of governance received mixed reviews from faculty members. Some said they did not participate in discussion and decisions about important issues and were unclear who made decisions and how. At the same time, faculty members praised the collegial, collaborative ethos of the Department and said that it was a pleasure to teach and work in a place where colleagues respect, support and enjoy one another. A commitment to fellowship, however, cannot entirely replace formal governance.

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

Faculty and students praise the chair for her work ethic and attention to the details of leadership and management and for her constructive, positive approach to administration and governance. Individual faculty members and students report instances where the chair had found a way to enable them to overcome challenges and accomplish their goals.

Faculty members and administrators from across campus admire the chair’s outreach and cooperation with other disciplines and administrative offices. The College leadership endorsed this evaluation of the chair’s effectiveness and managerial style.

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

The Baylor Personnel Policy Manual defines basic principles for selecting administrators at the department level and allows for departmental tradition and practice in the search process. After consultation with the faculty of the unit and the dean of the College, the provost appoints the chair to a three-year term. There are no limits to the number of terms a chair may serve. The current chair began her first three-year term in fall semester 2013.

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

The Baylor Personnel Policy Manual defines procedures for faculty, students and staff to express and receive a review of their grievances and concerns and to pursue an appeal if they disagree with the resolution proposed.

**Summary**

The Department seeks a balance among effective leadership and management, informal faculty governance and appropriate latitude for individual initiative in order to preserve a collegial, collaborative working environment. Collegiality has been achieved, it seems, at some cost to a clear sense of collective discussion and decision-making. Faculty, students and staff within the Department as well as faculty and administrators across campus admire the chair's cooperative, engaging managerial style.

**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.**

In 2012, the Department's faculty voted to increase the number of hours for the major to 33 from 30, and the number of core courses was increased. Students are required to take a minor in the College of Arts and Sciences or a concentration of 18 semester hours outside of the College, to be approved by the Department chair. The concentration must come from one of these schools: business, education, engineering and computer science, or music.

All students must complete the University's general education requirements, which include two religion courses and a foreign language through the fourth semester.

Because the B.A. degree requires 124 hours for completion, majors take 91 hours outside the Department and comply comfortably with the 72-hour rule. If it wished, the Department could require up to 52 hours for the major.

- (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.)**

Students at Baylor can pursue a bachelor of arts with an emphasis in one of three sequences: News-Editorial, Public Relations or - new in 2012 - New Media. Elective tracks are available to New Media students in photography and advertising.

The Department offers three minors in news-editorial, public relations and photography. Below are specifics associated with each undergraduate sequence:

**News-Editorial:** Students take seven required courses:

JOU 2303, Reporting/Writing for Media

JOU 3325, Editing

JOU 3375, Advanced Reporting and Writing

JOU 3376, History of American Journalism *or* JOU 4359, History of Photography  
JOU 4325, Advanced Editing  
JOU 4340, Writing/Editing On-Line Media  
JOU 4380, Law and Ethics

Also required are an additional nine semester hours of 3000-level or 4000-level journalism electives, excluding JOU 3372, Writing for Media Markets.

**Public Relations:** Students take the following required courses:

JOU 2303, Reporting/Writing for Media  
JOU 3325, Editing  
JOU 3367, Public Relations  
JOU 3374, Public Relations Writing *or* JOU 3375, Advanced Reporting & Writing; *or*  
JOU 3389, Magazine & Feature Writing  
JOU 4368, Advanced Public Relations  
JOU 4371, Public Relations Media Programming  
JOU 4380, Law and Ethics

JOU 3355, Media Photography I, *or*  
JOU 4325, Advanced Editing, *or*  
JOU 4340, Writing/Editing On-Line Media

Also required are an additional nine semester hours of any level of journalism electives, excluding JOU 3372, Writing for Media Markets.

**New Media:** Students take the following required courses:

JOU 2303, Reporting/Writing for Media  
JOU 3325, Editing  
JOU 3369, Media Design  
JOU 3374, Public Relations Writing *or* JOU 3375, Advanced Reporting & Writing; *or*  
JOU 3389, Magazine & Feature Writing  
JOU 4380, Law and Ethics

Advertising Track:

JOU 3320, Advertising Procedures  
JOU 3321, Advertising Copywriting  
JOU 3322, Strategic Communications Research  
JOU 4320, Advertising Management

OR

Photography Track:

JOU 3355, Media Photography I  
JOU 3356, Media Photography II/Photojournalism  
JOU 3357, Advanced Photography  
JOU 3358, Video Journalism

Also required are an additional six semester hours of any level of journalism electives, excluding JOU 3372, Writing for Media Markets.

The selection of courses and course titles for the New Media sequence does not convey what is generally understood as new media. Instruction in digital, technological and multimedia knowledge and competency has increased in existing and new courses in all sequences. Faculty and students agree that the Department needs to offer more courses in visual communication and broadcasting. As a work in progress, the New Media sequence may be a promising vehicle for that development.

The combination of history, theory, research and practical craft in these sequences covers ACEJMC's 12 professional values and competencies. Faculty members report that theories such as "cognitive dissonance," the "behavior communication model" and "diffusion and adoption" are woven into writing sections, including print journalism, broadcasting, advertising, PR and online writing. Similarly, students confront ethical questions throughout the curriculum. Less evidence exists that diversity is a frequent topic in the classroom, and in interviews students had few examples to offer.

An emphasis on real-world experience through internships and project work for local organizations – as well as for other departments on campus – gives students opportunities to practice.

Several members of the faculty noted that incoming students' writing skills are increasingly weak, and that this creates a growing demand for remedial training. Still, individuals who work with or employ Baylor grads describe students who are thoughtful, curious and well prepared for work. An editor from the local NPR affiliate said that "every intern has come with exactly the background we need." A local newspaper executive credited effective faculty mentorship for Baylor students' strong intellectual curiosity, which he called "incredibly positive." He highlighted their excellent questions. "Other kids want answers," he said. "These kids want to learn something."

**(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.)**

Teaching clearly continues to be a strength of the program. Students report that professors don't "spoon feed" them; they ask probing questions that force them to think. "Our creative abilities are ever expanding," one student said. "Professors are always pushing us to think outside the box."

In interviews, students say they feel their professors care about them and go above and beyond to be supportive. One student noted that his instructor responded to a request for help at 10 p.m. on a Saturday. Others describe professors who take interest in their lives and careers and who ask unprompted questions about internships and other activities.

Instructors routinely weave personal professional experience into their lectures, which students find engaging.

“It’s unbelievable what they do for us,” one student said. “They are always rooting for us to succeed. They make us feel like we can do anything.” Another commented that “we owe them our best because they are there for us.”

**News-Editorial:** Students are incorporating video into their work, and they are creating multimedia portfolios. Some are using tools such as Instagram to build their comfort level with interviewing. The multimedia labs (deemed “gorgeous” by one faculty member) house dozens of new Macs, and students say they are satisfied with the quality of the equipment available to them. One student with her sights set on broadcasting highlighted a need for more broadcast experience. “We’ve spent more time behind the camera than in front of it,” she said.

**Public Relations:** New course material in advertising management, digital advertising and strategic communications is under construction and is inspired by research one professor has done with industry and at other universities. Her engagement with the Public Relations Society of America strengthens her ability to weave current practitioners’ needs into class work, and use of social media and other current tools and technologies is woven into courses. In one observed PR Media Programming class, students reviewed several newer social forums, including Pinterest, Vine and Google+. Some faculty reported having difficulty adding courses they deem necessary. That challenge is attributed partly to a lack of teaching capacity, and partly to layers of approval that slow decision-making. “It’s easier to say no,” one lecturer noted.

**New Media:** Students are exposed to contemporary tools and technologies. Faculty note that it will be important to continue to build skills in contemporary tools in order to keep up with trends. Two of the three students who attended the New Media meeting were interested in still and video photography; the other student was interested in digital graphic design. They chose the New Media sequence because it enabled them to pursue their technological interests outside news-editorial.

Student and faculty awards are celebrated with postings and announcements in a variety of forums. The Department selects a dozen outstanding students each year as ambassadors; they host events such as the freshman open house, homecoming coffee and the annual spring journalism, PR and new media awards program. The awards program features top students who are inducted into the Kappa Tau Alpha hall of fame, as well as dozens of other Departmental student awards. Two students selected by the Department are nominated to the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences each year for recognition at the University-wide Honors Convocation. Students report feeling valued by program faculty.



**(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.\***

While JOURNAL 1303, Introduction to Mass Communications, includes dozens – if not hundreds – of students, most of the conceptual and skills courses are small. Students report class sizes of 15 or fewer (each lab has no more than 15 workstations), and highlight how easy it is to build relationships with professors.

**(e) The unit advocates and encourages opportunities for internship and other professional experiences outside the classroom and supervises and evaluates them when it awards academic credit. Schools may award academic credit for internships in fields related to journalism and mass communications, but credit should not exceed six semester credits (or nine quarter credit hours). Students may take up to two semester courses (or their quarter equivalent) at an appropriate professional organization where the unit can show ongoing and extensive dual supervision by the unit's faculty and professionals. Students may take up to three semester courses (or their quarter equivalent) at a professional media outlet owned and operated by the institution where full-time faculty are in charge and where the primary function of the media outlet is to instruct students.**

Students may earn three hours of internship credit twice for a total of six semester hours. Internships are required in the public-relations sequence. Baylor has memoranda of understanding with 178 approved internship sites, and more are added each semester, based on potential site and student interests.

An internship is one component of the Advanced PR course, in which the goal is for students to have "one foot in the classroom and one in the workplace." Students are required to work 10 hours per week for a total of 160 hours during the semester. More time working is encouraged, as an emphasis is placed on building practical experience. Work products are inspired by the National Communication Association's list of items that should be in entry-level and level II portfolios. Interns are expected to produce evidence of social media management and analytical skills, several multimedia visual storytelling products, and a research-to-integrated marketing campaign.

Students describe feeling “spoiled” by how easy it is to identify internship opportunities through the Department, noting that their friends at other universities have to work harder to track down jobs. During the site visit, one student visited her professor to share the news that she had just won a public affairs internship with NASA for which he had helped her apply. She said she wanted to tell him before even letting her family know, because he had been so instrumental in her success. The portfolios that result from the Advanced PR course differentiate candidates, one student said. “People get jobs based on the portfolios they build in class,” she said.

Processes and assessments for interns taking the class include: collaboratively created assessment of intern tasks; mid-term supervisor evaluation; instructor site visits with supervisor interviews; written intern testimonials; employer evaluations; faculty review of instructor; and alumni follow-up.

### **Summary**

The Baylor program does an exemplary job of preparing students with knowledge and relevant practical skills. The nature of student placement in jobs and internships, coupled with employer testimonials and first-hand observation, makes clear that graduates leave the program with strong fundamental and social skills. They know how to present themselves professionally, how to talk to people, how to tell stories, and how to think critically.

### **COMPLIANCE**

## PART II — Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness

*The unit has an inclusive program that values domestic and global diversity, and serves and reflects society.*

### **Unit performance with regard to indicators:**

- a) The unit has a written plan for achieving an inclusive curriculum, a diverse faculty and student population, and a supportive climate for working and learning and for assessing progress toward achievement of the plan. The diversity plan should focus on domestic minority groups and, where applicable, international groups. The written plan must include the unit's definition of diversity and identify the under-represented groups.**

The Department first adopted a diversity plan in 1996 and updated it in 2002 and 2007. In fall 2013 a diversity committee modified and adopted a strategic diversity plan for 2013-18. It focuses on faculty and student recruitment and retention, curriculum and community service. The plan has a number of strategies for sustaining or creating a diverse climate in the Department and goals for each of the five years of the plan. The new plan appears comprehensive and achievable if the Department is committed to following through.

- (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.**

A Department survey of whether faculty say they included "sensitivity to diversity issues" in the curriculum from 2011 to 2014 showed faculty reporting that diversity was a topic in about 70 percent of the class sections. But the Department's diversity committee's review of syllabi found that "in contrast to what faculty members reported, terms related to diversity appeared infrequently in course syllabi." The site team's review of syllabi for spring 2014 found a similar lack of diversity topics or assignments in the majority of syllabi. In fall 2014 several syllabi did contain the Department's and the University's diversity statements, but there was still little evidence from reading assignments or class exercises that gender, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation were topics integral to the courses. Students reported that those subjects tended to come up "organically" as they arose in the context of current events, but only a few cited examples of diversity issues as a planned part of classroom instruction.

There are notable exceptions, to be sure. Students frequently mentioned the Law and Ethics course as including diversity discussions and a Public Relations Programming class offers a service-learning component that gives students the opportunity to create campaigns for some of Waco's non-profit organizations that serve underprivileged populations. It is important to note that a few professors are keenly aware of the need for including diverse perspectives in curriculum discussions, but there is not persuasive

evidence that it's a practice across the Department. The Department made some effort to invite speakers with diverse perspectives to the Department, but in the list of 35 speakers cited, it is often not clear whether the speakers are themselves minorities or what topics they discussed in their presentations.

Overall, practical exercises addressing diverse populations do not seem to be the norm, and student comments reinforced that conclusion.

The chair created a diversity committee in 2012 that has been active recently, compiling the 2013-18 Baylor Journalism, PR and New Media Diversity Plan. The Department cites few accomplishments in diversity since the last site visit in 2009, though it lists several strategies for improving diversity in the next several years. Among them is offering a course in diversity, which would be available to students across the University. The Department had a course, Media and Minorities, at the time of the last site visit, but dropped it soon after when it could not attract a sufficient number of students.

As presented, the diversity plan appears to be more in response to looming reaccreditation than the continuation of a systematic plan for creating a more diverse environment in the 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 full-time faculty of 15 includes one full professor (the chair), three associate professors, two assistant professors, a lecturer who fills an endowed chair, six senior lecturers and one lecturer. Among tenure-track faculty, plus the endowed chair, five are women, two are men. Among full-time lecturers, five are men, three are women.

The full-time faculty is 7 percent minority, with one African-American female and one Latina female who was hired for a named professorship and began teaching in fall 2014. This is an improvement from the last site visit, when only one faculty member was an ethnic minority. All 11 part-time faculty are white, a decrease of 18 percent in adjunct faculty diversity in the last year.

The Department has undertaken several initiatives to recruit and retain female and minority faculty members and its efforts are yielding impressive results. It has advertised faculty openings in diverse publications, and search committee chairs have sought out female and minority applicants through professional contacts and interviews with prospective candidates at regional and national meetings. Chairs of two of the last three search committees have been minorities. As a result of their efforts, three of four faculty members who joined the Department in the last three years are women and one is a minority. Of special note are the Department's actions to fill a named professorship. The committee was dissatisfied with the applicant pool's size and lack of minority candidates

and was able to extend the search for a year, which resulted in the hiring of a Latina female, who joined the faculty in fall 2014.

Retention efforts toward full-time faculty have shown success, though the Department did lose one excellent female research faculty member to a distinguished university. A highly productive African-American female scholar has achieved tenure since the last reaccreditation, indicating that her research and teaching are supported and valued, not just in the Department but also in the University.

The Department provides a supportive climate for faculty and assigns senior faculty to mentor new faculty. With two exceptions, faculty have made good progress toward tenure. A male faculty member judged to lag significantly in research output was given a terminal contract. A productive female faculty member was denied tenure by the University president, after a positive recommendation from the University tenure committee, and left for another university. A female faculty member has had her tenure clock suspended, first for maternity leave, and almost immediately afterward, upon learning that she had contracted cancer. The Department chair and the faculty have been especially supportive, not only by delaying her tenure evaluation but also by stepping in to teach her classes. The administration has offered to find money, if needed, to pay faculty for a teaching overload.

Diversity and retention measures for adjunct faculty have not been as successful. The Department has 11 adjuncts, four of whom are women. None is a minority. It lost two minority adjuncts recently: a Latino male who left town to take a newspaper editorship elsewhere in Texas, and a female who became a student in the graduate program. Adjuncts are hired from a standing pool of applicants, typically filled by informal recruiting efforts. The Department cites a small pool of minority media professionals in the area as a barrier in hiring a more diverse adjunct pool.

**(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's enrollment is 84 percent female, 16 percent male, a ratio heavily influenced by the predominance of females in the public relations sequence, though females outnumber males in every major within the Department.

Minorities/international students make up about 26 percent of the Department's enrollment, a slight rise from six years ago. Within the University the minority enrollment totals 36 percent. The Department lags slightly behind the University (5.26 to 7.54) in percentage of African-Americans, and is on par with the University in Hispanic/Latino enrollment (13.57 to 13.85 percent), but has a much smaller Asian enrollment (.55 percent) than the University (6.43 percent).

Both Baylor and the Department enroll significantly fewer African-Americans and Latinos than are reflected in the population of the state of Texas, and slightly fewer Asian students than their percentage of the state population. The percentage of African-Americans in the Department, as compared to the state, is 5.26 against a state total of 12 percent. Latinos make up 36.7 percent of Texas residents and only 13.5 percent of the Department. The Asian population in Texas is 3.8 percent, versus .55 percent in the Department.

The Department states that its “strong minority retention rate within the journalism Department is attributable to strong mentoring, advising and counseling relationships with the faculty,” yet it only began to keep retention data one year ago. Its one year of data shows that from Fall ’12 through Fall ’13 it retained 94 percent of minority students enrolled in the Department, with 19 of 86 receiving a degree in that period.

The Department also states its goal is “to increase the number of majors and minors by 20 percent over each three-year period,” a lofty aspiration that comes with almost no recent track record of measures undertaken before the accreditation site-visit year. It has compiled a list of high schools in the state that have large minority populations and plans to send those schools recruiting brochures. There is no mention of past direct efforts to recruit high school students, though the Department states that it will visit high schools in the future.

The Department notes with pride that it gives a scholarship to every minority student who applies and who meets the University requirement of at least a 2.5 GPA, but by its own accounting it notes that a hurdle in recruiting and retaining minority students is the high cost of tuition at Baylor. As one faculty member noted, a scholarship of a few thousand dollars, while generous, barely begins to cover tuition and related expenses that exceed \$50,000 yearly. It has no scholarships exclusively for minority students.

Its other efforts are general and do not appear vigorous. For example, the Department cites faculty advisers to a poetry multicultural organization and a Hispanic fraternity as among its recruiting efforts. They also attend a yearly campus dinner for high-achieving minority students. The Department’s diversity plan lists several outcomes under its goal of increasing workplace and classroom diversity and inclusiveness, but each of the outcomes cited assistance given to students with physical disabilities, but no other type of diverse population.

Once students are enrolled in the Department, it does excellent outreach and mentoring. It assigns all minority students a faculty adviser, and supports students in the chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists by helping fund student travel to the NABJ national meetings. The college chapter, which recently received its official charter, began a mentoring program with area professionals, but the Department notes that it has been difficult to sustain.

The staff of the student newspaper, *The Lariat*, is more diverse than the population in the Department and includes students from a variety of majors. Faculty do try to recruit

talented Lariat staff who are non-majors to the Department, with some success. And students report that mentoring of Lariat staff in general is particularly excellent.

Two faculty members have been recipients of University-wide diversity awards, one for his dedication to the Black Gospel Music Restoration Project, the subject of two books he has undertaken. The other award honored a female minority faculty member cited as “a tireless worker on behalf of diversity in both academia and in the mainstream world, a living, breathing example of acceptance, and a real inspiration to many of us.”

**(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.**

The Department has a collegial faculty that cares deeply about its students, who in turn admire and feel close to faculty. Students and faculty of all ethnicities are valued and those with special needs are accommodated to lengths not often found in other schools.

No gender or race-related grievances have been filed in the Department since its last reaccreditation.

## **Summary**

The Department’s minority cohort has remained essentially constant since the last accreditation, and it has doubled its minority faculty with the hiring this fall of a Latina professor. The full-time faculty is 53.3 percent female, 46.7 percent male; the chair appointed in fall 2013 is the first female in that position since the Department’s founding in 1927. The directors of undergraduate and of graduate studies are also women. The new Diversity Plan, if more than a statement to meet the obligations of accreditation, will position the Department to enhance its diversity and inclusivity. However, it could have executed its aspirations in more meaningful ways. Diversity topics do not appear in many faculty syllabi and students we met are frequently at a loss to cite instances in which diversity is built into the curriculum. The high cost of attending the University makes it difficult to recruit minority students. It would be advisable to partner with the University or private donors on strategies to overcome that hurdle. All of that said, there is little doubt the Department recognizes the value of diversity in its many forms. It is on a positive path.

## **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 Department of Journalism, Public Relations and New Media follows the Baylor Faculty Handbook and the University Personnel Policy Manual in selecting and evaluating faculty. It adheres to EEO guidelines in hiring but invokes the religion exemption in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act to discriminate on religious grounds in hiring personnel. The manual clearly outlines the procedures for hiring faculty and includes consultation between the faculty and Department chair. A faculty search committee makes recommendations to the dean, who offers the name of the preferred candidate to the provost, who makes final hiring decisions.

Policies for evaluating faculty are also clearly stated, and Department policies on promotion and tenure expand on the University protocols and provide specificity that clearly guides tenure-track faculty as they work toward career advancement. Teaching, scholarship/creative activity and University services are all evaluated.

Students are involved in all faculty evaluations by filling out online questionnaires for each instructor. The University summarizes the results of each class by computer and compares the professor's statistics with those of other professors. Results are reviewed by the faculty member and also by the chair to come up with plans for improvement where needed. Both full- and part-time faculty must be evaluated. The student evaluations become part of the record for retention, tenure and promotion. All full-time faculty are evaluated each year, using a detailed process outlined in faculty handbooks.

Tenure recommendations are made by a 13-member University-wide tenure committee comprising members appointed by the University president and by the Faculty Senate. The University provost makes final tenure decisions. The University's tenure policy is supplemented by the Department's tenure policy, updated in 2008-09 after revisions of the University's tenure policy. It addresses teaching, scholarship and service expectations in detail. A major change by the Department was an increase in the number of journal articles and conference presentations expected of a successful tenure candidate. University policy on promotion in rank is likewise explicit and detailed.

The Department has 15 full-time faculty: seven tenured or on tenure-track or with the rank of distinguished professor, and eight designated as senior lecturers or lecturers. It employs a varying number of adjuncts: eight in spring 2014 and 11 in fall 2014.

The full-time faculty has primary responsibility for instruction, teaching between 80 and 90 percent of the course offerings. Tenured faculty are expected to teach a 3-3 load, while tenure-track faculty are given teaching relief and teach 2-2. Lecturers teach a 4-4 course



load, with adjuncts hired to teach a single course a semester. The Department chair typically has a 2-1 course commitment and the graduate studies director is assigned a 3-2 load, though the current director, who is the Department's most prolific researcher, has had her load reduced to 2-2 to give her more time for research, growing the graduate program and aiding and assessing the Department's diversity efforts.

**b) 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.**

Eight of the 14 full-time faculty members employed in the 2013-14 school year had doctoral degrees. All but one of the remainder have master's degrees and the lecturer without a master's is working toward one. He was hired on the basis of his extensive professional experience to teach photography and video journalism. All full-time faculty members and all adjunct faculty members have extensive professional experience in journalism or a related communications field. Three of the senior lecturers have Ph.D.s.

The faculty is able to take advantage of academic and professional opportunities through an annual allocation of up to \$3,000 for tenured and tenure-track faculty. The Department reports that no faculty member has been refused a trip for academic or professional reasons.

**c) The unit regularly evaluates instruction, using multiple measures that include student input.**

Instruction is evaluated for every course taught by every professor. Students are asked two weeks before the end of the term to fill out online evaluations. Acceptable teaching performance is measured on those instruments by a positive rating from at least 80 percent of the students. Peer teaching evaluations are also conducted and a faculty member must receive a rating of "very good" for at least three semesters prior to a tenure application.

At the time of the third-year pre-tenure review and at the final application for tenure, the Department assesses the competence of students who learned with the faculty member. A faculty member looks at jobs and internships held by students who had classes with the faculty member under review and interviews both the students and their employers regarding their preparation for professional work. At least five such interviews are conducted and the faculty member may also suggest alumni to be consulted.

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

Faculty from other disciplines were enthusiastic about the quality of the Journalism program. They praised the students, particularly those they have contact with through

student media, but also those in their classes. They said Department faculty make important contributions to the life of the University by serving on committees and are admired for their scholarship and publication records.

### **Summary**

This is a faculty admired by its colleagues across campus and its students. Representatives of the Center for Spatial Research and of the Medical Humanities were especially impressed by the expertise of faculty members who collaborate with them. Both the University and the Department have detailed procedures for evaluating teaching and scholarship and those policies are adhered to. All faculty have good professional and academic credentials and have made concerted efforts to keep current with changes in the media.

### **COMPLIANCE**

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

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

### **Unit performance with regard to indicators:**

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

The Department policy on tenure recommends that tenure-track faculty members devote 50 percent of their time to research, which can focus on academic inquiry or professional practice that gains knowledge transferrable to the classroom. Annual negotiations with the Department chair determine each faculty member's workload and focus. To guide faculty members, the University uses the Boyer categories of scholarly activity, which the Department believes correlate with its expectations of faculty for research pursuits.

Money for research assistance and travel to conferences is readily available and most faculty members have used it to support their research efforts and to travel to present papers and enhance research efforts. Several faculty members have been recognized for their research, internally through grants, awards and sabbaticals, and nationally through fellowships and awards for research excellence.

Scholarship expectations fall primarily on the tenure-track faculty, though lecturers are expected to produce some scholarship in the first five years of their employment. Overall, the faculty has a good level of scholarship productivity, especially considering that one assistant professor has been on medical leave, a second is new to the faculty, and the chair's research productivity is reduced by her administrative load.

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

The Department's tenure guidelines, as well as University policy regarding research, teaching and service, are clearly spelled out in policy manuals, faculty handbooks and Department policies on scholarship. The Department's is especially detailed, citing examples of acceptable activity, and an enumeration of the number of peer-reviewed articles, papers, exhibits and types of publications that are acceptable.

#### **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 Department tenure policy uses a section titled Scholarship of Application to recognize that professional activities are equally valued when appropriate to the faculty members' area of research and teaching. It states: "In a professional field, applying

scholarly knowledge to the field and experiencing the present state of professional practice are both critical to teaching and scholarship. ...We hold writing, designing, or creating artwork for professional publication, both in print or online, as part of the scholarship of application. The selection of the faculty member's work by the editor or publisher or jury panel will constitute peer-review of this work."

**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.**

In 2002 the Baylor University board of regents announced its intention to seek Tier One research status for the University and altered its historical emphasis on teaching to focus more on a research-intensive agenda for all faculty. The Department has responded to that charge by hiring faculty with research track records or a clearly defined research agenda and a demonstrated commitment to teaching. Each year every faculty member must submit a summary of activities for the last calendar year that addresses in detail faculty members' record of teaching, research and service.

The Department's research output is impressive. Most of the expectations for research productivity fall on the assistant and associate professors, and they have delivered. Since the last site visit the Department has lost a productive researcher to Elon University, and one assistant professor's tenure clock has been suspended due to maternity leave and a subsequent cancer diagnosis. Yet the output as a whole has been good and markedly so from one associate professor. Additionally, though full-time lecturers do not have research obligations, several do publish in both refereed and professional outlets, make academic presentations and produce creative works.

### **Summary**

The Department has clear criteria for acceptable scholarship and creative activity. Faculty fulfill their obligations in both areas and are secure in knowing their professional and scholarly work is valued by colleagues and rewarded by the current administration.

### **COMPLIANCE**

## PART II – Standard 6: Student Services

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

### **Unit performance with regard to indicators:**

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

The number of faculty serving as academic advisers in the Department has gone from six to three since the last site visit. At the same time, this semester the College of Arts and Sciences is instituting a new approach to academic advising, combining a robust online degree-audit system with a professional adviser for every freshman, sophomore and transfer student. Students in the program will be assigned a mentor in their respective departments for career counseling.

The Department anticipates that most students, including juniors and seniors, will continue to seek career advice from faculty, regardless of requirements. In interviews, students highlighted how much individual attention they receive from faculty. One pointed out that her adviser was “honest beyond what was expected” and tailored recommendations to her style of learning. Students said faculty are true coaches and ask them about what they want to do in order to ensure that this is a conversation about interests and aptitudes, not simply a discussion about practical requirements.

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

This is clearly a strength. The site team witnessed a parade of students visiting professors, and it’s clear that many are comfortable simply dropping in. Several faculty offices open onto common areas, including the multimedia lab, increasing their accessibility. Students note that faculty routinely share their mobile phone numbers and “don’t work on a clock,” encouraging phone calls whenever contact is needed. The site team heard many stories about professors’ responsiveness to phone calls and e-mails at all hours.

Students point out that professors are available and supportive, regardless of whether students are seeking help with a course they are teaching. In one example, a photography professor stayed at a student’s side to coach her on technique and to help perfect production details until after midnight, when she finally finished producing a public-service announcement for an assignment in someone else’s class.

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

Digital tools are enabling a growing range of options. In addition to using a master e-mail list of all journalism students, the Department now regularly populates Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn with information about job, scholarship and internship opportunities, as well as special speakers and events, and relevant news and happenings in the profession. Glass cases in the hallway serve as a posting area for information about graduate school, scholarships, internships and jobs. Postings include references to student accomplishments, such as scholarship wins, academic honors and procurement of work.

Student-produced Departmental newsletters (*The Castellaw Connection* and the internship publication) are another mechanism with which to share announcements, and faculty share information about Departmental activities and updates in classes.

Students indicate that they feel well informed.

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

*The Lariat*, the four-day-a-week newspaper, and *The Round Up* yearbook are once again part of the Department after having been put under the direction of an independent student publications board in 2000. The publications again came under the umbrella of the Department in 2009. Student publications, which also include television broadcast news and expanded multimedia, have a three-person professional staff and a 28-person paid student staff. The bulk of student staff are journalism majors.

Students also produce newsletters for minority student organizations such as NABJ and NAHJ.

About 60 students per semester develop media programming, promotional videos and public relations plans for local nonprofits. This gives them the opportunity to build their skills while giving these institutions a voice to expand their efforts.

**(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 Department's self-study indicates that no hard data on its student retention existed before spring 2013. It recently worked with the University's Institutional Research & Testing group to complete a five-year retention and graduation study, and has a standing order in place to update the information annually. Some of those results began appearing on the website in summer 2013.

The 2013 study revealed that in 2012-13, 85.3 percent of undergraduates were still enrolled in the Department after one year. That was down slightly from 88.6 percent in 2011-12, and from 94.4 percent in 2010-11.

In interviews, students indicated that it isn't difficult to finish the program within four years. They report having access to the courses they need, and to having good advice about what to take. According to the study, the five-year average of students who finish their degree within four years was 68.4 percent. The five-year average for students who finish their degree within five years was 77.6 percent. The five-year average for students who finish their degree within six years was 77.7 percent.

Students told numerous stories about faculty efforts to help them identify and win scholarships. One individual said that, after she told the Department that financial difficulties were forcing her to leave the University for a period of time, more than one professor began making calls and doing research to track down enough aid money to keep her in school. In 2013-14, 204 students in the program received \$1.8 million in institutional scholarship dollars, and 77 students received \$201,064 in scholarship funds controlled by the Department. All of those figures had risen from 2012-13.

The Department does not have a minimum grade point average but does limit the number of times a student can retake Departmental exams and take several core courses without passing. The University generally requires a 2.0 grade point average, and students applying for Department scholarships must have at least a 2.5 GPA. Nearly all of the Department's scholarship recipients have a GPA of 3.0 or higher.

## **Summary**

All indications are that supporting and mentoring students is a high priority – and considerable strength – of this program. Through their attention and availability, faculty members demonstrate genuine care for students and an investment in their success. Students are eager to sing the praises of their professors, who they say “know we can be better” and provide “super-human” support while pushing them to improve and prompting them to think.

## **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 chair reviews requests from the faculty and prepares and submits an annual and a three-year budget to the College of Arts and Sciences. The chair meets with the divisional dean of the College to review the budget request. The dean of the College, the provost and the president discuss and determine the budget.

- (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.**

An argument for a possible merger between the Department of Journalism, Public Relations and New Media and the Department of Communication, according to the self-study, is that, because they would have 815 majors between them, they “would jointly have strength and clout we don't have individually now.” A source of this concern seems to be the University's increased investment in recent years in STEM fields, perhaps at the expense of the social and behavioral sciences and the arts and humanities. The College's divisional dean told the site team, however, that the assumption that more students means more power is misguided, at least within the College.

From 2011-12 to 2014-15, the Department's budget rose from \$1,220, 831 to \$1,287,681, an increase of 5.4 percent.

The chair and the faculty report that the College and the University have met most of the Department's requests. Five vacant faculty lines have been filled over the past six years.

The Department has a number of endowed scholarships and awards more than \$200,000 in scholarships annually. It has also received gifts to its excellence fund, which it has used for equipment and faculty development.

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

The Department and student publications occupy the second floor of the Castellaw Communications Center. The faculty teach in seven classrooms and computer labs. To ensure class sizes of no more than 15 students in skills courses, the three computer labs have 15 workstations and an instructor's workstation each. The classrooms for other



courses are smart classrooms with overhead projection. Baylor University's policy is to try to hold all classes to no more than 19 students.

The second floor has a somewhat antiseptic feel, with linoleum-covered, narrow corridors and few windows. Classrooms are efficient. Offices are compact and mainly windowless. An exception is *The Lariat's* newsroom, which is spacious and windowed. Storage space is cramped. It is a place for work more than for reflection. It is not a place for loitering. No faculty member or student complained.

**(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.**

Faculty report that their requests for upgrading computer hardware and software and for acquiring still and video cameras for the most part have been met. The Mac computers in labs and in *The Lariat* Newsroom and *The Round Up* yearbook offices are up-to-date and have the most current versions of Adobe Creative Suite and Microsoft Office programs. Three printers are available to students.

Students report that they have ready access to the computers after class and can check out professional-grade cameras and lenses. They said the equipment they use in class and campus media compares favorably with the equipment they encounter on professional internships.

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

Faculty and students have digital access to the publications and information sources relevant to their academic and professional interests.

## **Summary**

The Department has been able to fill vacant lines over the past six years and to sustain a full-time faculty of 15. It has excellent computer and camera equipment. If not inviting or inspiring, the building is efficient. But it is stretched to cover the Department's present program for 350 majors. To achieve its aspirations for strengthening its visual and broadcast courses, it will need a fully equipped television studio. The development of the visual and broadcast curriculum is likely to increase the number of majors. The second floor of the Castellaw Communications Center will be pressed to squeeze them in.

## **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 Department uses Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn extensively to update and engage alumni and others on achievements and opportunities. The Department reports that Baylor alumni frequently reach out with a desire to hire more Baylor graduates. Students indicate that professors routinely put them in contact with alumni who work for companies – or in locations – that they’re interested in.

Emily Callahan, director of communications at St. Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital, participated with other alumni in a conference call to assess the Department’s PR curriculum. Charles Poe, executive vice president of the Smithsonian Network, and John Pluhowski, vice president of eBay, have spoken to students. All are prospects for a revitalized advisory council that has yet to take shape.

One professor recently applied a teaching grant to observing the treatment of advertising and public relations at several other institutions, including the University of Missouri and Texas Christian University.

- (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.**

Faculty activities outside the Department include presentations on topics such as “Service Learning in a New Media Environment,” “Representation of the Feminine Mystique on the Web: A Look at Pinterest Pins,” “Rap Music and the Feminist Perspective,” and “Reigniting Your Creativity Through Personal Projects.” Forums include podcasts, lectures elsewhere on campus and keynote speeches in contexts such as meetings of the National Association of Black Journalists and the College Media Association. Two faculty members co-presented on contemporary approaches to teaching public relations at the 2012 national conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

The Department's chair measures the effectiveness of its advising a couple of ways. The number of requests for petitions to the dean's office for a variance on academic standards is one indicator. So is the number of students who have fewer than 130 hours on their transcripts. Because just 124 hours are needed to graduate, strong advising should enable students to choose wisely and take only the most relevant courses.

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

Faculty members are active in PRSA, NABJ, NAHJ, SPJ and other industry associations. The Department's self study notes that "no one has ever been refused a trip for academic or professional reasons," and that faculty have used grants to attend conferences and workshops at The Poynter Institute and elsewhere.

Up to \$3,000 is available annually to tenure-track and tenured faculty for academic and professional pursuits. While one senior lecturer said that he has been given every opportunity to participate in industry activities, another suggested that training and professional-development opportunities are more limited for other members of the faculty.

**(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.**

Curriculum, syllabi and student testimonials indicate that a focus on nonprofit work and service learning infuses the Department's course work. In interviews, PR students shared their pride in providing communications services to organizations such as Friends for Life and Meals on Wheels. They craft informational brochures, public-service announcements and promotional videos, among other tools, and develop portfolios of their work in the process of serving their community. "Our work is actually being used," one student said. "These aren't fake brochures."

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

The self-study lists dozens of guest lectures over the past three years, including news anchors, an expert in black liturgical worship, a graduate student from Cameroon, and an opinion-page editor who discussed opportunities and challenges for female journalists. One program featured Chris Tomlinson, descendant of a slave owner at the Tomlinson Hill plantation just south of Waco, who spoke about his documentary (with partner Lisa Kaselak) detailing the white and black Tomlinsons who emerged from the plantation. Juan Williams, former NPR reporter and current Fox News political analyst, visited with classes and *Lariat* editors.

Numerous students enrolled in the PR sequence work with local school districts to develop communication campaigns, and the Department's relationships with those districts lead to regular engagement with high school journalism students. Students regularly tour the Baylor Student Publications area. Since 2011, two Department professors have been attending conferences of the Texas Association of Journalism Educators and Interscholastic League Press Association.

Through the SPJ chapter, the program's faculty and students regularly administer and judge high school journalism contests. In 2009 and 2010, one faculty member designed and implemented a two-week Digital Divas summer camp for girls ages 11-17.

### **Summary**

The evidence suggests that the Department fully embraces Baylor's values around service, with faculty actively engaged in serving students, the community and the profession. Students demonstrate enthusiasm for their work with – and exposure to – parts of society that they might not otherwise encounter. The fact that they are able to build their communications skills while helping charitable organizations advance their missions is noteworthy.

### **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:**

This is the only standard the 2008 site team judged out of compliance. That finding imposes a special obligation for rigorous scrutiny on the 2014 site team.

Assured analysis of the Department's assessment program is a challenge. The written plan listing 12 direct and indirect measures does not include the date of adoption. Although the Department reports on activities from 2007 to the present, the focus seems to be on activities in the last two years. For example, it says it has used principles and processes outlined in ACEJMC's "Guide to Assessment of Student Learning in Journalism and Mass Communication" (2012) and shifted its measurement criteria to ACEJMC's list of professional values and competencies as revised in 2012. Some faculty members told the team the Department did nothing in assessment for about four years after the 2008 site visit. The chair says that's not accurate. The report includes as direct and indirect measures of learning outcomes evaluation of teaching effectiveness and allocation of faculty time in courses to each learning outcome. Finally, the report includes as forms of "closing the loop," changes in curriculum and courses influenced by professional and alumni advice about changes in professional practice because of developments in digital, multimedia technologies. They are not obviously the result of findings from assessment of learning outcomes.

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

The Department began its assessment program in 2007, naming its adaptation of ACEJMC's professional values and competencies, the "Big 12." In 2012, the Department collapsed these values and competencies into eight "curriculum silos." In 2007 and in 2012, the Department used these lists to guide the faculty's definition of learning outcomes in required and elective courses.

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

The Department's plan in the self-study (undated) lists 12 direct and indirect assessment measures. Of these, core course departmental exams, portfolio review, and intern supervisor reviews are familiar to ACEJMC-accredited programs as potential direct or indirect measures of learning outcomes. Other measures evaluate important dimensions of the instructional process, some of which apply in other standards.

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

The Department has been reporting the results of its departmental exams annually. It has summarized the evaluations of intern supervisors and of portfolio reviewers. These findings give insight into students' mastery of some ACEJMC competencies, but without the specificity more effectively constructed forms would produce.

The report documents actions to upgrade and improve curriculum, but so mixes the wisdom of professional and alumni experience in journalism and communication with the results of measures of learning outcomes that it is difficult to analyze the specific impact of assessment on curricular improvement.

**(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 report is replete with accounts of interactions, formal and informal, structured and unstructured, between the Department, faculty members, students and alumni.

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

The Department has involved professionals most directly in the assessment of portfolios.

## **Summary**

The impression of heightened activity as the self-study and site visit loomed is hard to shake. The impression that, under these circumstances, throwing everything evaluative into the mix of measures and activities to demonstrate to the site team that assessment is going on is also hard to shake. Clearly assessment of learning outcomes in some form has been going on annually. Clearly actions to develop and improve curriculum have occurred, and the findings on student knowledge and competence have contributed. The team's judgment that enough assessment and actions for improvement have occurred to warrant compliance is complemented with the advice that the assessment program needs the collective engagement of the faculty guided by an experienced practitioner of assessment in ACEJMC.

## **COMPLIANCE**

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

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

##### Strengths

A faculty devoted to students and their preparation for successful careers

Effective integration of digital and social media into appropriate courses

A collegial and collaborative faculty

Excellent opportunities for practice in campus media and an array of internships

An impressive record in student competitions and in placement after graduation

##### Weaknesses

An insufficient commitment to diversifying the faculty and student body and for preparing students across many courses to live and work in a multiracial, multicultural society

An underdeveloped curriculum in visual and broadcast media

An insufficiently focused program of assessment of student learning outcomes

An uncertain system of faculty participation in discussion and decisions

A cramped, second-floor facility that does not enable an environment of out-of-class interaction and development and will not accommodate an increase in enrollment

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

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

The Department must address the weaknesses identified in meeting ACEJMC's expectations in diversity and assessment of learning outcomes.

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

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

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

In 2008, the Department was judged out of compliance with Standard 9. It continued its annual application of departmental exams and strengthened its use of the evaluations of internship supervisors and of professional reviews of portfolios. The Department must focus its program on assessment of learning outcomes separate from evaluation of other departmental and faculty activity.

**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 created the impression that the Department had collected much of the information and statistics only in the year before the site visit rather than gathering and using that information annually to improve instruction, administration and student services.