

Report of On-Site Evaluation

ACEJMC
Undergraduate program
2014–2015

Name of Institution: California State University, Fullerton

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Mildred Garcia, President

Name of Unit: Department of Communications

Name and Title of Administrator: Jason Shepard, Chair

Date of 2014 - 2015 Accrediting Visit: February 8-11, 2015

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

Date of the previous accrediting visit: November 2008

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Reaccreditation

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Reaccreditation

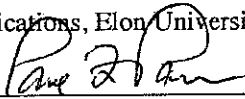
Recommendation by 2014 - 2015 Visiting Team: Reaccreditation

Prepared and submitted by:

Team Chair

Paul Parsons, Dean
School of Communications, Elon University

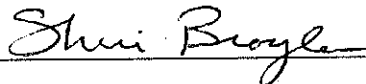
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Team Members

Sheri Broyles, Professor
Mayborn School of Journalism, University of North Texas

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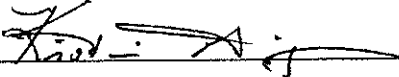
Peter Debreceeny, Consultant
Gagen MacDonald, Chicago

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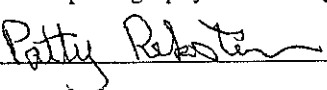
Kristin Gilger, Associate Dean, Professional Programs
Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Arizona State University

Signature _____



Patty Reksten, freelance
Former director of photography at the Oregonian, Portland

Signature _____



PART I: General information

Name of Institution: California State University, Fullerton

Name of Unit: Department of Communications

Year of Visit: 2015

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

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

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

- Private
- Public
- Other (specify)

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

California State University, Fullerton was chartered in 1957 as Orange State College, later changed to California State College, Fullerton in 1971. The individual California State Colleges were brought together as part of the California Master Plan for Higher Education, codified by the *Donohue Higher Education Act of 1960*. In 1972, the system became The California State University, now comprised of 23 campuses located throughout the state. Responsibility for The California State University is vested in the Board of Trustees, whose members are appointed by the governor. The trustees appoint the chancellor, who is the chief executive officer of the system, and the presidents, who are the chief executive officers of the respective campuses.

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: November 16-19, 2008

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

The Department of Communications was first accredited in 1971.

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

The mission of the department states:

Effective ethical communications are essential for the well being of a democratic society. Thus, there is a need for persons trained in the theory and practice of informing, instructing, and persuading through communications media. The educational goals of the programs leading to the Bachelor of Arts in Communications are to:

- Ensure that all majors are exposed to a broad liberal education;
- Provide majors with a clear understanding and a global perspective of the role of communications media in society; and
- Prepare majors desiring communications-related careers in the mass media, business, government, and education by educating them in depth on one of the specialized concentrations within the department.

The mission statement was approved by the faculty on May 8, 2002.

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Semesters of 15 weeks

Quarters of _____ weeks

Summer sessions of 5 or 8 weeks

Intersessions of 4 weeks

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

Four-year program leading to Bachelor's degree

Graduate work leading to Master's degree

Graduate work leading to Ph.D. degree

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

Bachelor of Arts in Communications

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

120 semester credit hours

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

3 units for the required COMM 495 Internship; 3 units for English 498, which counts as an upper-division elective.

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

The department offers one undergraduate degree, a Bachelor of Arts in Communications. Students must select a concentration from the following:

Advertising
Entertainment and Tourism Studies
Journalism
Photocommunications
Public Relations

All majors and concentrations are supervised by department chair Jason Shepard.

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

California State University, Fullerton enrolled 38,100 students in Fall 2014.

14. Number of undergraduate majors in the unit, by sequence and total (if the unit has pre-major students, list them as a single total):

<u>Name of Sequence or Specialty</u>	<u>Undergraduate majors (Fall 2014)</u>
Public Relations	740
Journalism	414
Entertainment and Tourism Studies	373
Advertising	379
Photocommunications	53
Nondeclared	222
Total	2181

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.

Skills Course Enrollments, Spring Semester, 2015

<i>Course Number</i>	<i>Section</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Enrollment</i>
101	01	Writing for Mass Media	19
101	02	Writing for Mass Media	19
101	03	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	04	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	05	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	06	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	07	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	08	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	09	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	10	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	11	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	12	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	13	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	14	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	15	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	16	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	17	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	18	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	19	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	20	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	21	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	22	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	81	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	82	Writing for Mass Media	20
101	83	Writing for Mass Media	19
101	84	Writing for Mass Media	19
201	01	Reptg for Mass Media I	20
201	02	Reptg for Mass Media I	22
201	03	Reptg for Mass Media I	20
202	01	Reptg for Mass Media II	20
202	02	Reptg for Mass Media II	20
202	03	Reptg for Mass Media II	20
301	01	Writng for Broadcast & Flm	20
301	02	Writng for Broadcast & Flm	19

301	03	Writing for Broadcast & Film	19
301	04	Writing for Broadcast & Flm	19
301	80	Writing for Broadcast & Flm	20
317	01	Digital Foundations	20
317	02	Digital Foundations	20
317	03	Digital Foundations	20
317	04	Digital Foundations	20
317	05	Digital Foundations	19
317	06	Digital Foundations	19
317	07	Digital Foundations	20
317	08	Digital Foundations	20
325	01	Multimedia Journalism	13
332	01	Editing and Design	20
332	02	Editing and Design	20
334	01	Feature Article Writing	20
334	02	Feature Article Writing	19
334	03	Feature Article Writing	20
334	04	Feature Article Writing	20
334	05	Feature Article Writing	18
334	06	Feature Article Writing	18
334	81	Feature Article Writing	9
351	01	Writing for Adv Industry	20
351	02	Writing for Adv Industry	20
351	03	Writing for Adv Industry	20
351	04	Writing for Adv Industry	20
351	05	Writing for Adv Industry	19
351	81	Writing for Adv Industry	20
353	01	Creative Stratgy & Executn I	20
353	02	Creative Stratgy & Executn I	19
353	03	Creative Stratgy & Executn I	18
353	04	Creative Stratgy & Executn I	20
353	81	Creative Stratgy & Executn I	11
362	01	Public Relations Writing I	20
362	02	Public Relations Writing I	20
362	03	Public Relations Writing I	20
362	04	Public Relations Writing I	20
362	05	Public Relations Writing I	20
362	81	Public Relations Writing I	20
372	01	TV News Production	20
372	02	TV News Production	20
372	03	TV News Production	20
372	04	TV News Production	20
380	01	Interactive Media Design	20

380	02	Interactive Media Design	20
409	01	Adv Visual Reporting	8
434	01	Magazine Editing and Productn Advanced Studio	15
421	01	Photography	10
435	01	Opinion Writing	18
436	01	Report Entertain Industry	20
438T	01	Specialized Reporting	9
455	01	Internet Ad & Promo Comm	25
462	01	Public Relations Writing II	16
471	01	News Media Production	31*
472	01	Advanced Electronic News	20
472	02	Advanced Electronic News	20
472	03	Advanced Electronic News	17
472	04	Advanced Electronic News	17
481	01	Adv Interactive Media Design	10
481	02	Adv Interactive Media Design	10

*News Media Production is the class of staff writers for the *Daily Titan* newspaper and website, and the is the equivalent of two classes for the instructor.

Online Skills Course Enrollments, Spring Semester, 2015

317	51	Digital Foundations	20
317	52	Digital Foundations	20
362	51	Public Relations Writing I	20
362	52	Public Relations Writing I	20

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

\$3,380,425 is allocated for salaries and operations.

Percent increase or decrease in three years:

This is a 1.85% increase in three years.

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

\$2,406,428 is allocated for full-time faculty salaries.

17. List name and rank of all full-time faculty. (Full-time faculty refers to those defined as such by the university.) Identify those not teaching because of leaves, sabbaticals, etc.

In the Spring 2015 semester, the Department of Communications has 17 tenured faculty (two of them on one-year leaves), four tenure-track faculty and seven lecturers. Five faculty emeriti are participating in the Faculty Early Retirement Program (FERP), and they teach two classes per semester after retirement.

Tenured Faculty:

1. Carol Ames, Associate Professor
2. Genelle Belmas, Associate Professor (on one-year leave)
3. Jeffrey Brody, Professor
4. xtine burrough, Associate Professor
5. Carolyn Coal, Associate Professor
6. Anthony Fellow, Professor
7. Brent Foster, Associate Professor
8. Kuen-Hee Ju-Pak, Professor
9. Dean Kazoleas, Professor
10. Cindy King, Professor
11. Paul Lester, Professor
12. Gail Love, Associate Professor
13. Henry Puente, Associate Professor
14. Jason Shepard, Associate Professor and Chair
15. Andi Stein, Professor
16. Doug Swanson, Professor
17. Mark Wu, Associate Professor (on one-year leave)

Tenure-Track Faculty:

18. Jim Collison, Assistant Professor
19. Micheal McAlexander, Associate Professor
20. Jeusun Kim, Assistant Professor
21. Emily Erickson, Assistant Professor

Full-Time Lecturers:

22. Pam Caldwell, Lecturer
23. Tom Clanin, Lecturer
24. Pete Evanow, Lecturer
25. Dennis Gaschen, Lecturer
26. Beth Georges, Lecturer
27. Waleed Rashidi, Lecturer
28. Bonnie Stewart, Lecturer

Faculty Emeriti participating in Faculty Early Retirement Program:

29. David DeVries, Professor Emeriti*
30. Coral Ohl, Professor Emeriti*
31. Edgar Trotter, Professor Emeriti*
32. Diane Witmer, Professor Emeriti*
33. Fred Zandpour, Professor Emeriti*

**Faculty emeriti participating in the Faculty Early Retirement Program (FERP) teach two courses per semester.*

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.)

Spring 2015 Part-Time Instructors

1. Assaf Avni
2. Marc Ballon
3. Davis Barber
4. Emily Barnes
5. Erik Blair
6. Mark Boster
7. Debra Conkey
8. Ian Crockett
9. Roxanne Garzon
10. Tim Greenwood
11. Monica Gutierrez
12. John Hart
13. Eva Hedger
14. Paul Hodgins
15. John Hollon
16. Jon Howell
17. Keith Kesler
18. Michelle Kurland
19. Anne Lajeunesse
20. Marie Loggia-Kee
21. Henry Mendoza
22. John Millerd
23. Holly Ocasio-Rizzo
24. Mel Opotowsky
25. Mariusz Ozminkowski
26. Robert Quezada
27. Ron Romain
28. Jeff Rowe
29. Steve Scauzillo
30. Sue Schenkel
31. Gregg Schwenk
32. Tatiana Servin
33. Brian Song
34. Bill Thompson
35. Robert Walls
36. Tynesha Williams
37. Carla Yarbough

Fall 2014 Part-Time Instructors

1. Assaf Avni
2. Marc Ballon
3. Davis Barber
4. Emily Barnes
5. Erik Blair
6. Ricardo Chavira
7. Debra Conkey
8. Ian Crockett
9. Irv Cuevas
10. Tim Greenwood
11. John Hart
12. Eva Hedger
13. Paul Hodgins
14. John Hollon
15. Vikram Jolly
16. Kathleen Kaiser
17. Keith Kesler
18. Michelle Kurland
19. Anne Lajeunesse
20. Donna Lamar
21. Marie Loggia-Kee
22. Marc Martin
23. Henry Mendoza
24. John Millerd
25. Mina Obeyd
26. Holly Ocasio-Rizzo
27. Mel Opotowsky
28. Mariusz Ozminkowski
29. Anthony Pinto
30. Robert Quezada
31. Ron Romain
32. Jeff Rowe
33. Sue Schenkel
34. Gregg Schwenk
35. Brian Song
36. Bill Thompson
37. Robert Walls
38. Gabrielle Windsor

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>684</u>	<u>684</u>	100
2012-2013 academic year	<u>826</u>	<u>826</u>	100

PART II — Standard 1: Mission, Governance and Administration

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The Department of Communications at California State University, Fullerton is the academic home to about 2,200 students, making it one of the largest communications programs in the United States. It is the second-largest department at the university (behind only Business Administration) and is part of the College of Communications along with two other departments: Radio-Television-Film and Human Communication Studies.

The Department of Communications began in 1961 and was first accredited by ACEJMC in 1971. The department has 33 full-time faculty and 38 part-time faculty in the media-rich Los Angeles area. Students choose among five concentrations: Public Relations (740 majors), Journalism (414), Advertising (379), Entertainment and Tourism Communications (373) and Photocommunications (53), with the remainder undeclared. All students earn a B.A. in Communications. The department also offers an M.A. in Communication. Only the B.A. program is going through accreditation review.

The university system itself is a colossus. The California State University system is the largest public university system in the United States and consists of 23 campuses. Cal State Fullerton is the largest of those, with more than 38,000 students. The vast majority of students (98 percent) are from California, and students classified as low-income comprise more than 40 percent of the student body.

The mission of the department says, “Effective ethical communications are essential for the well being of a democratic society. Thus, there is a need for persons trained in the theory and practice of informing, instructing, and persuading through communications media. The educational goals of the programs leading to the Bachelor of Arts in Communications are to:

- Ensure that all majors are exposed to a broad liberal education;
- Provide majors with a clear understanding and a global perspective of the role of communications media in society; and
- Prepare majors desiring communications-related careers in the mass media, business, government, and education by educating them in depth on one of the specialized concentrations within the department.”

The university has undergone financial trauma at the hands of state government during the past decade, including a faculty/staff furlough in 2009-10 that resulted in a 10 percent pay reduction for that year. Since then, faculty salaries have been flat except for a 1 percent increase in 2013. Cal State Fullerton also has experienced a substantive amount of leadership change since 2012, including a new president, provost and most vice presidents and deans. The president implemented a strategic planning process that has percolated down to the department level, and the Department of Communications adopted a new strategic plan in September 2014 in sync with university objectives. It includes such objectives as reducing curricular silos, increasing accountability in department committee and faculty governance systems, expanding opportunities for students through a Latino

Communications Initiative, enhancing faculty recruitment of under-represented minorities, and improving departmental faculty collegiality.

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

The faculty meets monthly to discuss departmental business, with minutes published. The department operates with five standing committees (Personnel, Curriculum and Assessment, Special Projects, Graduate, and a Search Committee) and four task forces (Accreditation, International Programs, Advising and External Communications). Faculty members are invited to indicate their committee preferences, and the chair seeks to accommodate their preferences.

This is a contentious faculty in many ways (thus the departmental goal of improving faculty collegiality) and has been for several years. Faculty meetings can be tumultuous, faculty members who should be working closely together have strained relationships, and some faculty members remain unhappy at the elimination of concentration coordinators. Until a couple of years ago, coordinators of the five concentrations each received a course release and served on an executive committee working with the chair. This practice was halted, in part to end what was viewed as concentration “silos” that often were resistant to holistic departmental initiatives.

In addition, Cal State Fullerton operates under a collective bargaining agreement that dictates many workplace issues for both full-time and part-time faculty.

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

Amid stagnant faculty salaries and areas of faculty dysfunction affecting morale, the unit is being led by its fourth department chair since the 2008-09 ACEJMC review. Associate professor Jason Shepard is in his first year of a three-year elected term as department chair.

The faculty view the chair favorably, praising his positive attitude as he combats obstacles and citing him as forward-thinking and hardworking. Leaders across campus also hold him in high regard. The interim dean of the College of Communications praises the department chair for his vision, listening skills and equilibrium at a time of rapid change. The dean views the move from concentration focus to a more holistic department focus as a positive in trying to break down the silos that seemed to stymie the department as a whole. The chair has the full confidence of the dean in leading the department forward.

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

The department chair is elected by the faculty and appointed by the president with the dean’s concurrence. A chair may be re-elected for as many terms as are mutually agreeable. Within the California State University system, department chairs are considered to be within the faculty bargaining unit and are not considered a part of management. While no formal evaluation process exists, the dean regularly communicates expectations and feedback to the chair. The current chair has committed to having a “360” performance review at the end of his first year as chair to receive feedback from faculty, staff, students and administrators.

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

Informal concerns typically come first to the department chair, who may consult with the dean or associate dean of the college as warranted. Formal complaints flow through the university's Human Resources, Diversity and Inclusion office. For grade appeals, a university policy outlines the appeals process. The Division of Student Affairs coordinates the resolution of issues such as plagiarism, access and accommodation.

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.

A bachelor's degree at Cal State Fullerton requires a minimum of 120 semester hours for graduation. The Department of Communications requires a minimum of 36 hours for the Bachelor of Arts in Communications. Another 72 hours must be taken outside of communications. The remaining 12 hours can consist of communications or non-communications courses. The faculty has discussed adding additional required courses within concentrations under new ACEJMC rules, but such a move has not yet materialized.

The department is 100 percent in compliance with the 72-hour rule for the two academic years preceding the 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 a major in Communications with a choice of concentrations in five specializations: Advertising, Entertainment and Tourism Communications, Journalism, Photocommunications and Public Relations.

The Department of Communications has a loosely constructed core curriculum that consists of three courses. All students must take Mass Communication in Modern Society and Communications Law. For the third "core" course, students choose from among eight options that include ethics, diversity, communications technologies and global media systems.

The core curriculum is conceptual and theoretical in focus, while skills classes are specific to the concentrations. Excluding the required external internship, all five required courses for the Journalism concentration and all five required for Photocommunications consist of skills-based courses. Four of five courses required for students in Advertising and Public Relations are skills-focused. Students in the Entertainment and Tourism Communications concentration have the fewest required skills courses, with three of five required classes being devoted to skills training (again, excluding the required internship).

In its self-study, the department states, "Students take at least half of the required credit hours in professional skills courses that are appropriate to professional communication careers." A review of requirements within each of the five concentrations indicates that it is possible for students, based on

their elective choices, to complete fewer than half of their credit hours in professional skills courses in three of the five sequences. However, department leadership states that it is highly unlikely students in these concentrations would fail to complete at least half of their coursework in skills classes based both on the preponderance of skills options and students' preference for skills classes.

All faculty members are allowed to approve course substitutions for students, with the result that some students are waived out of required classes. Department leadership says this has created problems in a handful of cases but the system is not widely abused.

Courses generally reflect the range of student competencies outlined by the Accrediting Council. Mass Communication in Modern Society, which includes a strong history component, and Communication Law are required of all students. Ethics is not a required course. Mass Media Ethics is one of eight options that students may choose from for their core elective.

According to the self-study, ethics, law, history and theory are embedded to varying degrees in every course taught in the communications program. A review of syllabi shows that ethics and diversity are incorporated at least minimally into the required Mass Communication in Modern Society class, Reporting for Mass Media and Writing for Mass Media. Students said ethics discussions occur frequently in a variety of classes and many instructors spend considerable time during the first week of classes discussing journalism ethics, particularly as it relates to plagiarism and fabrication.

All concentrations require Writing for Mass Media that covers basic grammar, sentence construction, punctuation and word usage, with the exception of the Advertising sequence. That sequence requires Writing for the Advertising Industry, which covers the principles of clear, accurate writing in the context of an advertising agency.

Several curricular revisions have been implemented since the last accreditation review in 2008. A Principles of Communication Research was added for the Advertising, Public Relations and Entertainment and Tourism Communications concentrations. (The lack of a research class was noted as a deficit in the 2008 site team report.)

Individual areas of emphasis (print, broadcast and visual) within the Journalism concentration were eliminated. Students still may specialize in an area through the choice of electives, but formal areas of emphasis were eliminated in an attempt to break down silos within the journalism sequence and provide a more converged media experience for students.

All sequences offer capstone experiences that seek to give students an opportunity to apply the skills and knowledge they have learned through the course of their studies.

Faculty also voted to allow students to do two internships for credit, added several new courses and developed online options for a number of courses. Two new certificates – one in Latino Communications, the other in Digital Media Production – have recently been approved.

Other curricular changes have been implemented within sequences since the last accreditation review, with new classes being added and capstones and required classes undergoing revisions. However, the department has not undertaken a comprehensive curricular review that takes into account all concentrations and how they relate to one another – and whether all the sequences should remain in place. The ad hoc nature of curricular revisions has resulted in some anomalies, such as an Advanced

Visual Reporting class developed for Photocommunications being offered only to students in that sequence and not to students in the Journalism sequence.

Many faculty and students as well as the department leadership noted that not all students are getting sufficient training in digital skills. While some digital media skills are taught in a number of classes, there is no departmental requirement that students take a course exclusively focused on the development of digital media skills. A Digital Foundations class, which teaches photo shooting and editing as well as typography, layout and design using the Adobe CS6 software package, is required for only students in the Photocommunications concentration and is offered as an elective in the other concentrations. Students in Advertising, Photocommunications, Public Relations and Entertainment and Tourism Communications have no required training in video shooting or editing, and students generally agree that social media gets little attention. The concern that students are not getting a fully digital curriculum also was expressed in the 2008 site team report.

The department has discussed adding a required course for digital media, thereby raising the number of required Communications credits to 39, but that has been met with some strong opposition and has failed to gain momentum.

Public Relations

Public Relations is the largest concentration in the department, with 740 students enrolled in fall 2014 out of a total of 2,181 students in the department.

In addition to the core curriculum, students in the Public Relations sequence take a required Breadth course, Principles of Communications Research. There are five required Public Relations courses: Writing for the Mass Media, Principles of Public Relations, Public Relations Writing, Mass Media Internship and a capstone course comprising either service in the student-run advertising and public relations agency through the PRactical ADvantage Communications course or the Public Relations Management course in which students develop comprehensive public relations plans designed to solve real-life communications challenges being faced by participating organizations. Students also take three elective courses from a mixture of 18 writing and public relations options.

A review of public relations course syllabi indicates that the courses provide a comprehensive grounding in communication skills.

Both full-time and adjunct faculty members bring considerable practical experience to bear in the classroom, and students and graduates interviewed indicated that they appreciated the comprehensive grounding in public relations skills and techniques provided by faculty.

Skills relating to new media capabilities, particularly social media, are referenced during many of the courses, but there is no required course in digital skills. Students interviewed expressed a need to have a specific course in social media for public relations.

Public relations students who had taken the internship course reported that they felt well equipped for the tasks they were assigned during the internship and had a positive hands-on experience in the real-life situation offered by the internship.

Journalism

This is the second-largest concentration in terms of student enrollment, with 414 students in fall 2014.

In addition to the core curriculum, students in the Journalism concentration take a required Breadth course in History & Philosophy of American Mass Communication. Students must take five additional courses: Writing for Mass Media, Reporting for Mass Media I (with an emphasis on print and web reporting and writing), Reporting for Mass Media II (with an emphasis on web, radio and television writing and reporting), New Media Production or Advanced Electronic News Production, and Mass Media Internship. Students may select three more courses from 19 different offerings, most of which are skills-oriented.

The New Media Production and Advanced Electronic News Production serve as capstone experiences for students. Students in the former constitute the editorial staff of the university's student newspaper, and students in the latter work on "OC News," producing daily television, radio and web newscasts. Recent efforts to converge the content of the two operations into Titan Media, a news website to showcase student work in print, web and broadcast, have faltered due to logistical, programmatic and curricular disagreements as well as concerns about ensuring the independence of the student press.

Content of courses, as indicated by syllabi reviewed, adequately covers the fundamentals of the discipline, although training and exposure to digital media skills is uneven, depending on the electives that students choose. Students in Journalism receive basic video and audio training in a Reporting for Mass Media course that focuses on the web.

Students entering the capstone at the student newspaper often have had little field reporting experience. Prerequisites include Reporting for Mass Media I, which includes little public affairs reporting, and Reporting for Mass Media II, which focuses more on technical skills than reporting skills. As a result, students may not cover a court, police or public meeting story until they reach their capstone in their senior year.

Students said they have access to experienced faculty members with extensive professional experience that informs their teaching. They said the faculty is generally accessible and willing to provide extra assistance and bring real-world issues into the classroom on a regular basis.

Students said core classes are sometimes hard to get into, with the result that they sometimes have to wait semesters, or even years, to get into a course required for graduation. They also said some courses are offered infrequently. Department leadership confirmed that Literary Journalism, for example, has not been offered for years although it is still listed as an elective in the Journalism sequence.

Advertising

This is the third-largest concentration in terms of student enrollment, with 379 students in fall 2014.

In addition to the core curriculum, students in the Advertising sequence take a required Breadth course in Principles of Communications Research. Students must take six additional courses: Principles of Advertising, Writing for the Advertising Industry, Advertising Media, Advertising Creative Strategy and Execution I, Advertising Campaigns, and a Mass Media Internship. In addition, students select two courses from elective options.

Content of courses, as indicated by syllabi reviewed, covers the fundamentals of the discipline – a general overview in Principles of Advertising, then a deeper dive into writing, media and creative. The one area not required is strategy/account planning, which is an elective, although strategy is addressed in the creative class.

The focus of Writing for the Advertising Industry is on business writing, including contact reports, memos, emails and SWOT analysis. Writing for print, TV/radio, outdoor and direct mail are touched on, but the creative side is in Advertising Creative Strategy and Execution I and, for students interested in going into the creative side of advertising, Advertising Creative Strategy and Execution II.

The Advertising Campaigns class serves as the capstone experiences for students. There are three options to complete this capstone:

- A traditional campaigns class with a local client.
- AAF's National Student Advertising Competition team in the spring, which requires an application.
- PRactical ADvantage Communications, the student-run advertising and public relations agency housed on the Irvine campus. Both advertising and PR students can use this class as their capstone.

Digital concepts and skills are introduced in the required Writing for the Advertising Industry class and touched on in required classes such as Advertising Media and Advertising Creative Strategy and Execution I. Students can choose electives such as Digital Foundations, which includes work in Photoshop, Illustrator and Dreamweaver, and Interactive Media Design, where students learn basic coding such as HTML and CSS. However, students are not required to take a class exclusively devoted to digital media skills and they may not be exposed to social media – including an understanding of the analytics behind these social networking services – despite the necessity of these skills in today's job market.

Entertainment and Tourism Communications

This is the fourth-largest concentration in terms of student enrollment, with 373 students in fall 2014.

In addition to the core curriculum, students in the Entertainment and Tourism Communications concentration take a required Breadth course in Principles of Communications Research. Students must take five additional courses: Writing for the Mass Media, Introduction to Entertainment and Tourism Studies, Entertainment and Society, Capstone in Entertainment and Tourism Studies, and Mass Media Internship. Students also select a writing course from among five choices. Students select two more courses from among 12 options, including Reporting on the Entertainment Industry, Tourism and Travel, Entertainment Public Relations, Event Planning and Management, Digital Foundations, Interactive Media Design and Communications Technologies.

Students attending the Entertainment and Tourism Communications session reported they were generally pleased with the concentration. They said a number of concentration courses focus on marketing and financial concepts, and they wish more-specific electives and capstone choices were offered.

Students said they appreciated their faculty having professional experience and being enthusiastic as teachers. They said professors were approachable and helpful. They were complimentary of the

college's Advisement Center and were particularly positive about the quality and rigor of online courses.

Photocommunications

The smallest of the concentrations, with 53 students, requires the largest number of skills courses. After their core requirements and a Visual Communication class, which are largely theory classes, students pursue almost all skills classes.

The curriculum was revised to provide greater multimedia focus following the last accreditation report in 2008. Students must take Digital Foundations, a nine-hour capstone sequence and an internship. Students also are required to take two writing classes – Writing for the Mass Media and either Feature Writing or Public Relations Writing.

The Digital Foundations course, which is an elective for the other majors, was praised by students who said it provided a solid introduction to a range of multimedia skills. The faculty member who created the course said it was designed for all Communications majors and was disappointed that it wasn't a required course for those outside the Photocommunications concentration.

Students have a choice of skills-focused capstones that include a visual reporting track, a studio photography track or an interactive media design track. The latter offers a rich combination of instruction in digital media skills, web design, generating HTML code, and exploring new media technologies. The studio photography series includes a business angle to help studio photographers with bidding and pricing. The visual reporting capstone experience includes not only an emphasis on shooting stills but also preparing those photos for both print and screen media.

While the concentration has become more multimedia in focus, students are not exposed to video shooting or editing. Students expressed a desire for this kind of training, recognizing that video skills are helpful, if not required, for careers in photography and design.

(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.)

There is general agreement that the department has made strides in keeping up with the changing needs of the industry, but much more remains to be done to ensure that students have digital skills in video shooting and editing, web production, coding and multimedia storytelling. While all of these skills are taught to some degree in various classes, gaps exist especially with regard to video and social media.

The core curriculum includes Communications Technologies; however, the class is primarily an issues class covering recent developments in technology, the roles of government and industry, history and implications for social change.

The Digital Foundations class is required only of Photocommunications majors. Another class, Multimedia Journalism, combines audio, photo, video and print. It was added to the curriculum for Journalism majors and is being taught for the first time in spring 2015. However, it is on a list of 19 electives from which students choose three.

Some courses such as Editing and Design are traditional in nature, with students designing a newspaper broadsheet, while other classes are cutting-edge. A course in Interactive Media Design, for example, teaches students how to create and display content on a smart phone, through a browser and on a tablet. One Communications Law professor has students tweet weekly about an article or event related to topics covered in class.

Many students and faculty still think of broadcast and print journalism as separate sequences, although they have been combined into one Journalism concentration. Students, in particular, say more convergence is needed. Several said they are doing minors or double majors in the Department of Radio-Television-Film in order to get more hands-on experiences with cameras, and others have taken a social media class in the Department of Human Communication Studies in order to bolster their social media skills.

For enterprising students, the lynda.com video library is available free to all Cal State Fullerton students. Lynda.com is an online training website with thousands of courses and video tutorials. Students can learn anything from programs such as Photoshop and InDesign to mobile apps and digital publishing.

The Department of Communications has expended considerable effort over the past two years developing common learning objectives for all of its undergraduate courses, with the result that learning objectives are clearly outlined in most course syllabi.

While learning objectives are generally the same for multiple sections of classes, many other elements vary from section to section. The self-study states that adjunct faculty members who teach courses use the same texts across sections and assign the same kinds of projects to students. It also states that a full-time faculty member is assigned to oversee multiple sections of the Writing for Mass Media course to ensure that lectures and assignments are uniform. However, a review of syllabi shows that assignments and even texts are not standard for the sections of the class offered in spring 2015. Adjuncts interviewed said they are given syllabi to use as a guide, but they are allowed to deviate from the standard to customize their classes.

Syllabi vary with respect to penalties for academic integrity violations. Students who plagiarize or fabricate, for example, may face penalties ranging from failing the assignment, failing the class or being reported to a university-wide Judicial Affairs for further disciplinary action.

The department offers a robust selection of online courses. During fall 2014, 14 undergraduate Communications courses were offered online. These included required classes such as the core Mass Communication in a Modern Society as well as a number of core electives, such as Writing for Mass Media and Visual Communication. Some courses, such as Public Relations Writing, are taught as hybrid sections, depending on the preference of the instructor.

Online courses are popular with students and often are among the first classes to fill. Students were generally enthusiastic about their experiences in online courses and said the classes were both rigorous and interactive.

The university provides detailed policies for the establishment of online courses. Proposed syllabi are reviewed by a department curriculum committee, followed by a faculty vote. If approved, the course is reviewed by the college curriculum committee and, finally, by a university curriculum committee.

The Department of Communications faculty is well represented in university-wide teaching awards. One professor has been honored three times for teaching honors awarded by the dean of the College of Communications, the Faculty Development Center and the Irvine Campus. Another has received both the 2013 Alumni Association's Outstanding Faculty Student Service Award and the 2014 Faculty Recognition Teaching Award for High-Impact Practices. Three faculty members have received several small university grants and fellowships for research and curriculum development in recent years.

Full-time and part-time faculty members are supported by the university's Faculty Development Center, which brings together faculty from across the institution for training and development. According to the department self-study, the center has been particularly helpful in introducing faculty to and teaching new classroom tools, resources, software and online platforms. The center also assists with assessment and raises awareness of diversity issues. Two department faculty members have served as instructors for the center in assessment and teaching workshops.

In 2014, the department began hosting weekly faculty lunches at which individual faculty members presented on various research interests as well as topics ranging from community engagement to campaign finance laws in the context of the First Amendment. The department also offered for the first time in 2014 orientation sessions for part-time faculty that included some training on best practices in teaching and classroom management. More than 90 percent of part-time faculty attended these sessions in August 2014, according to the department chair.

(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 department reported enrollments in skills classes for one semester (fall 2014). Most skills classes had the maximum enrollment of 20 students. Three sections reported enrollment of 10 students each.

One class, New Media Production, had 22 students enrolled. The class provided editorial content to the Daily Titan student newspaper and website and is the equivalent of two classes for the instructor.

The self-study excluded another nine sections of courses that were found to be over the 20-student limit. Seven were capstone classes in Advertising and Public Relations, which ranged from 24 to 32 students. Another course, Event Planning & Management, had three sections with enrollment of more than 20. Those classes ranged from 21 to 32 students.

Online course enrollment ranges from about 20 students to 180 students. Instructors who teach online courses are not provided with teaching assistants.

- (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 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.

Internships are one of the strengths of the program, bolstered by the university's location in one of the nation's largest media markets and in the heart of the nation's entertainment industry. In fall 2014, the department had more than 400 students interning at more than 250 sites. The number of interns typically ranges between 800 and 900 when fall, spring and summer sessions are included. A total of 2,649 students completed internships over a three-year period, from fall 2011 through fall 2014.

Students intern at local film production companies, athletic programs, non-profits, newspapers, magazines, and advertising and PR agencies, among others. Major employers who regularly accept the department's interns include Sony, Warner Brothers, CNN, Dreamworks, Paramount Pictures, KKLA-TV, the Orange County Register, the local PBS station, and several large public relations and advertising firms. A number of alumni interviewed said they obtained jobs after graduation as a result of their internships.

All students are required to complete at least one internship for credit. Faculty recently voted to accept two, with the second internship being an elective. The faculty also recently voted to change the requirement that students must be seniors before they can intern; juniors are now allowed to do internships.

Internship opportunities are listed on a university website, and students are responsible for seeking out those they wish to apply for. Students also can locate internships not listed on the site and apply for approval to take those for credit. Students must complete 120 hours in an internship over the course of a semester. Students submit time sheets signed by their employer to confirm hours. Approximately 90 percent of internships are unpaid.

Since August 2013, internship programs have been headed by a full-time faculty internship coordinator. The coordinator spends two days a week visiting internship sites, conducts orientations for students and evaluates their performance. Students are required to produce two short papers about their internship experience, one of which asks them to evaluate how well their coursework did or did not prepare them for their internship, and supervisors are to produce a final evaluation of students, which consists of a 14-question form. However, many supervisors fail to complete the form. In spring 2012, 251 of 423 supervisors returned student evaluations. Internships are offered on a credit/non-

credit basis, and supervisor evaluations are not part of the decision on whether to award credit.

The college aggregated its spring 2012 data from employer evaluations and student comments for purposes of assessment – the only time it has done so. That assessment was done at the college level and does not separate out Department of Communications evaluations from those of the rest of the college. Nonetheless, the assessment indicates a high level of employer satisfaction with interns. Forty-nine percent rated their interns as superior, while an additional 36 percent rated their interns as above average. Only 1 percent rated their interns as poor.

According to the college's internship coordinator, when employers do express dissatisfaction, it most often has to do with a lack of writing skills, student initiative, and students' ability to integrate social media efforts. While those issues are occasionally raised in faculty meetings, there is no formal feedback mechanism or follow-up, and there appears to be a lack of interest on the part of the faculty in the data.

Since the last site team visit, several new components have been added to the internship program:

- Students must have their resumes and cover letters reviewed by the university's Career Center before they can participate in the program.
- Students must attend a mandatory internship orientation.
- The university's Center for Internship and Community Engagement must approve all companies participating in the program. The center verifies the legitimacy of the academics of the internship and the safety of the site.

While internships are required, some students are allowed to substitute another 400-level course for an internship when they can show that they are working in their field of choice. Any faculty member can execute these waivers, as can the internship coordinator. About 30 students received such waivers in 2014.

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 unit's current diversity plan, adopted in September 2014, has three goals: a diverse faculty; a diverse student body; and an inclusive curriculum. The department has certainly met two of its goals.

The student body is extremely diverse. One third of the population is Hispanic, one third white and the remaining third is comprised of other minority groups. According to *Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education*, Cal State Fullerton awarded more Communications degrees to Hispanic students in 2014 than any other university in the country.

The Latino Communications Initiative is an effort by the College of Communications to offer programs that serve Hispanic students. In 2013, the college launched the program to prepare and maintain qualified Latino students for the workforce. The college and the Department of Modern Languages & Literature are offering a new academic certificate that includes courses to improve the language skills of bilingual students and to prepare them for employment and internships. The director of the Latino initiative has many contacts in the industry that help in this endeavor.

The many international opportunities for students to study abroad include a cooperative relationship with the University of Havana (Cuba) in which faculty and students can travel back and forth. In December 2014, the college hosted a digital journalism workshop for faculty and students from the University of Havana. There also are study abroad programs and/or exchanges to western Europe, South America and Asia.

In terms of faculty diversity, 44 percent are female and 12 percent are non-white. The numbers are similar to what they were at the time of the last accreditation review. It's a highly tenured faculty with five professors (all white) in phased retirement. In contrast with the large Hispanic student body on campus, the department has one Hispanic professor on the full-time faculty. During and immediately following the ACEJMC site visit, two Latina candidates accepted new full-time faculty appointments for 2015-16, which will triple the number of Hispanic faculty.

- (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 number of courses in the Department of Communications address diverse topics as reflected by their syllabi. In addition, having such a diverse student body in the classroom generates discussion.

The chair is on a panel that helped establish a Queer Studies minor in the Women and Gender Studies Department, and a professor who teaches in the minor said his help has been invaluable. In addition, advertising students have been working with the newly formed minor to update the website and establish a slogan, logo and brand. Members of the PRactical ADvantage Communications class even organized a flash mob. Class members have been providing quantitative feedback on their endeavors.

(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.

With the department conducting four faculty searches this year – all new positions – the first two offers have gone to Latinas. Both have accepted. One third of the department’s student population is Hispanic. Two female candidates, one Asian and one international, declined offers in recent years.

Some faculty members say the large teaching load (4-4) is a deterrent to prospective minority faculty recruitment as well as other prospective hires. Others reported that they had not been asked to help recruit or to be on committees to interview faculty candidates.

The university has made renewed efforts to hire minorities recently by changing the way in which they are recruited, including trying to expand the pool by advertising in more Hispanic publications. Deans, too, can reject a search if they believe there are not sufficient minorities in the pool.

The department has six part-time faculty members who are Hispanic, the same as six years ago.

(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.

Many of Cal State Fullerton’s students transfer from community colleges within the area. Some students report that the transferring of credits does not go smoothly. The university has added more advisers to help with the process; however, advising is not mandatory. The department has a dedicated adviser as well as a graduation specialist. There will soon be another person added as an adviser who will be a retention specialist. Graduation rates are quite remarkable. In 2014, 33 percent of the department’s graduates were Hispanic students. A decade ago, it was 19 percent.

(e) The unit has a climate that is free of harassment and discrimination, in keeping with the acceptable cultural practices of the population it serves, accommodates the needs of those with disabilities, and values the contributions of all forms of diversity.

No evidence exists of discrimination or harassment problems. Neither faculty nor students expressed concerns in this area. It is the policy of Cal State Fullerton to create and maintain an environment that values diversity, tolerance and being a school that is free from all forms of discrimination or harassment. Students in general said they were happy with their fellow students and the faculty.

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.

In spring 2015, the Department of Communications had 33 full-time faculty members. Two-thirds were tenured (eight full professors, five full professors in the Faculty Early Retirement Program, seven associate professors, and two associate professors on one-year leave). The department has four tenure-track faculty (one associate professor, three assistant professors), and seven lecturers.

Faculty members have a variety of backgrounds with academic credentials: 20 with a Ph.D., one with an Ed.D., four with an MFA, six with an MA and two with an MS.

Selection

A search committee is elected by the faculty and serves for the academic year, with the department's vice chair leading the committee. The search committee at the time of the site visit was comprised of a full professor and three associate professors. It should be noted that this committee serves for all searches – both tenure/tenure-track and lecturers. Committee members must be tenured faculty. Lecturers do not serve on search committees for lecturer positions.

The search committee screens applicants and then conducts phone interviews to determine finalists for campus visits. Following the visits, faculty provide feedback on teaching and research effectiveness through an evaluation form.

A five-page Faculty Recruitment Guide outlines the recruitment process and refers to university policy regarding recruitment and appointment of tenure-track faculty.

Evaluation

The department outlines its standards for teaching, research and service in its Retention, Tenure and Promotion (RTP) policies and procedures document. There is also a standard student opinion questionnaire for evaluation of all departmental courses.

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

Full-time members have taught 65 to 68 percent of all courses in the last three years.

The department has 38 part-time adjuncts. It should be noted that Cal State Fullerton is in the Los Angeles DMA, the No. 2 media market in the country. There are many highly qualified professionals in the area who serve as adjuncts.

(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.

Full-time faculty in the department have significant professional experience – an average of 12 years. Faculty average 15 years of full-time teaching experience.

Faculty are supported through sabbaticals, and there have been four within the department since the last accreditation visit.

In addition, the department chair has made travel funding a priority. Resources have been moved within the budget to maintain an average of \$1,500 a year for tenured, tenure-track and lecturer travel.

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

Teaching is the most important criterion for retention, tenure and promotion. Faculty members assess their own teaching goals and performance in a 1,000-word narrative in the teaching performance section of the portfolio. Also included are written reports of classroom visitations by the chair or members of the personnel committee, student opinion forms and statistical summaries of student opinion. Student ratings of faculty are heavily weighted in evaluation of faculty: numerical student opinion ratings account for 40 percent, and student comments on opinion forms account for another 40 percent of the assessment of teaching performance.

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

Faculty members in the Department of Communications are clearly respected across campus. Faculty from other programs who have communications students praised the students' performance in their classes and noted how well prepared they appear for the post-graduation job market.

Communications faculty also are highly visible, serving on university committees and having been elected to some of the most important committees across campus. Several members of the Communications faculty have served on the Academic Senate.

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.

Cal State Fullerton is first and foremost a teaching school. The university states, “CSUF recognizes that teaching is the most important activity of its faculty. Therefore, teaching shall be the most important criterion for retention, tenure, and/or promotion.”

The stated university teaching assignment for tenure and tenure-track faculty is 4/4 with an expectation of research and service. New tenure-track faculty receive a course reduction during their first four semesters for a 3-3 teaching assignment. In their third year, tenure-track faculty move back to a 4-4 teaching assignment. Teaching four classes each semester can be challenging for any faculty, but especially for faculty focusing on research as they work toward tenure. When talking with faculty in other programs across campus, units outside the College of Communications appear to have 3-3 or 4-3 teaching expectations.

The teaching assignment for full-time lecturers is 5/5 without an expectation of research and service.

Nearly half of the department’s full professors are leaving full-time teaching as they move to the Faculty Early Retirement Program. Four more will move to the phased retirement program or be fully retired.

While Cal State Fullerton is seen as a teaching school, research also is important in decisions for tenure and promotion.

The preamble to the guidelines for granting sabbatical leaves for faculty states that “sabbatical leaves are not a privilege, but a right.” Four faculty members in the department took research sabbaticals in the last six years. In addition, tenured, tenure-track faculty and lecturers receive travel support of up to \$1,500 a year.

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

The department’s 18-page Personnel Policies and Procedures document specifies the requirements for promotion and tenure. It addresses the personal narrative and the portfolio and includes performance indicators for teaching, scholarly and creative activities, and service.

The role of the faculty is specified in three performance indicators, which reflect the three pillars found in academe:

- Representing knowledge through teaching.
- Advancing knowledge through scholarly and creative endeavors.

- Sharing and applying knowledge through professional, university and community service activities.

While faculty may combine scholarly and creative activities, the department expects to see scholarly activity in a candidate's portfolio for promotion and tenure. That portfolio should focus on the work's relevance, continuity, significance and productivity.

(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's promotion and tenure criteria recognize a range of scholarly productivity:

- Refereed journal articles and monographs
- Refereed or reviewed text and scholarly books
- Refereed book chapters
- Invited (non-refereed) journal articles and book chapters
- Refereed paper presentations
- Grant and research contracts
- Trade publications, commentaries and creative writings
- Invited scholarly presentations and speaking engagements

The department also recognizes creative activities, defined as:

- Solo exhibitions and monographs
- Refereed multiple-authored text and inclusion in scholarly books
- Refereed group exhibits

(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's faculty produced 445 documented works of scholarship and creative activity in the past six years. In its Personnel Policies and Procedures, the department notes that "quantity does not substitute for quality" and asks evaluators to consider the importance of each achievement and the faculty member's contribution in the case of co-authored or other collaborative work. The policies clearly state indicators of productivity in both scholarly and creative activities and give a point system for each. For example, a refereed journal article could receive up to 2 points while a refereed paper presentation could receive up to 1 point. A similar system is established for creative activities. For tenure and/or promotion, faculty members must have a total of 2.5 points from at least two different works as listed in any single indicator or combination of indicators that includes a similar system for creative activities.

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

The faculty is steeped in knowledge and eager to share this expertise with students as well as with each other. One venue for doing so is the department's monthly lecture series. The faculty have been known to have frank exchanges of ideas and vigorous debates.

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 advising system at the department is currently somewhat ad hoc. It is available, but it is up to the individual student whether to access the support provided. Student participation in academic advising is highly encouraged but mandated only for students placed on academic probation.

Advising support is provided through the College of Communications Advisement Center, which has a dedicated professional staff of one academic adviser supported by a graduate assistant and two undergraduate peer advisers. The center provides year-round academic advisement and related resources, including information about major course and overall degree requirements, registration assistance, academic probation advising, clarification of university policies and procedures, and referrals to appropriate campus resources.

Academic advisory support also is provided by faculty, although the Advisement Center may not be aware which faculty member is advising which student. Students are not assigned to a specific adviser and may get advisory services from multiple sources during the course of their degree program. Information about advising resources is provided in written and electronic formats, and students can easily discover which faculty provide advisory services in which concentrations.

Faculty advisers appear to have significant individual latitude in changing course requirements to suit individual circumstances, with the consequence that on occasion students end up not having taken the correct prerequisites for subsequent courses required for their degree.

Strengthening academic advisement practices is a component of the university's strategic plan, and there is considerable discussion about whether mandatory advisement should be implemented in order to increase retention and graduation rates. In 2014, the College of Communications participated in the university's first pilot mandatory advisement involving a subset of the juniors in the college, and debate continues within the department on the desirability of mandated advising.

Advisement record-keeping is somewhat haphazard, and the college is in the process of introducing electronic advisory record keeping through the Titan Degree Audit record system. Faculty have not yet been asked to adopt this new approach, so there currently is no formal record of the number of students who have undertaken advisement. Anecdotally, the department believes that it exceeds the university's target of 75 percent.

(b) Faculty are available and accessible to students.

Students have good access to faculty, both through office visits and online. Faculty are assigned one office hour per course per week, at which time students may also seek advising information. There is a readily available listing of faculty who can serve as advisers in specific concentrations, and details of faculty office hours, office phone numbers and email addresses are available in printed form and on the department's website.

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

Information about activities is posted on the department website, in flyers and on posters distributed through the areas where department offices are located and where there are lecture rooms and labs primarily used for department courses.

(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.

A variety of extracurricular activities are provided including student chapters of the Society of Professional Journalists and Public Relations Student Society of America. Other student-focused organizations include the Ad Club affiliated with the American Advertising Foundation, an Entertainment and Tourism Club, Latino Journalists of CSUF, and participation in the American Advertising Federation National Student Advertising Competition. Students in the Photocommunications concentration are discussing forming a similar club. The clubs appear to be active and promote their activities widely across the department. Students reported that they appreciated club activities and, in particular, opportunities to hear from outside speakers at club events. Department faculty are active in advising these clubs and coordinating events. Public Relations alumni contacted by the team reported very positively on the education they had received from the department in terms of preparation for their working careers.

(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.

Student records are stored in electronic form on the Titan Degree Audit record-keeping system. Students learn how to access and interpret their audit during orientation as well as during subsequent advisement sessions. Using the audit, they have access to their individual records through a portal and can check their specific required courses, identify course options in each area of study, and keep track of which requirements have been met and which need to be met for graduation. The college recently appointed a graduation specialist to serve as the lead academic adviser and oversee the graduation checkout and approval process for all undergraduate students in the department.

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 self-study says the university is coming out of its worst budget and fiscal crisis in the institution's memory. Despite that, the department has invested in facilities and equipment for student media: \$110,000 for broadcast studio upgrades, \$40,000 for upgrades for the Daily Titan student newspaper and \$10,000 in equipment for multimedia journalism. The broadcast portion of journalism received \$50,000 to buy Go Pros, high-definition cameras and other equipment.

The financial picture has improved somewhat within the last year, and the provost says a predicted change to outcome-based financing might prove beneficial to the Department of Communications, as it already exceeds many of the new outcomes metrics.

The department now also has the authority to move allocations between budget subcategories. For example, money saved from a resignation could be allocated for part-time faculty salaries.

Little evidence exists, though, of a long-range strategic plan related to budget. The department is living in the moment.

(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.

Budget records indicate that the department receives its fair share of university resources. It might even be argued that the department is receiving a generous share because there are eight open faculty lines available to be filled. However, with about 2,200 students, the department does not have enough dedicated computer labs. The department has five dedicated labs that contain 20 computers each with the latest software installed. Faculty and students say access to more dedicated labs is a big need.

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

Most students and faculty say facilities are generally adequate for teaching and learning. However, the majority of Communications students do not have access to equipment housed in the Department of Radio-Television-Film, some of which was paid for with Department of Communications funds. Communications instructors may make a special request to use the equipment. However, this information has not been widely disseminated.

Several endowments are administered. One of the largest is the Maxwell Center for International Communications, a \$1.7 million endowment from J. William Maxwell, founding chair of the department.

(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 offices include up-to-date computers and software. Some students say they don't have access to necessary equipment needed for creative endeavors, such as up-to-date cameras and printers, but overall, equipment is adequate and available for generous periods of time.

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

The Department of Communications has a specialized librarian dedicated to it. This librarian conducts workshops for both faculty and students within the department. The department has an extensive electronic reserve of journals, and each year faculty submit requests for more.

COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 8: Professional and Public Service

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

Alumni from the Department of Communications serve on the Dean's Advisory Board, and the department invites alumni to many events on campus. Alumni frequently act as guest lecturers across the concentrations, and students report finding alumni presentations particularly helpful as they bring real-world experience into the classroom.

The college conducts an annual Communications Week, a college-wide event designed to educate the campus on the scope and breadth of College of Communications programs to provide students and faculty an opportunity to interact with communications professionals and, in particular, to provide a forum for interaction with alumni. About 60 events are held during Communications Week, and the department typically invites alumni to participate in up to half of these events.

At a macro level, alumni outreach has not received as much attention in the past as at many other academic institutions. Alumni outreach has been the responsibility of the Director of Development for the College of Communications, and this position has been vacant for the last year. A search is under way to fill the position, but, in the meantime, alumni outreach has suffered.

Due to recent budget constraints, the department was forced to suspend publication of the alumni-focused magazine PROComm. The primary mode of communication with alumni today is through the department's website. The department has instituted an External Communications Task Force to review all facets of its communications, including those with alumni. There is no formal department-based recordkeeping of alumni contact details, and department management acknowledges that alumni relations is an area that needs renewed focus.

- (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 members are active in addressing current topics that are important from a professional point of view and cover these topics in the classroom setting. Students report that this approach is helpful. A significant number of faculty have been speakers on topical professional issues at external events.

- (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 a large number of academic associations and serve extensively on journal editorial boards and as journal reviewers. Financial support is provided to attend academic

events, and faculty members take advantage of these opportunities. Faculty members serve as advisers for co-curricular organizations in support of students' interests and serve on the boards of national professional organizations.

(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.

Individual members of the department are active in community service and projects. Faculty members have supported a number of scholastic journalism programs, including at the high school level in the local area. As half of the department's students transition in from community colleges and not directly from high school, faculty has long participated in events at community colleges. In particular, active support and participation is provided to the Journalism Association of Community Colleges.

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

The department regularly hosts visiting lecturers, and each concentration is active in bringing guest lecturers in their respective disciplines to campus. The department recently instituted a weekly lunch series for faculty members to present a topic of their choosing, and many faculty members are leading discussions about best practices in teaching.

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 department’s curriculum map matches ACEJMC’s values and competencies with program learning outcomes in core courses and two courses in each concentration. The map includes 11 of the 12 values and competencies. In 2009, the Accrediting Council established competencies for both global diversity and domestic diversity (“Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communication.”), which is not included in the department’s curriculum map. The department will need to address all 12 values and competencies in future curriculum maps.

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

The department adopted its current assessment plan in November 2011. Direct measures typically consisted of pre/post tests and student work being evaluated by a team of faculty and professionals using a common rubric. Indirect measures included employer surveys of students’ strengths and weaknesses.

With great sensitivity to the concentrations, the plan allowed faculty within each concentration to make decisions about their course assessment. The result is that some did so in useful ways, and others did not.

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

The 2008-09 ACEJMC review found the department in non-compliance on Standard 9, with the team report concluding: “[T]he evidence and interviews indicate little faculty support for an assessment program. Progress is too late and too little. The imminence of a self-study and site-team visit seems to have resurrected the corpse of assessment.... Here’s our concern: that after the site team leaves town, assessment will lapse into a coma.”

It indeed appears to have laid dormant for a year or two, then the department became serious about assessment when the university itself began making assessment of student learning a priority. In 2011, the department established its current assessment plan and undertook a three-year cycle of direct and indirect measures. In fact, the department is sort of a hero on campus for its plan, which is recognized as a best-practice plan by the university.

The department’s leadership deserves commendation for taking assessment seriously by creating a framework, useful protocols and student learning outcomes for all courses.

That’s the good news. The bad news is that the assessment efforts were too inconsistent and incomplete to fulfill ACEJMC’s expectations. Two concentrations (Public Relations and Entertainment & Tourism Communications) and the internship program did a serviceable job of gathering data, the core less so, and the other three concentrations did little or nothing of actual use.

The concentrations of Advertising, Journalism and Photocommunications seemed to mouth willingness, but did not actually do anything meaningful. For example, a pre-post test was administered in a core course in 2011-12, with a notation on the assessment flowchart saying, “Pre/post test in 2011-12 did not generate reliable data... No revisions have yet been received.” In the Journalism concentration flowchart was this not-uncommon notation: “The JOUR faculty has discussed assessment but no report of assessment has been made to the Department Assessment Committee as of 5/2014.” In the Photocommunications concentration, failure of the pre/post test was acknowledged, but instead of doing something about it, the faculty employed a delaying tactic by saying the next assessment cycle (in 2016-17) ought to do something different.

We found no evidence that the faculty ever had substantive discussions on the limited useful assessment data gathered, such as that from the internship program, thus no evidence of “closing the loop.”

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

The department says it uses “informal means” to track graduates and, because many live in the Los Angeles area, some interact with the department as guest speakers or through professional organizations. In 2012, the university conducted a survey of all Cal State Fullerton alumni to determine perceptions of their undergraduate experience. An extract of the campus survey produced a subset of 190 graduates from the Department of Communications. Unfortunately, staffing shortages at the university have delayed results and analysis, so there is nothing to report from a survey conducted more than two years ago.

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

The internship program involves professionals whose involvement points toward the assessment of student learning. We also can praise a co-curricular map that shows the presence of guest speakers in classes in ways that support the values and competencies.

Summary

The department has admirably moved forward in its assessment process, but the lack of a centralized means of ensuring assessment across all curriculum areas meant the faculty did not have the evidence needed to have meaningful conversations about how to improve student learning. As a result, there was no evidence that assessment measures led to improvements in curriculum or instruction.

NON-COMPLIANCE

PART III: Summary by site visit team

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

STRENGTHS

- ❖ Recognition as a benchmark program at the university because of its size and importance
- ❖ An appreciative student body of extraordinary diversity
- ❖ Retention and graduation rates better than the university's
- ❖ A vibrant internship program in a major media market
- ❖ Capstone courses focusing on professional practice
- ❖ Multiple international opportunities for students through the innovative work of faculty
- ❖ A strong, independent student media and a new PR/AD agency since the last review
- ❖ A reputation in its region for producing capable students

WEAKNESSES

- ❖ A faculty with dysfunctional tendencies that harm collaborative efforts such as assessment
- ❖ Continued need for a more diverse faculty that aligns with the makeup of a highly diverse student body
- ❖ An optional advising process that tends to be ad hoc, although a good advising center exists
- ❖ A curriculum that needs a more consistent approach to digital media skills
- ❖ Lack of dedicated computer labs for all of the department's skills courses
- ❖ Student perception that the department lacks "community" because facilities are spread out
- ❖ Lack of organized outreach to alumni

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

Standard 9: Assessment of Learning Outcomes

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

A plan and protocols are in place, but implementation was sporadic among the concentrations. No evidence exists of faculty analysis and discussion to "close the loop" about ways to improve student learning. The department needs to implement its assessment plan with greater consistency and show efforts to use findings to improve curriculum and instruction.

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

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

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

Standard 9: Assessment of Learning Outcomes

The department has moved far from its “corpse of assessment” as described by the ACEJMC team in 2008-09. Still, there remains much to do, as described above.

- 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 well written, well edited and well packaged. Most of the information needed was contained in the self-study or its appendices. Sometimes it had a more positivist tone than deserved, and the curriculum and assessment standards were the most challenging to follow.

Considering this was primarily the work of a first-year department chair who had never observed an accreditation visit before, and who had to work through some senior faculty resistance to prepare for reaccreditation, it deserves a standing ovation.