

Report of On-Site Evaluation

ACEJMC

Graduate/Undergraduate programs

2015– 2016

Name of Institution: The University of Alabama

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Stuart Bell, President

Name of Unit: College of Communication & Information Sciences

Name and Title of Administrator: Mark Nelson, Dean

Date of 2015 - 2016 Accrediting Visit: February 14-17, 2016

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

Date of the previous accrediting visit: January 25-28, 2009

Recommendation of the previous site visit team:

Graduate program: Re-accreditation

Undergraduate program: Re-accreditation

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council:

Graduate program: Re-accreditation

Undergraduate program: Re-accreditation

Undergraduate program recommendation by 2015 - 2016 Visiting Team: Re-accreditation

Graduate program recommendation by 2015-2016 Visiting Team: Re-accreditation

Prepared and submitted by:

Team Chair

Name and Title: Trevor R. Brown, Professor Emeritus

Organization/School: School of Journalism, Indiana University

Signature Trevor R. Brown

Team Members

Name and Title: Vincent Duffy, News Director

Organization/School: Michigan Public Radio

Signature Vincent Duffy

Name and Title: Rochelle Ford, Chair/Professor of Public Relations

Organization/School: S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, Syracuse University

Signature Rochelle Ford

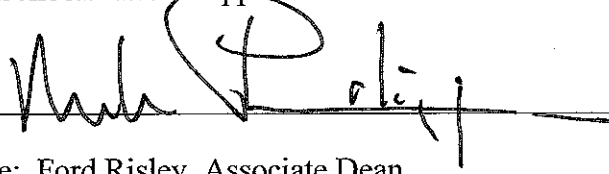
Name and Title: Michel Haigh, Associate Professor

Organization/School: College of Communications, Pennsylvania State University

Signature Michel M Haigh

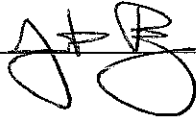
Name and Title: Mike Philipps, retired President and CEO
Organization/School: The Scripps Howard Foundation

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Philipps", written over a horizontal line.

Name and Title: Ford Risley, Associate Dean
Organization/School: Pennsylvania State University

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ford Risley", written over a horizontal line.

PART I: General information

Name of Institution: The University of Alabama

Name of Unit: College of Communication & Information Sciences

Year of Visit: 2016

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

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

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

- Private
- Public
- Other (specify)

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

In 1819 the Congress of the United States donated 46,000 acres of land within the State of Alabama for the endowment of a seminary of learning. The General Assembly of Alabama created the Board of Trustees in 1821, and on April 18, 1831, the University was opened for admission of students.

From the Alabama Code for Education:

The Governor and the State Superintendent of Education, by virtue of their respective offices, the trustees heretofore appointed from the different congressional districts of the state under the provisions of Section 264 of the constitution and such other members as may be from time to time added to the Board of Trustees and their successors in office re constituted a body corporate under the name of "the Board of Trustees of the University of Alabama, to carry into effect the purposes and intent of the Congress of the United States in the grant of lands by the act of April 20, 1818, and in the act of March 2, 1919, to this state, to be by it held and administered for the benefit of a seminar of learning. (School Code 1927, & sect 543; Code 1940, T. 52, & sect; 486)

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: 2009

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

1949

6. **Attach a copy of the unit's undergraduate mission statement and the separate mission statement for the graduate program. Statements should give date of adoption and/or last revision.**

The College of Communication & Information Sciences is a comprehensive multidisciplinary division in which teaching, research and service are focused on shared creation, presentation, dissemination, retrieval, collection, analysis and evaluation of messages and meanings in a variety of settings. The mission is supported by one of the country's most diverse combinations of academic and service programs.

Date of adoption: 2008

In addition to the college's mission statement, each of the departments accredited by the Accrediting Council has its own mission statement that complements the mission of the University of Alabama and the college and relates directly to the needs of its students and the industries it serves.

Department of Advertising + Public Relations

To prepare highly competent, socially conscious and engaged leaders to shape the future of global advertising and public relations

Date of Revision: 2012

Department of Journalism

The Department of Journalism teaches students to make sense of information, sort truth from fiction, and tell stories with authenticity and inspiration, all critical tasks in an information age. We prepare our graduates to find jobs and excel across many fields, both within and outside the media. We also prepare our graduates to think critically about media and their role in a democratic and diverse society. We believe that those who can collect information, filter it for accuracy and importance and tell it well can change the world.

Date of Revision: 2013

Department of Telecommunication & Film

The Department of Telecommunication & Film (TCF) offers an undergraduate curriculum designed to develop discriminating media consumers as well as entry-level professional capable of technical, managerial and ethical leadership. The graduate

curriculum, (not being submitted for ACEJMC review), provides preparation for leadership roles in the management, analysis or teaching of Telecommunication & Film media.

Date of Adoption: 1989

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Semesters of 16 weeks

Quarters of weeks

Summer sessions of 5 weeks

Intersessions of 3 weeks

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

Bachelor's degree

Master's degree

Ph.D. degree

9. List the specific undergraduate and professional master's degrees being reviewed by ACEJMC. *Indicate online degrees.

BA Advertising

BA Public Relations

MA Advertising +Public Relations

BA Journalism

MA Journalism

BA Telecommunication & Film

**10. Credit hours required by the university for an undergraduate degree:
(Specify semester-hour or quarter-hour credit.)**

120 (Semester hour)

Credits hours required for a professional master's degree:

30 (Semester hour) required by the university, although the two graduate programs under review for this unit require between 30 and 33, depending on the track.

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

Internships and practicum experiences are variable 1 to 3 semester-hour credits. Until the ACEJMC changes regarding internship credits went into effect, all journalism and mass communication units in the college allowed a maximum of 3 semester-hour credits in internship or practicum experiences. After that change, journalism majors are now allowed to apply up to 6 credits toward their degree. Majors in advertising, public

relations and telecommunication and film still may only count 3 semester-hour credits toward their degrees.

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

<u>Name of Sequence or Specialty</u>	<u>Person in Charge</u>
Department of Advertising + Public Relations	Dr. Joseph Phelps
Department of Journalism	Dr. Wilson Lowrey
Department of Telecommunication & Film	Dr. William Evans

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

Fall 2015 enrollment: 37,100

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

<u>Name of Sequence or Specialty</u>	<u>Undergraduate majors</u>
Public Relations	951
Advertising	403
Journalism	324
Telecommunication & Film	592
Total	2270

15. Number of graduate students enrolled onsite:

Journalism	18
Advertising	21
Total	39
*Online	0

Note: Both 14 and 15 exclude majors in Communication Studies, the School of Library and Information Studies (SLIS) and in the doctoral program. With these programs added, fall 2015 college enrollment is 3,027.

16. Number of students in each section of all skills courses (newsriting, reporting, editing, photography, advertising copy, broadcast news, public relations writing, etc.). List enrollment by section for the term during which the visit will occur and the preceding term. Attach separate pages if necessary. Include a separate list for online skills courses, which also must meet the 20-1 ratio. (*The Council has ruled that campaigns courses are exempt from the 20-1 ratio.)

SKILLS CLASS SECTIONS AND ENROLLMENT, SPRING 2016

Department of Advertising + Public Relations

Undergraduate Class Sections

APR 300-002 Basic Principles of Design (lab).....16

APR 300-003 Basic Principles of Design (lab).....	16
APR 300-004 Basic Principles of Design (lab)	20
APR 300-005 Basic Principles of Design (lab)	20
APR 300-006 Basic Principles of Design (lab).....	20
APR 300-007 Basic Principles of Design (lab).....	17
APR 300-008 Basic Principles of Design (lab)	15
APR 300-009 Basic Principles of Design (lab).....	16
APR 300-010 Basic Principles of Design (lab)	15
APR 300-011 Basic Principles of Design (lab)	12
APR 300-012 Basic Principles of Design (lab)	20
APR 300-013 Basic Principles of Design (lab)	20
APR 322-001 Copywriting Seminar	3
APR 322-002 Copywriting Seminar	19
APR 322-320 Copywriting Seminar	17
APR 323-001 Art Direction Seminar	12
APR 332-001 Public Relations Writing	20
APR 332-002 Public Relations Writing	20
APR 332-003 Public Relations Writing.....	20
APR 332-005 Public Relations Writing	19
APR 332-320 Public Relations Writing	18
APR 332-321 Public Relations Writing	19
APR 410-001 Portfolio I	15
APR 415-001 Online Magazine Writing	12
APR 418-001 Advertising Development	19
APR 418-002 Advertising Development	20
APR 419-001 Public Relations Concepting	15
APR 419-002 Public Relations Concepting	14
APR 422-004 Channel Planning.....	18
APR 422-005 Channel Planning.....	17
APR 422-006 Channel Planning.....	20
APR 422-007 Channel Planning.....	7
APR 423-002 A+PR Management	15
APR 423-003 A+PR Management	15
APR 423-005 A+PR Management	15
APR 423-320 A+PR Management	0
APR 423-321 A+PR Management	12
APR 424-001 Advertising Campaigns.....	11
APR 424-002 Advertising Campaigns.....	34
APR 424-003 Advertising Campaigns.....	26
APR 432-002 Public Relations Management	20
APR 432-003 Public Relations Management	20
APR 432-005 Public Relations Management	19
APR 432-321 Public Relations Management	22
APR 433-001 Public Relations Campaigns.....	26
APR 433-002 Public Relations Campaigns.....	28
APR 433-003 Public Relations Campaigns.....	26
APR 433-320 Public Relations Campaigns.....	22
APR 433-321 Public Relations Campaigns.....	25
APR 433-322 Public Relations Campaigns.....	26

Professional Master's Class Sections

APR 522-002 Advertising Media	10
APR 582-001 A+PR Management	12
APR 583-320 Research Applications A+PR	14
APR 592-001 Integrated Communication Proj	23

Department of Journalism

Undergraduate Class Sections

JN 261-001 Visual Journalism.....	12
JN 261-002 Visual Journalism	12
JN 261-003 Visual Journalism.....	12
JN 261-320 Visual Journalism.....	12
JN 311-002 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	13
JN 311-003 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	14
JN 311-004 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	14
JN 311-005 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	15
JN 311-006 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	14
JN 311-008 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	14
JN 311-009 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	14
JN 311-010 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	14
JN 311-014 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	13
JN 311-015 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	14
JN 311-016 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	14
JN 311-320 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	13
JN 311-321 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	15
JN 311-322 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	12
JN 311-323 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	13
JN 312-003 Editing and Digital Production (lab)	8
JN 312-004 Editing and Digital Production (lab)	7
JN 312-005 Editing and Digital Production (lab)	7
JN 312-006 Editing and Digital Production (lab)	8
JN 312-007 Editing and Digital Production (lab)	7
JN 312-008 Editing and Digital Production (lab)	7
JN 315-003 Advanced News Writing and Reporting	17
JN 315-320 Advanced News Writing and Reporting	17
JN 318-001 Sports Writing and Reporting.....	18
JN 320-001 Intermediate Journalism Design	13
JN 415 Advanced Magazine Writing	14
JN 417 Digital Community Journalism	17
JN 418-320 Advanced Sports Writing & Reporting.....	21
JN 426-320 Advanced Journalism Design.....	6
JN 430 Digital Media Workshop	18
JN 491 Sports Feature Writing	17

Professional Master's Class Sections

JN 501-002 Producing Community Journalism.....	5
JN 515-320 Advanced Magazine Writing.....	5
JN 553-001 Assessing Community Journalism.....	5
JN 561-320 Sports Writing.....	1

JN 561-321 Advanced Journalism Design.....	5
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Telecommunication & Film Department

Undergraduate Class Sections

TCF 145-001 Media Production.....	15
TCF 201-001 Intro to Video Production	15
TCF 201-002 Intro to Video Production	15
TCF 201-004 Intro to Video Production	15
TCF 201-320 Intro to Video Production	14
TCF 286-003 Intro to Reporting	5
TCF 286-004 Intro to Reporting	16
TCF 286-006 Intro to Reporting	16
TCF 286-320 Intro to Reporting	19
TCF 301-001 Intro to Audio Production	16
TCF 315-001 Scriptwriting	20
TCF 321-001 Announcing and Performing for Radio and TV.....	20
TCF 332-001 Fundamentals of Electronic News	17
TCF 332-002 Fundamentals of Electronic News	11
TCF 333-001 Advanced Electronic Reporting	20
TCF 333-002 Advanced Electronic Reporting	15
TCF 334-001 News Portfolio	21
TCF 334-002 News Portfolio	16
TCF 335-001 New Media	14
TCF 361-001 Intro to Post Production	15
TCF 361-002 Intro to Post	15
TCF 361-320 Intro to Post	15
TCF 441-001 Documentary Production	15
TCF 451-002 Advanced Television Production	14
TCF 452-001 Advanced Video Projects	15
TCF 461-001 Advanced Post Production	15

SKILLS CLASS SECTIONS AND ENROLLMENT, FALL 2015

Department of Advertising + Public Relations

Undergraduate Class Sections

APR 300-002 Basic Principles of Design (lab).....	18
APR 300-003 Basic Principles of Design (lab).....	20
APR 300-004 Basic Principles of Design (lab)	20
APR 300-005 Basic Principles of Design (lab)	19
APR 300-006 Basic Principles of Design (lab).....	9
APR 300-007 Basic Principles of Design (lab).....	12
APR 300-008 Basic Principles of Design (lab)	15
APR 300-009 Basic Principles of Design (lab).....	19
APR 300-010 Basic Principles of Design (lab)	16
APR 300-011 Basic Principles of Design (lab)	20

APR 300-012 Basic Principles of Design (lab)	20
APR 300-013 Basic Principles of Design (lab)	20
APR 310-001 Concepting.....	16
APR 322-001 Copywriting Seminar	20
APR 322-001 Copywriting Seminar	20
APR 322-001 Copywriting Seminar	20
APR 322-001 Digital and Social Media	9
APR 332-001 Public Relations Writing	20
APR 332-002 Public Relations Writing	20
APR 332-003 Public Relations Writing.....	20
APR 332-005 Public Relations Writing	20
APR 332-006 Public Relations Writing	20
APR 332-320 Public Relations Writing	20
APR 415-001 Online Magazine Writing	11
APR 418-001 Advertising Development	19
APR 418-002 Advertising Development	16
APR 419-001 Public Relations Concepting	19
APR 419-002 Public Relations Concepting	20
APR 422-004 Channel Planning.....	10
APR 422-005 Channel Planning.....	14
APR 422-006 Channel Planning.....	15
APR 422-007 Channel Planning.....	17
APR 422-004 Channel Planning.....	10
APR 424-001 Advertising Campaigns	16
APR 424-002 Advertising Campaigns	14
APR 424-004 Advertising Campaigns	17
APR 433-001 Public Relations Campaigns.....	21
APR 433-002 Public Relations Campaigns.....	17
APR 433-003 Public Relations Campaigns.....	24
APR 433-004 Public Relations Campaigns.....	13

Professional Master’s Class Sections

APR 550-001 Adv/PR Research Methods	17
APR 572 -001 Persuasive Communication	12

Department of Journalism

Undergraduate Class Sections

JN 261-001 Visual Journalism.....	12
JN 261-002 Visual Journalism	13
JN 261-003 Visual Journalism.....	13
JN 261-320 Visual Journalism.....	12
JN 311-003 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	13
JN 311-004 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	13
JN 311-006 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	13
JN 311-007 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	13
JN 311-009 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	13
JN 311-010 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	13
JN 311-011 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	13
JN 311-012 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	12

JN 311-013 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	13
JN 311-015 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	12
JN 311-016 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	13
JN 311-320 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	13
JN 311-321 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	13
JN 311-322 News Writing and Reporting (lab).....	11
JN 312-003 Editing and Digital Production (lab).....	7
JN 312-004 Editing and Digital Production (lab).....	7
JN 312-006 Editing and Digital Production (lab).....	7
JN 312-007 Editing and Digital Production (lab).....	7
JN 312-008 Editing and Digital Production (lab).....	7
JN 312-009 Editing and Digital Production (lab).....	6
JN 315-003 Advanced News Writing and Reporting.....	16
JN 315-320 Advanced News Writing and Reporting.....	14
JN 318-001 Sports Writing and Reporting.....	17
JN 320-001 Intermediate Journalism Design.....	15
JN 325-001 Reporting and Writing Across Media.....	15
JN 412-001 Opinion Writing.....	13
JN 415 Advanced Magazine Writing.....	11
JN 419 Food Writing and Reporting.....	12
JN 430 Digital Media Workshop.....	11
JN 491 Journalism Reporting Project.....	10

Professional Master’s Class Sections

JN 502-001 Media Production Tools.....	6
JN 511-001 Depth Reporting.....	7
JN 515 Advanced Magazine Writing.....	1
JN 561 Food Writing.....	1

Telecommunication & Film Department

Undergraduate Class Sections

TCF 145-001 Media Production.....	15
TCF 201-001 Intro to Video Production.....	19
TCF 201-002 Intro to Video Production.....	14
TCF 286-001 Intro to Reporting.....	15
TCF 286-002 Intro to Reporting.....	20
TCF 286-002 Intro to Reporting.....	20
TCF 286-002 Intro to Reporting.....	17
TCF 286-004 Intro to Reporting.....	11
TCF 301-001 Intro to Audio Production.....	15
TCF 312-001 Intro to Audio Production.....	15
TCF 315-001 Scriptwriting.....	15
TCF 315-320 Scriptwriting.....	16
TCF 321-001 Announcing and Performing for Radio and TV.....	20
TCF 332-001 Fundamentals of Electronic News.....	16
TCF 332-002 Fundamentals of Electronic News.....	17
TCF 333-001 Advanced Electronic Reporting.....	16
TCF 333-002 Advanced Electronic Reporting.....	20

TCF 334-001 News Portfolio	8
TCF 334-002 News Portfolio	12
TCF 335-001 New Media	14
TCF 361-001 Intro to Post Production	15
TCF 361-002 Intro to Post	20
TCF 361-320 Intro to Post Production	20
TCF 451-001 Advanced Television Production	19
TCF 451-002 Advanced Television Production	9
TCF 461-001 Advanced Post Production	12
TCF 461-320 Advanced Post Production	10

- 17. Total expenditures from all sources planned by the unit for the 2015 – 2016 academic year: \$7,507,841**
Percentage increase or decrease in three years: 23%
Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries: \$4,577,638

Note: These figures break are only central administration and the three journalism and mass communication departments. See full detail answers to in Standard 7.

- 18. 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.**

Anderson, Lars--Instructor	Hoewe, Jennifer--Assistant Professor
Barry, Mark—Instructor	Hopp, Tobias--Assistant Professor
Bennett, Beth S.--Professor	Horsley, Suzanne--Associate Professor
Billings, Andrew--Professor	Huffaker, Randall--Lecturer
Bissell, Kimberly--Professor	Khang, Hyoungkoo--Associate Professor *
Bragg, Dianne--Assistant Professor	Ki, Eyun-Jung--Associate Professor
Bragg, Rick--Professor	Kim, Yonghwan--Assistant Professor
Brantley, Chip--Lecturer	Kinney, Lance--Associate Professor
Brown, Kenon--Assistant Professor	Lamme, Meg--Associate Professor
Bruce, Michael--Assistant Professor	Lewis, Regina--Associate Professor
Bunker, Matthew--Professor	Little, Mike--Instructor
Butler, Jeremy--Professor	Lowrey, Wilson--Professor
Cammeron, Dwight--Lecturer	Meissner, Dan--Instructor
Cantrell Glenda—Associate Professor	Nelson, Mark--Professor
Champion, Maya--Instructor	Ofori-Parku, Senyo--Assistant Professor
Clark, Chandra--Assistant Professor	Panek, Elliot--Assistant Professor
Cooper, Caryl--Associate Professor	Parrott, Scott--Assistant Professor
Corrao, Nick--Assistant Professor	Payne, Matthew--Assistant Professor
Cummings, Meredith--Instructor	Phelps, Joseph--Professor
Daniels, George L. --Associate Professor	Raimist, Rachel--Associate Professor
Daria, Susan--Instructor	Roberts, Chris--Associate Professor
Evans, William--Professor	Sherrick, Brett--Instructor
Gonzenbach, William J.--Professor	Sims, Tracy --Instructor
Gower, Karla--Professor	Tran, Pam Doyle--Professor
Glenn, Griffin--Associate Professor	Vargo, Christopher--Assistant Professor
Grace, Andrew--Lecturer	Walker, Janet--Lecturer
Greer, Jennifer--Professor**	Warner, Kristen--Assistant Professor
Hartley, Sara--Assistant Professor	Waters, Jay--Instructor
Henley, Teri--Instructor	Zhou, Shuhua--Professor

* Sabbatical- Spring 2016

** On Administrative Assignment as Associate Provost - Spring 2016

**19. List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in fall 2015.
Also list names of part-time faculty teaching spring 2015.**

Avant, Lydia
Bowers, Kathy*
Brewer, Terri
Brock, Elizabeth
Brown, Donald
Bruinton, Lesley*
Burnett, Marq*
Byland, David
Cherones, Tom
Cole, Jamie
Cornelius, Donna*
Cross, Kim
Dowling, Rick
Eaton, Kim*
Ezell, Jon
Fields, Monique
Fisher, Brad
Flora, Doris*
Gamble, Shweta
Gerdes, Bill*
Goodson, Keli*
Jaillet, Brett*
Jaillet, James*
Jones, Jessie
Lazer, Alan
LeComte, Richard
Mayfield, Mark
Miller, David*
Monroe, Laura*
Murphy, Morgan*
Nevin, Will
Scarritt, Tom
Smith, Jamon*
Suttles, Aaron
Sutton, Robert
Torrence, Marc*
Whatley, James
Whitley, Carla Jean
Wray, Cheryl

**denotes lab instructors who are not instructors of record. They assist in labs, using assignments, lesson plans and assessments created by the instructor of record. They do not assign grades in the course, but do assist with grading.*

20. 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.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Graduates</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
2014-2015	605	605	100%
2013-2014	628	628	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.

Introduction

Since the Department of Journalism was established in 1928, the program has evolved to reflect changes in professional and business practice in journalism and mass communications – and continues to do so. The Department of Radio Arts was established in 1939, later becoming the Department of Telecommunication and Film; the Department of Advertising & Public Relations was established in 1974; and in the week before the visit, the College announced that the departments of Journalism and Telecommunication & Film will merge into the Department of Journalism and Creative Media.

The School of Communications, of which these departments are a part, was established in 1973 and became the College of Communication in 1988. It merged with the School of Library & Information Studies in 1997 to become the College of Communication & Information Sciences.

In 2003 the University launched an ambitious program of growth in student enrollment, faculty and staff, and physical plant. Student increases have come mainly from out of state; in 2015-16, 60 percent came from outside Alabama, from virtually every state. As the state has reduced support for higher education, the University has had to rely on tuition and fees, particularly from out-of-state students. These students are far more than an economic asset; they have contributed to a rise in ACT scores and high school GPAs that, said the interim provost, has changed the culture of the University.

Here is a snapshot of change in the accredited units of the College from 2009 to 2015:

	2009	2015	% Change
University Enrollment	27,052	37,100	+37.14
College Accred. Units:			
Undergraduates	1,829	2,270	+24.11
Graduate Students	47	39	-17.02
Full-Time Faculty	38	58	+52.63
Adjuncts	24	39	+62.50
Budget	\$5,695,678	\$7,158,045	+25.60

The pace of growth in the University and College has been steady; the pace of change in the industries and professions the College serves has been volatile and hectic. Managing these forces so that students and faculty can do their best work and achieve their potential has been a formidable challenge.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(a)The unit has a written mission statement and engages in strategic or long-range planning 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 College has a mission statement that embraces the breadth of teaching, scholarship and service of multimedia journalism, film, communication studies and library and information studies. Each of the

three departments seeking accreditation has a mission statement that defines professional purpose and goals for the undergraduate major and the two master's degrees.

The dean was chosen for his vision, energy, and experience in administration at the University level. After his appointment in July 2014, he engaged the faculty in strategic planning. This process was not deflected by the strategic planning initiatives of a new president in July 2015, but had to coordinate with the University's goals. The first priorities of the College plan were to reconstruct the instructional space and technological capacity of Phifer Hall, once upon a time a student union building with a maze of offices and stairways; to consider merging the departments of Journalism and Telecommunication & Film; and to rebrand and reposition the doctoral program. Taking on these challenges in the year of a self-study risks territorial dispute and disciplinary discomfort. It's to the credit of the leadership, the faculty and staff that the process so far has been collegial and harmonious.

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

University and College handbooks define policies and procedures for faculty governance, a system the year and a half of planning and action has tested. While a few faculty members expressed unease about the implications of the merged departments, consensus was solid that the process has fully engaged both tenure-track and contract faculty and that the merger is full of promise.

The College's standing committees (Tenure and Promotion, Graduate Studies, Undergraduate Curriculum, Committee on Faculty, and Computing & Instructional Technology) and ad-hoc committees ensure appropriate authority and voice for faculty members.

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

The dean is widely admired within and outside the College for his vision and vitality and a nice balance between consultation and decisiveness. He has streamlined the College's administrative echelon, delegating responsibility to associate and assistant deans, diverse in race and gender, so that he can strengthen connections with alumni and the professions, revitalize the Board of Visitors and raise funds that benefit students and faculty. Because of his experience at the University level, he has been effective in securing support for renovating and equipping classrooms, labs and studios. He has brightened the hallways with celebratory messages that inform and motivate and introduced a system of signage that enhances the probability students and visitors will find their way in Phifer Hall.

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

The president appoints deans guided by a search process that conforms to the University's Affirmative Action Plan and includes advice from the academic division and a search committee. The dean of the College appoints chairpersons, subject to review and approval by the Office for Academic Affairs and the president. The UA Faculty Handbook defines policies and procedures for evaluating deans and department chairs.

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

The University's Mediation and Grievance System defines a process for pursuing grievances and assessing sanctions.

Summary

The University and the College are adjusting to new leadership that is wrestling creatively with the challenges of growth and the constraints of finite resources. The dean has infused a renewed sense of purpose and potential in faculty, students and staff and in the Board of Visitors and alumni, who conveyed a concern that the College had been coasting in a time of upheaval in the industries and professions it serves. He has organized an administrative team that enables him to delegate domestic responsibility and to engage in a constructive foreign policy to enrich external connections and raise resources.

Overall evaluation (undergraduate program): COMPLIANCE

Professional master's program / Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The College of Communication and Information Sciences offers four M.A. degrees and an M.F.A. degree. This report evaluates only the M.A. in Advertising and Public Relations and the M.A. in Journalism.

The one-year M.A. program in Advertising and Public Relations provides advanced preparation in both disciplines. Both Plan I and Plan II (discussed in detail later in this report) provide students with the necessary skills to gain entry-level jobs in the field.

The M.A. in Journalism includes a two-year option and the one-year community journalism option. The two-year option prepares graduates for teaching and research and is not reviewed herein. The community journalism option is a training program, which, in addition to requiring each student to complete a multi-chapter reporting project, also requires a summer professional immersion experience at The Anniston Star. As a partner in the Community Journalism master's program, Star owners and managers are consulted during formal meetings, but "do not play a formal role in curriculum governance and policy."

The site team was not initially provided with a written mission statement for the professional master's programs in Journalism or a written strategic or long-range plan. Upon inquiry, the Department did provide both.

The College's most recent strategic plan completed in 2008 did not include goals, strategies or performance indicators directly related to the master's in Advertising and Public Relations. The self-study references a new strategic plan and reports that the College is working on revamping the Ph.D. program. No information is presented that discusses strategic planning for the master's in Advertising

and Public Relations. The self-study does say an ad hoc committee is looking at the curriculum of the master's program in Advertising and Public Relations, but it is charged only to look at how the curriculum may need updating. The self-study also references how the master's in Journalism has been updated based on student feedback.

(g)The unit has designated administrative oversight of the professional master's program as well as policies and procedures that ensure faculty oversight of educational policy and curriculum in the professional master's program.

The graduate programs are overseen by the Department chairs, the associate dean for graduate studies, and the College's graduate studies council. The Departmental graduate coordinators and graduate faculty members then discuss issues with the full faculty.

The graduate program coordinators of Journalism and Advertising and Public Relations coordinate the programs and advising. The coordinator serves as head of the Department's graduate affairs committee and as supervisor of all graduate students.

Faculty members have oversight of the educational policies and curriculum in the master's programs. Any members of the graduate faculty may propose changes to the curriculum. The proposals are reviewed by the Department's graduate committee, and then voted on by all graduate faculty members.

Summary

The College's strategic plan does not provide specific vision and direction for the master's program in Advertising and Public Relations. A strategic planning process is under way, but the focus seems to be on the Ph.D. program. The College may want to develop a more formal plan for the professional master's programs (e.g., recruiting and branding) as it has for the Ph.D. program. Faculty members are actively involved in the future of the program by updating curriculum as needed and recruiting new students.

Overall evaluation (professional master's program): COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The College is in compliance with this rule. The College requires at least 72 hours outside of journalism and mass communications. The College administers a checks and balances system through the DegreeWorks program and the College registrar.

(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 College offers majors in Advertising and Public Relations, Journalism, and Telecommunication and Film. Each sequence offers theoretical and skills courses. All programs require a minor or a second major, which cannot be in a mass communication area. All students regardless of sequence must take MC 101: Introduction to Mass Communication. Curriculum has been updated in some majors starting in the 2015-2016 academic year, but this review examines the curriculum from 2010 to 2015.

ADVERTISING

The Advertising and Public Relations faculty introduced a new curriculum during Fall 2015. The old curriculum was evaluated for this report. Sophomores and juniors were being advised which curriculum better suited their needs. The students are very excited about the new curriculum, so it seems to be a positive change.

Advertising has 403 majors, comprising 18 percent of the College's majors. Students in the major must take 9 hours of common courses. In addition to MC 101: Introduction to Mass Communication (3 credit hours), students must choose between: MC 401: Mass Communication Law & Regulation (3 credit hours) *or* MC 407: Mass Communication Research (3 credit hours). They must select the other three credits from MC 405: Mass Communication Ethics, MC: 409: History of Mass Communication, MC 413: Mass Communication, Service and Diversity, MC: 421: Political Communication, MC 425: Media Management, MC 444: Lobbying, or MC 495: Special Topics. Students in the Advertising major take: JN 150: Mechanics of Media Writing (1 credit hour); APR 221: Introduction to Advertising (3 credit hours); APR 260: Design Applications (3 credit hours); APR 300: Visual Communication (3 credit hours); APR 322: Advertising Copywriting (3 credit hours); APR 418: Advertising Development (3 credit hours) or APR 423: Advertising Management (3 credit hours); APR 422: Advertising Media (3 credit hours); and APR 424: Advertising Campaigns (3 credit hours) for a total of 22 credits.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public Relations has 951 majors, comprising almost 42 percent of the College's majors. Students in the major must take 9 hours of common courses. In addition to MC 101: Introduction to Mass Communication (3 credit hours), students must choose between MC 401: Mass Communication Law & Regulation (3 credit hours) *or* MC 407: Mass Communication Research (3 credit hours). They must then select the other three credits from: MC 405: Mass Communication Ethics, MC 409: History of Mass Communication, MC 413: Mass Communication, Service and Diversity, MC 421: Political Communication, MC 425: Media Management, MC 444: Lobbying, or MC 495: Special Topics. Students in the Public Relations major take: JN 150: Mechanics of Media Writing (1 credit hour); APR 231: Introduction to Public Relations (3 credit hours); APR 260: Design Applications (3 credit hours); JN 311: News Writing and Reporting (3 credit hours); APR 300: Visual Communication (3 credit hours); APR 332: Public Relations Writing (3 credit hours); APR 433: Public Relations Campaigns (3 credit hours); and *one* of the following: APR 415: Online Magazine Writing (3 credit hours), APR 419: Public Relations Development (3 credit hours), or APR 432: Public Relations Management (3 credit hours) for a total of 22 credits.

Advertising and Public Relations students reported that the curriculum balances theoretical and conceptual courses and professional skills courses. They said that ethics and law are emphasized in every course. Domestic and global diversity and inclusion were discussed primarily in elective courses, but depending on the instructor, these concepts were emphasized in Advertising and Public Relations required classes. The students appreciate the small class sizes; however, they expressed concern over the growing enrollment and the difficulty in obtaining access to courses in a timely manner.

JOURNALISM

The Journalism major has 324 majors, the smallest major in the College, and offers sequences in Journalism, Visual Journalism, and Sports News and Information. Students in the major must take 15 hours of common courses regardless of sequence. These include: MC 101: Introduction to Mass Communication (3 credit hours); JN 101: Journalistic Principles and Practices (2 credit hours); JN 150: Mechanics of Media Writing (1 credit hour); JN 311: News Writing and Reporting (3 credit hours); JN 312: Editing and Digital Production (3 credit hours); JN 499: Journalism Issues and Ethics (3 credit hours); and MC 401: Mass Communication Law.

Journalism students reported they are required to show a grasp of communications theory and apply it to their work in skills classes. They said the Council's competencies are addressed throughout the curriculum.

TELECOMMUNICATION AND FILM

The Telecommunication and Film major has 592 majors and offers sequences in media production, electronic reporting, sports, production management, critical studies in film and telecommunications and documentary. All students in this major regardless of sequence are required to take: MC 101: Introduction to Mass Communication (3 credit hours) and TCF 100: Introduction to Telecommunication (3 credit hours).

Telecommunication and Film students report strong instruction in professional skills courses and a good balance of theory and conceptual courses. Students say they have many opportunities in their classes to combine the two and put conceptual ideas into practice in their projects. Students had positive responses when asked about ACEJMC competencies and cited MC 101: Introduction to Mass Communication and

TCF 100: Introduction to Telecommunication as strong introductory courses that created a foundation for these competencies.

(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.)

ADVERTISING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Advertising and Public Relations students said the curricula were rigorous, particularly in the professional skills courses. The students were given a trial access to Radian6 to learn analytics, and ongoing access to databases such as Simmons, and other tools such as SPSS and Qualtrics for research. The students appreciated having access to Adobe Creative Suites in all of their labs. Video and photography equipment was readily available for 24 hours for class projects. Those working under the new or old curriculum report feeling very competent and competitive with their technology skills. Those in the new curriculum are hoping to learn more about analytics and other creative technologies and are excited to have a specialization.

JOURNALISM

Journalism students said the curriculum is current and rigorous. Labs and equipment are well maintained with the latest software and technology. Issues of law and ethics are woven into the curriculum. Diversity is also emphasized in many courses. Students said faculty in the Department are accessible and make themselves available outside of class.

TELECOMMUNICATION AND FILM

Telecommunication and Film students report they have many opportunities in their courses for hands-on experience with modern production and field equipment that matches industry standards. Current events and recent news coverage are often discussed in media courses, and film students say their professors keep lecture materials and other classroom presentations current as well. Upper-level skills courses are almost uniformly multimedia, including a fair amount of social media instruction as well.

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

Skills courses ranged from 2 to 21 students in Fall 2015. One section of campaigns had 24 students enrolled, but that is exempt from the 20-1 ratio. Some skills courses were taught with more than 20 students. The Department chair reports this occurred due to enrollment pressure with so many students needing the course to stay on track for graduation and not enough instructors to create another section.

(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.

ADVERTISING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Students in the Advertising and Public Relations major are not required to have an internship, but they are strongly encouraged to apply for them. The self-study states a majority of the majors do participate in a practicum, internship or other professionally oriented experiences outside the classroom, particularly the student-run agency. Students may apply for internship credit during the semester. The most common for-credit internship is APR 100: Professional Exploratory (1 credit hour). Students must have permission of the Department chair and faculty sponsor. They must have a 2.0 GPA and be an Advertising or Public Relations major or minor in good standing. This course may not be repeated.

The second type of internship is a “formal” internship taken for 3 credit hours and requires 350 hours of work at the sponsoring organization. The Department chair administers these internships, and students are required to apply for them. Students must have earned a 2.5 GPA in the major and have completed 61 hours of credit. Students may be enrolled in only 6 credit hours (3 of these credits are internship credit) during the semester of their internship. Advertising internships require completion of at least APR 422: Advertising Media. Public Relations internships require the completion of APR 332: Public Relations Writing. The interns must review an internship syllabus and complete a midterm and final reports on the internship experience. The employer is required to provide objectives for the internship and professional supervision of the intern. The employer completes an intern evaluation form at the conclusion of the project. The employer evaluation forms and student reports are graded as pass/fail.

Student interviews uncovered a lack of awareness by students of the federal law and Public Relations Society of America Code of Ethics regarding unpaid internships.

JOURNALISM

Students majoring in journalism are strongly recommended but not required to have an internship prior to graduation. In 2007, the Department revised its curriculum to make the internship course, JN 382, one of the four professional “capstone” options required of all majors.

Students with a GPA of 2.5 or higher who have completed 45 credits and taken JN 311: Newswriting and Reporting with a C- or better are allowed to intern for credit. They receive 1 credit hour for 60 hours of work. Students can take internships for 1 to 3 credit hours, but no more than 6 credit hours can be earned.

Each student pursuing an internship fills out a form describing what he or she will do for the organization. The Department does not allow a student to earn internship credit if the student is the only one performing that task for an organization and does not benefit from on-site feedback and supervision. The Department evaluates student performance 1) through a self-reported weekly performance evaluation sent to the internship coordinator to monitor the output of the student; 2) through a supervisor's midterm and final evaluations; and 3) through a final paper and portfolio submitted to the internship coordinator at the end of the semester.

TELECOMMUNICATION AND FILM

Students who major in electronic news, sports, or production are required to earn 3 hours of internship credit. Students majoring in production management or critical studies are not required to take an internship, but may take up to 3 hours of TCF 387: Internship. Many Telecommunication and Film students intern with organizations located within the College's Digital Media Center, which houses a commercial television station, public broadcast facilities and a production house for the University Athletic Department. Students report the faculty are helpful in assisting them to locate and secure appropriate internships for their majors.

Summary

The College has a balance of conceptual and skills courses. The curriculum is current, and the faculty are flexible in their ability to introduce new technology into courses as needed. Courses are in a logical sequence. It will be very important for the College to keep a close eye on the student-faculty ratio and the ability to offer its curriculum considering all of its specializations.

Overall evaluation (undergraduate program): COMPLIANCE

Professional master's program / Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(f) At least half of the required credit hours are in either professional skills or courses that integrate theory and skills appropriate to professional communication careers.

ADVERTISING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS M.A.

According to the University Graduate School website both the Advertising and Public Relations and Journalism departments offer: (1) a two-year thesis program with specialization in Advertising and Public Relations or Journalism (Plan I), and (2) a one-year professional program combining Advertising and Public Relations or Journalism (Plan II).

There are 21 students enrolled in the M.A. in Advertising and Public Relations. There is flexibility to change between the plans after the student has enrolled. Plan I, two-year thesis, for the M.A. in Advertising and Public Relations requires completion of 30 hours of graduate courses and a comprehensive exam. The exam is usually the thesis proposal. The required courses include: APR 550: Advertising and Public Relations Communication (3 credit hours); APR 551: Advertising and Public Relations Communication Theory (3 credit hours); APR 570: Contemporary Advertising and Public Relations (3 credit hours); APR 583: Research Applications in Advertising and Public Relations (3

credit hours); and APR 599: Thesis Research (3 credit hours). They also take 9 credit hours of cognates and 3 credit hours of Advertising and Public Relations, Journalism, Mass Communication or Telecommunication and Film.

Plan II, or the one-year professional track, for the M.A. in Advertising and Public Relations requires completion of 33 hours of graduate courses, passing a comprehensive written examination, and completion of a master's project in APR 598: Communication Workshop. The required courses include: APR 522: Media Planning (3 credit hours); APR 550: Advertising and Public Relations Communication Research Methods (3 credit hours); APR 551: Advertising and Public Relations Communication Theory (3 credit hours); APR 570: Contemporary Advertising and Public Relations (3 credit hours); APR 572: Persuasive Communication (3 credit hours); APR 582: Advertising and Public Relations Management (3 credit hours); APR 583: Research Applications in Advertising and Public Relations (3 credit hours). APR 597: Communication Campaign Workshop I (3 credit hours) and APR 598: Communication Campaign Workshop II (3 credit hours) are also required. The self-study states that master's students complete eight skills classes.

JOURNALISM M.A.

There are 18 students enrolled in the M.A. in Journalism. Most of the required courses are professional skills courses with a heavy emphasis on critical thinking, ethics and context. Course work focuses on journalism in a community context. They must complete 31 hours of course credit. Required courses include: JN 501: Producing Community Journalism (3 credit hours); JN 502: Media Production Tools (2 credit hours); JN 511: Depth and Investigative Reporting (3 credit hours); JN 553: Assessing Community Journalism (3 credit hours); JN 562: Contemporary Journalism (3 credit hours); JN 571: Practices of Community Journalism (1 credit hour); JN 572: Seminar in Professional Journalism (3 credit hours), as well as a two-month experience at the The Anniston Star.

(g) Instruction and curricular requirements for professional master's students are more advanced and rigorous than for undergraduate students, including courses open to both undergraduate and graduate students.

ADVERTISING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS M.A.

Students thought the curriculum was advanced and rigorous. The curriculum has a blend of theory, research and skills classes. Students in Plan II, or the one-year professional track, expressed interest in having more flexibility in choosing electives or having the option of replacing APR 597: Communication Campaign Workshop I (3 credit hours) and APR 598: Communication Campaign Workshop II (3 credit hours) with an internship because they did not think they had enough field experience. They are aware that this program will provide them with skills needed to obtain a full-time position. Faculty said the Advertising and Public Relations M.A. program will be reviewed and revised. They are developing a strategic plan and will be evaluating the curriculum.

JOURNALISM M.A.

The M.A. program in journalism centers on a professional immersion experience that is central to the program; professional-level quality is expected of master's students, including a May through July professional reporting experience at The Anniston Star. Students are exposed to advanced reporting techniques, to management and assessment of markets and product effectiveness, to web analytics and to the social problems and challenges inherent in use of new, potentially invasive technologies. The

students are required to apply communications theory to projects arising from their community-based experience. They are mentored in coding and other advanced digital applications and they must conduct applied research analyses.

Summary

The curriculum reflects the ACEJMC requirements. The curriculum provides more skills courses tailored to the professional track students. M.A. students stated the courses were preparing them for entry-level positions.

Overall evaluation (professional master's program): 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 College has a written plan and updated it in 2015. The initial plan, written in 2008, was one of the first at the University of Alabama. The plan clearly defines diversity and inclusion and outlines steps the College is committed to taking to improve diversity and inclusion among students, faculty and staff. The College is required to report on its progress annually to the University. Its plan addresses curricular issues, emphasizing issues related to women and minority groups, and designates certain courses as meeting writing requirements as well as cross-listings with the University's African American Studies Program. Courses in public relations and in journalism also include diversity instruction.

Recruitment and retention of underrepresented minority students and faculty are emphasized in the plan. The College has better rates than the University in some categories. The plan incorporates informal mentoring of faculty members from underrepresented groups and support through the University's Black Faculty and Staff Association.

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

The syllabi, outlined in the self-study as being focused on diversity and inclusion, reflect course learning outcomes, readings, and assignments related to gender, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation. Examples of assignments in the required curriculum associated with diverse cultures in a global society include required readings, discussions and ethical case studies. These courses include required courses in each department and specialization. Students across majors could articulate examples of how the faculty incorporated diversity and inclusion discussions and assignments into their required professional skills curriculum. A host of elective courses also focus exclusively on issues related to diversity and inclusion. Students who had enrolled in these diversity-specific courses said the experiences were very rich and helped them to understand media representations, how to be more sensitive toward diverse groups and how to communicate effectively across cultures. Students may also complete writing intensive courses in mass communication that center around diversity themes; however, courses are offered only every other year, enabling only about 30 students to complete when they are offered. Additionally, students may complete elective courses that enable them to travel abroad or produce journalism projects with an international focus.

In 2014, the College voted to approve a 12-credit diversity certificate, which involves taking two diversity-related courses within the College, another diversity-related course elsewhere in the University

and an internship or media-related field experience. This diversity certificate program is being refined as the University investigates how to enhance diversity and inclusion coursework into the general education requirements.

To help facilitate discussions of diversity in the classroom the College has hosted teaching roundtables. One in 2013 focused on gay marriage. University teaching fellowships helped two College faculty members broaden the discussion and application of diversity beyond race and gender to include geography, generations, class and religion. Annually, the College submits a summary of its diversity-related speakers to the Office of the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs.

(c) The unit demonstrates effective efforts to recruit women and minority faculty and professional staff and supports their retention, progress and success.

Representation of Blacks and Hispanics on the faculty is less than in the state. In faculty searches, the candidate pools have been diverse in gender, race and ethnicity, with over representation of international candidates. Although offers to racially or ethnically underrepresented candidates have been limited, a new strategy to provide diversity training to faculty search committees has been discussed in faculty meetings. Faculty search committees report that the College has received a lot of interest in its openings. Students across departments report feeling positive about the gender diversity in the College. The students report a desire to have more Hispanics and African-American female faculty members.

The dean began including diversity and inclusion among items discussed at faculty meetings. Minutes of meetings reflect an inclusion of these diversity topics from recruitment of faculty and students to promoting speakers in the College and at the University. Also the dean now gives the C&IS Diversity Research Award to outstanding diversity-related research conducted by a faculty member and/or graduate student. Receptivity to this award has been positive and had impact on diversity research being conducted. A new C&IS Diversity Forum was also established to help encourage and support research and creative productions about diverse issues and to sponsor the Annual Discerning Diverse Voices symposium. About 16 faculty members across the College participate in the Forum.

Each of the three departments within the College has tenured or tenure-track Black faculty members. Two hold tenure, one of whom serves as assistant dean of administration and the other is a former assistant dean. Neither has reached full professor rank; however, both indicated they understand the requirements of promotion to full professor and how to achieve it if they desire to do so. The assistant professors of color reported feeling mentored and supported within their Departments, the College and the University.

To assist with retention and successful promotion and tenure, a new faculty orientation program was established in fall 2015. New faculty of all genders, races and ethnicities said that this new program was helpful. Under the leadership of a professor in the Department of Advertising and Public Relations, the University's Black Faculty and Staff Association (BFSA) had established a formal program of periodic workshops for African American faculty, particularly those holding tenure-track appointments. However, the newer Black faculty members were not active in the group, finding it more staff centric now. The faculty and staff from across campus said that the current and former assistant deans in the College, who are both African American, are visible and provide support for diverse faculty across campus.

(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.

Although the College has made steady progress and boasts of its largest population of Black students, its representation of Black students is between 10 percent and 20 percent lower than the state average and, in all but one department, lower than the University's percentage. In terms of Hispanic representation, the Departments (except the professional journalism master's program) have exceeded state and University levels. In the last five years, non-white students have received about 15 percent of the College's conferred undergraduate degrees. Likewise the six-year graduation rates for underrepresented students were higher (69.6%) than non-underrepresented students (65.3%). The University attributes much of the diversity improvement to the recruitment and funding support of high achieving students from out of state. While the self-study still compares the College's diversity to the state, more than 50 percent of its students are from out of state. Parity with national demographics would require the student population to be 13.2 percent African-America/Black, 17.4 percent Hispanic/Latino (of any race), and 5.4 percent Asian alone (<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/00000.html>). The provost explained that the University considers its peer institutions to be those in the SEC Athletic Conference and other state flagship universities. A group of diversity officers within the SEC are now meeting to share resources and ideas to enhance diversity and inclusion among the SEC universities.

At the graduate level, Black representation is higher in public relations (38%) than the state and the University. However, journalism's professional master's program (11%) lags behind both the state and the University. Recruitment for graduate programs still focuses primarily on the state of Alabama, unlike the undergraduate program.

Other efforts to help diversify the student body include partnerships with community colleges and historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). Dr. Ivory Toldson, executive director of the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities, visited the University of Alabama to kick off a partnership with Stillman College and Shelton State Community College. This visit resulted in an enhanced partnership with Shelton State Community College to help community college students transfer smoothly into C&IS mass communication majors. The desired impact is to increase the opportunities for first generation and minority students. The Stillman and Shelton State partnership provides academic advising to students interested in mass communication careers as well as the ability to complete courses in C&IS by paying tuition to their home institutions. C&IS students may also complete courses at Stillman and Shelton State to get exposure to African-American/Black culture.

A new initiative to give support to student organizations that emphasize diversity as core to their mission is under discussion, and the initiative for student organizations to collaborate with other campus organizations that emphasize diversity is not complete despite being a part of pre-2015 plans. Students said in meetings that there is diversity in student organizations but they focus more on regional diversity and not racial diversity. Gender diversity among students is highly skewed female and they want more males to become involved in professional organizations. Students did share that student organizations bring in a diverse array of speakers.

The College created a new lounge in 2014 and in February 2015 designated this space for informing students and faculty about diversity-related events and encouraging diverse conversations. No evidence

of this emphasis on diversity was seen during the site visit; however, other signage around the building emphasized diversity and inclusion including a rotating digital display emphasizing diversity and inclusion. Additionally, the Source, a campus-wide network of student organizations, now offers training about diversity. Students and faculty report the national geographic diversity has led to increased conversations, understanding and acceptance of diverse perspectives and cultures and a greater ambition for students to explore career opportunities throughout the U.S. versus Alabama and Atlanta to which students had limited their exploration.

The inclusion of diversity-related content such as lists of diversity-oriented professional groups on campus and photos of diverse students in the Bama Bound Orientation Program was aimed at helping diverse students envision a place for themselves in the College. Feedback has been positive from current and new students.

(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.

Syllabi reflect statements about respecting diversity and ensuring classes are free of harassment and discrimination, accommodate the needs of those with disabilities, and value the contributions of all forms of diversity. Students and faculty alike express a change in the culture of the University to being more open, inclusive and accepting of differences and attribute much of this to the increased national diversity of the student body. Some faculty have signage on their office doors identifying themselves as a safe zone for the LGBT community. The faculty report feeling supported across the College and an enhanced sense of inclusiveness at the University. The provost emphasized wanting the entire campus to be a place where all feel welcomed.

Summary

The College embraces diversity and inclusion through its curriculum, support of students and faculty from various backgrounds and increases in diversity among faculty, students and staff. Much of the demographic change is attributed to the majority of students being from out of state, which adds to diversity of thought on campus.

Overall evaluation (undergraduate program): COMPLIANCE

Summary

The College's professional master's programs embrace diversity and inclusion through the curriculum, support of students and faculty from various backgrounds and increases in diversity among their faculty, students and staff. Graduate students clearly articulated how professional communicators must address issues related to race, gender, ethnicity sexual orientation and physical disabilities.

Overall evaluation (professional master's program): COMPLIANCE

Table 7. Faculty Populations, Full-time and Part-time

Show numbers of female, male, minority, white and international faculty members and the percentages they represent of the unit's total faculty. (Report international faculty the same way the university reports them.) SCHOOLS LOCATED OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED STATES should adjust the response and listing below to best represent the racial/ethnic/socio economic groups of the area's population.

FULL-TIME FACULTY - THREE JMC UNITS IN C&IS

Academic year: 2014 - 2015

Group (Total %)	Female	% of total faculty	Male	% of total faculty
Black/African American (10.7%)	2	4.3	3	6.4%
White (76.6%)	11	23.4	25	53.2%
American Indian/Alaskan native				00.0%
Asian (6.4%)	1	2.1	2	4.3%
Hispanic/Latino (any race) (4.3%)	2	4.3		-
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander				00.0%
Two or more races				00.0%
Other race				00.0%
International (any race)			1	2.1

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

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The College has written criteria for selecting and evaluating the performance of all full-time and part-time faculty and instructional staff that are outlined in the University's Faculty Handbook. The process for a full-time faculty member begins with a request to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and subsequent approval. A search committee is then formed by the department chair, and the committee drafts the position description and leads the search process, including a concerted effort to recruit women and racial and ethnic minorities into the pool. The search teams advertise nationally for open positions and describe the emphasis of the position. The committee makes a recommendation to the chair, who then makes a recommendation to the dean, who makes the final offer after approval of salary and qualifications by the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs and background check by the Office of Academic Affairs. Faculty members and administrators feel this process is fair.

Part-time faculty do not go through this process. They are recruited generally by the chair to teach a particular course, as need arises. The candidates are interviewed by the chair, after receiving their resumes and cover letters; then they are invited to guest lecture and are observed by faculty members who evaluate the part-time candidate. The chair then may offer the candidate an opportunity to teach for the semester. Based upon teaching evaluations by students, part-time instructors may be reappointed without engaging in the process again.

Using an online submission process, all faculty, regardless of status are evaluated annually. All faculty must submit an annual report of their activities in teaching, research and service between April 1 and March 31 of each year as related to their Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) appointment. This online system automatically fills their form with information from teaching evaluations, published course syllabi and course enrollment. These reports are used for promotion, tenure and contract renewal submissions. Faculty across departments explained that this system helps tenure-track, tenured and contract faculty to prepare for re-appointments, tenure and promotions.

The University's Faculty Handbook and the C&IS Faculty Handbook outline the process and evaluation criteria for faculty to earn tenure and/or promotions. The criteria are competitive and compare faculty productivity to similar faculty at the unit's peer institutions. The process for tenure at the College-level attempts to confirm or determine the individual faculty member's academic and professional merits. However, the University's, College's and Department's long-range and intermediate academic planning at the time of appointment may also play a role in decisions of tenure. Because of the diversity within departments and the College, faculty applying for tenure and promotion must explain how their dossier and application meet the criteria. Faculty are evaluated based on their teaching, scholarly productivity and service. Faculty on the tenure track are reviewed annually and receive feedback in a retention letter from the department's personnel committee. During their fourth year, the dean and provost participate in that review. Faculty are then evaluated for tenure and promotion in year six. Recently, tenured faculty reported feeling very supported, saying that the detailed feedback was reassuring and eased the

stress of the process. Tenure-track faculty reported feeling that they have clear direction on how to obtain tenure, understand expectations and know where they need to improve before submitting their dossiers for tenure and promotion. Likewise, associate professors report knowing what is required to be promoted to full-professor, although the feedback loop and mentoring are not formal. Most reported having an informal mentor who encouraged them to apply. Those recently promoted to full professor report having very smooth processes.

Two exceptions to this positive feeling were raised during the site visit, but both have been forthrightly addressed. One included a few junior faculty expressing uncertainty with how widely critical scholarship will be accepted in the new Journalism and Creative Media Department. Both they and members of the College-level promotion and tenure committee explained that while the monographs, book chapters and other forms of scholarship are widely accepted in critical scholarship, journalism and other disciplines require single-authored refereed journal articles as the main form of scholarship. To address this concern, the College has revised its promotion and tenure policies to reflect the changes in the College's structure, and to ensure the language of the criteria across the College is inclusive. The other concern stemmed from the Telecommunication Communication & Film Department's multiple changes in leadership, which may have led to poor mentoring and guidance on expectations for tenure and promotion, particularly as related to creative productions. To address this concern, the College-wide promotion and tenure committee wrote a letter to all department chairs offering guidance on how to improve coaching and mentoring of faculty to ensure greater clarity of expectations at the College-level of review. Additionally, the dean of the College requested that the College-wide promotion and tenure committee review a case with a mixed recommendation so that its review was consistent in treatment of candidates who may not have been as clearly advised as others. These actions seem to have helped ease concerns.

Contract faculty are evaluated based on their teaching; input from faculty peers, students and the chair is included in the review process. Renewable contract faculty are evaluated annually, and the dean issues contract renewals. Once a renewable contract faculty member receives a second three-year contract renewal, the faculty member will be reviewed every three years instead of annually. The University is considering new personnel categories for contract faculty (such as senior lecturer); however, most of the contract faculty interviewed did not know about this development.

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

All faculty are expected to teach well, with an increasing emphasis on strong teaching. The teaching load of full-time faculty members in the College is 4:4 (12-hours of teaching each semester as the base-line). Tenure-track and tenured professors have a 50 percent reduction to ensure strong research productivity, resulting in a 2:2 load. Some contract faculty members maintain a 3:3 load to enable them to advise and complete service obligations; others maintain a 4:4 load. The provost explained that contract faculty can have up to a 5:5 load. Administrators and faculty with special assignments may also receive workload reductions.

Across the board, full-time faculty teach more than 57 percent of the courses; the average across all programs in the last three years has been 77 percent. However, some lab courses in the Telecommunication and Film Department have much heavier reliance on part-time faculty, but the unit has worked to bring those full-time percentages higher. To help support the culture of strong teaching, faculty can participate in teaching-related professional development through the University's Faculty

Resource Center, the Office of Academic Affairs, Center for Ethics and Social Responsibility and the College's Learning in Action Initiative. Faculty report participating in these courses. Faculty can obtain funding support to develop curriculum, publish research on assessment of teaching, and participate in service-learning professional development.

All faculty with rank above instructor are expected to conduct research or produce creative works. Faculty consistently report understanding the expectations for scholarly/creative production and are assessed accordingly through the annual review process. Each department has its own criteria for judging quality and quantity of scholarly productivity. The College also has current measures and descriptions of the diversity of acceptable scholarship. Some indicators of quality scholarship include potential contributions to the field, examining the number of citations and the observable impact the work is having on the research of other scholars in the field.

All faculty are expected to engage in service that is considered to reflect their teaching and research. All tenured and tenure-track faculty are expected to serve as advisers to students. These roles are outlined in the University's faculty handbook. Now that the College has a central advising center and the DegreeWorks software, the pressure for faculty to engage in very technical course-level selection and registration advising has lessened, enabling them to focus on career and general professional advising. The students and faculty alike believe the faculty are accessible, caring and helpful.

Tenure and tenure-track faculty members' service and research must result in building a positive national or international reputation for themselves and the University. Contract full-time faculty are also expected to engage in service; however, the measure of excellence need not involve a national or international reputation.

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

The credentials of the faculty represent a balance of professional and scholarly experience and expertise. They remain current through memberships in professional and academic organizations. Professionals said that the faculty are very knowledgeable, provide professional development training to their teams, assist with projects and demonstrate their knowledge of the current practice by supervising student productions and projects of high professional quality. Guest speakers and adjunct/part-time faculty from local media companies and public relations departments, as well as from out of state, contribute to the currency of the faculty. Furthermore, several faculty continue to practice the profession and/or participate in fellowships, like those offered through the Plank Center, to work in the industry during summer breaks. Students appreciate the balance of the faculty's professional and scholarly expertise and experiences and look to faculty for their areas of specialization to assist them with their careers.

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

Evaluation of instruction occurs through multiple measures including student ratings, peer evaluations of teaching, evaluation of student work (campaigns, presentations), peer review of demonstration of content knowledge, rapport with students and classroom management skills and chair review of grading practices. Students' winning awards for course-related projects offers insights into teaching effectiveness. Faculty members have received multiple teaching awards and have published multiple pedagogy articles as well, further demonstrating teaching effectiveness. Teaching evaluations occur annually.

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

The College of Communication & Information Sciences has a strong reputation on campus for its citizenship. Faculty members serve in the Senate, hold offices in the central administration, lead diversity and inclusion efforts on campus, conduct interdisciplinary research and support productions across campus. Faculty and administrators interviewed during the visit said that the College has a reputation of providing an outstanding quality of education. The students were described as being passionate, dedicated, highly skilled and leaders on campus.

Summary

The faculty are highly respected by each other and colleagues. A spirit of collegiality and support was overwhelmingly present enabling new and seasoned faculty to feel supported in their teaching, research and service with clear pathways to tenure and promotion.

Overall evaluation (undergraduate program): COMPLIANCE

Professional master's program / Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(f) Faculty members teaching in the professional master's program meet the criteria for graduate instruction at that university.

Only faculty members approved to be full and/or associate graduate faculty members are allowed to teach graduate courses. Criteria for full and associate members include a Ph.D. and a rank of at least assistant professor in a full-time, tenure-track position. Both full and associate members must show ongoing interest in the graduate program and research productivity. Full members especially must have a strong, continuing record of productive research appropriate to the discipline. These requirements are interpreted by the Departments and College. All of the full and associate members listed above meet these criteria. Faculty may be appointed as temporary graduate faculty if they hold a Ph.D. and are producing scholarship, but have not had sufficient graduate teaching experience yet. Other temporary graduate faculty members have substantial creative productivity and are teaching highly specialized skills courses, but they do not hold a terminal degree.

(g) Graduate faculty teach the majority of professional master's courses.

All of the professional master's courses are taught by members of the graduate faculty (temporary, associate or full).

Summary

The graduate faculty are highly respected by each other and colleagues. The departments have a system of rotation so that a variety of faculty can teach graduate courses.

Overall evaluation (professional master's program): COMPLIANCE

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

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The University of Alabama is a Research 1 University that prides itself on being a “student-centered research university.” The University’s research mission is to facilitate and promote the pursuit, discovery and dissemination of knowledge through scholarship and creative activity.

Tenured and tenure-track faculty generally teach a 2/2 course load in order to give them time to pursue research. (Lecturers generally teach a 3/3 or 4/4 course load.) Tenured faculty members are eligible for a sabbatical every six years at full pay for one semester or half pay for two semesters. The College granted sabbaticals to ten faculty members during the past six years.

The College provides travel funding to tenure and tenure-track faculty to present their research at academic conferences. Faculty members put in requests for travel funding and they say the funding is granted, provided the amount is reasonable. Contract faculty can also requests funds for professional, teaching and service travel.

To promote and facilitate research, the College houses the Institute for Communication and Information Research and the Health Communication Lab. The research facilities include six labs: Child Media, Content Analysis, Focus Group, Psychophysiology, Survey and Theater. Last year, the College added a new position, Assistant to the Dean for Grant and Collaborative Activities, to assist faculty in applying for grants to support its mission.

Tenured and tenure-track faculty can receive a graduate research assistant to help with their scholarship. The associate dean for research puts out a call to faculty each year for research assistants. Faculty members with ongoing projects can generally receive a research assistant for 10 hours a week. Tenure-track faculty members receive special consideration for graduate research assistants.

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

Faculty members are evaluated based on the University’s tripartite mission of teaching, research and service. The College spells out the expectations for research and creative activity in its Faculty Handbook. The granting of tenure and the awarding of promotion to Associate Professor require “clear evidence of the potential for a distinguished reputation in a candidate’s area of expertise,” while promotion to Professor requires “clear evidence of having achieved a distinguished reputation for excellence.” Faculty said the expectations are made clear by the administration and reinforced during annual reviews.

(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 College's tenure and promotion policy requires faculty to have "an active, ongoing program of scholarly research and/or creative activity." The definition includes the wide range of traditional academic scholarship and professional creative activity found in the College. All three departments in the College have a generally good record of tenure.

(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 College has an extremely productive faculty whose scholarly and creative work is disseminated across a variety of publications and venues. Faculty members have produced more than 500 books, textbooks, scholarly articles, and creative works.

Among the books published by the faculty are *Communication and Sports: Surveying the Field*, *Campaign Finance Reform: The Political Shell Game*, and *Public Relations and Religion in American History: Evangelism, Temperance and Business*.

Faculty members have published articles in scholarly journals such as *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, *Communication Law and Policy*, *Newspaper Research Journal*, *Journal of Public Relations Research*, *Journal of Sports Media*, *American Journalism*, *Mass Communication & Society*, *Journal of Broadcasting Electronic Media*, *Journalism History*, and *Asian Journal of Communication*.

Faculty members also made hundreds of research presentations at national conventions of the major academic organizations in the field, including the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, International Communication Association, and National Communication Association. They also made presentations at numerous national, regional and state professional organizations, including the American Academy of Advertising, Public Relations Society of America, Broadcast Education Association, and Alabama Press Association.

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

Faculty members are respectful of one another. They appreciate different points of view they each may hold and the various approaches each brings to the creation and dissemination of scholarship and creative activity.

Summary

The College requires faculty to engage in scholarly research or creative activity and supports them through travel funding, sabbaticals and research assistants. Faculty members have an outstanding record of publishing their work, as well as presenting it at academic and professional meetings. The College fosters a climate that supports intellectual curiosity and respect for differing points of view.

Overall evaluation (undergraduate program): COMPLIANCE

Overall evaluation (professional master's program): COMPLIANCE

Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activities	Total from Unit*	Individuals				Totals (58)
		Full Professors (19)	Associate Professors (11)	Assistant Professors (17)	Other Faculty** (11)	
Awards and Honors	154	51	29	10	64	154
Grants Received Internal	13	1	6	6	0	13
Grants Received External	15	2	0	6	7	15
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co-authored	11	8	1	1	1	11
Textbooks, Sole- or Co-authored	4	4	0	0	0	4
Books Edited	13	12	1	0	0	13
Book Chapters	97	50	17	30	0	97
Monographs	5	5	0	0	0	4
Articles in Refereed Journals	325	185	79	61	0	325
Refereed Conference Papers	460	249	122	89	0	460
Invited Academic Papers	35	18	17	0	0	35
Encyclopedia Entries	18	6	11	1	0	18
Book Reviews	15	7	7	1	0	15
Articles in Non-refereed Publications	153	13	24	13	103	153
Juried Creative Works	67	13	6	20	28	67
Non-juried Creative Works	100	10	11	46	33	100
Other (specified)	87	35	28	18	6	87

*Co-authored work should be counted as a single publication in the unit totals. However if, for example, two members of the faculty are co-authors on the same journal article, it would be reported as a publication for both authors.

**Includes all full-time faculty who do not hold listed ranks, such as instructors and others on term appointments. Many faculty in this category may hold teaching appointments without significant scholarship, research or creative requirements.

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.

Academic advising has undergone substantial revision since the 2009 site team visit. In 2014, the College created the position of assistant dean for undergraduate studies and external relations to oversee a variety of student services including advising. This change was intended to place overall responsibility for advising with a full-time administrator. With this change, incoming freshmen are now assigned to a professional adviser rather than a faculty member. Meanwhile, a professional academic adviser was hired in fall 2013 and assigned to students who need additional assistance. Now three professional advisers are available to at-risk students.

New students are informed of the requirements of their degrees during new student orientation sessions where advisers meet with them individually to help them register for their first semester courses.

Once students have accumulated 31 credit hours and are not deemed at-risk or in need of special attention, responsibility for their advising services shifts to faculty members. Most College faculty members in the Journalism and Advertising and Public Relations departments, are, as part of their duties, expected to provide advising services to these students. In the Department of Telecommunication and Film, one faculty member carries most of the load. There is said to be substantial informal advising conducted by most faculty in all three departments and this was confirmed in conversations with faculty and with current and former students.

Student progress toward meeting the requirements for their degree is monitored via DegreeWorks, a widely used online system. The ACEJMC 72-credit-hour rule is posted with each student's record.

Site team discussions with current and former students suggest a high level of satisfaction with and confidence in College advising services. However, in a University-wide advising survey, when compared to eight other colleges on campus, the College of Communication & Information Sciences had the highest percentage of students (10.5 percent) who rated their overall satisfaction with the advising experience as "very unsatisfactory." Extrapolated to the total reported enrollment of the programs under consideration, that would leave nearly 240 students who would be very unsatisfied with their advising experience.

(b) Faculty are available and accessible to students.

Faculty members are required to hold regular office hours of only one hour per course per week, but a more typical schedule is said to be three or four hours per week for those teaching two courses. During registration periods and other peak advising times, most faculty are said to "devote about five hours a week to advising" in 20-minute sessions. Such representations were confirmed in conversations with

faculty members and with current and former students, who said most faculty members are very accessible and helpful outside of both classroom hours and outside of posted office hours.

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

Since the 2009 site team visit, the College has refined its communication with students about advising and student service, creating in 2014 a student e-newsletter now sent weekly. The newsletter includes upcoming deadlines, internship and scholarship opportunities, special educational enrichment opportunities, and schedules of tutoring. Information also is distributed through social media, the University website and signage.

Academic advising is not required once students have accumulated 31 or more credit hours, but students are encouraged via the newsletter and regular contacts from the student services center to participate in one advising session per semester.

Current and former students confirmed they have been informed regularly about advising and said they were informed of a variety of educational and enrichment events and opportunities, not only in the e-newsletter, but in the more traditional bulletin boards, fliers and signage.

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

The College describes a robust array of student organizations and media enterprises that provide students with extra-curricular and co-curricular opportunities related to journalism and public communications.

Of particular note, the University owns a full-service commercial television station serving the top-50 market of Birmingham, Tuscaloosa, and the surrounding area. WVUA-23 television is operated by the College as a laboratory for students. It is one of a handful of media in the U.S. operated on the “teaching hospital” hospital model where students work as staff with professional leadership in a commercial setting to enhance their skills and achieve high standards. WVUA’s studios are housed in the Digital Media Center inside Bryant Denny Stadium, just behind Reese Phifer Hall, providing easy access for all students to the station’s various learning experiences, including reporting, production, advertising and marketing and station management.

Also housed in the Digital Media Center are:

- The Center for Public Television and Radio
- Alabama Public Radio
- Crimson Tide Productions, operated by the Athletics Department but said to be a partner with the media center on many projects.

More than 100 student internships are said to be offered each year in these units.

In addition, Journalism students who meet the criteria are virtually guaranteed an internship with The Tuscaloosa News. All Community Journalism master’s students are required to complete an immersion experience at The Anniston Star.

Opportunities for editors and for advertising and marketing students also are available outside the College in the Office of Student Media, which operates:

- The Crimson White, a student newspaper
- WVUA-FM, a student radio station
- Alice, a magazine for college women
- Black Warrior Review, a literary magazine
- Marr's Field Journal, a literary magazine

Additional opportunities include:

- The Black Warrior Film Festival
- Campus MovieFest
- Mosaic magazine, a publication in the Honors College
- The Odyssey, devoted to fraternity life
- Alabama Alumni Magazine and Alabama Heritage, both University publications, offer internships

The College also operates student media outlets in a classroom laboratory environment:

- Platform Magazine, focused on ethics and leadership in public relations practice
- Dateline Alabama, a daily digital community news platform produced by a senior-level Journalism class
- Alpine Living, an online and print travel magazine, produced by a senior-level Journalism class
- Capstone Agency, a public relations and advertising agency serving local clients

There is a similarly vigorous suite of student organizations, including:

- The Public Relations Council of Alabama
- The Public Relations Student Society of America
- PRSSA Bateman Competition Team
- The Radio-Television Digital News Association
- The Student Production Association
- The National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ)
- The Society of Professional Journalists
- The Capstone Association of Black Journalists
- Capstone Advertising Federation, affiliated with the American Advertising Federation
- National Student Advertising Competition Team
- Alpha Delta Sigma

Overall, the College offers a particularly rich suite of extra-curricular and co-curricular opportunities appropriate to a large state university communications program. Current and former students say these opportunities are regularly communicated to them in the classroom and through a variety of formal and informal media.

(e) The unit gathers, maintains and analyzes enrollment, retention, graduation rates and other aggregate information for improving student services and reducing barriers to student success. Clear and accurate data are published on the accredited unit's website.

The College maintains retention and graduation statistics. First-year retention rates of first-time undergraduate students and six-year graduation rates of first-time undergraduate students are available on its website broken down by department.

No four-year graduation rates could be found on its website. Four-year graduation rates for the College as a whole were provided to the site team, broken down by department.

The College's four-year graduation rate varied between 33 percent and 39 percent for students who matriculated in 2006 through 2009 and remained in the College for all four years. That compares to the rate for the University as a whole, which varied between 38 percent and 41 percent for the same period.

The College's six-year graduation rate varied between 42 percent and 46 percent for students who matriculated in 2006 through 2007 and remained in the College for all four years. That compares favorably to the rate for the University as a whole, which varied between 38 percent and 41 percent for the same period.

Summary

The College is highly student focused with a robust suite of highly relevant extra-curricular opportunities. Faculty members are very accessible and the College collects and maintains graduation and retention statistics.

Overall evaluation (undergraduate program): COMPLIANCE

Professional master's program / Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(f)The unit has appropriate admissions and retention policies for the professional master's program. The enrollment, retention and graduation data are published on the unit's Website.

M.A. Advertising and Public Relations

Admission to graduate work in the M.A. in Advertising and Public Relations requires a 3.0 or higher undergraduate GPA and a combined score of at least 1000 on the verbal and quantitative portions of the Graduate Record Examination general test. The Department also accepts the Graduate Management Admissions Test with prior approval. Required supporting materials include a statement of career objectives and three letters of reference (at least two from academic sources). Students are required to

maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 to remain in the program. Students falling below this minimum are placed on probationary status and may be dismissed if the GPA does not improve.

Students in the M.A. program are advised by the Department's graduate coordinator, and students commented that other faculty are very willing to offer advice when needed.

Enrollment, retention and graduation data for the master's program are provided on the College's website.

M.A. Journalism

For the one-year professional track resulting in an M.A. in Community Journalism, between six and eight students are accepted per year. Applicants must fulfill all University graduate school requirements. Regular admission to graduate work in the Department of Journalism requires a 3.0 or higher undergraduate grade point average, and a score of at least 300 on the verbal Graduate Record Examination. Applicants who do not meet one of these two criteria may be admitted under conditional status if, based on other application material, the Department's faculty agrees the student is likely to succeed in the program. However, conditionally admitted students are not prioritized for University funding, and they must maintain at least a 3.0 GPA the first semester.

Students in the professional master's degree program are advised by the department's graduate coordinator who provides both orientation prior to the beginning of classes and throughout the program year.

Enrollment, retention and graduation data for the master's program are provided on the College website.

Summary

Admissions and retention policies for the M.A. programs are appropriately administered. Enrollment, retention and graduation data is available on the website.

Overall evaluation (professional master's program): 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.

A broad-based top-line budget provided in the self-study indicates continued growth in resources over the last three years as student enrollment has increased. A spot check of more detailed departmental budgets supported claims of increased resources throughout the College.

The long-range strategic plan in the self-study is outdated and was written in 2008. The College has participated in strategic planning over the last year that resulted in a plan to merge Journalism and Telecommunication and Film into the Department of Journalism and Creative Media; it was approved by the University of Alabama Board of Trustees in February 2016. The annual budget for the College seems adequate to support this plan.

(b)The resources that the institution provides are adequate to achieve the unit's mission. The resources are fair in relation to those provided other units.

The University has funded additional faculty, staff and graduate assistantships for the College to meet the demands of growing enrollment. The resources provided through state operating funds have increased only minimally in recent years, but rapid growth in enrollment for both the University and the College have provided additional resources.

The funding provided by the University of Alabama to the College is fair when comparing it to units of similar size and credit-hour production. The total allocation is \$10.5 million, ranking it 7th of the 10 units at the University.

The University also significantly underwrites the commercial television station operated by the College. The TC&F chair reports the annual support for the station is about \$750,000 in combined direct support and student fees.

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

The College has more than 117,000 square feet of assignable space in Reese Phifer Hall, a recently renovated building that contains classrooms, departmental and faculty offices, labs, and studios, as well as career center offices, student collaborative workplaces, equipment rooms, research facilities and the College library.

Reese Phifer Hall is actually two four-story buildings connected by a stairwell and enclosed walk-through bridge. While the building is large and sometimes difficult to navigate, faculty offices are grouped together by departments.

The two buildings together house many modern classrooms and conference rooms, which all contain multimedia projection systems. There are seven computer labs with at least two dozen work stations. An

APR lab and Journalism's Room 301 with eight workstations are available to students 24/7 with the use of a swipe card. The computers at the lab workstations are large-screen Macs equipped with Adobe Premiere Suites. Each classroom in Reese Phifer Hall is equipped with complete multi-media projection capabilities that include a computer for the instructor, a DVD player, audio speakers and an overhead projector. Many classrooms and all labs and conference rooms have large LCD displays and equipment to conduct Skype interviews or other video teleconferencing. The building also has wireless capability throughout and numerous areas where students can meet socially or for academic discussion.

Other facilities within Reese Phifer Hall include:

- Capstone Agency: a student run public relations firm
- The Speaking Studio: a public speaking consultant agency that facilitates the recording and immediate feedback of individual or group presentations
- Alabama Forensics Council: home to the University speech and debate team
- Institute for Communication and Information Research: this area houses a wide range of equipment and infrastructure to conduct advanced research in communication and information sciences including a child media lab, a survey lab and a theater lab. The ICIR also houses the offices dedicated to the College's doctoral program
- Studio A: a live production studio with digital capability and green screen
- Equipment Room: a storehouse of field recording and film equipment for production use available for students
- The College of Communication and Information Sciences William E. Winter Reading Room

Next to Reese Phifer Hall is the newly constructed Digital Media Center (DMC), an \$18 million facility inside the Bryant-Denny (football) Stadium. The DMC opened in 2014 and houses the College's commercial television station (WVUA-TV 23), the University's public radio station (WUAL-FM) and Crimson Productions, which is operated by the athletic department. The DMC contains three television studios and production control rooms, four radio production suites, ten non-linear editing suites, and a state-of-the-art newsroom for the television station.

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

The College provides a wide variety of equipment for student productions, projects and class assignments, from inexpensive Kodak flip video cameras to professional video equipment that includes light kits, a wide variety of microphone options, tripods and even a fully equipped grip truck for major productions off-site. Students report that the staff in the equipment room is knowledgeable about the equipment and helpful with instructions.

While the equipment available is professional level and more than complete, the amount of equipment has not grown with the increase in the number of students. Both student and faculty alike complain that necessary equipment is often unavailable, especially at busy times of the semester.

Students also complain that the sign-out system for equipment from the Telecommunication and Film equipment room is cumbersome and slow. Students are required to email the equipment request to the professor teaching their course. That professor will then approve or deny the request. If approved, the request is forwarded to the equipment room. Equipment can only be picked up between noon and 5 pm, and must be returned the next day between 9 am and noon. Students report professors often do not approve equipment requests quickly enough for students to get the materials they need for scheduled interviews or event coverage.

The Journalism Department has its own Cannon DSLRs available to its students for field work reporting, and a few Marantz PMD 660s and 661s for audio recording.

The Sanford Media Center operated by the University library also has video equipment, audio recorders, microphones and SLR cameras available to students to check out at no cost. Many students report it can be easier to borrow equipment from the Sanford Media Center than from the equipment room at the College due to hours of operation and availability of equipment.

One of the computer labs in Reese Phifer Hall is available for student use 24 hours a day through the use of a security swipe card. While students recognize this is a luxury, they report there is often not enough available lab space during evening hours and would like to see a second lab operation on a 24-hour schedule.

A studio with a fully equipped control room is available for students with faculty moderation. This is not, however, a fully functional studio; it needs to be set up every time if used for classroom instruction or multi-camera production.

The Digital Media Center houses state-of-the-art facilities for television, radio and sports production. Three Journalism classes are integrated into the Center and the WVUA newsroom was classified as a classroom in 2014-15, with additional computers for use by students. Students report they need to get jobs or internships with the stations or athletic department in order to use the facilities at the DMC, and say those positions are highly competitive. Students who do have jobs or internships at these locations, however, report highly positive experiences and say they learn a great deal.

There is not a designated audio lab or booth in Reese Phifer Hall. Documentary students say they often have difficulty finding an adequate location to produce voice tracks.

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

The College has its own library in Reese Phifer Hall with a large collection of books, periodicals and research journals. There are large-and small-group study areas in the library, a writing center for student help, and easy availability to the stacks. Library personnel report that the acquisitions budget for scholarly material, books and journals is more than adequate, and that the library is used frequently.

Summary

The College has experienced rapid enrollment growth over the last decade, much like the entire University of Alabama. University resources have increased with the enrollment, and the College has the physical and financial resources it needs to fulfill and sustain its mission, and plans are in place to further increase the resources and improve the facilities. The allocation from the University is fair and the facilities work well for scholarship, teaching and learning. The equipment available for faculty and students is excellent and in some cases state of the art, but access to some of the equipment can be limited and the availability of equipment is not always optimal.

Overall evaluation (undergraduate program): COMPLIANCE

Overall evaluation (professional master's program): COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 8: Professional and Public Service

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The College has two advisory boards, which link faculty and administrators with alumni and professionals:

- The Communication & Information Sciences Board of Visitors provides advice and feedback to the College. The team was not provided with a current list of the members, but according to its website, in 2013 there were 58 active members representing the interests of newspapers and magazines, wire services, broadcast television, public relations and advertising, digital media, film and others. A current member said the board meets quarterly. Members told the site team the board is “not just window dressing” and its suggestions often are adapted into the curriculum. Board members speak very highly of the College’s new leadership. Current and former students and faculty confirm that members of the Board of Visitors are involved with student portfolio reviews and feedback, mock interviews, career fairs, guest lectures and strategic planning.
- The Betsy Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations Board of Advisors is intended to provide advice and “oversight” to the Center with respect to strategic vision and plans. The Center’s mission, according to its website, is “to help develop and recognize outstanding diverse public relations leaders, role models and mentors to advance ethical public relations in an evolving, global society.” The Plank Center board, of which only two are University of Alabama alumni, has nationally and internationally recognized professional and educational members. The College’s Public Relations and Advertising students recognize the Plank Center as a major resource on campus, helping them to find internships and mentors and to cultivate a national network. The College’s Public Relations faculty report improving their connection to the industry through the Plank Center’s programs and Board.

The College attempts to engage with its alumni via a monthly e-newsletter, an annual magazine, an annual report, an annual Highlights publication and various social media platforms. Interviews with randomly selected alumni prior to the site visit were generally positive with respect to the skills learned. None of those whose names were not provided by the College as potential contacts remembered being asked to return to the College to make presentations or being asked for advice or opinions on how to keep the curriculum current with evolving industry standards.

The College’s relationships with the University television station and with the Tuscaloosa and Anniston newspapers provide a valuable opportunity to keep curriculum current by directly observing and participating in evolving industry practices.

(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.

A review of faculty vitae suggests some have engaged in workshops and discussions and panels aimed at both professionals and the general public. Some faculty members have served on local and area governing bodies of professional organizations. Interviews with faculty found the College encourages and provides adequate support for such investments.

(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 clearly are deeply engaged in academic associations and related activity. Review of vitae reveals a faculty with extensive involvements in and service to academic and professional committees and organizations, including leadership positions. Interviews with faculty members found unit support for such participation is adequate.

(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.

The College provides substantial civic engagement. The College operates a University-owned commercial television station, which serves a top-50 market including Birmingham, Tuscaloosa, Anniston and central Alabama, reaching more than 3.1 million consumers with news, public affairs programming, sports and entertainment. University commitment to the public service provided by the station is demonstrated by an annual subsidy said to be about \$500,000.

The College’s Center for Public Television and Radio has reportedly produced more than 120 public service announcements for local and state nonprofit organizations.

In 2011, the University-owned television station, which is operated by the College and staffed in part by students, produced an award-winning documentary on an April tornado that left considerable damage in Tuscaloosa. The project relied on undergraduate students from two departments in the College and delivered significant value to Tuscaloosa community.

Public relations students worked with telecommunication & film students to address binge drinking on university campuses in a campaign dubbed “Less Than You Think.”

The College hosts the annual “To Kill A Mockingbird” Essay Contest, which attracts entries from high schools across Alabama.

The College hosts an annual Multicultural Journalism Workshop, now in its 32nd year. A 10-day resident program, the workshop especially targets students from underserved populations to provide a writing and reporting experience intended to encourage a career in journalism. Although explained in detail in Section 8 of the self-study as a community engagement effort, it also is described in Section 3 as an “important” recruitment tool.

Although not strictly unit-based, public relations students have been active in supporting state-wide literacy campaigns. These students also teamed up with Tuscaloosa City Schools for an anti-bullying campaign.

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

Faculty members judge scholastic journalism contests and both the high school and the university level, including the Alabama Scholastic Press Association and two state-wide journalism awards programs, which are operated by the College. Telecommunication & film faculty serve as jurors for several film festivals. The Department of Telecommunication & Film also operates its own festival of films produced by its students.

The College is home to the Alabama Scholastic Press Association and the National Elementary School Press Association.

Summary

The College is actively and productively engaged with a board of advisers whose suggestions are considered seriously and often incorporated into teaching. There are programs to maintain contact with alumni and alumni often are invited to participate in classroom discussion. University ownership and subsidy of a television station in a Top 50 market provides news and public affairs programming throughout central and north Alabama. Faculty are active in service to the public and the academy through a variety of personal and unit-based investments.

Overall evaluation (undergraduate program): COMPLIANCE

Overall evaluation (professional master's program): 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 College’s three departments use the ACEJMC’s Values and Competencies to guide their assessment activities, although some departments use slightly different language. For example, the Department of Advertising + Public Relations used four student-learning outcomes that were rooted in the values and competencies. In 2014, the faculty from all three departments worked together to identify courses that connect to the values and competencies. The values and competencies now appear on all course syllabi in the College.

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

Each department has its own assessment plan and a designated assessment coordinator. The departments undertake assessment at different times and in different ways, but all do so in a systematic and comprehensive manner. The assistant dean for administration oversees assessment activities and meets regularly with the departmental assessment coordinators.

The direct measures for the Department of Advertising + Public Relations were primarily course-embedded test questions and rubrics that measure entire projects or a portion of projects. The direct measures for the Department of Journalism were primarily course-embedded test questions, assignment rubrics, portfolio reviews and student surveys. The direct measures for the Department of Telecommunication & Film were primarily course-embedded test questions and assignment rubrics. The indirect measures are done at the College level and were primarily graduate and alumni surveys.

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

The College has used the data from its assessment activities to improve the curriculum, albeit to varying degrees, depending on the department. To improve the presentation of images and information, the Department of Advertising + Public Relations changed its visual communication course to include more hands-on design work; to improve writing the department added more writing with real world clients in its public relations writing course. The department also used the results of its assessment, in part, to update its curriculum. Students are now required to take a research course and they are permitted to specialize in three areas: creative, consumer or digital.

The Department of Journalism has made a number of changes to its curriculum based on data from assessment. To improve the writing of its students the department added a senior-level depth reporting class; to improve the use of tools and technologies, the department collaborated with the University’s Computer Based Honors Program to use digital data in one of its courses.

The Department of Telecommunications & Film cited few improvements to its curriculum as a result of assessment. To help improve student understanding of ethical principles, the department reported it is

considering adding a stand-alone ethics course.

(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 College maintains both formal and informal contact with its alumni. Graduates are regularly asked to return to campus and speak to classes and meet with students. The College's Board of Visitors, made up of alumni and professionals, meets regularly on the campus. Alumni evaluate student portfolios and hold mock interviews during Advertising and Journalism Days. Feedback from alumni has been used to improve the curriculum.

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

Professionals are involved in the College's assessment activities. Members of the Board of Visitors are asked to assess student projects and provide feedback on curriculum. The Department of Journalism asked members of the Alabama Press Association to critique the curriculum. Departments seek guidance from other professional groups as well.

Overall evaluation (undergraduate program): COMPLIANCE

Professional master's program / Unit performance with regard to indicators:

The departments of Advertising + Public Relations and Journalism used separate assessment plans to evaluate their graduate curriculum and instruction. Both were developed in line with ACEJMC's values and competencies.

The direct measures used by the Department of Advertising + Public Relations include course-embedded examinations, course rubrics and questions in the comprehensive examination. The department chair and the Department's Assessment Committee provided oversight. The direct measures used by the Department of Journalism are course-embedded questions and course rubrics. The Department chair provided oversight.

The departments have used the data from their assessment activities to improve the graduate curriculum, albeit to varying degrees. The Department of Advertising + Public Relations used assessment results in its strategic plan and in its revision of the undergraduate curriculum. To improve writing, the Department of Journalism now encourages students with weaker writing background to take an additional writing course as an elective. To better apply technology, the department created a media production tools course.

Summary

Departments in the College assess their curriculum differently but each aligns its goals with the professional values and competencies of the Accrediting Council. The departments use assessment data to improve curriculum and instruction, albeit to varying degrees. The same holds true for the two

departments with graduate programs. The College maintains regular contact with alumni and professionals, and they are used in the assessment process.

Overall evaluation (professional master's program): COMPLIANCE

**PART III: Summary by site visit team
of the undergraduate program**

(A separate summary is required of the professional master's program)

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

Strengths

- Energetic, consultative, and decisive leadership
- A collegial, student-focused faculty
- Outstanding faculty scholarship
- Enhanced student services that release pressure on faculty
- Well-equipped classrooms, labs and studios
- A variety of campus media and student organizations for the professional development of students
- Bridging between the profession and the academy through the Plank Center

Weaknesses

- An uncertain balance between numbers of sequences and faculty, space and equipment to serve them
- Stress on the 20-1 student-faculty ratio in some skills courses because of the demands of an increasing student body for access to classes that permit timely graduation
- Uneven use of assessment data for improving curriculum and instruction

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

None

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

None

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

The previous report did not identify significant deficiencies. It urged a strengthening of the assessment program and of diversity and inclusiveness in faculty and students.

Stimulated by the requirements of SACS and ACEJMC, the Departments have focused on intensive assessment at the course level as well as at the exit level. ACEJMC favors a focus in the self-study on exit measures that demonstrate mastery by graduating cohorts of the 12 professional values and competencies. The College should give a clearer account in the next self-study of its exit measures and results and actions taken to improve curriculum and instruction.

The College has made commendable and creative efforts to elevate diversity and inclusiveness as central values in the life and work of faculty, students and staff. The curriculum is more broadly attentive to issues and perspectives on race, gender and ethnicity and underrepresented populations have an increased presence in administration, faculty and students. On initial probing, millennial students seem less concerned about race and gender than ACEJMC's sensitivity to historic inequities expects of them. Once students understood the team's focus, they reported and demonstrated a robust engagement with these matters in their classes and extracurricular activities.

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

A program of this size and complexity poses a significant challenge for producing a clear and appropriately detailed self-study. To its credit, the College involved a range of faculty members in each department in the process. The self-study had many virtues but was confusing in some sections, particularly in describing curriculum and requirements. When the team was unable to penetrate contradictory passages, it was grateful for the prompt responses on site to clarify and inform.

**PART III: Summary by site visit team
(Professional master's program)**

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

Strengths

- A Community Journalism program with an especially effective relationship with The Anniston Star
- The professional and academic credentials and accomplishments of the faculty noted in the undergraduate program apply equally in the master's degrees

Weaknesses

- Inadequate strategic planning for the professional master's degrees
- A lack of clarity about the professional focus of the thesis-based master's degrees

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

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

The College should develop an updated strategic plan for the professional master's degrees.

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

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

6) If the unit's professional master's program was previously accredited, summarize the significant deficiencies noted in the previous report and the actions taken to correct them. If the master's program 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.

No deficiencies were identified.

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

See the commentary on the self-study for the undergraduate program.