

**2023-24**  
**Revisit Team Report**  
**for Accreditation in Journalism**  
**and Mass Communications**

Name of Accredited Unit: Journalism Unit in the Media School

Name of Institution: Indiana University

Name of Unit Administrator: Gerry Lanosga

Date of Original Site Visit: Oct. 24-27, 2021

Revisit Date: Jan. 9-11, 2024

Revisit Team Chair: Joel Kaplan, Associate Dean for Graduate Programs, S.I.  
Newhouse School of Public Communications, Syracuse University



Revisit Team Member: Africa Gordon Price, Assistant Vice President of  
Community and Public Affairs, Ochsner Health



Revisit Team's Recommendation: **REACCREDITATION**

**1. List each standard found in noncompliance and the reasons as cited in the original team report. (Add additional pages as necessary.)**

Standard 3: Mission, Diversity and Inclusiveness  
Reasons cited:

The unit has been unsuccessful in recruiting and retaining Black faculty members for three accreditation cycles, including losing a well-regarded faculty member during the current cycle. Though there is a diversity plan for the unit (as well as the school and college), that notes specific actions and objectives to be taken on a regular basis, there was no indication of progress toward completion or any metrics to show what progress has been made. While the unit should be commended for diversifying much of the curriculum, gaps remain and there is not a required diversity course.

Standard 9: Assessment of Learning Outcomes  
Reasons cited:

The unit did not have an assessment plan nor did the unit have a committee, coordinator or administrator for assessment. Though there were two assessments in 2019: one for news reporting and editing and the other for public relations concentrations. there was no formal plan. While the news reporting and editing assessment did correspond with ACEJMC values and competencies, the public relations assessment was based on industry and professional standards. The most recent assessment plan was issued in 2014 prior to the unit's integration into the Media School.

**2. For each standard that had been in noncompliance, provide a summary of the revisit team's findings regarding corrections. Provide an evaluation of compliance or noncompliance. (Present a separate narrative response for each standard in noncompliance. Add additional pages as necessary.)**

**Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness**

Summary of findings:

Several efforts since the accreditation visit have led to substantive progress towards both diversifying the faculty and the curriculum. The unit has added two full-time African American faculty members on continuing appointments and the targeted recruitment effort has yielded 28 percent in BIPOC among the faculty. The unit now represents three African American, one Native American, three of Asian descent and one Hispanic. Additionally, the unit's new director of recruitment is a Black graduate of the program. The unit believes this hire, with

the assistance of newly appointed minority faculty, will help increase the number of minority students who matriculate to the journalism unit.

In addition to hiring a diverse faculty, the unit has bolstered its curriculum with special courses such as Immigration Reporting and a newly developed course, Media, Diversity, and Representation: Exploring Inclusivity, Culture and Production. Professors have also embraced the infusion of diversity segments in traditional journalism courses, spreading DEI issues throughout the curriculum. Students noted that learning about diversity across the spectrum of their courses has been beneficial to honing the craft for the professional world. The students truly embrace the concept and are using in their roles as student ambassadors, advisory council members and peer mentors. Some of the disparity among the races that were amplified during Covid has also seemed to become the topic of discussions in some classes.

Outside experts are also brought in to share unique perspectives with students. In one instance the unit leverage the offerings of one of its guest speakers to allow students and faculty to travel to Washington D.C. to participate in a Democracy Summit. Faculty members are also afforded the opportunity to get professional development outside of the unit, like attending the Poynter Institute Diversity Across Curriculum Workshop. Students stressed the importance of being taught by faculty of various ethnic background because it helps them to understand the world in which they cover from multiple vantage points.

One faculty member who has been involved in diversity efforts for several years said the trajectory of the unit in terms of diversity and inclusion efforts has been positive for the past few years but there is still work remaining.

One issue is a stronger embrace of affinity groups like the National Association of Black Journalists and the National Association of Hispanic Journalists. NABJ membership has declined to four students this semester and an effort is underway to improve funding so students can attend more events. Overall, the unit has made great progress on the diversity and inclusiveness standard.

**Overall evaluation:** Compliance

## **Standard 9: Assessment of Learning Outcomes**

Since the accreditation visit, the unit has established a standing accreditation committee of three faculty members that have created a new assessment plan that aligns with ACEJMC's 10 professional values and competencies. The committee has also been assigned a staff member to make sure that assessment activities proceed as planned.

The plan was approved by the faculty in March 2022 with a revision approved in December 2022. The plan details the use of direct and indirect measures.

The direct measures include:

1. Cumulative exams: journalism students take the exam when they enter the school and when they leave the school.
2. Internship evaluations
3. Course-embedded writing samples (evaluated by faculty who are not the instructors of the class)
4. Student work samples from both the news reporting & editing and the public relations concentrations. These samples are evaluated by media professionals applying ACEJMC values and competencies.

The indirect measures include:

1. Student surveys
2. Alumni surveys
3. Alumni focus groups

Late last semester the assessment committee said it had received its first batch of student work samples that had been evaluated by alumni. The unit plans to use that feedback to assess teaching effectiveness across the curriculum. In addition, the pre-test was given to students in introductory classes in the fall of 2021.

The test consists of 31 multiple-choice in the areas of diversity, history, ethics and skills-oriented questions including presentation of images, numeracy and technology-based skills. The test will then also be administered to students as they prepare to graduate.

Because the assessment plan is so new, there is not yet evidence of closing the loop, but it is clear that the unit now recognizes that assessment is a valuable tool to improve student learning and spur curriculum innovation. The current plan is to use a faculty meeting each spring to discuss assessment findings and the close the loop with curricular adjustments.

The revisit indicates that there is strong faculty buy-in now for assessment and the infrastructure is in place to make changes and close the loop.

**Overall evaluation:** Compliance

**3. Describe any other significant weaknesses cited by the site team in its report and/or any additional concerns cited by the Council in its letter to the unit regarding provisional status.**

Losing control over what had been its own budget following the move to the Media School

Decision to forgo integrating advertising into the unit alongside public relations

**4. For the other significant weaknesses cited by the site team or concerns cited by the Council, provide a summary of the revisit team's findings regarding corrections.**

The unit still does not have control over its own budget even though that was promised when it merged into the media school.

The new dean acknowledges that the Media School's structure does not give budgetary control to the units but emphasized that "Journalism is a priority for me." Both the dean and associate dean said that there is a plan in place to increase journalism's budget given that it is the largest unit in the Media School. Advertising students are not considered to be within the unit. While many advertising faculty are in the unit, they can still choose to remain in whatever unit they prefer.

The dean also said that the school is about to embark on a five-year strategic plan and part of that plan will be to examine all the ways the school operates including how advertising and public relations will continue to mesh.

Since the visit, besides a new dean at the media school, the university has a new provost.

Some students and faculty complained that central administration does not understand the role of journalism in society or the role of campus media, particularly the Indiana Daily Student, which has faced financial pressures in recent years. The dean said he is investigating the creation of a converged student media newsroom and that he supports student media on campus.

**5. Summary conclusion and recommendation:**

The revisit reveals that the unit has made tremendous progress on the two standards where it was found out of compliance.

For diversity and inclusion, the unit has made great strides in bolstering the makeup of the faculty, as well as securing a more diverse student body. Although there have been notable gains in this area, there is still room to improve through a more inclusive recruitment effort and continuing to adapt its curriculum to the changing nature of journalism and media.

In terms of assessment, it is clear that it fell through the cracks when the journalism unit merged into the Media School and the unit developed a new curriculum. But since the accreditation visit the unit has done an outstanding job of putting assessment on the front burner. The new three faculty member assessment team has created a strong plan that uses both direct and indirect assessment measures. While it has not yet closed the loop because the plan is only in its beginning stages, the infrastructure is in place to do so.

Recommendation:

**REACREDITATION**