Report of ACEJMC Evaluation

Undergraduate program
2023–2024

Name of Institution: Drake University

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Marty Martin, president

Name of Unit: School of Journalism and Mass Communication

Name and Title of Administrator: Kelly Bruhn, Ph.D., APR, interim dean (2023-2024), associate dean

Date of 2023-2024 Accrediting Visit: Feb. 11-14, 2024

Date of the previous accrediting visit: Feb. 12-15, 2017

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Reaccreditation

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Reaccreditation

Recommendation by 2023-2024 Visiting Team: Reaccreditation

Prepared and submitted by:

Team Chair
Name and Title: Jennifer Sizemore, founder and principal
Organization/School: Matter – Storytelling for Good LLC

Team Member
Name and Title: Sandy Banisky, retired (Abell Professor in Baltimore Journalism)
Organization/School: University of Maryland
Signature

Team Member
Name and Title: Jessica Gisclair, associate professor, strategic communications
Organization/School: Elon University
Signature — Jessica Gisclair

Team Member
Name and Title: Greg Luft, professor, journalism and media communication
Organization/School: Colorado State University
Signature _____

Team Member
Name and Title: Johnny Sparks, director and professor, School of Journalism and Strategic
Communication
Organization/School: Ball State University
Signature

Name of Institution: Drake University

Name of Unit: School of Journalism and Mass Communication

Year of Visit: 2024

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

_X_ Higher Learning Commission
___ Middle States Commission on Higher Education
___ New England Commission on Higher Education
 ___ Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
___ Southern Association of Colleges and School Commission on Colleges
 ___ Western Association of Schools and Colleges

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

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

_X__ Private
___ Public
___ Other (specify)

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

Drake University is an incorporated, non-for-profit entity in the state of Iowa. It is governed by the Academic Charter of Drake University.

4. Has the journalism/mass communications unit been evaluated previously by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications?

_X_ Yes
___ No

If yes, give the date of the last full accrediting visit:

February 12 – 15, 2017

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

1972

6. **Insert here the unit's mission statement. Statement should give date of adoption and/or last revision.**

Drake School of Journalism and Mass Communication Mission Statement
Updated October 2015

Drake's School of Journalism and Mass Communication educates strategic, global thinkers with diverse media and communication skills and a solid ethical underpinning who are prepared to respond to a rapidly changing media culture.
The SJMC provides professional experience in a media-rich environment and professional mentors for life.

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Number of weeks in a semester: 15 weeks plus one week for final exams; select courses may be offered in Term 1 (6 weeks) or Term 2 (6 weeks) each semester
Number of weeks in a quarter: N/A
Number of weeks in summer sessions: Varying lengths, determined by instructor
Number of weeks in intersessions: January Term of three weeks

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

_X_ Bachelor's degree
_X_ Master's degree
___ Ph.D. degree

9. List the specific undergraduate degrees as well as the majors or sequences being reviewed by ACEJMC. *Indicate online degrees.

Bachelor of Arts in Journalism and Mass Communication
·   Advertising
·   Digital Media Production
·   Magazine and Brand Media
·   Multimedia Journalism
·   Public Relations
·   Strategic Political Communication
·   Communication *(By Petition Only)*
·   Digital Communication* (launched in 2019-2020)
·   Public Relations* (launched in 2023-2024)

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

120 semester-hour credits of coursework to successfully complete a bachelor's degree

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

Maximum of 6 semester-hour credits allowed

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

SJMC faculty believe in collegial governance, and except for our Magazine and Brand Media program, we do not have chairs of our majors. We have listed all faculty members whose teaching responsibility lies primarily within a particular major. However, several faculty members teach across multiple majors.

Name of Sequence or Specialty	Person in Charge
Advertising	**Sandra (Sandy) Henry**, professor; **Ryan Stoldt**, assistant professor
Digital Media Production	**Lakshmi Tirumala**, associate professor; **Christopher (Chris) Snider**, associate professor; **Sandra (Sandy) Henry**, professor; **Lee Jolliffe**, professor (retires January 2024)
Magazine and Brand Media	**Jennifer (Jen) Wilson**, associate professor, Fisher-Stelter Chair of Magazine and Brand Media; **Jeffrey (Jeff) Inman**, associate professor
Multimedia Journalism	**Jill Van Wyke**, associate professor; **Christopher (Chris) Snider**, associate professor; **Jeffrey (Jeff) Inman**, associate professor; **Amy Lorentzen McCoy**, assistant professor
Public Relations	**Kelly Bruhn**, professor; **Jennifer Glover Konfrst**, associate professor; **Eric Kwame Adae**, assistant professor; **Mu He**, assistant professor
Strategic Political Communication	**Jennifer Glover Konfrst**, associate professor; **Amy Lorentzen McCoy**, assistant professor
Communication*	Interdisciplinary Major *By Petition Only – All SJMC Faculty
Digital Communication (online)	**Jill Van Wyke**, associate professor; **Christopher (Chris) Snider**, associate professor
Public Relations (online)	**Mu He**, assistant professor; **Kelly Bruhn**, professor; **Jennifer Glover Konfrst**, associate professor; **Eric Kwame Adae**, assistant professor

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

Approximately 2,607 full-time undergraduates; 820 full-time graduate students. (Drake's Office of Institutional Research and Assessment published this databook.)

14. Number of undergraduate majors in the accredited unit, by sequence. (If the unit has pre-major students, list them as a single total). Give the semester and academic year represented. Add lines as needed.

Name of Sequence or Specialty	Fall 2023 Undergraduate Majors and Minors
Open SJMC *(pre-major)*	25
Advertising	36
Advertising minor	14
Digital Media Production	63
Magazine and Brand Media	21
Magazine and Brand Media minor	19
Multimedia Journalism	63
Public Relations	62
Strategic Political Communication	36
Digital Communication (online)	9
Public Relations (online)	1
Total	349

15. Number of students in each section of all skills courses (newswriting, 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 for the preceding term. Submit two semesters with the self-study and update the list as needed for spring 2024 visits. Include a separate list for online skills courses, which also must meet the 20-1 ratio. (The Council has ruled that campaign courses are exempt from the 20-1 ratio.)

Fall 2023	Enrollment
JMC 031 Multimedia Lab (CRN 4320)	20
JMC 031 Multimedia Lab (CRN 4321)	20
JMC 031 Multimedia Lab (CRN 4324)	15
JMC 031 Multimedia Lab (CRN 4327)	19
JMC 054 Reporting and Writing Principles (CRN 1009)	20
JMC 054 Reporting and Writing Principles (CRN 3721)	11
JMC 057 Video Production	18
JMC 059 Visual Communication Methods	10
JMC 075 Digital Photography	20
JMC 088 Intro to Strategic Political Comm	18
JMC 100 Electronic Field Production	17

JMC 105 Web Content and Development	19
JMC 116 Documentary Production	14
JMC 123 Public Relations Writing (CRN 8267)	10
JMC 124 Advertising Copy and Content	20
JMC 131 Political Campaign Management	20
JMC 138 Public Affairs and Advocacy	11
JMC 176 Travel Journalism: Culture, Cont, Cuis	20
JMC 195 App Design and Development	14
JMC 199 Social Media Methods	7
Online Skills Classes – Fall 2023	**Enrollment**
JMC 080 Foundations of Strategic Comm	3
JMC 107 Persuasive Writing	5
JMC 123 Public Relations Writing (CRN 11566)	5
JMC 166 Leading with Effective Comm	7
JMC 167 Polls and Public Opinion in Comm	6
JMC 169 Data and Visual Storytelling	8

Spring 2024	**Enrollment**
JMC 031 Multimedia Lab (CRN 12634)	15
JMC 054 Reporting and Writing Principles (CRN 3376)	20
JMC 054 Reporting and Writing Principles (CRN 3683)	20
JMC 057 Video Production	20
JMC 059 Visual Communication Methods	20
JMC 067 Digital Audio Writing and Production	20
JMC 088 Intro to Strategic Political Comm	13
JMC 100 Electronic Field Production	16
JMC 103 Public Affairs Reporting	20
JMC 105 Web Content and Development	17
JMC 113 Consumer Culture	14
JMC 117 Media Analytics and Insights	15
JMC 119 Brand Media Planning	14
JMC 123 Public Relations Writing	7
JMC 124 Advertising Copy and Content	9
JMC 150 Editing and Motion Graphics	11
JMC 173 Reporting for TV and the Web	4
Online Skills Classes – Spring 2024	**Enrollment**
JMC 031 Multimedia Lab (CRN 5304)	9
JMC 054 Reporting and Writing Principles (CRN 12246)	5
JMC 175 Building a Diverse and Equitable Future in PR	8

16. Total expenditures planned by the accredited unit for the 2023–2024 academic year:
$1,740,533

Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries: $1,693,621

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

Catherine M. Staub, Ed.D., dean and professor (doesn't teach because of new role as dean) – *on FMLA for 2023-2024 academic year*
Eric Kwame Adae, Ph.D., assistant professor
Kelly Bruhn, Ph.D., APR, professor and associate dean (teaches two classes/semester), *interim dean for 2023-2024 academic year*
Mu He, Ph.D., assistant professor
Sandra (Sandy) Henry, professor
Jeffrey (Jeff) Inman, associate professor
Lee Jolliffe, Ph.D., professor (pre-retirement sabbatical for fall 2023; retires January 2024)
Jennifer Glover Konfrst, APR, associate professor
Amy Lorentzen McCoy, assistant professor
Christopher (Chris) Snider, associate professor
Ryan Stoldt, Ph.D., assistant professor
Lakshmi Tirumala, ABD, associate professor
Jill Van Wyke, associate professor
Jennifer (Jen) Wilson, associate professor

18. List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in fall 2023. Also list names of part-time faculty teaching spring 2023. (If your school has its accreditation visit in spring 2024, also provide the spring 2024 adjunct list in the updated information.)

Spring 2023
Ray Fredregill, JMC 067 Digital Audio Writing and Production (SJMC Staff Member)
Lindsay Gilbert, JMC 054 Reporting and Writing Principles
Lee Konfrst, J.D., JMC 104 Communications Law and Ethics
Timm Pilcher, JMC 040 Pre-Professional Workshop (SJMC Staff Member)
Timm Pilcher, JMC 109 Internship (SJMC Staff Member)

Fall 2023
Ray Fredregill, JMC 075 Digital Photography (SJMC Staff Member)
Lindsay Gilbert, JMC 054 Reporting and Writing Principles
Lee Konfrst, J.D., JMC 104 Communications Law and Ethics
Timm Pilcher, JMC 040 Pre-Professional Workshop (SJMC Staff Member)
Timm Pilcher, JMC 109 Internship (SJMC Staff Member)
Neil Ward, JMC 195 App Design and Development (Professor Ward is an associate professor in the College of Arts and Sciences and team taught the course with full-time SJMC faculty member Jeff Inman)

Spring 2024
Ray Fredregill, JMC 067 Digital Audio Writing and Production (SJMC Staff Member)
Lindsay Gilbert, JMC 054 Reporting and Writing Principles

Lee Konfrst, J.D., JMC 104 Communications Law and Ethics
Timm Pilcher, JMC 040 Pre-Professional Workshop (SJMC Staff Member)
Timm Pilcher, JMC 109 Internship (SJMC Staff Member)
Zach Tecklenburg, JMC 173 Reporting for TV and the Web

19. For each of the last two academic years, please give the total number of graduates from the unit.

2021-2022		
Summer 2021	Graduate	14
	Undergraduate	3
Fall 2021	Graduate	17
	Undergraduate	11
	Undergrad minor	1
Spring 2022	Graduate	6
	Undergraduate	56
Total 2021-2022 Grads		108

2022-2023		
Summer 2022	Graduate	10
	Undergraduate	6
Fall 2022	Graduate	14
	Undergraduate	8
Spring 2023	Graduate	16
	Undergraduate	77
	Undergrad minor	2
Total 2022-2023 Grads		133

Drake University is a private institution in Des Moines, Iowa, with seven colleges and schools, including the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. On its 150-acre campus in the heart of the Iowa state capital's metro area, it enrolls approximately 2,700 undergraduates and more than 1,000 graduate students from 43 states and 44 countries. Eighty percent of its student body is from five midwestern states: Iowa (the largest contingent at 40%), Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Missouri. Drake has been ranked in the top 100 best colleges in the United States by *The Wall Street Journal*'s 2024 College Pulse Rankings – the only university in Iowa to make that list.

The College of Commerce, Finance and Journalism was established in 1919. Over the years, the college's leadership included Gardner Cowles of the Cowles publishing family and George Gallup, who went on to start his national polling organization. The standalone School of Journalism was created in 1962, and shortly after moved into the new Meredith Hall, named for the founder of Des Moines-based Meredith Corp. (of the Better Homes & Garden empire, now DotDash Meredith). The mid-century modern building was designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and is now on the National Register of Historic Places. In 1981, the school's name became the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

In the accredited undergraduate unit, there are eight majors (two online-only) and 349 students. Students, faculty and administration talk about a phenomenon called "Drake Busy," a state of "go-getting-ness" that is both a motivator and a stressor for Drake students. Students typically arrive at Drake already inclined to overachieve, with a large number signing up for more than one major and, even so, racing toward a high-percentage four-year graduation rate. Drake Busy is on full display in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, though faculty and staff have been working to temper its effects and advise students to take on realistic loads. Drake Busy is such a part of the fabric that concerned university administration has launched a new initiative that is essentially counterprogramming: Drake Balanced.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The unit posts its mission statement and strategic plan in a prominent, easy-to-find place on its website.

Describe in detail how the mission statement/strategic plan is implemented, plays into the daily life of the unit and its effectiveness in driving progress. Who has responsibility for keeping the plan updated? Is it revised regularly to deal with rapidly changing issues of instruction and technology?

The school's mission is "to change the world, one student at a time, by training the world's next generation of excellent, ethical, passionate and compassionate media professionals." Students and alumni actually use those words to describe their Drake education. Faculty believe they are uniquely prepared to provide this training in a personal, engaging and current way.

This is the school's mission statement:

"Drake's School of Journalism and Mass Communication educates strategic, global thinkers with

diverse media and communication skills and a solid ethical underpinning who are prepared to respond to a rapidly changing media culture. The SJMC provides professional experience in a media-rich environment and professional mentors for life."

This is the school's strategy statement:

"The Drake SJMC will be internationally recognized as the gold standard for education in journalism and mass communication. We will train a diverse group of the world's best and brightest young people who will be effective, ethical, passionate and compassionate communication leaders of the future.

"The SJMC will become a hub and incubator for media innovation — on campus, in our community and in our industry."

As part of the self-study process, the faculty revisited and updated the school's strategic, assessment and diversity plans. Across campus, the university president leads a Continuous Improvement Plan process that includes each unit customizing its own data-driven and evolving plan that ladders up the university-wide plan. Those objectives and measures are suggested by the school's dean and associate dean and approved by faculty during regular meetings. However, because of accreditation and the fluidity of the CIP process, the school's faculty also has a strategic plan in conjunction with its balanced scorecard model. The goals of the current strategic plan were approved by the faculty during the 2022-2023 academic year.

The school's mission and strategic plan are prominently posted on the school website.

(b) 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.

Characterize in depth the leadership of the unit as an agent for progress, advocate for the unit's fields of study within the university and aggressive connector with alumni. What significant achievements can be attributed to the leader? Has the leader built partnerships within the university? Is the leader seen as a strong advocate on matters of diversity, inclusion and equity? Is faculty and student diversity improving? Do scholars and professionals work collaboratively? Is creativity in curriculum, teaching and research sought and rewarded? Is the leader driving forward the curriculum (while respecting faculty governance and required process) to keep up with a rapidly changing media world?

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication is known as a leader on the Drake campus. The dean's office and the faculty are talked about by university leaders and colleagues as "leaders on campus in innovation." One administrator said, "What a blessing the whole school is." And, "The faculty are integral to every type of innovation that shows up on campus." Campus colleagues and local professional alumni had similar feedback. The faculty "recognize the industry is about to change and are willing to change" their curriculum. A local news director said the school "can spin faster than the corporate world."

In the past six years, the school was the first at the university to launch an online graduate program, online undergraduate program and undergraduate certificate programming.

The online programs in particular have been a model for other schools and colleges to develop online degree programs. Faculty and administrators across the university report they often consult with the

SJMC dean's office when looking for innovative ways to approach recruitment, retention and student support: "They are Ninja innovators." The dean and associate dean are seen as campus leaders in driving change, relevance, sustainability and DEI efforts. Since the last accreditation, faculty diversity has improved considerably while the curriculum has continued to evolve to emphasize issues of inclusion throughout the coursework.

The interim dean is seen by her faculty as embodying "leadership with great foresight." She is known for her openness, honesty and transparency, and ability to do a good job doing difficult things. "She sees the big picture and can lay all the pieces in line," said a member of the school's National Advisory Council (see Standard 8). Several faculty appreciate her mantra of, "Let's be in charge of what can happen to us." One said, "Everybody on campus has the utmost respect for (the interim dean)."

The interim dean's usual role is associate dean. The dean, who had served one year before being on leave for the 2023-24 school year, is spoken of as a critical thinker and good teacher who is kind and knowledgeable. She gets praise for active follow-up on faculty goals and for her sincere counsel about professional development.

Every member of the faculty has some professional experience, and the collaborative, respectful leadership of the dean's office is replicated across the school. Tenure-line and non-tenured faculty work as a team, supporting and learning from each other, while assistant professors (not yet tenure-track) report active support and encouragement for pursuing potential promotion. The entire faculty is on an active group text, sharing both work and personal tidbits.

Every faculty member participates in a variety of standing and ad hoc university committees and as such are deeply involved with the governance of the institution. As a group they are seen as active leaders and change-makers at the university. One faculty member is known as the "guy who breaks things" and is always on the cutting edge of technology – for the school and university as a whole.

The SJMC dean is appointed by and reports to the provost; the associate dean is chosen by the dean. Faculty members consult on both positions and periodically provide feedback to administration via anonymous surveys. The faculty meet monthly as a committee of the whole to make most decisions; six standing committees handle special functions like tenure and promotion as well as academic adjustment.

Overall, the school's faculty are constantly working to update the curriculum based on robust assessment measures and advice from alumni and professionals – powered by a collegial atmosphere that fuels productive and constructive hallway conversations. These undocumented collegial conversations have evolved into a documented assessment effort that is constantly and nimbly working to update the curriculum, even while the scaffolding of a more formal plan remains under construction (see Standard 3 for more detail). Since the last site visit:
- These majors have been launched: online MA in Communication; online BA in Journalism and Mass Communication Digital Communication; online BA in Journalism and Mass Communication Public Relations.
- Program reviews of all majors and course curriculum resulted in: core curriculum updates; changes in co-requisites and prerequisites; curricula changes in Multimedia Journalism, Magazine and Brand Media, and Advertising and Digital Media Production

School administration leads and models a faculty culture that enthusiastically embraces a tradition of a commitment to being students' "mentors for life."

(c) The unit annually updates its data on the ACEJMC searchable database website (https://lookup.acejmc.org).

The unit updates its data on the ACEJMC website.

(d) The unit gathers, maintains and analyzes enrollment, retention and graduation data and posts them annually in a prominent, easy-to-find place on its websites.

The unit posts analysis of enrollment, retention and graduation data on its website.

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

Faculty governance is a core value for Drake and SJMC. All those policies and structures are in SJMC Faculty Handbook, the Drake Academic Charter and the Drake Faculty Manual.

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

The SJMC dean is appointed by the provost in consultation with the faculty; the associate dean is appointed by the dean in consultation with the faculty. The provost conducts annual performance evaluations and goal-setting for the dean. The SJMC Faculty Handbook addresses the process for evaluating administrators; the most recent evaluation was in 2021.

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

The school's Policy for Resolving Conflict addresses grade complaints and the process for resolution of other disagreements between students and staff or faculty members. The policy is posted on the school's website.

SUMMARY:

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Drake University embraces its long tradition of educating the next generation of communicators. Its strategic plan and mission define its ambition to quite literally change the world, one student at a time, and its policies, documents and processes provide a buttoned-up foundation for that work. The dean's office is seen within the school and across the university as a catalyst for change and a supportive, innovative force for a collegial culture unafraid of change.

Overall evaluation compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

Discussions of indicators b, c and f should describe and evaluate individual academic sequences in the unit.

(a) Students in the unit complete academic requirements for a baccalaureate degree that meet the liberal arts and sciences/general education requirements of the institution. Programs may identify classes within the unit that contribute to a liberal arts and social sciences perspective for graduates from the unit.

The SJMC requires 45-48 credit hours in major courses and the university requires 120 credit hours to earn a baccalaureate degree. Students take either the Areas of Inquiry (AOI) or the Honors Program curriculum in general education courses such as humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, mathematics, and writing. The SJMC students take 21 credit hours of "area of concentration" outside the unit to ensure a broad liberal arts education, with 30-40% of SJMC students earning a second major or degree outside the unit. Thirteen courses in the unit are designated as AOI including Mass Media in a Global Society, Reporting and Writing Principles, and Communications Law and Ethics.

(b) The unit provides a balance between theoretical and conceptual courses, professional skills courses, and courses that integrate theory and skills to achieve the range of student values and competencies listed by the Council.

Since the 2017 accreditation visit, the unit launched two online majors, Digital Communications in 2019-2020 and Public Relations in 2023-2024. A 2022 review of majors resulted in changes to co-requisites, removal or streamlining of prerequisites, moving one course from the core to the majors, updating some curricula, and rebranding one major.

Students take seven courses of a 15-credit hour core, which includes five conceptual courses, Mass Media in a Global Society (3 credits), Pre-Professional Workshop (1 credit), Financial Fundamentals for Communication Professionals (1 credit), Digital Media Strategies (3 credit), and Communications Law and Ethics (3 credit). Two professional skills courses in the core are Multimedia Lab (1 credit) and Reporting and Writing Principles (3 credit). Internships are not required, but 93% of students held an internship over the past six years.

The unit has eight majors, two of which are online majors, and two minors. The majors are Advertising, Digital Communication (online), Digital Media Production, Magazine and Brand Media, Multimedia Journalism, Public Relations, Public Relations (online), and Strategic Political Communications. The minors are Advertising and Magazine and Brand Media. The unit offers an interdisciplinary major in Communication by petition only.

Required courses in the majors include a balance between theoretical and conceptual courses and professional skills courses. Faculty collaborate on curriculum and assignments to ensure consistency across sections.

Advertising courses such as Video Production and Media Analytics and Insights provide professional skills while Advertising Principles provides theoretical and conceptual content.

Digital Communication (online) courses such as Visual Communication Methods and Strategic Communication Planning provide professional skills while Media Editing and Foundations of Strategic Communications provide theoretical and conceptual content.

Digital Media Production courses such as Digital Photography and Web Content and Development provide professional skills while Media Criticism provides theoretical and conceptual content.

Magazine and Brand Media courses such as Web Content and Development and Brand Media Planning provide professional skills while Foundations of Visual Communications and Media Editing provide theoretical and conceptual content.

Multimedia Journalism courses such as Video Production and Electronic Field Production provide professional skills while Foundations of Visual Communications and Editing provide theoretical and conceptual content.

Public Relations courses such as Public Relations Writing provide professional skills while Public Relations Principles and Cases in Ethical PR Practice provide theoretical and conceptual content. These courses also apply to the Public Relations online program.

Strategic Political Communication courses such as Public Relations Writing and Public Affairs and Advocacy provide professional skills while Foundations of Visual Communication and Public Relations Principles provide theoretical and conceptual content.

The result is an effective blend and balance of courses that support ACEJMC's core values and competencies. The unit's curriculum map is comprehensive of required courses with ACEJMC values and competencies.

The unit's curriculum changes, regular review of syllabuses across multiple course sections and focus on industry standards and new technology, such as DaVinci Resolve, provide relevant, professional education in journalism and mass communications. One fourth-year student commented that some courses have changed and shifted in type and function, but courses have remained student-focused.

Student competencies are demonstrated through internship experiences and extracurricular opportunities with organizations such as Public Relations Student Society of America, The Times-Delphic weekly student newspaper, and Drake Magazine along with internships at companies including Del Technologies, The Des Moines Register and United Health Care.

Syllabuses address the spirit of the ACEJMC professional values and competencies with the specific language of the professional values and competencies.

Students commented that they learned about diversity theories, practiced theories through assignments and exercises, and applied knowledge about diversity when working with underrepresented groups such as the Des Moines refugee community.

(c) Instruction, whether on-site or online, synchronous or asynchronous, is demanding and current, and is responsive to professional expectations of digital and technological media competencies.

The unit maintains expectations of digital and technological media competencies through specific courses, workshops, and teaching modules.

SJMC students take core courses in multimedia communication and digital media. Those courses include Multimedia Lab, Digital Media Strategies, Video Production, and Visual Communication Methods. One student commented, "Video Production class got me out of my comfort zone. Professors prepared us so we were ready" for class assignments, exercises, and projects.

In each major students take a visual communications course. Advertising, Digital Communication, Digital Media Production, Magazine and Brand Media and Multimedia Journalism majors take advanced classes in video production and web design such as Web Content and Development and Reporting for TV and the Web. Public Relations and Strategic Political Communication majors take Public Relations Writing. Students commented that almost all classes were client-based but professors were with them the entire time saying, "professors guided us to figure things out." Students said professors expected them to perform professionally for clients.

A specific example of responsiveness is an industry standard in post-production editing, DaVinci Resolve, is taught in Advanced Video Production and Documentary. A publishing platform, Substack, is used in Advanced Magazine Staff Writing. Faculty are well-connected with the professions they represent, which is also reflected in their teaching.

Public Relations and Strategic Political Communications majors can take special topic courses to stay current in such areas as Polls and Public Opinion in Communications Research, Data and Visual Storytelling, and Building a More Diverse and Equitable Future in Public Relations.

The SJMC, in partnership with E.T. Meredith Center for Magazine and Multimedia Education, offers workshops to students and local professionals on multimedia skills and digital media such as HTML and CSS, Search Engine Optimization, and Snapchat. Faculty incorporate applicable teaching modules into courses such as algorithms, video games, interactive media, AI tools, user-centered design, digital assessment management and online safety and free speech.

Students expressed admiration for the faculty's dedication to providing relevant instruction, remaining active and current in their disciplines and bringing challenging content and technological skills to the classroom. Students praised the faculty for providing real client-centered projects to classes that added to the students' professional portfolios. Even during the pandemic years with online synchronous and asynchronous instruction, students felt "connected to the unit" and prepared for the next level of courses and professional experiences.

(d) The unit demonstrates efforts to connect faculty and administrators to the professions they represent, with a specific understanding of the changing skills needed to be successful in the workplace.

The unit uses various avenues to connect to the professions. The unit hosts classroom speakers and the annual Accreditation in Public Relations preparation course for working professionals, and it meets twice a year with the SJMC National Advisory Council. Faculty participate in conferences, workshops, and training such as the NER Evaluator Certification for the accuracy of auto-captions. Faculty maintain membership and leadership roles in professional organizations such as the American Society of Magazine Editors, the American Advertising Federations, the Public Relations Society of America, the Broadcast Education Association, the Iowa Newspaper Association and the Des Moines Film Society. One faculty member is the House Minority Leader in the Iowa House of Representatives.

Three professors received the AEJMC 2021 GIFT Honor for their research about understanding the skills students need to be successful in the workplace.

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

The unit maintains a ratio of fewer than 20-1 in skills courses.

Faculty confirmed that the enrollment caps on skills and laboratory courses help maintain the student-faculty ratio of no more than 20-1. Students stated they have access to these courses.

(f) 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. Units 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 hours).

A maximum of credited six semester hours of internship is allowed. The SJMC internships vary from 1-3 hours and are offered as credit or no credit, based on the length of time at the internship and the number of hours worked per week. Although not required, 95% of SJMC seniors had an internship in 2022.

The SJMC's student professional and academic support specialist provides information to students seeking internships. Students are made aware of internship opportunities through Handshake, an online career management system, and faculty, social media and bulletin board postings.

Students reported numerous opportunities to apply to internships, being prepared for internships based on their course work, and gaining valuable experience at the internship site. One student stated, "Accessibility for internships is why I came to Drake." This student interned for the local county and a local public relations firm. Students commented on the numerous professional contacts and alumni connections faculty shared with them to assist in internship opportunities. "I clerked at the state capitol and I'm not even from Iowa," said one student.

When students take courses for internship credit at appropriate professional organizations, the unit must show ongoing and extensive dual supervision by the unit's faculty and professionals.

The unit uses a syllabus (JMC 109) that lists the requirements of the internship including two individual meetings with the instructor/assistant director, career services for SJMC. Students are paired with businesses and nonprofits. Employers complete a post-internship evaluation form about the student's performance.

The supervisor evaluation forms rate students' performances on 26 categories including speaking, writing, editing, critical thinking, numerical skills and ability to work with a diverse audience. Examples of internship sites are the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, NBC Universal, and the American Society of Magazine Editors NYC. On-campus internship sites include the Drake Broadcasting System, The Harkin Institute for Civic Engagement and Public Policy and ESPN-3.

Supervisors described students as having cross-functional media skills and confidence to ask questions that challenge the norm. Supervisors characterized students as punctual, creative, teachable and easy to work with. The students' "desire to learn new things and offer insights on new initiations impressed leadership," said one supervisor.

Students may take up to nine semester credits (or their equivalent) at professional media outlets 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.

The unit offers a service journalism apprenticeship program with Dotdash Meredith for majors in Magazine and Brand Media and Multimedia Journalism along with Graphic Design majors in the Department of Art and Design. Students are supervised by a Dotdash Meredith employee and a Drake Magazine and Brand Media professor.

SUMMARY:

The unit has been proactive with its response to curriculum development that prepares students for careers in mass communications industries. The unit has a strong pedagogy in emerging technologies while maintaining a balance of skills, theory and conceptual courses. The unit connects faculty and administrators to the professions. Syllabuses are consistent in reflecting the ACEJMC professional values and competencies.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 3: Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(a) The unit has a written assessment plan that has been implemented, is up to date and addresses contemporary curricular issues, including instruction related to the rapidly changing digital media world.

The unit posts its assessment plan in a prominent, easy-to-find place on its website.

The unit's assessment plan is posted in a prominent easy-to-find place on the School of Journalism & Mass Communication's webpage under About Us on the Accreditation & Accountability page. The unit has a two-page "written assessment plan," which was updated Dec.1, 2023. A copy of the previous plan (update May 7, 2021) was provided for review. According to the interim dean, the practices described in the 2021 assessment plan occurred during the current review period prior to the written assessment plan.

The self-study said, "As a small, collegial faculty, we're guilty of vetting new ideas via hallway conversations and in-depth discussions in our monthly faculty meetings. We continue to strengthen the documentation of this great work to demonstrate our leadership in assessment practices." The "Assessment Plan" lists the faculty's ongoing assessment activities to promote an adaptive contemporary curriculum, including instruction related to the rapidly changing digital media world.

(b) The unit defines the goals for learning that students must achieve, including the professional Values and Competencies" of the Council. (See Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction.)

The unit defines core competencies, which are based on the professional competencies required by the ACEJMC.

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

Annual Assessment Project: Within the plan, the "annual assessment project" provides a direct assessment of student learning outcomes at the course level.

Measurements of specific core competencies are planned for once every four years. Faculty have mapped core competencies (i.e., student learning outcomes) to individual courses. At the first faculty meeting of a year, faculty discuss the competency to be assessed and determine the most appropriate classes in which to incorporate assessment.

The faculty member assigned to the selected course(s) prepares and evaluates a course assignment(s) in relation to the year's competency. Typical target proficiencies are set to 75% of students earning a rating of Exceptional or Competent in their understanding and application of a core competency.

For example, according to the 2020-21 assessment report, faculty measured student performance on the JMC 30 First Amendment Quiz created by the Student Law Press Center and found 84% of students (53 of 63) Exceptional (52) or Competent (1) in their understanding and application of the First Amendment and principles and laws of speech and press.

Faculty collect, analyze, review, and report the results via a form presented to the assistant dean. If deficiencies are identified (i.e., less than 75% of students earning a rating of Exceptional or Competent) on the assignment, faculty additionally report action plans (i.e., revision of course content, policies) to address the deficient area in the course's next teaching. Following course revision(s) and delivery in the subsequent course, the assignment is readministered. To "close the loop," faculty report percentages (exceeding the 75% target) of students earning a rating of Exceptional or Competent in their understanding and application of the core competency.

In addition to the annual assessment project, the school conducts ongoing assessment activities including the following indirect measures:

1.   Core values inventory: First-year students enrolled in JMC 030 Mass Media in a Global Society complete a self-reported inventory of "their understanding and mastery of the School's core values," which is again administered to graduating seniors in their capstone classes to allow them to self-assess their progress.
2.   University surveys: Results from the Drake Student Survey and National Survey of Student Engagement "are analyzed in areas related to the SJMC core competencies."

(d) At least one direct and/or indirect measure should include journalism and mass communication professionals engaged in assessment data collection.

The unit reported that journalism and mass communication professionals were engaged in assessment through several direct measures including:

1.   Capstone feedback: Public Relations capstone course students' clients complete an eight-item "Feedback Form." The form primarily focuses on client experience. Two items (Nos. 5 and 6) measure student performance. Specifically, clients are asked to identify the most helpful (No. 5) and least helpful (No. 6) elements of the work provided by the students (i.e., Research, Situation Analysis, Objectives, etc.).
2.   Intern evaluation: Internship supervisor evaluations for approximately 200 students completing internships from 2017 to 2024 were provided as indirect measures of student learning in a pdf file. There was no data reduction or analysis from which to interpret the results.
3.   Magazine "pin-ups": The unit's National Advisory Council members engage in frequent "pin-up critiques" of student work. During the site-team visit, alumni council members reported improvement in student work based on their feedback from one critique to the next during students' academic career progression.
4.   Contests: Judges' comments on student work submitted to national contests were also provided as a direct measure.

(e) The unit collects and reports data from its assessment activities and applies the data to improve curriculum and instruction. There is substantial, concrete evidence of "closing the loop," generally and specifically. Multiple examples of "closing the loop" are evident.

The unit collects and reports data from its assessment activities and applies the data to improve curriculum and instruction. The unit presented numerous specific examples of closing the loop based on the "annual assessment project," as described above.

When deficiencies have been identified in course assignment(s) through the annual assessment project, numerous examples were presented of faculty action plans; revised course content; reassessment; and

achievement of target proficiencies. During our visit, students reported observations of assessment-based improvements in curriculum during their academic career.

The unit presented numerous less systematic, general examples of closing the loop related to direct measures including "faculty capstone project reviews," "internship supervisor evaluations," and "professional feedback," as well as indirect measures including the "core values inventory" and "university surveys." (Each of the measures were previously described in this standard).

SUMMARY:

The unit is closing the loop in curricular and formative assessment based on direct measures in support of a thriving and adaptive program. Hallway conversations and in-depth discussions in monthly faculty meetings are taking life in the documentation of the faculty's assessment plans and implementation. The faculty are committed to continuously improving curricula to support student learning in relation to outcomes. Assessment efforts benefit from an exceptionally engaged National Advisory Council, which includes alumni and working professionals. A faculty member noted the importance of the assessment plan in promoting diversity. Specifically, the faculty member said, "Assessment efforts are helping us close the loop to ensure diversity is in every course."

The unit is performing multiple acts of assessment, and is closing the loop consistently and constantly at the course level. However, when the site team tried to understand the programmatic implications of this work, it was difficult to connect the dots. The assessment output too often lacks specific data points and aggregated results that might yield larger programmatic interpretations. Additional rigor in the identification of the metrics -- and their analysis -- would help the unit (and the site team) draw more meaningful conclusions.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 4: Diversity and Inclusiveness

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(a) The unit has a written diversity plan that has been implemented and discussed annually, for achieving an inclusive curriculum, a diverse, culturally proficient faculty, staff 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, identify under-represented groups and articulate key performance indicators upon which the unit intends to focus and improve.

The unit posts its diversity plan in a prominent, easy-to-find place on its website.

The unit's diversity plan is posted and easy to find on the school's website. The SJMC plan defines diversity as including "race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, economic status, gender identification, religion, age and physical abilities." The unit says it has not been tracking first-generation college students, though it says that demographic represents a form of diversity and they plan to begin that tracking in the next academic year. The university is also a First-Gen Forward university, and the unit participates heavily in those multi-university activities. The acting dean is a first-generation student herself, and she mentors an SJMC first-gen student.

SJMC acknowledges that the diversity of its student body has remained flat, and even ticked down in the last academic year, since its last review, though it has increased efforts to recruit and retain students from underrepresented groups. The unit says the fact its numbers of diverse students hasn't improved reflects, in part, the fact that, since the Covid-19 pandemic, Drake has been drawing more of its students – about 40% – from Iowa, a state that is overwhelmingly white. Before the pandemic, about 27% of Drake's student body came from Iowa.

The SJMC diversity plan says the unit will:
● "Monitor and improve the recruiting, retention and graduation rates" of students of color and other minority groups. SJMC's goal is to have a student body that represents the demographics of the school's recruitment area – which is predominantly the Midwest. The school will track the progress and the retention rates of students of color, first-generation students and at-risk students and offer support when needed.

● "Identify high schools that have significant numbers of students of color and add those schools to recruitment efforts. It will seek donors to provide scholarships for students from underrepresented groups, including international students.

● "Increase the diversity among the faculty by conducting searches that produce a diverse pool of candidates. It also will bring to campus guest speakers who represent a variety of viewpoints."

(b) The unit's curriculum creates culturally proficient communicators capable of learning with, working on and advancing the value of diverse teams. The unit's curriculum includes instruction on issues and perspectives relating to mass communications across diverse cultures in a global society.

"SJMC has done a good job of infusing (diversity) content throughout the curriculum," one university administrator said. The SJMC reviews courses every two years to see that presentations and assignments address issues of diversity and inclusion. The curriculum, redesigned since the last site visit to strengthen a focus on diversity and inclusion, reflects efforts to promote critical thinking on these issues and to present perspectives of people from an array of underrepresented groups. For example, JMC 030 Mass Media in a Global Society is a required first-year class that focuses students on how the media presents issues involving race, gender and culture. Students in a Public Relations planning and management course read research papers on diversity, equity and inclusion. Students studying Multimedia Journalism must grapple with DEI issues as they create content for use in various media channels.

The unit also encourages students to enroll in international courses and is raising money to help cover student costs. The SJMC has created a three-week program in Ghana, led by two faculty members, which will occur every other year – giving most students two chances to enroll before graduation. Before traveling to Africa, students learn some Ghanaian history as well as language basics. In Ghana, the students visit professionals and serve four-day internships to learn how public relations work in Ghana parallels or is different from work in the West. In addition, the school's diversity and inclusion plan says it hopes to revive courses in Spanish-speaking countries.

(c) The unit demonstrates effective efforts to enhance all faculty members' understanding of diversity, equity, inclusion and ability to develop culturally proficient communicators capable of learning with, working on and advancing the value of diverse teams. The unit also demonstrates intentional efforts to recruit and retain faculty and professional staff who are from demographics that are historically, domestically marginalized.

"Our work on DEI issues is the work of a lifetime," one faculty member said. "It is cemented into the foundation. And there will always be room to improve."

All members of faculty, staff and administration met with the university's director of global engagement and took part in an exercise that examines attitudes toward cultural differences. Each participant then met with a coach to discuss the findings and devise a plan for intercultural development. The school also organized a workshop for all faculty and staff to help them find ways to add intercultural competences to all classes, including in assignments and discussions.

In its last review, SJMC did not have any diversity in its faculty. But since then, SJMC reports that it has changed how it recruits new faculty, and new hires include a Black professor from Ghana plus a new faculty member from China and one from India -– hires that represent 25% of full-time faculty. The unit says that "intentional recruitment" has produced a diverse pool of finalists in all recent faculty and staff searches. Members of search committees take implicit bias training before they start their work.

Women are well represented among faculty, staff and administration. Fifty percent of the faculty, as well as the acting dean, are women. The SJMC reports that recruiting women for staff and faculty openings is not a problem. The part-time/adjunct faculty is all white – four men and one woman. About 75% of full-time faculty members have Drake degrees.

To aid in retention of faculty members, the SJMC supports research and travel, offers mentoring and allows for flexible course scheduling.

From 2020 to 2023, SJMC has had five searches for full-time faculty, and the number of minority applicants and finalists has improved significantly year over year. The unit also conducted five searches for part-time/adjunct faculty in that time frame, and the number of minority and female applicants and finalists dropped in 2022-2023 from the previous year. No minority applicants were in the 2022-2023 hiring pool for one position, and just one woman applied.

(d) In alignment with the institution's mission, the unit demonstrates effective efforts to help recruit, retain and graduate a student population reflecting the diversity of the population the institution aims to serve.

The SJMC used U.S. Census figures to calculate the demographics of its geographic service area. Those numbers show the area is 86.5% white, 6.1% Black, 8% Hispanic (of any race), 4.5% Asian, 2.4% two or more races, and .4% Native American/Alaskan Native.

In the 2022-2023 academic year, the SJMC undergraduate enrollment was:

- White: 85.2%
- Black: 5.9%
- Asian: 3.3%
- Hispanic (any race): 5.5%
- Two or more races: 5.5%
- International: 1.5%

The SJMC has increased efforts to recruit a diverse student body as well as a more diverse faculty, but it acknowledges that its work, slowed by the Covid-19 pandemic, has not resulted in much progress. Over this review period, the student body has become slightly less diverse. The school is hoping that relatively new university programs and continued SJMC recruiting innovations will draw a more diverse pool of applicants to SJMC.

The university's Crew Scholars Program is aimed at attracting top students and increasing retention and graduation rates, as well as boosting diversity and a sense of inclusion. Crew Scholars turned out to be so successful – with the students thriving – that it was tripled in size and now has three cohorts of 25 students each. The program, which includes regular counseling for first-year students, "is improving the university's ability to attract a highly qualified and diverse student body and provide academic and personal support to ensure students are successful," the university website says. SJMC faculty and staff work as mentors and advisers, and four Crew Scholars were enrolled at the SJMC in the 2022-2023 year.

In 2021, the university opened the John Dee Bright College, a two-year associate degree program, and located it in the SJMC's Meredith Hall. Bright College is described by the university as "uniquely tailored to meet the educational needs of a diverse array of students." In hopes of expanding diversity in the SJMC, the school has relaxed its pre-requisite courses to enable Bright College graduates to ease their way into the SJMC and complete a bachelor's degree. SJMC faculty and staff work as mentors and advisers. The first Bright College graduating class graduated in May at 19 strong; 2 Black students from that class are now enrolled in the SJMC.

Last fall, the unit began the School of Journalism & Mass Communication Dean Team Scholars, a program created to support first-generation students as well as students from minority groups or students with financial need. The program offers $500 bookstore stipends, mentoring and networking with media

professionals. For example, students have toured television station KCCI as well as Dotdash Meredith Corp. The SJMC sees this program as an opportunity to make the student body more diverse.

Faculty leaders of workshops on diversity, which have been required for both faculty and students, say that inclusion is as important an element in their work as recognizing diversity. They say their goal is to be sure students who represent diversity feel comfortable and included once on campus – which means all students must learn to recognize and appreciate diversity.

The campus is overwhelmingly white and, a faculty member said, "that creates a climate we're very much trying to change." Another faculty member added, "If we fall down at including DEI in our curriculum, the students hold us accountable."

The school has stepped up recruitment from high schools, but so far that has resulted in attracting even more white students. The school says it now will focus recruiting in areas that are more diverse, such as some Des Moines neighborhoods that are home to concentrations of minority communities.

In another recruitment effort, SJMC runs a summer camp for high school students, Media Now at Drake. The school offers bus transportation for students from St. Louis – where public schools have high percentages of racial and ethnic minorities – to attend the residential summer camp. It also offers three camp scholarships each year. Since 2018, 26 of the campers have enrolled at Drake, with 25 of those coming to the SJMC. This academic year, four of the Media Now campers are at the SJMC; one of those four is Black.

SJMC attempts to draw more diverse campers by working with advisers in high schools that serve diverse populations. Last summer, about 25% of the 110 campers came from diverse ethnic or racial backgrounds–with about 15% Asian and 5% Black.

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

The SJMC administration is aware that people from underrepresented groups can feel uncomfortable in what the unit describes as "a largely homogeneous, white, straight, middle-class environment." To improve the climate, administrators and faculty are serving as mentors to minority students, as advisers to scholarship students and at-risk students. One student said they felt confident leaning into their diversity to create stories for *Drake Mag* about the LGBTQ+ community members who are active in religious communities. "Everyone's super-respectful about diversity and identity," one student said.

"The diversity of our professors is awesome," another said.

The unit also brings speakers to campus who represent a variety of cultural, racial and political viewpoints.

Table 6. Faculty Populations, Full-time and Part-time

Academic year: 2023 – 2024 Full-time faculty

Group	Female	% of total faculty	Male	% of total faculty
Black/African-American			1	8%
White	6	50%	3	25%
American Indian/Alaskan native				
Asian			2	17%
Hispanic/Latino (any race)				
Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander				
Two or more races				
Other race				
International (any race)				

Academic year: 2022 – 2023 Part-time/adjunct faculty

Group	Female	% of total faculty	Male	% of total faculty
Black/African-American				
White	1	20%	4	80%
American Indian/Alaskan native				
Asian				
Hispanic/Latino (any race)				
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander				
Two or more races				
Other race				
International (any race)				

SUMMARY:

Aware that its student body and faculty are overwhelmingly white, the SJMC has made determined efforts in diversity, equity and inclusion. It requires courses to contain assignments that focus on differences in culture and points of view. It has offered its faculty a robust series of workshops and counseling sessions in identifying biases and creating an inclusive environment. The unit, still struggling to attract a more diverse student body in a predominantly white state, has set out a plan to reach new groups with recruitment programs.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(a) Full-time faculty have primary responsibility for curricula, oversight of courses, research/creative activity and service.

The faculty set the goals contained in the SJMC strategic plan and approved the plan during a faculty meeting. The SJMC has a full-time faculty of 12. (One additional faculty member retired in spring 2023.) The goals set by faculty include keeping curricula current, infusing curricula with awareness of diversity, recruiting and maintaining "a vibrant faculty and student body" and supporting faculty development and research. Most faculty teach three courses, or nine credit hours, a semester.

As specified in the SJMC faculty handbook, all faculty are expected to be effective teachers, to engage in professional or scholarly work, and to serve the university. Among the measures the administration will use in reviewing faculty: research, membership in professional organizations, books, journal articles and speaking engagements. All SJMC faculty serve on a variety of the unit's committees. In addition, SJMC faculty members and administrators serve on university task forces and committees.

(b) The unit's faculty (full- and part-time) are highly qualified and keep their expertise current through professional development opportunities and maintain relationships with professional and scholarly associations.

The faculty includes four members with Ph.D.s, (plus one ABD), six with master's degrees and one with a bachelor's degree. Two faculty members have an Accreditation in Public Relations. Two faculty members have more than 20 years of professional experience; eight have between six and 20 years of experience and two faculty members have five years or less.

Two faculty members are professors; six are associate professors, and four are assistant professors. One faculty member has more than 20 years of full-time teaching experience. Six have between six and 20 years of experience, while five have five years of teaching experience or less.

Faculty regularly take advantage of professional development opportunities. For example, they have attended workshops on solutions journalism, received Google certification in Google analytics and received Knight Foundation certification in audio storytelling. Faculty also maintain memberships in professional organizations including AEJMC.

In this academic year, faculty members began scheduling regular lunches to share ideas on research partnerships and other academic work, something they believe is particularly helpful for professionals who have begun academic careers.

(c) The unit requires, supports and rewards faculty research, creative activity and/or professional activity. Expectations for promotion and tenure are clear.

In addition to funds the university provides for staff development, the SJMC has restricted and endowed gifts it uses to pay for costs associated with faculty development, including travel, memberships, online training programs and presentations at conferences. The SJMC says the funds have been used every year by every faculty member.

The unit's policies on tenure and promotion are published in the Drake Academic Charter and the SJMC Faculty Handbook, which states: "Promotion and tenure in the School are closely related to the faculty member's level of performance and professional contributions in the important areas of 1) teaching effectiveness, 2) professional and scholarly activity, and 3) service to the University and to the

community. Ideally, the candidate will contribute in each of the three areas, but excellence in service, while desirable and praiseworthy, will not be held as professionally significant as teaching and scholarship."

In addition, SJMC expects faculty to be innovative and willing to serve as mentors. The SJMC Tenure and Promotion Committee meets with non-tenured faculty, visits classes and reads student evaluations. Committee members then meet with the dean to discuss reappointment each year. Faculty members also meet with the dean to set goals for the year, and progress toward those goals becomes the basis of annual performance reviews.

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

In the review period, the SJMC faculty has received 31 awards and honors plus 10 grants. Faculty awards include: Iowa High School Press Association Stratton Award for support of scholastic journalism (2023); Outstanding Public Relations Professional of the Year – Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Iowa Chapter (2021), and John F. Murray Outstanding Doctoral Student in Teaching Award, 2018.

Collectively, the faculty has written two books, edited five books and published 27 articles in refereed journals. They have been quoted in professional publications and served as moderators or members of panels.

This grid lists faculty work since 2017:

Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activities	Total from Unit*	Individuals				
		Full Professors (4*)	Associate Professors (4)	Assistant Professors (5)	Other Faculty** (0)	Totals (13)* 1 full professor retires in Jan 2024
Awards and Honors	31	10	12	9		31
Grants Received Internal	8	1	1	6		8
Grants Received External	2	1		1		2
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co-authored	2			2		2
Textbooks, Sole- or Co-authored	0					0
Books Edited	5	1		4		5
Book Chapters	29	3		26		29
Monographs	0					0
Articles in Refereed Journals	27	10	3	14		27
Refereed Conference Papers	72	35	10	27		72
Invited Academic Papers	0					0
Encyclopedia Entries	0					0
Book Reviews	12		6	6		12
Articles in Non-refereed Publications	6		6			6
Juried Creative Works	2			2		2
Non-juried Creative Works	3			3		3
Other (please specify) Moderator or invited panelist	24	15	9			24
Media Quotes in Professional Publications	9	9				9
Substack Publication (300 subscribers)	38		38			38
Innovation Profs Generative AI Newsletter (360 subscribers)	13		13			13
What's New In Social Media Newsletter (1,087 subscribers)	240		240			240

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

Faculty members and administrators from other units on campus praise the work of the SJMC. "I love their students," the chair of one department said. The faculty members of other units say SJMC administrators are effective collaborators.

SJMC interns won the praise of industry professionals. "Students who take the Meredith Apprenticeships are inquisitive and know how to interview. The faculty make sure they are prepared and ready."

One alumnus, a member of the SJMC National Advisory Council, praised the faculty for the support they offer students, even those who may not be reaching out for support. "It's hard for students to avoid interaction," the alumnus said. "The faculty seek out the less engaged students. They put up their office hours where the students are … and are available whenever however wherever."

SUMMARY:

The SJMC is one of the smallest units on the Drake campus but its faculty is engaged in the classroom and in research and professional development. The SJMC requires the faculty to create innovative courses, produce research, serve on university and SJMC committees, stay current with their profession and be available to students.

Faculty members clearly enjoy working together. A small group, they easily share ideas for updating courses and making plans for the future. "We are like our own pirate ship at the university," one faculty member said, "We are moving quick, we're nimble, and we're a tight-knit band."

Veterans and newcomers appear to respect each other. "I am gobsmacked by the newer younger faculty," one faculty member said. "It's a culture. It's a family," one relatively new professor said. "The environment is an enabling environment. You know you're flourishing because you've planted yourself in good soil." Students also volunteer praise for the faculty. One student said he applied to Drake after a visit because "one thing that stood out was how the students interact with their teachers."

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 6: Student Services

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The school works with the university to improve recruitment and retention. In 2022, SJMC helped to lead the way for the university when it introduced a new Blended Advising Model. The model is explained on the university's website: "Each year the incoming (first year and transfer) class will be assigned a faculty mentor adviser and an academic advising specialist. Academic advising specialists (i.e. staff academic advisers) will co-create developmental spaces for students to meet their academic and personal goals. The faculty mentor advisers will continue to provide students mentorship and guidance that supports their professional aspirations."

The model places responsibility for students' degree progress with the advising staff, allowing faculty members more time for personal and professional mentorship of students. A formal advising reporting plan tied to the new model is scheduled to launch university-wide during spring 2024. The plan will track student success over time, evaluating the progressive effectiveness of the Blended Advising Model. In tandem with this new strategy for advising and evaluation of student success outcomes, faculty members will continue to mentor students; coach students on course selections and opportunities; and maintain accessibility through office hours and electronic communication.

Faculty members also support students by tracking and reporting student grades in their classes, noting progress at mid-semester to identify needs for assistance. They also affirm their interest in students by involving them in professional activities and attending student activities (sports, performances, speakers) outside of the classroom when possible.

In addition to unit checksheets that outline class requirements for each program of study, a university-wide electronic degree evaluation system allows students and advisers to track degree progress online. All materials that outline academic standards are regularly reviewed and updated.

The SJMC career services staff member leads a pre-professional workshop to acquaint students with programs, requirements and opportunities. The career specialist also organizes workshops, events, portfolio reviews, internships, social media groups tied to opportunities, clubs, and the school, while also keeping track of internship and job opportunities through the online Handshake system. Because the career services role is integrated into the advising specialist position, the result is holistic oversight of student academic and professional success.

At the university level, students are required to complete INTD 025, Blueprint for Success, a one-credit course. It offers an academic advising module, where students meet their adviser and begin to create a career path. It also introduces other success strategies, including time management and study skills, campus resources and campus DEI perspectives. The university requires that all undergraduate students complete either the Drake Curriculum of Inquiry, or Honors Curriculum, both of which support student awareness of options and opportunities. Additional university-wide services include customized advising and career counseling (utilized mostly by students with multiple majors), as well as an annual in-person career fair.

Scholarships, student aid and work study positions are available through both the university and the SJMC. University scholarships total more than $84 million annually, while 32 SJMC scholarships provided an additional $87,236 in scholarships in 2023. Roughly 400 students (varies by year) university-wide have work study appointments.

(b) Professional advisers, and faculty where appropriate, provide students with academic and career advice.

On the ground, SJMC has been tracking student success closely over time with spreadsheets that visualize student progress through their class requirements. This system is used to help identify students who need assistance with moving forward. With multiple degree programs and student enrollment within those majors, the data is analyzed each semester to anticipate and plan course scheduling for upcoming semesters. SJMC incorporated systems (checksheets, faculty and career advising success) in the blended advising model a year before the rest of the university. As a result, staff members observe that faculty have more time to help students with career, life and professional challenges, while advising staff effectively track degree progress and semester-by-semester student success.

All incoming students are assigned to a professional advising specialist with the school's career services staff member providing school-specific advising and expertise. Every semester the assistant dean for Student Records and Services monitors student success in academics. Low-GPA students are included in the SJMC student success plan. The assistant dean provides strategies and assistance for those students, also monitoring and mentoring students from at-risk populations. Students whose GPAs are below the required level receive a letter of notification from the school.

Faculty members hold an average of six office hours per week and serve as mentors.

While advisers and faculty members confirm student progress toward graduation every semester, the assistant dean reviews each student's degree progress prior to their senior year and checks records to confirm that students are ready for graduation.

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

Printed materials, website resources and electronic newsletters, along with the online university catalog, provide accessible details for students to stay informed about school requirements, policies and activities. Graduation requirements are available in the University's online course catalog and on the SJMC website. Graduation check sheets and degree path maps for each of SJMC programs are available on the school's website, and date back to 2015 to accommodate student start dates and curricular changes.

The Magazine and Brand Media and Multimedia Journalism faculty send out a weekly Journalism and Monday Memo (JMM) with regular updates about school activities and opportunities. This memo provides pertinent, current news and announcements related to the SJMC. The career services staff member manages a Facebook group for the school, while the PR and Strategic Political Communication concentration also has a Facebook group. These groups are used to share opportunities including but not limited to internships, jobs, events and networking programs. Faculty members are encouraged to use a university communication tool (Starfish) to acknowledge student needs and accomplishments. Starfish flags grades of C- and lower at midterm so that SJMC can reach out to those students. Students widely acknowledge that advisers and faculty members maintain an open-door policy and provide excellent help.

One student told the team that she was frustrated and overwhelmed with questions, but when she walked in to see an adviser, he immediately stopped what he was doing and not only answered her questions, but effectively showed her how to find answers in the future.

Another student noted that students love the faculty and advisers because they have highly sought after information and are personally "awesome."

(d) The unit and institution provide extra-curricular activities and opportunities relevant to the curriculum and that help develop the students' professional and intellectual abilities and interests.

Numerous groups and organizations provide opportunities for student skill acquisition and career development. This includes a weekly newspaper (The Times-Delphic), magazines including Drake Mag, Drake Political Review, a humor-focused Drake University Independent Newspaper (DUIN), and Periphery, an art and literary journal. The Drake Broadcasting system produces "The Dog" streaming radio programming and a YouTube channel.

Team members observed that spaces set aside for these activities were active and full of students. When asked about the student media opportunities, students passionately indicated that they were satisfied with opportunities and proud of their work.

Student clubs include the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) chapter and an Ad Club. The SJMC also organizes an annual field trip to New York City, networking events with political groups, events featuring guest speakers, Women in Leadership activities, student mental health, and the SJMC Week, which provides a broad scope of activities tied to school facilities, personnel, technology, and events.

Students have opportunities to cover the famous Drake Relays track and field event, which is a week-long city event that provides plentiful options for student engagement in media work. Other units providing on-campus opportunities include Athletics, Greek Life, Student Government, the Student Alumni Association and the Residence Hall Association. These opportunities earn both partial credit and blame for keeping students "Drake Busy."

The SJMC does not require an internship, but solid, long-term connections between the SJMC and local communication and media companies offer recurring and highly beneficial local networking that leads to internships and jobs. As a result, annual surveys indicate that 90% or more of graduates report at least one communication/media-oriented internship or work experience while in school. The site team noted that students, the alumni advisory board, faculty and advisers emphasized the abundance of professional and extracurricular opportunities for students' personal and professional growth.

Drake Career Services uses an alumni survey to measure "accomplishment rate" or percentage of undergraduates reporting being employed, enrolled in graduate or professional school or an activity related to professional goals within six months of graduation. Drake regularly boasts an accomplishment rate of greater than 90% for both the university and the SJMC.

(e) The unit uses retention and graduation data to improve student services, such as advising, and to reduce barriers to student success.

Due to shifting population demographics with declining numbers of high school graduates (the so-called national enrollment cliff), recruitment and retention is recognized as critical at Drake University. The SJMC and university recognize the ramifications of fewer high school graduates in the admissions pipeline, and closely track retention and graduation rates. During the past five years, the unit's retention rates for entering classes range from 80 to 91.5%, while four-year graduation rates in the same time period range from 70 to 89%. The unit's numbers are comparable to the university rates during the same time period. Some students have scholarship funding for four years and the SJMC works hard to facilitate completion before funding ends.

Because the university and the SJMC's budgets are tuition dependent, the need to recruit and retain students is critical. The SJMC is answering this critical need for retention enrollment management and regular effective communication with letters, online meetings, faculty speed-networking and welcome emails, as well as student and family events. Recruitment activities also are ramping up with more than a dozen recruitment-targeted activities during the 2023-2024 school year. These efforts include a summer camp, online workshops, sports reporting events, virtual programs, high school connections, SJMC campus and building tours, as well as presentations and exhibitions at national conferences such as the Journalism Education Association.

Multiple students acknowledged that passionate, personal attention from the SJMC administrators and faculty helped them decide to attend Drake University.

SUMMARY:

The university and SJMC are aware of the need to regularly communicate and support students' growth and development as they progress toward graduation. The wide variety of communication materials, channels for delivery and strategies for advising, as well as the number and varied types of opportunities for professional and personal development demonstrated by the unit are noted and recognized as valuable for student success. The unit's advising staff members double check to make sure students succeed.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 7: Resources, Facilities and Equipment

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(a) The unit has a detailed annual budget for the allocation of its resources that is related to its long-range, strategic plan.

The SJMC budget is dependent on enrollment as well as donated funds. Tuition is determined each year by the Board of Trustees. The SJMC dean and budget manager subsequently work with the university's CFO to anticipate and fund programs. The SJMC strategic plan allows for faculty input based on recognized priorities such as recruitment activities, guest speakers and technology expenditures.

The overall budget is stable and has grown modestly in dollars during each of the past three years. Primary expenses include administrative, teaching and clerical salaries and benefits. Expenses and expenditures beyond personnel, including operating, hardware and software, travel and membership expenditures represent a small portion of the budget.

The SJMC budget is reliant on tuition, but not wholly so. Donated funds come from the Meredith Family Foundation and DotDash Meredith, considered the largest digital and print publisher in the country. These funds pay for an apprenticeship program that includes a faculty member's salary, technology and faculty development. The E.T. Meredith Center for Magazine and Multimedia Education supports students, faculty and events. Endowed funds also support the Fischer-Stelter Chair of Magazine and Brand Media, scholarships, the Public Relations Capstone, and discretionary projects.

SJMC is able to operate with its current budget because the Meredith funds have provided much-needed supplementary programmatic funds. SJMC anticipates additional future funding from donors and new initiatives such as online degree programs. However, all academic units at Drake were asked to cut non-personnel budgets in 2023-2024, and to identify areas for further cuts if needed. These cuts and concerns about future budgets provide incentive to spend wisely and strategize for additional funding.

(b) Resources provided by the institution are adequate to achieve the unit's mission and are fair in relation to those provided to other units.

Institutional funding is based largely on tuition and currently considered by the unit as fairly allocated to SJMC. However, those funds are not adequate to meet the school's ambitious mission. Thus, in more ways than one, the Meredith Foundation funds and Dotdash Meredith donations provide resources for the school to rise above limitations that otherwise would restrict the school's success.

During a time of challenging enrollment and the need to be frugal with university resources, the unit's budget resources are both a blessing and a curse. The unit uses endowed funds and donations to cover up to 25 percent of salaries, plus additional expenses for operations and technology. This adroit ability to fill in gaps might create the impression SJMC can be targeted for more cuts. The site team queries to university administration about that possibility were met with positive comments about what good stewards the school has been with its own and university resources. However, when the site team asked if SJMC might be merged with another school or college in a money-saving move, the administrator said no, "That is a hill I would die on."

(c) The unit's facilities and information resources enable and promote effective scholarship, teaching and learning.

SJMC is located in Meredith Hall, a two-story structure designed by famed architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. It was built in the 1960s and restored to retain historical design features during a year-long process in 2022-2023. Because of the restoration, the building now features faculty and staff offices circling an atrium for accessibility and convenience. It also includes computer labs, collaboration classrooms that can be adjusted for diverse programmatic goals, TV and podcasting studios, theater spaces, video editing facilities, the campus radio station, and equipment checkout space.

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

Donors were instrumental in helping to provide updated technology and creative spaces for the refreshed workspaces. There is some concern and recognition that continuing the current pattern of innovation requires vigilant pursuit of additional funding. Also, SJMC notes that IT support has been slow and perhaps too deliberate in approving and supporting innovation and basic technology functions. The unit is strategizing ways that can reinvigorate the university IT's commitment to speed and innovation.

The unit will continue to seek financial support from the university for facilities and opportunities that lift creative recruitment efforts, scholarships and support for efforts to improve representation and success of students from historically underrepresented groups.

At the same time, SJMC recognizes that enrollment challenges and the need for innovation require an aggressive, strategic plan for finding additional support outside of the administration through expanding personal and professional relationships, activities and accomplishments.

SUMMARY:

The school's budget, including university funds and donor funds, is seen as adequate. SJMC continues to function well in a modern, spacious environment, but acknowledges it needs new streams of funding to advance its ambitions and effectiveness.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 8: Professional and Public Service

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(a) The unit consults and communicates regularly with its alumni, and actively engages with them, other professionals and professional associations to keep curriculum and teaching current and to promote the exchange of ideas.

SJMC is connected to its alumni in multiple ways, from the informal – through individual faculty members ("mentors for life") – to the official, including an annual alumni reception, a "dean's column" in the university alumni magazine, social media and a weekly "Monday Memo" for students and alumni. One faculty member does regular webinars for alumni on emerging technologies.

One of the school's preeminent processes for systematically keeping in touch with both alumni and professionals is the SJMC National Advisory Council. Its membership is an impressive combination of esteemed alumni and dedicated professionals. It meets twice a year to advise on curriculum, instruction and industry developments. The council also discusses events, professional development and potential fundraising opportunities. Members of the council participate with SJMC as guest speakers, intern supervisors, student project and portfolio reviewers and mock interviews. The school actively reaches out to this group throughout the year in myriad ways. Recently, a faculty member reached out to a council member with a request to review an alumni's resume. "They are still caring about kids even when they aren't here anymore," the council member said. Another council member illustrated his ongoing connection with the school this way: "The (previous) dean officiated my wedding, if that tells you anything."

Alumni and industry professionals provided input on the review of every SJMC major over the last accreditation cycle. And many SJMC classes work with on- and off-campus clients that serve diverse communities.

(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.

Unit faculty workload typically is a 3-3 teaching load, advising student organization or publications, academic and career mentorship, and university and community service. While Drake is a teaching institution and excellence in instruction is the top qualification, the other legs of that stool are scholarship/professional activity, and service.

The local professional community views the school as a key ally for ongoing professional development and awareness opportunities, as well as potential new interns or hires. "Drake is always the first thought," said one alumni who now runs a communications team locally. Every year, SJMC hosts multiple public events related to the communications industry, recently including workshops on artificial intelligence, generative AI, political coverage and diversity in the media. One faculty member regularly hosts professional development webinars for alumni in the professions.

Across the board, faculty participate in professional and public service. Just a few representative examples include: leading a national webinar for PRSA; serving as Iowa United Nations vice president; volunteering for Des Moines Refugee Services; serving as a state representative in the Iowa House of

Representatives; judging ASME National Magazine Awards; serving on the Iowa Public Television Editorial Integrity Board; judging the Midwest Emmys.

(c) The unit contributes to its communities through unit-based service projects and events, service learning of its students and civic engagement of its faculty.

SJMC has a tradition of public service, and that continues to be a strength of the unit.
The unit's projects and events reflect the commitment to advancing industries and enriching the community. The examples are too numerous to list here, so here are some highlights:
● SJMC "Refresh" series, a collection of half-day and daylong professional development opportunities for alumni and professionals.
● SJMC teamed up with the Poynter Institute and Drake's Olson Center for Public Democracy for a three-day seminar for national journalists on covering the Iowa Caucuses and presidential elections.
● SJMC faculty participated in a leadership course for hundreds of Des Moines Public School District students as part of the Latinos in Action programming.
 Service learning is integral throughout the coursework. Some examples include:
● PR, Advertising, Digital Media Production and Strategic Political Communication courses all work for off-campus, often nonprofit clients who serve diverse communities.
● Visual Communication and Digital Strategies classes create websites and social media campaigns for community organizations.
● Advanced Reporting students worked with the Library of Congress on the Veterans History Project.
● PR and Strategic Political Communication faculty use the UN Sustainable Development Goals to select community partners for capstone classes.

The school is an affiliated program of study with the university's new Olson Center for Public Democracy. The dean and a professor sit on the committee for the center and the SJMC works to promote the center's mission to sustain multi-dimensional public participation and civic leadership. The faculty's civic engagement includes examples from serving on zoning boards to serving in the state legislature.

(d) The unit supports scholastic journalism.

SJMC supports scholastic journalism in multiple ways.

The faculty's involvement with the Journalism Education Association is indicative of this commitment. Faculty members conduct sessions at conferences and serve as JEA Mentors and on the JEA Certification Committee.

The Media Now at Drake residential summer camp for high school students is an innovative recruiting and inclusivity play, offering tracks from multimedia to leadership. The courses are taught by professionals, SJMC faculty and high school journalism teachers. The annual camp funds scholarships and charters a bus from a diverse metro area.

The Iowa High School Press Association is a SJMC partner in the annual IHSPA Winter Thaw event, a daylong professional development program for high school media advisers. Faculty members have also been featured speakers at the IHSPA annual conference. Other unit activities in support of high school journalism instruction include developing customized high school field trips in support of high school instructional goals, such as podcasting.

Faculty and staff serve as judges for multiple Iowa high school journalism contests. And faculty regularly open their classrooms to high school students, even crediting any substantive input in the publication they participate in,

SUMMARY:

The unit's ongoing commitment to public and community service and currency in instruction is on display in every section of this standard. Alumni and professionals are integral to official planning and feedback loops for everything from instruction to events. Individually and as a unit, the school serves its professional and civic communities in a wide variety of impactful ways. And the scholastic journalism participation of the unit seems to be baked in at every level – from an innovative summer camp to individual class participation.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

Strengths:

● Extraordinarily engaged student body, who in some cases may take on too much.
● A small, collegial and collaborative faculty that considers itself and the school to be "family."
● All faculty members have industry/professional experience and networks, something that is noticed and appreciated by students and campus colleagues.
● Faculty are lauded by students as genuine and supportive.
● Newly renovated historic mid-century modern facility with up-to-date video and audio studios, student-gathering spaces and faculty offices arrayed around a light-filled courtyard.
● A faculty which experienced increased diversity from zero to 25% members of color.
● A revamped curriculum infused with diversity and inclusion content; and, students who speak eloquently about the importance of accepting differences among themselves and enthusiastically recall multiple diversity lessons from their classes.
● Seemingly limitless professional opportunities for students within proximity of the school's capitol city location, supported by faculty networks and a thriving alumni network.
● Increased activity in assessment since the last site visit, resulting in curriculum changes that have positively impacted the unit.
● A new major, Strategic Political Communications, that is gaining traction and growing, and an emerging cohort of students passionate about filmmaking both provide opportunities for new students and some risks of needing more resources.

Weaknesses:

● Iowa is an overwhelmingly white state as is the wider multistate service area of the unit. The student body's diversity numbers have remained flat despite multiple recruiting innovations. The unit plans to continue to evolve the efforts as they work to diversify the student body.
● A lack of programmatic scaffolding from which to derive actionable assessment outcomes. Increased rigor around metrics, data and aggregation/analysis will continue progress in an already-improved area.

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

3) In the case of a recommendation for accreditation or reaccreditation, with standard(s) not in compliance, list the deficiencies that need to be addressed before the next site team evaluation.
N/A

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 the recommendation.
N/A

6) If the unit was previously accredited, summarize 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 2017 site visit team noted two weaknesses:
- Lack of a diverse faculty and student body
- Aging building and an obsolete TV studio that lack modern amenities

Diversity of faculty and student body:

Faculty: At the past accreditation visit, SJMC had no faculty of color. Now, they have two tenure-track faculty members of color and one associate professor of color. Three of 12 full-time faculty represents 25%. The school reports that its faculty and staff pitched in to actively recruit within their professional and personal networks, resulting in high-quality and diverse candidates across all searches.

Student body: The Class of 2027 is one of the most diverse classes in Drake's history. The university is proud of its record and reputation for great economic diversity among its students. Twenty-five percent of incoming first-year and transfer students are first-generation students, and almost 100% of the class was awarded a scholarship or need-based grant to help cover the cost of tuition. Approximately 19% of Drake community members identify as LGBTQIA+. While the University has increased its percentage of diverse students, the number of students of color in the SJMC has remained flat or even declined in some years during the review period.

The school and its faculty continue to try new recruitment strategies to address this. In Fall 2023, SJMC launched the SJMC Dean Team Scholars program. The program supports high-potential JMC students who are first generation, from an underserved population, or have financial need. In their first year at Drake, these students receive a $500 award for books and incidentals and are immersed in the media profession via networking with industry professionals, leadership development, tours of companies and meetings with the SJMC dean.

The school also continues to host the annual summer camp, Media Now at Drake. In 2023, 25% of the resident campers represented racial or ethnic diversity. As the Des Moines metro area increases in diversity, faculty and staff have also worked to cultivate relationships with local high school advisers, and created development events for high school student journalists including opportunities to participate in Division I Basketball Media Day, "pin-up" events for *Drake Mag*, and covering a Drake football game from the press box.

Faculty also participate in the university program that supports and mentors students of color, Crew Scholars.

Aging building and obsolete TV studio:

The 2023 reopening of historic Meredith Hall after a multi-million-dollar restoration addressed this weakness on one dramatic August day. See details of the renovation project, and all the modern amenities now available to faculty, staff and students, in Standard 7.

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

The self-study was clean and easy to follow. Except for the Assessment standard (see Standard 3 and above), data and back-up information were accessible and organized.