Report of ACEJMC Evaluation

Undergraduate program
2023-24

Name of Institution: Southeast Missouri State University

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Dr. Carlos Vargas

Name of Unit: Department of Mass Media

Name and Title of Administrator: Dr. Tamara Zellars Buck

Date of 2023-2024 Accrediting Visit: Oct. 29- Nov. 1, 2023

Date of the previous accrediting visit: Oct. 9-12, 2016

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Re-accredit

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Re-accredit

Recommendation by 2023-2024 Visiting Team: Re-accredit

Prepared and submitted by:

Team Chair
Name and Title: Paul Voakes, Professor Emeritus
Organization/School) University of Colorado Boulder
Signature

Team Member
Name and Title: Pam Luecke, Journalism Professor Emerita
Organization/School: Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Va.
Signature

Team Member
Name and Title: Helen Katz, EVP Research
Organization/School: Publicis Media
Signature

Team Member
Name and Title: Carol Sagers, Principal Consultant
Organization/School: CHS Marketing Consultants
Signature

PART I: General information

Name of Institution: Southeast Missouri State University

Name of Unit: Department of Mass Media

Year of Visit: 2023

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: N/A

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

Southeast Missouri State University is duly authorized to operate and grant degrees by Chapter 174 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri. A Board of Governors is vested by law (Chapter 172 pursuant to Section 174.457 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri) with all powers and authority to effectively govern and set university policy in accordance with the laws of the state of Missouri and with the regulations and rules of the Board of Governors.

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. If there was a revisit, give the date of the last full visit and the date of the revisit:
Oct. 9-12, 2016

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

2004-2005

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

The department's mission statement has undergone several revisions but remains substantively unchanged. The plan was adopted in spring 2015 and reviewed Oct. 17, 2018, in light of university restructuring that dissolved the College of Liberal Arts and relocated the unit to a new Holland College of Arts and Media. After discussion during a scheduled department meeting, it was determined no revisions were necessary and it was reaffirmed as written. Revisions were again discussed in August 2022 during a departmental retreat to ensure alignment with the university's Strategic Action Plan adopted the previous semester. The statement was refined to emphasize a commitment to helping students overcome individualized barriers to graduation and to express ACEJMC values and competencies in a less-literal way.

The revised statement was adopted during a meeting Sept. 14, 2022, and reads as follows:

The mission of the Department of Mass Media at Southeast Missouri State University is to prepare a diverse student body to ethically and effectively understand, craft and lead media communications in an increasingly converged, diverse and interactive media environment. We recognize a special responsibility to prepare students to overcome personal barriers, recognize their talents, and achieve their professional goals. We emphasize student-centered and experiential learning through innovative curricula and work in collaboration with media partners to prepare individuals to be critical, creative and independent thinkers. (*Revised 9/14/2022*)

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Number of weeks in a semester: <u>16</u>
Number of weeks in a quarter: <u>N/A</u>
Number of weeks in summer sessions: <u>4, 6 or 12</u>
Number of weeks in intersessions: <u>4</u>

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

<u>X</u> Bachelor's degree
___ 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 Science in Mass Communication, with the following academic sequences:
　　Advertising
　　Media Management*
　　Multimedia Journalism
　　Public Relations
　　TV/Film

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

120 semester hours

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

Students may earn 1-, 2-, or 3-semester credit hours for an internship experience.

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.

Name of Sequence or Specialty	Person in Charge
Advertising	Dr. Karie Hollerbach
Media Management*	Dr. Tamara Zellars Buck
Multimedia Journalism	Dr. Tamara Zellars Buck
Public Relations	Dr. Sarah Cavanah
TV/Film	Professor Fred Jones

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

Fall 2023 – 8,099 undergraduate students

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.

Name of Sequence or Specialty	Undergraduate Majors in Fall 2023
Advertising	50
Media Management*	19
Multimedia Journalism	40
Public Relations	30
TV/Film	100
TOTAL	239

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 campaigns courses are exempt from the 20-1 ratio.)

COURSE NAME	FALL 2023	SPRING 2023
MC221 Digital Media Production	20 (section 01) 20 (section FX1)	19 (section 01) 18 (section FX1)
MC310 Advertising Analysis & Strategy	20	
MC312 Advertising Creative Concepts		13
MC316 Advertising Media	20	20

Course		
MC318 Advertising Digital Applications	14	
MC320 Media News		10
MC322 Design for Media		18
MC323 Media Audio Production	10	
MC327 Media Visual Production	8	
MC331 Strategic Writing	14	7
MC333 Strategic Production		9
MC334 Public Relations Research		7
MC351 Basic TV/Film Production	20	14
MC352 Video Postproduction	11	19
MC354 Screenwriting	20	19
MC363 Sports Broadcast Production	20	
MC366 Television Directing	20	
MC367 Converging Media Systems		19
MC418 Advertising Campaigns		15
MC421 Multimedia Storytelling		12
MC427 Specialized Reporting		9
MC429 Media Management	19	14
MC430 Professional Strategic Communication		7
MC431 Ethical Strategic Communication		6
MC432 Hot Topics in Strategic Communication		7
MC434 Public Relations Campaigns & Case Studies	11	
MC451 Advanced Film Production	20	
MC469 Advanced Video Production		20

16. Total expenditures planned by the accredited unit for the 2023–2024 academic year:

	Department	Professional Development	Arrow	TV/Film	Total
Operations	$19,095	$4,000	$90,000	$2,850	
Equipment	$8,692				
Student Labor	$9,580		$30,450	$5,505	
TOTALS	$37,367	$4,000	$120,450	$8,355	$170,172

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

$958,452.00

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.

Full Professor
    Dr. Tamara Zellars Buck
    Dr. Karie Hollerbach
    Professor Fred Jones
    Dr. Pam Parry
Associate Professor
    Dr. Sarah Cavanah
Regular Non-Tenure-Track faculty
    Professor Eun Jeong Lee
    Professor Mike Simmons

8. 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.)

No adjunct faculty were utilized in spring 2023. Adjunct faculty teaching in fall 2023 are:
    Will Atkins
    Emily Blattel
    Candice Davis
    Chastidy Henry
    Anthony Scherer

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

Academic Year	Total Graduates
2022-23	51
2021-22	70

PART II — Standard 1: Mission, Governance and Administration

Southeast Missouri State University, in Cape Girardeau, MO, enrolls about 8,000 undergraduates and 1,600 graduate students. It offers 129 undergraduate majors and options and 33 master's programs. The Department of Mass Media is one of four departments in the Holland College of Arts and Media, which was founded in 2018. The department's enrollment in Fall 2023 was 239 students — all undergraduates seeking the bachelor of science degree. The department offers sequences, which it refers to as "options," in Multimedia Journalism, Advertising, Public Relations, Television/Film, and an online-only option in Media Management, which was added to the curriculum in AY 2023. It also offers a 15-credit-hour certificate in Media for Managers.

The department sponsors an active student news organization, a student agency for advertising and public relations clients, and a video production agency, also for internal and external clients. It occupies new (or newly remodeled) and spacious facilities for offices, classrooms, student organizations and other student productions.

The university has seen a 23% drop in its undergraduate enrollment since Fall 2017. The department has reflected that trend, with about a 30% decrease since 2017. The declining enrollment has necessitated budget reductions across the university, and the department's budget dropped by about 5% during the review period. Likewise, the department's full-time faculty has shrunk from nine in 2017 to its current seven. Five of these seven positions are tenure-track lines. The department's graduation rates have risen since the last visit, but at 48% (the most recently recorded six-year graduation rate), the department still lags behind the university rate of 66%. The faculty has responded with a number of curricular and advising measures designed to increase retention and graduation rates. The most recent rate for retention — students returning for their second year — is 70%, significantly higher than in the previous decade, but also falls below the university's rate.

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?

Since its first adoption in 2010, the department's strategic plan has undergone regular revision, the most recent being in Fall 2022. The chair embraces her responsibility to keep the plan updated.

This is a plan that clearly attempts to address the ideals of the department's mission statement, also revised in Fall 2022. Both documents emphasize a rededication to students' academic success, and preparation for professional success "in an increasingly converged, diverse and interactive media

environment." The strategic plan now includes six objectives in the service of three broader goals or "outcomes." It outlines strategies to increase retention and graduation rates through improved faculty and peer mentoring and a greater emphasis on experiential learning. It also calls for the recruitment of a more diverse faculty and staff and new energy in advocating for scarce resources (especially new equipment and updated software). Interviews with faculty suggested that these goals have remained top of mind in the department's daily life. While it was still too soon to assess the effectiveness of the revised plan, the department's faculty search in Fall 2023, for example, seemed to focus on a hire who would bring more diverse perspectives to the department (another of the plan's main goals).

(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?

Chair Tamara Buck draws broad praise — from departmental faculty and administrators and colleagues across campus — for her effective leadership. When she became chair in 2020, her first goal was to strengthen the relationship between the department and the administration of the Holland College of Arts and Media, which in turn has led to stronger support from the provost's office. She has also put her stamp on faculty governance by requiring higher levels of accountability: For example, she gives each standing committee an annual charge, with deadlines and requirements of meeting minutes. She led the faculty through the creation of a new option, Media Management. The chair has also invited students into department governance by creating a Student Leadership Board, which provides input on curricular revisions and faculty searches.

The chair is known as a strong advocate across campus for media education, and the faculty cited several examples. Through her persistence, as one instance, she secured funding to replace the department's moribund Avid video editing system with a new $500,000 lab, in 2022. Television/Film faculty now tell their students they will graduate with competence in both leading editing systems, Adobe Premiere and Avid. The chair has invited students and faculty from other options and departments in the college to learn the Avid software and use the lab.

In response to the university's and department's declining enrollments, the chair has put new ideas and energy into recruiting. Because out-of-state tuition at Southeast is no higher than in-state, she recruits students at conventions of high school journalists around the country, often taking a few Mass Media majors with her to help recruit.

To connect students and alumni, the chair is active on the department's closed Facebook page, which has grown to 350 members. The page has become a resource for job and internship postings, often with older alumni hiring new graduates.

The chair is known as a campus leader in diversity, equity and inclusiveness, and she aims to "embed

DEI in everything we do" in the department. Mass Media became the first department at the university to include considerations of diversity in faculty self-reports for annual evaluations. Professor Buck was the first faculty co-chair of the campus Black Faculty/Staff Alliance affinity group and is a sought-after presenter and trainer on campus and nationally regarding improvement of diversity and inclusion in academic departments, inside newsrooms and within news content. Both Buck and Professor Karie Hollerbach have been AEJMC Institute for Diverse Leadership fellows.

The chair seeks collaborations with other units at the university. As one example, the Multimedia Journalism and TV/Film options have joined the Department of Engineering and Technology in redesigning the degree and minor programs in Unmanned Aircraft Systems (drones) to incorporate Mass Media coursework. Also, the department is a leading organizer of the annual Fault Line Film Festival, a well-known regional showcase of student films. Department students run social media and other promotional campaigns for the festival as well as entering their own films.

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

The department updated its data in Fall 2023.

(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.

These data can be found, prominently marked, near the bottom of the department's website.

On indicators (e), (f) and (g) the site team should make sure the unit operates within accepted academic norms and need only report in detail on extraordinary situations, cases or variances from policy.

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

The department's faculty meets monthly. It also holds an August retreat each year to review assessment reports, discuss policy updates and review annual goals. The department enjoys a high degree of shared governance, with standing committees on Assessment, Curriculum, Scholarships, Student Recruitment and Retention, and Tenure and Promotion. The faculty has formed ad hoc committees as well, depending on need.

The department has a representative on the Holland College Council, which primarily reviews proposals for curriculum revisions from member departments. Faculty play numerous roles in university governance. During the review period, department faculty served on 34 governing or administrative bodies at the campus level, and on 17 at the college level. A rare governance glitch arose in 2023 when no faculty member volunteered to represent the department in the campuswide Faculty Senate.

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

The Faculty Handbook outlines the process for selecting, appointing and evaluating unit administrators. It provides guidelines for establishing both internal and national searches, conducting formal and

informal reviews, and conducting two modes of regular reviews of the chair. Each year, the department's Tenure and Promotion Committee evaluates the chair's faculty performance in teaching, service and professional growth. The dean then assesses the chair in accordance with six administrative rubrics. At the conclusion of the chair's three-year term, the dean leads a more comprehensive review of the chair's performance, with input from the department faculty as well as from external constituents. The data are used in the dean's decision on whether to offer the chair another term. In Spring 2023, the faculty survey returned highly positive feedback, and the college dean evaluated the chair's performance positively as well. The provost renewed the chair's appointment for a second three-year term. The decision ushers in a period of stability, as Professor Buck was the department's third chair in the review period.

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

The department chair generally fields student complaints, student grade appeals and academic honesty concerns. Official university policies are outlined on the Dean of Students website, "Grade Appeals Process." Guidelines for concerns or complaints about Academic Honesty are published in the Academic Bulletin and, if necessary, cases are adjudicated at the Office of Student Conduct. Faculty or staff complaints are resolved either under the Grievance Policy in the Faculty Handbook or under the guidelines published in the Grievance Policy for staff members in the Business Policy and Procedures Manual. There have been no student, faculty or staff complaints or grievances during the review period.

SUMMARY:

The Department of Mass Media faculty are highly involved in governance, and the department chair receives high praise – from students, faculty, colleagues and leaders across campus, and media professionals -- for her boundless energy, her leadership style and for keeping faculty, students and staff focused during a period of enrollment and budget challenges.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

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 department of Mass Media offers five sequences, called options (Advertising, Multimedia Journalism, Public Relations, TV/Film and Media Management), each of which require 120 credit hours to graduate, of which 45 credit hours must be in the major. For each required course a minimum grade of C must be attained.

All students in the program must complete eight core courses, for 24 credits:

· MC101 Media and Society
· MC 221 Media Production
· MC 301 Media Research
· MC304 Media Diversity
· MC382 Media History
· MC401 Media Law
· MC-prefix electives
· MC001 Exit Interview

There are then additional courses required for each of the five sequences, which the department refers to as options.

For Advertising, students must earn 21 credits from the following courses:

· MC002 Arrow Lab
· MC211 Advertising and Society
· MC310 Advertising Analysis and Strategy
· MC312 Advertising Creative Concepts
· MC316 Advertising Media
· MC318 Advertising Digital Applications
· MC418 Advertising Campaigns
· MC429 Media Management

 For Multimedia Journalism, students must earn 21 credits from the following courses:

· MC002 Arrow Lab
· MC320 Media News
· MC322 Design for Media
· MC323 Media Audio Production
· MC323 Media Visual Production
· MC331 Strategic Writing
· MC421 Multimedia Storytelling

·   MC429 Media Management

For Public Relations, students must earn 21 credits from the following courses:

·   MC231 Social Media Content Creation & Strategy
·   MC330 PR Principles
·   MC331 Strategic Writing
·   MC333 Strategic Production
    MC334 Public Relations Research
·   MC430 Professional Strategic Communication
·   MC431 Ethical Strategic Communication
·   MC432 Hot Topics in Strategic Communication
·   MC434 PR Case Studies & Campaigns

 For Television & Film, students must earn 21 credits from the following courses:

·   MC351 Basic TV & Film Production
·   MC352 Video Postproduction
·   MC354 Screenwriting
·   MC363 Sports Broadcast Production
·   MC366 Television Directing
·   MC451 Advanced Film Production
·   MC466 Advanced Video Production

For Media Management Online, students must earn 21 credits from the following courses:

- MC002 Arrow Lab
- MC211 Advertising & Society
- MC231 Social Media Content Creation & Strategy
- MC316 Advertising Media
- MC320 Media News
- MC367 Converging Media
- MC373 Media Ethics
- MC429 Media Management

Students in all five options are also required to take MA123 Mathematical Reasoning and Modeling or MA155 Statistical Reasoning.

The university requires 42 hours in general education, which covers Civics, Humanities and Fine Arts, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Oral Communication, Social/Behavioral Sciences, Written Communication and five additional hours from any category. All first-years must take the introductory "First Year Seminar." Two of the Department of Mass Media courses count toward the general education requirements. These are MC101 Media and Society (Social/Behavioral Sciences) and MC253 Film History (Humanities and Fine Arts).

The department requires that all students have a minor field of study, which requires at least 15 credit hours. Of those, at least six must be higher level (300 or above). There are 80 minors from which to choose.

(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.

The curriculum for all Mass Media students is generally well balanced between theory and practice, although across the five options, TV/Film leans more heavily towards practice. Most of the eight core courses are, by design, more conceptual as students are introduced to the fundamentals of the program. The one exception here is MC221 Digital Media Production, which allows students to have an early start to hands-on learning. As students move into their chosen option, the focus shifts to professional skills, although an examination of syllabi shows that theoretical and conceptual material is still very much in evidence. In discussions with students, they were able to articulate the value of the conceptual classes they had taken, and how that learning has benefited them in their experiential learning. They also noted that the faculty "are very good at explaining things in ways we can understand."

It is a department policy that all courses are mapped to the ACEJMC values and competencies. They have integrated these into the 10 Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) that are used to ensure clarity of learning objectives in a consistent and measurable manner. Each course instructor is required to use the PLO Syllabus Language Template to map their course objectives to the PLOs and, thereby, to ACEJMC values and competencies.

(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.

One of the key tenets of the program is to provide experiential learning for students, and this means that all options require students to gain production expertise to make them prepared for and attractive to the professional world after graduation. The department assesses student competence through relevant coursework, student perception of their production skills in the Exit Survey prior to graduation, and professional and alumni evaluations of student portfolios.

In site team visits to classes, it was clear that students were engaged in the material they were being taught. Additionally, in conversations with individuals who hire from the department, they spoke glowingly of how well prepared the students are for the professional world. As one of them noted, "these students are equipped and ready."

Advertising students appreciated the breadth and depth of material covered in their required classes. They understood and appreciated the order in which they go through the curriculum, starting broadly with more theoretical approaches such as MC211 Advertising and Society and MC310 Advertising Analysis and Strategy, then moving through more applied classes on creative strategy, media planning and digital, before the culminating capstone course, MC418 Advertising Campaigns where they work on real client projects. They applauded the advertising-focused faculty for providing both in-class and career guidance and support.

The **Public Relations** option is designed to prepare students for careers in public relations. This option has Certification in Education in Public Relations (CEPR) from the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). Coursework includes the necessary requirements for this certification. During meetings with the site team, Public Relations students uniformly praised the curriculum as well as their instructors.

Like a few of the other options, the required courses in the **Television/Film** option are all skills courses. They reflect the diversity in topics, and in the students' career ambitions, that this option entails. Courses range from Screenwriting and Advanced Film Production to Sports Broadcast Production and

Television Directing. In meetings, TV/Film majors said they appreciated the hands-on practicality of their curriculum and the gateway it provides for extracurricular production work. During a classroom visit, for example, the Advanced Film Production students shared plans for their entries into the Fault Line Film Festival, the university's annual showcase for student filmmaking. Students in the option offered fulsome praise for their instructors, whom they characterized as down-to-earth, accessible and deeply caring.

The **Media Management** option is built from courses in the other four options. It includes the 24 hours of shared theory-based coursework that all mass communication majors complete, and an additional 21 hours of coursework that provide experiential learning opportunities. The experiential courses were developed for students who plan to work with traditional, digital, and social media content.

The **Multimedia Journalism** option is designed to prepare students for journalism careers in a variety of media. The curriculum requires majors to take a mix of course types. The core curriculum contains most of the theoretical and conceptual courses, while the option requires seven courses focusing primarily on skills. These include Media News, Design for Media, Media Audio Production, Media Visual Production, Strategic Writing, Multimedia Storytelling and Media Management. Students are also required to take a non-credit lab with the student newspaper, Arrow. A separate ethics course is not required for Multimedia Journalism students, but the teaching of ethics is embedded throughout the curriculum. At the time of the site visit, the option had only one full-time professor, whose teaching is dynamic and current. Because many of the required courses are also required in other options, other professors and occasional adjuncts also teach Multimedia Journalism students.

The department also offers a Media for Managers Certificate, which ladders into the Media Management degree. The certificate primarily targets early or mid-career professionals who need a quick immersion in understanding how media operate in society, especially in how they can use social media platforms effectively. Both the Media Management option and the Media for Managers certificate programs were approved at the college and university levels in spring 2022 and launched in AY 2023.

Both the Media Management degree and Media for Managers Certificate may be earned either in person or fully online. Students enrolled in the online courses praised the flexibility of online courses. One student said, "The flexibility of having online classes allows me to complete my assignments around my internship … allowing me to get real-world experience while still learning the content through my online classes."

(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 department provides several ways for faculty to remain up to date with and connected to the professions. The relationship with Rust Communications, for example, links company leaders to all faculty who teach courses involving Arrow, the multimedia student offering. Similarly, the partnership with the local CBS affiliate, KFVS12, includes 10 hours of mentoring, although the self-study notes this has been "underutilized."

Faculty are encouraged to maintain membership in their respective professional organizations, such as American Advertising Federation, National Association of Black Journalists, National Press Photographers Association, and Public Relations Society of America. The funding for such memberships was made more restrictive in 2023, requiring approval of both dean and provost, which may deter faculty from maintaining such connections.

Professionals are regularly invited to the classroom, whether as guest speakers or to help evaluate student work in 400-level courses such as portfolio reviews and capstone presentations. These include MC418 Ad Campaigns, MC429 Media Management, MC421 Multimedia Storytelling MC434 Public Relations Campaigns and Case Studies, and MC469 Advanced Video Production.

The department's Professional Advisory Council is also intended to help keep the faculty and curriculum up to date. Unfortunately, this body has not met in person since August 2021, and only during this academic year has the department reached out to solicit new members to join the group. Conversations with several current Council members during a luncheon with the site team suggest this is an eager and very involved group that wants to do whatever it can to support the department.

(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 on online, should not exceed 20-1.

All courses within the review period met the requirement of not exceeding a 20-1 student to faculty ratio. Given the small size of the faculty and the student body, most courses only require one section, but there is a highly collaborative spirit among the faculty teaching the same option, that helps ensure consistency in material and approach when different professors teach the same class.

(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).

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.

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.

While internships are not required for graduation, students are encouraged to undertake them and can select whether they do so for one, two or three credits. At least 60 hours must be completed in a semester for each credit-hour. However, the reality is that few students choose to do an internship for academic credit, preferring either to find an internship independently or work somewhere solely to support their needs. Internship opportunities are generally found by the students themselves, often through the academic advisor or other faculty, as well as by word of mouth and social media channels.

Students who wish to receive credit must submit an Internship/Practicum Application to the department chair. This form includes details of the scope of the program, provided by both student and employer. If there is any need for further clarification, the chair will contact the employer to ensure that the student will receive a professional experience that is related to the major. Near the end of the internship, each student and their internship supervisor complete a Self and Program Evaluation, which is reviewed by the chair, who then must give approval for the credit to be awarded.

While some students did express to the site team that they wished "everyone had an internship" and that it would be required, they also acknowledged that to do so for credit can be challenging, both financially and to juggle with paid employment required to support college expenses. Those who had had an internship acknowledged the benefits, including workplace experience outside of the campus and "a great opportunity to network from the get-go."

However, there are many on-campus opportunities for students to gain professional real-world experience through student-run media (Arrow, SE Creative, the advertising and PR agency) or local media operations (ESPN+, Southeast Missourian). During student meetings with the site team, it was clear that many students get involved with these organizations during their years on campus and find them worthwhile and relevant to their career goals.

SUMMARY:

Despite the small size of the Mass Media program, and an overextended faculty, students receive an effective array of both theoretical and practical experiences in the classroom, on campus, and in the community to set them up well for their professional careers. The faculty, in turn, work hard to ensure the curriculum remains current, relevant, and aligned with ACEJMC values and competencies.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 3: Assessment of Learning Outcomes

The Accrediting Committee and Council seek site-team reports on assessment that are appropriately detailed for a judgment on compliance that is informed, fair and consistent from one team to another.

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 department has a written assessment plan that was updated most recently in 2021. The previous site team noted that the department's plan lacked sophistication for meaningful assessment, and the department has made a concerted effort to address that concern. A faculty member who joined the department in 2018 is the chief architect of the revisions and has developed a multipronged plan that is intended both to assess learning outcomes and to aid the department in monitoring other facets of accreditation. She has also written a 120-page "assessment procedure manual" for the department to ensure that the plan is understood and administered consistently.

The plan also serves as the department's assessment vehicle for the university.

It is posted on the department's website.

(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 department has adopted ACEJMC's 10 competencies as its "program learning outcomes" and clusters them within the council's eight standards. At the same time that it is measuring PLOs, it is evaluating 35 Key Performance Indicators for the university's assessment plan and for its own departmental monitoring.

Appropriately, the standard with the most PLOs is Standard 2, Curriculum. Here, PLOs and KPIs overlap and a mix of direct and indirect measures are used.

The department has grids for each major, detailing where each competency is covered in the curriculum. All syllabi contain a grid of the 10 competencies and identify which are covered in the course and in what way.

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

The department's plan has changed significantly during the past six years but continues to use both direct and indirect measures. The direct measures are a senior assessment and course-embedded assignments. Indirect measures include a senior portfolio review and an exit survey.

Since the last visit, a pre-test was dropped after determining that there were too many non-majors in the course where the test was administered, making meaningful comparison with the post-test difficult. The post-test was recast as the senior assessment, given online as part of a no-credit course required of all

seniors, MC001. Students in this course also complete an online portfolio, which is evaluated by outside professionals, and they complete an exit survey, which measures their perceptions of the program.

The internship evaluation was also dropped as a measure after determining that too few students participated in internships to make the results meaningful.

When the university adopted Canvas as a course learning management system a few years ago, 24 course-embedded assignments were developed to use as direct measures of the 10 competencies.

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

Professionals are involved in the assessment process primarily through evaluation of senior portfolios. The department's assessment coordinator provides evaluators with guidelines and rubrics and analyzes their feedback. Members of the department's Professional Advisory Council also interact with students and faculty in less formal ways to offer insights on student preparation for the workforce. Professors in capstone and other courses often call on professionals, as well, to review coursework.

(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 department reviews assessment data regularly, in department meetings, in the Assessment Committee, in the Curriculum Committee and in departmental retreats. Results are compared to designated thresholds and flagged as "areas of concern," "areas of success" or "areas to watch."

The self-study describes several examples of using assessment data to improve curriculum and instruction. Of particular note is its new Media Management major and certificate, which was approved by the university in 2021. The innovation arose from a number of factors, including results of alumni surveys and input from the department's advisory council.

The department also cites a change in its math requirement as evidence of closing the loop. Faculty had been concerned about students' performance on the PLO linked to numerical skills and determined that a required course from outside the department – Statistical Reasoning – was not accomplishing what it had hoped. The department added a second course that may be used to fulfill this requirement: Mathematical Reasoning and Modeling. It also restyled a required departmental course — Media Analytics — "to address data-based reasoning in a more professional career-oriented way."

According to the self-study, the positive effects of these changes "began to be seen in AY 22-23 in both student performance on course-embedded measurements and student confidence expressed in post-test instruments, which reached their highest level since measurement began in 2012."

Another example was a decision several years ago to add MC221 – Digital Media Production – to the core curriculum. This was in response to feedback in exit surveys indicating widespread student interest in the skills taught in that class, which had previously been required only in the Multimedia Journalism option.

SUMMARY:

The department takes assessment seriously and has revamped its plan since the last site-team visit. Because several of the measurements are relatively new, there have been few opportunities to analyze and respond to the data now being generated. But there is already evidence that the department is finding the data helpful in informing curricular changes.

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 Department of Mass Media has a written diversity plan that was updated May 3, 2023. It is easily found on the university website. This diversity plan includes detailed key performance indicators that are tactical and that provide specific measurements of progress. However, largely in accordance with the university's response to the current political climate in the Missouri legislature, the plan does not state a focus on domestic minority groups, does not specify underrepresented groups, and does not provide a distinct definition of diversity.

The department student diversity for the academic year 2022-2023 is as follows:

Group	Unit's Geographic Service Area Census	% of Total in Institution	% of Total in Unit
White	78.70%	77.55%	78.60%
Black/African American	11.53%	8.15%	12.56%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.44%	0.18%	0.47%
Asian	2.20%	0.85%	1.40%
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	4.65%	3.36%	2.33%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.15%	0.04%	0.47%
Two or more races	2.33%	3.17%	2.33%
Other race		2.07%	0.47%
International students (any race)		4.64%	0.47%
Total	**100.00%**	**100.01%**	**99.10%**

(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.

The department's self-study and conversations with faculty reported that the department provides wide instruction on issues and perspectives related to communication across diverse cultures within the curriculum.

All required core courses have embedded diversity instruction. At least three of seven courses in each of the academic options have units of instruction related to diversity and/or other elements that contribute to cultural competency. Students are encouraged to demonstrate their cultural competency in classrooms and production spaces. For example, in advertising, public relations and TV/Film capstone classes, assignments require students to address diverse and culturally sensitive situations in real time by working with diverse clients such as Robinson Farms NxtGen, an African American-owned family resort, or the PORCH Initiative, a community revitalization organization servicing a largely minority-populated and impoverished area in Cape Girardeau.

Additionally, a core course requirement for all students is Media Diversity (MC304). Per the syllabus and as observed in classrooms, this course examines the roles, impact, and challenges of minorities in mass media content and media professions.

During meetings with the site team, students verbalized the understanding that professional success may hinge on their learning about how to work with diverse teams. As one student noted, "the more educated you are about inequalities, the better you are able to combat inequalities." Another student commented about diversity in front of the camera and learning about the need for diversity behind the camera.

(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.

Beyond incorporating diverse content in coursework, the Department of Mass Media's diversity plan provides three specific Key Performance Indicators for faculty engagement in DEI initiatives. The assessment for AY 2023 compared current activities to the average in previous years and reported the following:

- KPI Measure 4.2.3 - The number of faculty experiences spent participating in diversity training opportunities was 126.32% of the historic average.

- KPI Measure 4.2.4 - The number of scholarly works produced by faculty focusing on diversity and/or global perspectives was 85.71% of the historic average.

- KPI Measure 4.2.5 – The number of professional practice works produced by faculty focusing on diversity and/or global perspectives was 105.88% of the historic average.

Faculty members have enhanced professional development in diversity.

- Dr. Tamara Zellars Buck and Dr. Karie Hollerbach were selected as fellows in the AEJMC Jennifer McGill Institute for Diverse Leadership.

- Dr. Sarah Cavanah and Dr. Tamara Zellars Buck are certified by the Freedom Forum as Workplace Integrity Trainers and have conducted on-campus training for the department's faculty, staff, and students.

- Dr. Pam Parry holds a certificate in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion from Cornell University.

The department intentionally used specific resources to recruit diverse faculty. These included sending job announcement emails to HBCU and HSI programs requesting they share these with recent or

upcoming graduates. Contacts and listservs (to identify candidates from diverse backgrounds) within organizations include the College Media Association Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the Minorities and Communication division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

The chair reported that before budget cuts necessitated a drastic reduction in adjunct instructors in 2022, the department's adjunct instructor corps was about 50% diverse in any given year.

(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 Department of Mass Media engaged in efforts to recruit students reflecting the diversity of the geography served. This included specific outreach into regions that are socially and economically depressed, and regions that may have not been provided sufficient opportunities for scholastic media to develop or thrive. The department chair personally conducts five to eight in-person recruitment visits annually to high schools within and adjacent to the service region that have sizable minority or lower socioeconomic populations. The chairman also travels to cities beyond the service area to recruit students.

The department engages in partnership and programming opportunities with community institutions in order to work with high school students who may be interested in mass media careers and may hail from underrepresented populations within the service region. An example of such partnerships includes three workshops on personal branding and digital production held from 2021 to 2023 in conjunction with Lincoln University, a historically Black university in Missouri that provides youth programming in southeast Missouri.

Two dedicated scholarships for minority students, personal mentorship from faculty, and support secured from the National Association of Black Journalists chapter, help the department's retention of underrepresented groups.

The department and university enrollment have steadily declined during the review cycle, and the enrollment of racial and ethnic minorities has experienced similar declines. Even so, the department has maintained an average minority student enrollment of about 25%, outperforming the university's average of about 20%. The department has not monitored retention of minority students from first enrollment through graduation.

A student exchange program with three universities in Puerto Rico, planned for 2024, will bring LatinX students to the department.

(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.

Accreditation site visit teams will apply this standard in compliance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations, as well as the laws of the countries in which non-U.S. institutions are located.

The Department of Mass Media has an inclusive climate, free of harassment and discrimination. Meetings with the faculty and students affirmed affinities for the department, teaching tools, environments, and personnel.

SUMMARY:

The Department of Mass Media is engaged and immersed in diversity and inclusiveness. Faculty and students reflect the diversity of the region served. Course materials and content address historic and contemporary diversity challenges, leading students to recognize and be sensitive to the value of diversity. The department has a diversity plan that is driven by specific tactics and measured progress. The department chairman is personally committed to fostering diversity and inclusion.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

Academic year: 2022 – 2023 Full-time faculty

Group	Female	% of total faculty	Male	% of total faculty
Black/African-American	2	25%	0	N/A
White	3	37.5%	2	25%
American Indian/Alaskan native	0	N/A	0	N/A
Asian	0	N/A	0	N/A
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	0	N/A	0	N/A
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0	N/A	0	N/A
Two or more races	0	N/A	0	N/A
Other race	0	N/A	0	N/A
International (any race)	1	12.50%	0	N/A

PART II — Standard 5: Faculty

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The department has seven full-time faculty members, including five tenured professors and two non-tenure-track instructors. The department has lost three tenure-track faculty lines and had one other converted to a non-tenure-track position since the last review. The hiring of adjunct instructors has largely been discontinued due to declining enrollment and budget constraints. Five adjunct faculty are teaching in AY 2024, and a search is underway to fill a tenure-track line in Multimedia Journalism.

The faculty is active in matters of shared governance, and preeminent among these responsibilities are curriculum and instruction. The faculty has standing committees on both curriculum and assessment, and the provost's staff regards the department's assessment effort as one of the most comprehensive and active on campus. Because the annual faculty retreat is devoted largely to analysis of assessment results, the faculty weighs proposals to revise the curriculum virtually every year.

Faculty members are given latitude to define their own research or creative agendas, as well as the scope of their service. The annual review of each faculty member's performance is conducted by the chair, in accordance with the university's published expectations for merit in teaching, professional growth and service. The faculty's Tenure and Promotion Committee takes primary responsibility (at the departmental level) for T&P evaluations. Part of the committee's charge is to provide at least two observations per year of classes taught by each probationary faculty member, with at least one observation per year by the department chair. The probationary faculty member is to be evaluated each semester for the first two years and once each year for the rest of the probationary period.

The responsibility for specific teaching assignments rests with the chair, with the advice of the faculty and the approval of the college dean and provost. In addition to teaching and research/creative work, a faculty member is expected to perform committee work, student advising and other work central to the department's mission.

The normal teaching load per semester is the equivalent of 12 credit hours, which in the department amounts to teaching four courses per semester. Faculty who advise student media receive a one-course release each semester, although the faculty adviser of the popular student advertising agency, SE Creative, does not have a course release.

(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 department has an experienced, if small, faculty. Overall, the seven faculty members average 13 years' professional experience and 20 years of college teaching (15 years at this university). They actively participate in professional development opportunities, both internal and external. The university's Center for Teaching and Learning offers a range of training and workshops. Collectively, this faculty participated in 150 such sessions during the study period, on such topics as course management, instructional design, remote teaching and culturally responsive teaching.

The faculty engages with professionals in the classroom, community and in assorted professional development activities. The department has a Professional Advisory Council (PAC) composed of

professionals in each option area. Its members have consistently participated in portfolio reviews, capstone presentations and other department activities.

The department also has public-private partnerships with two professional media organizations. Rust Communications, which operates a regional newspaper headquartered in Cape Girardeau, has interacted with Multimedia Journalism and Advertising faculty (in all courses in which Arrow is embedded for experiential learning) since the partnership was devised in 2011. Rust provides professional mentors who meet regularly with faculty and students to assist with supervision of production. A long-standing agreement also exists with KFVS12, the local CBS affiliate, to provide up to 10 hours of weekly mentoring and other services.

Faculty have access to industry-specific software in an Avid computer lab and through the Adobe Creative Cloud on department-issued MacBook Pros. Training on the hardware and software was provided when the laptops were first purchased, and the Avid lab was outfitted with new computers and software in AY2022. Faculty also regularly have pursued individual professional training to update their professional skills, including drone pilot testing and certification, a faculty fellowship at the National Association of Television Program Executives, participation in the Poynter Institute's Teachapalooza, and a fellowship at the International Radio and Television Society.

In addition, faculty have been active in development opportunities offered through professional associations such as AEJMC's Institute for Diverse Leadership program, National Association of Broadcasters, National Association of Black Journalists, Broadcast Education Association, College Media Association, the Missouri Broadcasters Association and the American Press Institute. The department chair is a board member of the Southeast Missouri Press Association, and the department often offers or attends training workshops during the annual meeting.

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

The department has developed its own documents articulating expectations for promotion and tenure, in alignment with the university's Faculty Handbook. As might be expected in a teaching-intensive institution, the department supports and rewards research/creative activity, but this is not the principal element in an evaluation for tenure and/or promotion. The departmental document "Criteria for Academic Rank" stipulates that a faculty member seeking tenure or promotion is to be evaluated in three areas: teaching effectiveness, professional growth, and service to the university. Research/creative activity constitutes a subset of professional growth. A colleague is rated as outstanding, superior, good or unacceptable in each of these three areas, which are defined in great detail. For tenure and promotion to associate professor, an assistant professor must be a "superior" teacher, "superior" in one other area, and at least "good" in the third area. For promotion to full professor, the colleague must be "outstanding" in one area and at least "superior" in the other two.

The department has an incentive for ongoing professional growth among its full professors: the "post-prof" merit increase. A professor may be awarded a merit raise of $5,000 as often as once every five years. Again, the colleague must submit a portfolio of performance and be rated as outstanding in one area and superior in the other two.

In 2023 the university changed its system for funding faculty travel for research and other professional development. Instead of allocating a set dollar amount annually to each faculty member, the chair considers faculty requests for support case-by-case. For AY 2024 the chair has been allotted $4,000 for department faculty. Priority is given to requests deemed necessary to support the faculty member's progress toward tenure and/or promotion. The faculty approved a policy whereby about half the

department's travel funding is set aside for assistant or associate professors' conference registrations, lodging and travel; about one-fourth for other research-related requests, and about one-fourth for the professional development needs of non-tenure-track instructors.

In addition, the provost's office offers funding for faculty travel, if the department's travel allocation has been depleted, in a competitive application process. Since 2020, Chair Tamara Buck has won three such grants.

Sabbatical leaves at Southeast Missouri are rare. During the review period, no Mass Media faculty applied for a sabbatical.

(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.

Heavy teaching loads notwithstanding, faculty members have produced a substantive quantity of research and creative work during the study period. This seven-member faculty (plus four colleagues who retired or resigned during the study period) received five research grants, authored three scholarly books and one textbook, edited three books, published 24 book chapters, won 40 awards or honors, produced 14 juried creative works including three feature-length screenplays, published eight articles in refereed journals, and wrote eight book reviews. Research topics included diversity in education and in the news industry; gender representations in advertising; the history of advertising, and the portrayal of women in U.S. political history.

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

Colleagues and administrators from elsewhere in the university indicated that the department is highly respected for its leadership in diversity and inclusiveness and assessment of learning outcomes, and for the collaborative nature of its faculty, led by the chair. The dean of the library had special praise for the intellectual vigor of the department's faculty. The faculty also won praise for its contributions to campuswide events dealing with current affairs and observances of diversity-related dates and milestones.

SUMMARY:

Faculty contribute research and creative activity appropriate to the department's mission. Criteria for tenure and promotion are clearly outlined, and they recognize a wide range of professional and scholarly activities.

The department has an experienced faculty, most of whom have both considerable teaching and professional backgrounds. Faculty members have primary responsibility for teaching, research and service. They are involved with media industry groups and participate actively in professional development opportunities, both on and off campus. Faculty members are respected across campus for their university citizenship and commitment to students.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activities	Total from Unit*	Full Professors (8)	Associate Professors (2)	Assistant Professors (2)	Other Faculty** (1)
Awards and Honors	40	36	1		3
Grants Received Internal	3	3			
Grants Received External	2			2	
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co-authored	3	2		1	
Textbooks, Sole- or Co-authored	1	1			
Books Edited	5		5		
Book Chapters	24	20	4		
Monographs					
Articles in Refereed Journals	8			8	
Refereed Conference Papers	2			2	
Invited Academic Papers	1	1			
Encyclopedia Entries	1	1			
Book Reviews	8	6	1	1	
Articles in Non-refereed Publications	2	1		1	
Juried Creative Works	7	6		1	
Non-juried Creative Works	7	7			
Other (Manuscript Review)	17	3		2	12

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.

There are multiple ways that students in the department are kept informed of graduation requirements. From the moment they enter the university as freshmen, students receive an Undergraduate Bulletin which outlines all degree information. The department maintains degree maps for each focus area which are readily available on its website. Students also have access to DegreeWorks, an online platform that both students and their advisers can use to ensure students are meeting graduation needs.

In addition, the department mandates advising (either in-person or via Zoom) for all students each semester to enable them to enroll for the subsequent semester. As students approach graduation, they must submit an application to the registrar's office, which manages a university-wide clearinghouse for graduation.

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

Most advising is conducted by the department faculty, each of whom sees an average of 30 students individually each semester. They must keep records of these meetings, in SupportNet or other documentation platforms. All records of advising meetings are kept in the department office. It is a requirement that all faculty have three office hours per week for academic advising, but they are generally available outside of that, to ensure that students who have extracurricular or employment commitments can still reach them.

Faculty are not assigned students for advising during their first year, but instead receive training from the senior faculty. All faculty work with the professional advisers in the institution to ensure accuracy and consistency in their advising.

Starting in 2021, the department included an advising-specific KPI in its assessment, with two measures. The first keeps track of the proportion of students meeting with their faculty advisors. Since it was introduced, that proportion has been at 95% or higher. The second measure comes from the Senior Exit Survey. When asked (on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) about their satisfaction with advising (*I believe the academic advising I received met my needs*), students have responded very positively, with the overall response at well above a 4. In meetings with students who are double majors outside of mass media, they commented that the advising support they received in this department is consistently stronger.

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

The department's website contains degree maps, which keep students on track with degree requirements. In conversations with students, the primary method for information appears to be regular emails from faculty.

(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.

Despite the small faculty size, Mass Media students have a strong array of extracurricular and other opportunities available to them. The premier organization, Arrow, has existed since 1911 and each year brings home up to 20 awards from college competitions. Now serving as a multi-platform news organization, it enables students to gain experience in everything from print media to digital news and social media channels. Starting in 2011, the university partnered with a local media company, Rust Communications, to co-manage the operation. Rust provides a general manager, technology coordinator, revenue manager and content production adviser, while the department provides a faculty adviser and budget for paid student staff. Arrow also gives students opportunities for professional development through onsite or other training activities and events.

Other opportunities include active chapters of the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) and Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA), each of which bring speakers to campus and/or take students to regional meetings. The students regretted that the local chapter of the American Advertising Federation (AAF) had recently closed. There is sports production experience available through ESPN+, with students creating livestreams of more than 70 sporting events each year. Southeast Missouri State is the single university in the region that does this. Although these productions have moved from the department to Athletics, much of the work is still undertaken by Mass Media students.

For Advertising and PR students, an in-house agency called SE Creative lets students work with actual clients on branding, design, social media management, event promotion, and strategy. A former PR-specific student agency, Riverfront PR, was merged with SE Creative in 2021 to provide students with a more holistic experience.

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

The department has faced considerable, and ongoing hurdles in the areas of retention and graduation rates during this evaluation period. The department's Assessment Committee is carefully monitoring both through various means, including university data from Institutional Research and their own Student Exit Surveys to assess ways to improve. Efforts to do so have included reducing the GPA requirements, adjusting the curriculum, offering a more relevant math requirement, and more focused advising. There has been some noteworthy success in retention of students from freshman to sophomore years, with department rates increasing from around 60% to figures between 70% and 80% in the two most recent years. Some of this success can be attributed to providing students in need with scholarships. During the review period, two new scholarships were added. The retention figures do remain lower than the university overall (Fall 2022: 70.4% for the department compared to 88.9% for the university) but are moving in the right direction.

The story with graduation is not as positive. Both 4-year and 6-year graduation rates are trending upward, but the department's levels are still lower than the university's for both 4-year and 6-year rates. For Fall 2017, the department graduated 36.4% of students in four years, compared to the university's 52.3%. The 6-year rates were 47.7% for the department and 65.9% for the university. Aside from the pandemic impact, there is not a simple explanation for this; the department believes two possible contributing factors are the university's decision to move to a test-optional admissions process and the socioeconomic conditions for students who may have to withdraw prior to graduation and then resume their studies later. In discussions on this matter with students, they noted that several enter the department after starting out in other colleges on campus and then have to take all the requirements for the Mass Media degree, which can delay their graduation.

SUMMARY:

Students in the Department of Mass Media are fully supported in the area of student services. The faculty build relationships with each student they advise, helping them navigate curricular requirements and guiding them to follow their passions through internships, jobs, and extracurricular activities. The department is aware of the challenges of retention and graduation rates, and continues working to break down the barriers that hinder success in these areas.

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 department's budget is established by the university administration with little opportunity for departmental input. The department's annual budget totaled $1.014 million in 2022-23, a 4.5% decline from 2020-21. Three-quarters of the budget goes to full-time faculty compensation. In the past three years, funds for equipment have grown fivefold (from $8,692 to $49,392), in large part because of an infusion from the provost's office. Funds allocated to travel have nearly tripled, from $4,500 to $12,045.

The department receives additional university funding for two significant activities:

- Arrow, the university's student newspaper, and its contractual relationship with Rust Communications, a dedicated home for all student media production. Its annual budget is $90,000, most of which is paid to Rust for printing and to defray the salaries of professional staff.

- TV/Film has a $5,505 annual budget that pays for student labor, operations and support for film festival activities. Another $2,800 is used for equipment, supplies, cable and phone charges, etc.

In addition to its annual budget from the university, the department has more than $400,000 in endowed funds that are maintained by the University Foundation. Allocations from these funds may be used to support scholarships, recruitment, retention and other activities.

The department's various budgets complement its strategic goals in several ways, including giving students access to experiential learning alongside media professionals in traditional, nontraditional and emerging media fields.

(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.

Like many state institutions, Southeast Missouri has, in the words of the self-study, "experienced economic hardship" since its last review because of reduced state funding and enrollment declines. The university's undergraduate enrollment has dropped 23% since the last site visit and the department's enrollment has fallen 31%.

In Fiscal Year 2020, all university divisions had to reduce their budgets by 12.5%, which resulted in the reassignment of the production supervisor for ESPN+ from Mass Media to Athletics.

The department's budget is lean, but the chair believes it is fair in comparison to other university programs and in light of the state's weak overall support for higher education. The dean and provost believe the department's budget is equitable.

The self-study notes that Mass Media faculty shoulder a heavier service burden than faculty in some other departments. Not all faculty who assume media advising roles, for example, are compensated for that work or given course releases.

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

The department's facilities are a strength. Its main facility is the lower floor of the Harold O. Grauel Building, which was built in 1966 and renovated in 2016. The department shares the building with the English Department and Department of Communication Disorders. Most classes are taught in this building and faculty offices are clustered in one suite. The space also has two conference rooms for use by faculty and students. Although the building is cinder block construction and some offices lack windows, the space is tidy and serviceable. In the 2016 renovation, classrooms were updated with new projectors, monitors, and computers and Wifi was bolstered throughout the building. Chairs and desks on wheels allow for flexible classroom configurations.

The department also controls two production facilities: Rose Theater, a 500-seat facility adjacent to Grauel, and the Rust Center for Media, a 13,000-square foot production space a 15-minute walk or short shuttle ride from Grauel. The Rust Center is located at 325 Broadway amid other professional media offices known as Media Row. Rust, which is owned by a private media company, was opened in 2016 in a renovated bank building and provides two floors of inviting contemporary production space, several conference spaces and dedicated audio, photo, podcast and webcast labs. It has proven to be a magnet for students involved in SE-TV, Arrow and SE Creative.

The university's Kent Library supports the department with an ample collection of books and databases to complement student learning and faculty scholarship. Thanks to the Carrie Woodburn Johnson Endowment, the library invites students and faculty to apply for one-time grants to enrich the library collection.

(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

The department became a "MacBook Pro" department in 2016 and gave faculty laptops and Adobe suite licenses to use in their classes. Students were required to have a MacBook Air or Pro for use in their upper level classes, and a loan program was instituted to help those who couldn't afford to purchase one. (In 2022 the program was broadened to allow students to use any compatible laptop.)

The self-study says "there is not enough inventory to provide every student in appropriate courses with multimedia equipment for the entire semester. Students often must work in groups and share equipment." Students who met with the team, however, felt the department's equipment levels were fine and reported no trouble accessing what they need using a simple 24-hour check-out system.

For the TV/Film option, the department provided a 14-page list of equipment, including lights, audio kits, and cameras. Inventory for the other options includes 21 cameras, 19 recording devices, 27 mics, 16 tripods, 18 ring lights and 2 GoPros. The department staff includes a veteran broadcast engineer who tends to equipment and technology needs.

SUMMARY:

Against the backdrop of a tough state economic climate, the department has an adequate operating budget and is able to tap other sources of funds for specific needs and activities. Its facilities, especially the Rust Center for Media, provide students an excellent space for learning and media production.

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.

The Department of Mass Media engages alumni, professionals, and professional associations.

- The department reached out to Mass Media alumni and other media professionals twice (2019 and 2022) with surveys to identify skills students need to succeed as mass media professionals.

- Department alumni and media professionals are used extensively as guest speakers. The department faculty has invited more than 50 speakers to campus throughout the review cycle.

- The department has a Professional Advisory Council (PAC) of media professionals. This PAC works with faculty on curricular review and special projects. For example, they have reviewed student portfolios and student performance in capstone courses.

- Student organizations engage frequently with alumni and professionals. The campus Association of Black Journalists engaged the National Association of Black Journalists Chapter in St. Louis as speakers and with projects. The department's SE Creative and PRSSA have hosted multiple guest speakers annually to share their professional stories and discuss industry-specific careers.

(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.

The Department of Mass Media faculty provide information, education, and instruction on communication practices. In recent years, for example, individual faculty members have:

- Presented a workshop "SEO for Newsrooms" to attendees from professional media outlets throughout the region.

- Served on the editorial board of the oldest peer reviewed journal of mass media history in the United States.

- Chaired the judging committee for a professional film and video competition.

- Presented a session during the annual meeting of the Missouri College Media Association on Best Practices on Photo Storytelling.

- Presented a session during the annual meeting of the Missouri Press Association on how to partner with student internships and alumni employment.

(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.

The department provides numerous community and civic services. Examples of their services are listed below.

- Moderating a panel for the Cape Girardeau NAACP with Cape Girardeau Police Chief Wes Blair to share concerns and propose solutions regarding policing, crime reporting, safety hazards and community involvement specifically related to people of color in the city.

- Providing a guide to the creative development of Southeast Missouri high school students producing poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, and artwork for publication.

- Providing professional consultation services to a nonpartisan voter registration and advocacy group. Assisted in attainment of a $5,000 grant to promote voter education activities.

- Completed critiques for schools competing in a national competition in the yearbook category.

- Hosting two community forums in partnership with the Southeast Missourian newspaper.

(d) The unit supports scholastic journalism.

The Department of Mass Media faculty members are active in outreach activities that support scholastic media. Following are some of their activities:

- The department is a sponsor and is involved in the selection and mentoring of the student editors of "Here," a literary magazine that publishes Southeast Missouri high school students' poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction and artwork.

- The department hosts groups of up to 30 high school students several times each year for tours of the Rust Center for Media and presentations on instruction.

- The department has served as a sponsor of the Gloria Shields National Scholastic Press Association Media Workshop for scholastic press students and advisers.

- Additionally, the department has sponsored the Journalism Education Association and the JEA-NSPA National High School Journalism Convention.

SUMMARY:

The Department of Mass Media provides abundant professional and public service. The small faculty engages the communities in which it serves, their knowledge of applying journalism, film, and related mass media content. Additionally, they find time to provide civic service to communities and to high school students.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

<u>**Strengths**</u>

- Dynamic department head who is admired within the department and across campus
- Dedicated faculty who are committed to student success
- Impressive array of student organizations and experiential opportunities for students
- An innovative partnership with a local publisher, which has made possible attractive production space for student media and organizations
- A thoughtfully revamped assessment plan that is generating meaningful data

<u>**Weaknesses**</u>

- Declining enrollment in some options
- Reduced number of full-time faculty, leading to heavy teaching, advising and service loads
- Low retention and graduation rates

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 on 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 2016-17 site team report noted students had difficulties accessing the classes they needed. The department remedied this by undertaking degree audits each semester to ensure students are on track. The issue of student retention was raised in the prior report. While retention remains a challenge, the department has taken several steps to improve the retention rate, such as lowering the GPA entry requirement, offering another math class, and removing unnecessary prerequisites. As a result, retention rates are trending in a more positive direction. The lack of funds for equipment maintenance and replacement that was noted in the prior report has been creatively addressed by securing a special fund allocation from the provost. Lastly, commentary on a limited assessment plan in the previous report led to a significant overhaul of the assessment process, so that it is now considered an example for others across the university to follow.

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 report was well written and thorough, although the links to additional documents were not fully accessible. Questions by the site team were answered promptly by the chair and other faculty.