

Report of On-Site Evaluation

ACEJMC
Undergraduate program
2019-2020

Name of Institution: **Oklahoma State University**

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: **President Burns Hargis**

Name of Unit: **School of Media and Strategic Communications**

Name and Title of Administrator: **Craig Freeman**

Date of 2019-2020 Accrediting Visit: **November 17-20, 2019**

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

Date of the previous accrediting visit: **January 26-29, 2014**

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: **Re-accreditation**

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: **Re-accreditation**

Recommendation by 2019-2020 Visiting Team: **Re-accreditation**

Prepared and submitted by:

Team Chair

Name and Title: Will Norton, Jr., Professor and Dean

Organization/School: School of Journalism and New Media, University of Mississippi

Signature 

Team

Name and Title: Helen Katz, Senior Vice President, Global Director of Analytics & Insight


Organization/School: Publicis Media

Signature 

Team

Name and Title: Mark Lodato, Associate Dean, Associate General Manager for Innovation and Design

Organization/School: School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Arizona State University

Signature 

Team

Name and Title: Tien-Tsung Lee, Professor

Organization/School: School of Journalism and Mass Communications, University of Kansas

Signature 

PART I: General information

Name of Institution: Oklahoma State University

Name of Unit: School of Media & Strategic Communication

Year of Visit: November 17-20, 2019

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

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

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.

- Private
- Public
- Other (specify)

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

The State board, Oklahoma Regents for Higher Education, grants Oklahoma State University the right to award degrees. Oklahoma State University is also accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

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

- Yes
- No

If yes, give the date of the last accrediting visit: January 26-29, 2014.

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

1948

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

SMSC's Mission and Vision Statement was revised and adopted for implementation during the September 20, 2013 faculty meeting:

Vision

Our vision for the School of Media & Strategic Communications is to be a niche program that offers cutting-edge educational programs and research. To do this, we will focus on a select number of programs and be the best in those. Instead of trying to be everything to everyone, we are focused on being the early adopters in strategic communication, multimedia journalism and sports media in terms of teaching, research and service. This requires us to be fast, flexible and responsive to the ever-changing world of media and strategic communications.

Mission

To accomplish our Vision, we are creating a learning environment for our students and faculty that can be summed up in three words: *Instill, Inspire, Illuminate*.

Instill: We envision a program that instills our students with cutting-edge, forward-thinking, real-world knowledge in our three primary fields of focus: multimedia journalism, strategic communications, sports media, as well as in our graduate programs in news media and strategic communications management. We are making constant curriculum improvement, expanding our international focus, offering more on-line programs, incorporating social justice into all we do, and providing the finest technological capabilities so our students are learning on current platforms. We will be forming new alliances and partnerships with external corporations, as well as with other schools and colleges within the university, such as the Spears School of Business.

Inspire: We want the program to inspire students to succeed by providing the finest professional and academic educational experience possible. Our professors provide a rare combination of both academic and business expertise, and we are striving to be sure we have the right blend of talented faculty in the School. To do this, we plan to continue to recruit and retain the best and brightest faculty in our respective disciplines. We want to provide them with the training, support and mentoring they need to research, publish, teach and stay ahead of our ever-changing field. Faculty members are the heart of our program and we want to be sure that we have teachers who are passionate in the classroom not only for the subjects they are teaching, but for the students they teach.

Illuminate: We want our program to provide an illuminating educational experience for our students, faculty and staff. To do this, we must have the right faculty and the right courses, but we also need something else: the right environment. As the largest school within the College of Arts & Science, we have simply outgrown the Paul Miller Building, both in the number of students and in its limited ability to support today's mass communications technological needs. Our goal is to design and build a building that will provide an illuminating educational experience—one that will help us recruit and retain the best and brightest students, faculty and staff.

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Semesters of 16 weeks

Quarters of weeks

Summer sessions of 4 or 8 weeks

Intersessions of 3 weeks

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

- Bachelor's degree
 Master's degree
 Ph.D. degree

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

Multimedia Journalism (BA/ BS)
 Sports Media (BA/ BS)
 Strategic Communication (BA/ BS)

10. Credit hours required by the university for an undergraduate degree: 120 semester hours.
 (Specify semester-hour or quarter-hour credit.)

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

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

Name of Sequence	Sequence Head
Multimedia Journalism	Dr. Joey Senat
Sports Media	Dr. John McGuire
Strategic Communications	Dr. Lori McKinnon

13. Number of full-time students enrolled in the institution: 25,594

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

Name of Sequence or Specialty	Undergraduate majors
Multimedia Journalism	91
Sports Media	126
Strategic Communication	250
Pre-majors	43
Total	510

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 the preceding term. 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.)

Spring 2019

Course Number	Section	Title	Enrollment
MC 2003	23510	Media Style & Structure	8
MC 2003	23512	Media Style & Structure	20
MC 2003	23516	Media Style & Structure	12

MC 2003	23520	Media Style & Structure	17
MC 2003	28683	Media Style & Structure	20
MC 2023	23525	Electronic Communication	20
MC 2023	29846	Electronic Communication	20
MC 2023	29847	Electronic Communication	20
MC 2023	30481	Electronic Communication	18
MC 2023	30482	Electronic Communication	14
MMJ 3153	22258	Fundamentals of Audio and Video Production	20
MMJ 3153	22259	Fundamentals of Audio and Video Production	20
MMJ 3153	22260	Fundamentals of Audio and Video Production	15
MMJ 3153	22261	Fundamentals of Audio and Video Production	14
MMJ 3263	22262	Multimedia Reporting	20
MMJ 3263	22263	Multimedia Reporting	9
MMJ 3263	28428	Multimedia Reporting	18
MMJ 4313	28025	Public Affairs Reporting	16
MMJ 4553	22267	News Production	8
MMJ 4953	22268	Advanced Production Practices	17
MMJ 4973	22269	Multimedia Journalism Capstone	20
MMJ 4973	22270	Multimedia Journalism Capstone	3
SPM 3813	23511	Sports Reporting Across the Media	18
SPM 4813	23523	Sports Media Production	20
SPM 4853	29845	Advanced Sports Writing	11
SPM 4883	23524	Sports Media Capstone	20
SPM 4883	23526	Sports Media Capstone	20
SC 3353	23195	Persuasive Writing for Strategic Communicators	19
SC 3353	23199	Persuasive Writing for Strategic Communicators	19
SC 3603	30480	Copywriting and Creative Strategy	14
SC 3703	23209	Graphic Design for Strategic Communications	20
SC 3703	23210	Graphic Design for Strategic Communications	20
SC 3703	23211	Graphic Design for Strategic Communications	18
SC 4493	23213	Advanced PR Writing	18

Fall 2019

Course Number	Section	Title	Enrollment
MC 2003	62057	Media Style & Structure	20
MC 2003	62059	Media Style & Structure	18
MC 2003	62062	Media Style & Structure	20
MC 2003	67359	Media Style & Structure	20
MC 2023	70513	Electronic Communication	20
MC 2023	70514	Electronic Communication	20
MC 2023	70515	Electronic Communication	19
MC 2023	70516	Electronic Communication	20
MMJ 3153	62310	Fundamentals of Audio and Video Production	12
MMJ 3153	62311	Fundamentals of Audio and Video Production	14

MMJ 3153	65275	Fundamentals of Audio and Video Production	13
MMJ 3263	62312	Multimedia Reporting	15
MMJ 3263	70816	Multimedia Reporting	17
MMJ 3313	62313	Editing in a Multimedia Environment	14
MMJ 3553	62314	Advanced Reporting	15
MMJ 3553	62315	Advanced Reporting	15
MMJ 3823	70976	Photography I	13
MMJ 3823	70977	Photography I	6
MMJ 3913	62319	Field Production	17
MMJ 3913	62320	Field Production	10
MMJ 3913	70899	Field Production	18
SPM 3813	62590	Sports Reporting Across the Media	19
SPM 3863	62592	Electronic Sports Reporting	14
SPM 3863	62593	Electronic Sports Reporting	20
SPM 4053	62594	Sports Announcing	20
SC 3353	65651	Persuasive Writing for Strategic Communicators	20
SC 3353	71647	Persuasive Writing for Strategic Communicators	11
SC 3603	63154	Copywriting and Creative Strategy	17
SC 3703	63155	Graphic Design for Strategic Communications	18
SC 3703	63159	Graphic Design for Strategic Communications	19
SC 3703	63166	Graphic Design for Strategic Communications	16
SC 4493	63203	Advanced PR Writing	17
SC 4493	63206	Advanced PR Writing	19

16. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2019–2020 academic year: \$1,349,408

Give percentage increase or decrease in three years: 1.41% increase

Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries: \$1,246,436

17. List name and rank of all full-time faculty in the accredited unit in fall 2019. (Full-time faculty refers to those defined as such by the university.) Identify those not teaching because of leaves, sabbaticals, etc.

Faculty Member	Rank	Leave/Sabbatical
Max Andrews	Lecturer	
Clara Bae	Assistant Professor	
Asya Cooley	Assistant Professor	
Skye Cooley	Assistant Professor	
Craig Freeman	Director & Associate Professor	
Shane Graber	Post-Doctoral Fellow	
Jack Hodgson	Associate Professor	
Shane Hoffman	Lecturer	
Jared Johnson	Assistant Professor	
Stan Ketterer	Associate Professor	
Ted Kian	Professor	Sabbatical
Bobbi Kay Lewis	Associate Professor	
John McGuire	Professor	

Lori McKinnon	Associate Professor	
Ray Murray	Associate Professor	
Gina Noble	Associate Professor of Professional Practice	
Joey Senat	Associate Professor	
Danny Shipka	Associate Professor	Leave

18. List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in fall 2019. Also list names of part-time faculty teaching spring 2019. (If your school has its accreditation visit in spring 2020, please provide the spring 2020 adjunct list in the updated information.)

Adjuncts Fall 2019	Adjuncts Spring 2019
Bonnie Cain-Wood	Daniel Crutcher
Daniel Crutcher	Jeremy Davis
Jeremy Davis	Tim Jessell
John Helsley	Nicole Morgan
Dave Hunziker	Juliana Nykolaiszyn
Tim Jessell	Gary Shutt
Kelly Kerr	Bob Tourtellote
Nicole Morgan	Andy Wallace
Juliana Nykolaiszyn	
Gary Shutt	
Andy Wallace	

19. Schools on the semester system:

For each of the last two academic years, please give the number and percentage of graduates who earned 72 or more semester hours outside of journalism and mass communications.

**72 or more semester hours
outside of journalism and mass communications**

Year	Total Graduates	Number in Compliance	Percent
2018-2019 academic year	<u> 156 </u>	<u> 156 </u>	<u> 100% </u>
2017-2018 academic year	<u> 169 </u>	<u> 169 </u>	<u> 100% </u>

PART II — Standard 1: Mission, Governance and Administration

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

a). The unit has a written mission statement and a written strategic or long-range plan that provides vision and direction for its future, identifies needs and resources for its mission and goals and is supported by university administration outside the unit. The unit annually updates its data on the ACEJMC searchable database website (<https://lookup.acejmc.org>).

The unit has a mission statement and a written strategic plan that provides vision and direction for its future, identifies needs and resources for its mission and goals and is supported by the university administration outside the unit. The unit updates its data on the ACEJMC searchable database.

The Director is responsible for budgeting, oversight of advising, curriculum and instruction, and personnel administration of the school. He also is responsible for the Paul Miller Building, home of the school.

The Associate Director for Undergraduate Studies is responsible for course scheduling and teaching assignments, assessment and assists with curriculum development.

The Coordinator of Graduate Studies oversees admissions and does initial advising of graduate students.

Each undergraduate degree program has a coordinator who reviews course schedules and teaching assignments and provides the Director and Associate Director with feedback on these and other curriculum matters. Program coordinators meet with faculty members at least once a semester to review the curriculum and maintain standards and rigor. These positions, however, do not have any official administrative responsibilities. The Outreach Coordinator supervises High School Journalism Day and the Oklahoma College Media Association.

The school's student advisers report to the Director. One also is responsible for assisting the Associate Director with course scheduling and teaching assignments. The other is responsible for outreach activities and scholarships.

The senior administrative associate, also reports to the Director, as does the in-house engineer.

The O'Colly Media Group merged student multimedia outlets at Oklahoma State into one unit. The Student Media Board governs O'Colly Media Group. The board has 15 members and is accountable to the university President. A faculty instructor oversees the O'Colly Media Group. The Media Group Director reports to the school's Director. *The O'Colly* is the student newspaper, published three times a week and *The O'Colly* is a website. *The Daily O* is a daily cable newscast. Other video content is produced under the banner of *O'Colly Creative*. KXZY is the student internet radio station and *MODMuze* is an on-line fashion and entertainment magazine.

The School created its latest strategic plan in winter 2019. The document updates the strategic plan adopted Aug. 16, 2013.

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

The Oklahoma State University policies and procedures as set out in the OSU Faculty Handbook govern and guide the school in terms of its mission. It describes the faculty, "... as an essential participant in formulating and recommending university policies."

Faculty participation in determining educational policy includes these elements:

- Faculty members are elected to serve on school committees that govern educational policy.
- The Director may request an appropriate committee to routinely review existing policies and develop recommendations.
- The Director may create ad hoc work groups to make proposals on new courses and requirements.
- Faculty members all participate in review of policy, procedures and curriculum at the school's annual faculty retreat.
- A committee chair or members or both may initiate discussion on educational policy items as a routine evaluation or in response to changes in the profession or university that justify a review.
- Faculty members in their individual program sequences have the ability to discuss curriculum and other pertinent academic issues each semester.
- Individual faculty members may request an item be placed on the agenda for a faculty meeting or submit it directly to the chair of the applicable committee.

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

The Director has been focusing on student growth and faculty excellence. He has advocated for rapid expansion in student media, opening opportunities for student involvement, fostering a culture of diversity and earning national recognition for excellence across media platforms. He has attracted, recruited and retained dynamic research professors. He has provided infrastructure for growth in faculty research, resulting in a 30 percent increase in research output. He has led successful efforts to increase external funding for the school, increasing pledged gifts from \$20,000 in the year before his arrival to more than \$3 million last year. He has led efforts to improve the quality of writing across the curriculum, revising intro-level courses to improve writing skills and updating mid-level courses to stress storytelling across platforms.

The staff and faculty widely support the director. Students speak of him enthusiastically. Nonetheless, a few senior faculty members have expressed concerns about his communication style and effectiveness. One person said the "Director does not follow policies" and "procedures are shortened."

At the same time the majority feel that the school is much better under the current administration. One said the Director has gotten people to work harder, and he's there for the students. He's open and accessible, is supportive of both research and creative work and holds people accountable.

However, the director could communicate better, ensuring that the faculty are fully informed. "We're in good shape, but sometimes you lose sight of the big picture." He also should ensure that everyone feels comfortable expressing different opinions with him about course assignments or other management related issues.

A faculty member summarized the opinion of the majority of the faculty: "His enthusiasm hasn't been matched before." This faculty member has been on the faculty through three or four Directors: "Craig has made a big difference in morale, and in energy. There is a new level of student focus. His mantra is 'I'm here to make you better'."

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

Each spring, the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences solicits faculty evaluations of the unit administrator. The Unit administrator is judged in three broad areas: leadership, administration and communication. Before meeting with the Dean, the Director is asked to submit a summary of major accomplishments in the school. The Dean then meets with unit administrators to discuss the faculty's evaluation and provide the administrator with the Dean's evaluation.

The Dean's evaluation of the Director of the School of Media & Strategic Communications in April 2019 was positive. The Director was complimented for his enthusiasm, his efforts in increasing external department financing and the growth in diverse majors (24 percent in 2014 to 33 percent in 2018).

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

Oklahoma State University has a standing university committee in Academic Affairs to resolve grade complaints. If a complaint is presented to the Director, then he or she tries to get the student and faculty member to meet and discuss the issue. At the request of either party, the Director will sit in on this meeting. If the complaint is not resolved, students are referred to Academic Affairs, where they are provided an opportunity to present their side of an issue to a committee composed of faculty and students.

Student complaints regarding school faculty or other school matters are presented to the Director. These discussions are always confidential and the utmost discretion is used to protect the student. The discussions conclude with an agreement between the student and Director.

When complaints concern grades received in classes, students are offered an opportunity to present any evidence that the grade received was unwarranted or unfair. When appropriate, a subsequent discussion is held with the faculty member. If a student is

referred to academic affairs for review through the normal appeals process, the Director does not intervene directly in grading issues unless extraordinary circumstances exist.

The Director directly receives faculty complaints or concerns, ranging from class assignments to compensation and promotions issues. Discussions may involve anything from regularly scheduled meetings to commitments to rescheduling courses. Some of the issues regarding teaching and research workload have been addressed by the adoption of a workload policy. Staff complaints or concerns are handled the same way.

SUMMARY

Despite some criticism, the Director's enthusiasm and forward-thinking has made a significant difference in morale and in energy. There is a new level of student focus. The school's emphasis seems to be on making each person (faculty or student) better.

Compliance

PART II — Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

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

The school reported that 100 percent of the graduates in 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 met the requirements for coursework under the 72-hour rule. The unit also met the liberal arts and sciences general education requirements of the university.

The 72-hour rule is part of the school's degree requirement sheet and has been programmed into the unit's degree auditing software. Should a student take a class in violation of the 72-hour rule, the credit hours are flagged and not counted toward their degree requirements.

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 competencies listed by the Council.

The school has institutionalized the student competencies listed by the Council in the form of the O-State 8, to create awareness of ACEJMC's professional values and competencies among students and faculty. The O-State 8 is posted throughout the building and used as part of the unit's assessment plan. Neither ACEJMC professional values and competencies or the O-State 8 is required in all syllabi.

The school curriculum revolves around three degree programs: Multimedia Journalism (MMJ), Sports Media (SPM) and Strategic Communication (SC). (Multimedia Journalism students can specialize in News or Digital Production, Sports Media students can specialize in Journalism or Digital Production and Strategic Communication students can specialize in Public Relations or Advertising.)

All school students must complete five core courses. Three are theoretical: Media in a Diverse Society, Ethics and Issues in Mass Communication and Mass Communication Law. Two of the courses are skills based: Media Style and Structure, which focuses on introductory writing, and Electronic Communication, which addresses the basics of audio, video and online storytelling.

The school has worked to ensure the Council's student competencies are woven into required courses within each sequence. There is a clear core block of skills taught in the introductory courses for students in each degree program to build upon. Meanwhile, theoretical competencies such as diversity, critical thinking and freedom of expression are touched upon in several required courses before a student graduates. The school

tracks how and which values and competencies are addressed in each required course within a sequence, all leading to a capstone course.

Since the last site team visit, the school has added additional measures to ensure the competencies are assessed. The process is outlined in the updated school Assessment Policy & Plan, first drafted in 2016 and adopted by the faculty in September 2019. This updated plan includes a new pre-assessment curriculum exam given in the entry-level Media Style & Structure course and again during the senior capstone course. The pre-exam and post-exam have the same questions. The measurement is in addition to external portfolio reviews, internship evaluations and other tools.

Students are clearly familiar with the O-State 8, explaining it as a guide of how a journalist is supposed to handle herself or himself, with diversity and ethical behavior serving as cornerstones. They say the concepts are embedded in the culture of the school, and not simply taught in a class or two then forgotten.

Multimedia Journalism:

Following the five core courses listed above, students in the Multimedia Journalism degree program must take an additional five courses covering reporting (two courses), the fundamentals of audio and video production, data journalism and a capstone course. Students must also take an additional six credit hours in either Editing in a Multimedia Environment and Public Affairs Reporting (in the Multimedia News sequence) or Field Production and Advanced Production (in the Digital Production sequence). That leaves nine credit hours available for departmental electives.

Sports Media:

Like the other sequences, Sports Media has a designated five courses that students must take including Sports and the Media, Fundamentals of Audio and Video Production, two reporting courses and Data Journalism. Of the 12 elective credit hours available, six credit hours are required for SPM students: Electronic Sports Reporting and Sports Media Capstone. Sports Digital Production sequence students must also take Field Production and Sports Media Production, while students in the Sports Journalism Sequence can pick two classes (six credits) from a list of six department classes. This leaves six credit hours available for other department electives.

Students in both Multimedia Journalism and Sports Media expressed confidence in and support for faculty, reporting strong, constructive feedback in a culture that promotes opportunity and success. Students say faculty are accessible, and ready to help when it comes to portfolio reviews, connectivity with industry for internships and other opportunities on and off campus. Like faculty, students believe a new building and/or added space would greatly enhance opportunities.

Strategic Communication:

Students in the Strategic Communication sequence follow a strict path to achieve degree requirements. There are eight required courses, ranging from Persuasive Writing and Copywriting to Research Methods and Strategic Communications Management. This leaves less room for electives compared to the other degree programs. Public relations

students will take Advanced Public Relations Writing and Strategic Communication Campaigns to round out their curriculum, while advertising students will take Copywriting and Creative Strategy and Advertising Competitions.

Strategic Communications students were positive about their curriculum experience, but fear that given the size of the program, faculty may be stretched too thin.

c). Instruction, whether on-site or online, is demanding and current, and is responsive to professional expectations of digital, technological and multimedia competencies. Achievements in teaching and learning are recognized and valued.

Since the last site team visit, the school has put tremendous time and resources to ensure that students are receiving demanding and current instruction that aligns with professional expectations. It recognizes that students must be prepared to enter an evolving media landscape, and to do that requires a proactive approach.

Each faculty member is allocated money to travel to professional conferences and workshops. Staff members are also supported in their efforts to stay current. The engineer, for example, takes part in certification courses and attends the annual National Association of Broadcasters convention where he can learn about current trends and technology. Several faculty members also visit the convention while concurrently attending the Broadcast Education Association conference.

The previous site team report noted the necessary effort to upgrade facilities, ideally through construction of a new building. While the building has yet to take root, the school has been proactive in investing money in equipment, technology and training. A technology committee is one of three standing committees within the school and has representation from each of the three, degree programs. The engineer also serves on that committee which meets regularly to address the currency and needs of the program as it relates to technology. Upgrades to the program since the last site team visit include:

- Installation of HD capable technology in the television studio
- Purchase of live video streaming boxes via a college grant
- Purchase of 4K video cameras and DSLR cameras used in all three, degree programs
- Purchase of new portable LED light kits
- Purchase of digital audio recorders and microphones to remain current in audio technology
- Upgrade of computer lab equipment (Two labs in the unit are not supported by the university regarding maintenance and financing.)
- Purchase of equipment to create an eye track lab
- Creation of a focus group room

The school has worked to encourage more student entries in competitions that evaluate work. Some of these competitions use professional judges that provide feedback. Since the last site team visit, the school has restructured some courses to include instruction and assignments to produce student entries in competitions such as the Hearst Journalism Awards Program, resulting in more awards won and recognition for the students and school. Meanwhile, outstanding students are recognized through the school's annual awards banquet and college and university honors.

Since the last accreditation, students have been recognized annually in both state and national competitions. Students in the school are consistently placing in the Hearst Journalism Award writing competition, the Broadcast Education Association Festival of Media Arts news and sports competition, and the Society of Professional Journalists regional and national contests. Students report that faculty are often encouraging participation, and ready and able to help identify opportunities to improve work destined for competitions. The school also covers the cost of entry, reducing the barriers to entry.

A culture of aligning both faculty and students in the creation of new knowledge is emerging, by offering student researchers to work closely with some faculty members on grants to study areas such as social media. Students praised faculty for their professional experience and dedication to student success. “Everything I’ve done is valuable. I don’t feel like I’ve ever wasted my time here,” one student said.

Multimedia Journalism

Students in the Multimedia Journalism degree program report good connectivity with area employers, and faculty are proactive about sharing internship and job opportunities. The head of the Oklahoma Broadcasters Association says Oklahoma universities have worked hard to stem a “brain drain” over the years, and more homegrown talent is staying in the state. The head of media relations at the university reports that the school’s students are talented and professional, and bring current skill sets to internship and job opportunities, and sentiment that was echoed by other unit leaders at the university who interact with the department.

Sports Media

The hands-on approach to the school is probably best exemplified by the Sports Media degree program, which produces live sports events from the university (among other endeavors). Students are proud of the program and have confidence in the skills they are learning. During the previous accreditation visit, faculty expressed concern that rapid growth in the Sports Media program was outstripping resources. Since that time, enrollment in the major has decreased by 18 percent; meanwhile equipment acquisition has been robust.

Strategic Communication

The Strategic Communication major is the largest in the school, at 250. However, this is down 27 percent since the last accreditation visit. But in that time students in the school have two new resources to aid in their understanding of advertising and public relations: A focus group room and an eye-tracking lab.

Faculty within each degree program report strong efforts to collaborate and ensure their respective areas remain current in a rapidly evolving media landscape.

d). Student-faculty classroom ratios facilitate effective teaching and learning in all courses; the

ratio in skills and laboratory sections, whether on-site or online, should not exceed 20-1. (Campaigns classes are exempt from the 20-1 ratio.)

Enrollment in skills and laboratory courses for Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 was capped at 20.

e). The unit advocates and encourages opportunities for internship and other professional experiences outside the classroom and supervises and evaluates them when it awards academic credit.

Internships are not required but are highly encouraged in the school's degree programs. Students are responsible for finding and securing internships, but faculty and staff help guide and facilitate the process. Academic advisers, faculty members, faculty internship advisers and the school's director all counsel students about internships. The school maintains a closed Facebook group which shares open internships and jobs.

Supervision of for-credit internships are shared by the faculty internship supervisor and a company internship supervisor. Once the student secures an internship offer, the faculty internship supervisor approves or denies the internship for credit-based criteria and internship responsibilities. Requirements include professional experience for the student, a company supervisor with a college degree and at least five years of work experience in a similar field, and regular feedback. Faculty internship advisers are responsible for reading, filing and responding weekly email reports.

Students participating in for-credit internships must provide weekly reports via email to his or her faculty internship adviser throughout the course of the experience. These reports must include hours worked, tasks assigned and a description of interaction with the company internship supervisor and/or other employees. At the end of the internship the student must submit a final paper summarizing the experience. The student is also required to provide a link to the student's digital portfolio, which must include updated materials from the internship.

Students must complete 60 hours of approved internship work for one hour of credit, 120 hours for two hours of credit and 180 hours of approved internship credit for three hours of credit. The internship professor determines the final grade. Company internship supervisors are asked to rate the intern's ability for seven of the ACEJMC core value competencies. The School of Media & Strategic Communications uses the evaluation to improve its program to better facilitate these outcomes. Students may take up to six hours of credit for an internship.

Since the last accreditation, students in the school have interned at more than 150 organizations from Washington, D.C., to Los Angeles.

Multimedia Journalism

Students in the Multimedia Journalism program often find internship opportunities in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, each about one hour away from campus. Internship employers include the *Oklahoman* newspaper, the *Tulsa World*, and television stations including

KOCO and KTUL. Students have also interned with the university's media relations, where the director reports they are accomplished and professional.

Sports Media

Students in the Sports Media degree program are a mainstay at Oklahoma State University athletics, which is a popular home for interns. There, students can work on game productions as well as other styles of content creation. Students have also found internship opportunities with the Oklahoma City Thunder professional basketball team, and media outlets in Stillwater, Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

Strategic Communication

Strategic Communication students also report substantial internship opportunities with organizations seeking interns with multimedia competencies and a fresh perspective on reaching audiences and stakeholders. Students did express concern at a lack of paid internship opportunities.

SUMMARY

The school curriculum has continued to evolve and remain current, providing students both the skills and theoretical context needed to succeed as communicators in a rapidly changing media landscape. The school has invested heavily in new equipment and resources to ensure students have access to the latest technology, giving students confidence that they can compete in the job market. The curriculum and hands-on experience are valued in the school and professional community, which finds the school's students skilled in the latest technology. Students are proud of their program and are quick to applaud faculty and leadership for their dedication, ability and engagement.

Compliance

PART II — Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

a). The unit has a written diversity plan for achieving an inclusive curriculum, a diverse faculty and student population, and a supportive climate for working and learning and for assessing progress toward achievement of the plan. The diversity plan should focus on domestic minority groups and, where applicable, international groups. The written plan must include the unit's definition of diversity and identify the under-represented groups.

The school adopted a diversity plan in April 2013 that reflects one of the values in the Strategic Plan (approved by faculty in September 2013): “Diversity – We respect others and value diversity of opinion, freedom of expression, and other ethnic and cultural backgrounds.” The diversity plan defines diversity as “an understanding that each individual is unique and the recognition and respect of these individual differences. Diversity can manifest as dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs as well as other ideologies. In addition to these, the school also sees the diversity of professions (i.e., Journalism, Strategic Communications, Broadcasting, etc.) as important to the overall culture of inclusion.”

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

Throughout the curriculum, there is evidence of faculty attention to developing course content related to diversity in both a domestic and international context. For example, a required course that is offered every semester, *MC 1143 Media in Diverse Society*, covers such topics as portrayal of women in advertising, the effects of African American newspapers and magazines on the Civil Rights Movement, and attempts to ban books about gays and lesbians. *MC 2003 Media Style and Structure*, an introductory writing class, covers how to avoid subtle forms of racism and sexism, and how to report disability issues. *SC 4013 Advertising Media and Markets*, a required course in the strategic communication sequence, compares media systems and media strategies in the U.S. and foreign countries.

c). The unit demonstrates effective efforts to recruit women and domestic minority faculty and professional staff and, where feasible, recruits international faculty and professional staff.

In accordance with its diversity plan, the school uses a variety of channels to recruit. It has advertised in general and industry publications, participated in academic and industry conferences, and used personal and professional contacts to generate interest in openings among women and minority candidates.

Advertisements are frequently placed in newsletters of professional organizations and newspapers in metropolitan areas in the state with the hope of attracting applications from women and minorities with academic credentials required for the position. Faculty

members who are also members of these organizations actively recruit at meetings. For each open position, the school tries to identify specific members of minority groups who are qualified and put them on a list for special attention. The faculty or the Director contact, either by mail or phone, these individuals and urges them to submit an application.

The unit has a majority of women staff. Among the faculty, there is one African American male, one Native American female, and one Native American male. They account for 16.7 percent of the 18 full-time faculty. In addition, two former sequence area heads who are still in the Department (there are three areas in the unit) are members of the LGBTQ community. There are seven (38.9 percent) full-time women faculty.

d). The unit demonstrates effective efforts to help recruit and retain a student population reflecting the diversity of the population eligible to enroll in institutions of higher education in the region or population it serves, with special attention to recruiting under-represented groups.

The school has made various efforts to recruit students of diverse backgrounds. For example, through an Oklahoma Collegiate Press Association college program, the High School Journalism Day, faculty members seek out students from diverse backgrounds and encourage them to pursue a mass communications degree from the university. In addition, the unit has reached out to high schools from predominantly minority areas, such as those from Native American Tribes and inner-city schools in Tulsa.

For the last two summers, the school has worked with the *Unidos Se Puede!* program to introduce opportunities in mass communications to the Latino community of Tulsa. The Unidos program brings about 50 middle school students from the city of Tulsa to campus to learn more about higher education. Unit faculty and staff provide workshops during a two-day period to introduce students to video storytelling and production.

In terms of retention, the Media House is an on-campus housing unit designed for freshmen who intend to declare a major in the school. They are paired with more advanced students in the major. This residence hall is home to about 40 students; 25 are freshmen taking two to three courses together during the fall semester. These students also take a class together in the spring and many of the students plan to live on the floor again in the next year. The Media House is home to students from a variety of backgrounds.

e) The unit has a climate that is 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.

An Oklahoma State University policy on gender discrimination/sexual harassment states the university is “committed to providing an environment of study and work free from gender discrimination and sexual harassment as prohibited.” A university grievance procedure document affirms “the accessibility of appropriate grievance procedures for

addressing all complaints regarding gender discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault.”

A university office oversees compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, along with general accommodation for people with disabilities. This office is dedicated to fulfilling university policy and implementing programs to assist students, faculty and staff with disabilities. Faculty and staff may request reasonable accommodation for their supervisor, chair, dean or the Office of Equal Opportunity.

The school takes the responsibility for providing equal access seriously. An associate professor in the strategic communication sequence regularly facilitates information sessions concerning ADA compliance and brings personal expertise to the topic for other classes occasionally. She uses a wheelchair, and advocates for the rights of people with disabilities at the Oklahoma State Capitol and the United States Capitol.

Three faculty members and three staff members became Safe Zone Allies after completing a training course on understanding LGBTQ issues and how to discuss these issues with individuals who needs counseling. They post a sign on their office doors to indicate it is a Safe Zone to discuss LGBTQ issues. A staff member also posts a sign on her office door to state that she is an advocate for equity.

The school appears to have a welcoming atmosphere. In interviews with students, this is clearly evident. Students see a poster titled “The O-State 8” throughout the school, which encourages students to “demonstrate an understanding of the relevance of human diversity in mass communication.” Students participate in professional competitions [e.g., Bateman (PRSSA) and National Student Advertising Competition (NSAC)] that require plans to reflect elements of diversity. They also stated that they have learned about diversity issues in various courses. In addition, students who are members of domestic ethnic minority groups have occupied leadership positions (such as editors of student media organizations).

SUMMARY

The unit’s self-study has addressed all the criteria under this standard. Independent research by the site team has confirmed the content of the self-study. Our only recommendation is that all the syllabi in the appendix to this section of self-study should include relevant evidence. For example, there are multiple sections of *MC 2003 Media Style and Structure*. Only one instructor’s syllabus lists racism and sexism among its weekly topics.

Compliance

Academic year: 2018-19 Full-time faculty

Group	Female	% of total faculty	Male	% of total faculty
Black/African American			1	5%
White	5	25%	11	55%
Native American	1	5%	1	5%
Asian	1	5%		
Hispanic/Latino				
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander				
Two or more races				
Other race				
International (any race)				

Academic year: 2018-19 Part-time/adjunct Faculty

Group	Female	% of total faculty	Male	% of total faculty
Black/African American				
White	3	27%	8	73%
Native American				
Asian				
Hispanic/Latino				
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander				
Two or more races				
Other race				
International (any race)				

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

In terms of hiring, ads are developed that clearly lay out the position for which the Department is hiring. Faculty in each sequence that is hiring provide input into the ad, which must then be approved by the Director. There is a clearly defined process for the hiring process, both in terms of how the interview pool is created, and who is involved at each stage. Those who are invited to campus are encouraged to share their research (where relevant) and/or teach a class. The full faculty vote to determine who receives an offer.

For evaluating faculty performance, the department has a well laid out criteria in the Tenure and Promotion document. All faculty complete an Appraisal and Development form each year prior to their annual review with the Director. The process is clearly laid out and is in line with university procedures. There is also a written workload policy for the school, which was introduced in 2018. Its goal is to find the right balance between administrative oversight and personal autonomy. Faculty are assessed in terms of teaching, research, and service, but the balance between these three areas may be adjusted annually, either at the request of the faculty member or where the Director believes this is in the school's interest. There was some concern expressed by several people that the decisions over course assignments were made without the input of the faculty, and that schedules have sometimes been changed in a way without sufficient communication on the rationale.

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

More than 80 percent of courses were taught by full-time faculty for the last three years (2016-19), going as high as 90.4 percent in 2017-18. During this accreditation period, the faculty have received numerous teaching awards or citations, won grants worth \$35,500 to develop courses, and published papers on teaching. Tenured faculty generally have an annual 2/2 or 3/2 teaching load (fall/spring), equating to 12 or 15 hours, in recognition of the time they are expected to devote to research and service, while clinical faculty and lecturers are spending the vast majority of their time (24 hours annually) in teaching. As a school within a research-intensive university, there are clearly laid out expectations for tenured/tenure-line faculty to conduct research and publish, including a variety of outlets that range from peer-reviewed academic journals to creative works in juried or peer-reviewed competitions. Faculty may request course release time annually to devote to research or creative works. For junior tenure-track faculty, that release time is automatic as they are approaching their tenure application. Three junior faculty members will have course release within the next 12 months. For tenured faculty, it is dependent on their publication record. None of the senior faculty has requested a release. Two faculty members requested, and received, a course release for administrative duties.

The service category is assessed in three ways: Academic-Internal, Academic-Academy,

and Applied-External. The faculty within the school are very actively involved in all three types of service activities, including advising student organizations, serving on committees for academic organizations, and journals, and working with outside organizations for either research or teaching purposes.

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

The faculty are well balanced in terms of their credentials and experience. Nearly three-quarters (73 percent) hold an advanced degree (Masters, J.D., or PhD), while 84 percent of the faculty have 11 or more years of professional experience.

Faculty development opportunities are numerous and range from newly hired training programs to interactions with the industry to ensure faculty remain current with professional needs. The College of Arts & Sciences offers a Dean's Incentive Grant designed to assist in faculty development. In the last four years, three faculty within the school have won this grant. Junior faculty, in particular, feel very well supported. Faculty at all levels are highly engaged with outside organizations, helping them to stay current with their curricula. Students appreciate this, commenting that faculty "have impressive real-world experience."

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

Every course is evaluated through the Student Satisfaction with Instruction (SSI) system that is mandated by the university. The school makes an extra effort to ensure students complete this online survey by providing a hard copy during a class period. All faculty are assessed through this survey, including adjuncts and teaching assistants. Results from the survey are included in the annual performance assessment of each faculty member.

Student input in instructional effectiveness is also collected via a biannual survey of alumni that the university administers.

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

In meeting with colleagues from across the campus and the town of Stillwater, it is clear that the school is well regarded. In particular, the Director has made significant effort to reach out to other departments or organizations. The educational quality is recognized and appreciated; graduates of the school are highly regarded by local employers and non-profits, as well as numerous facilities on campus, including the university's Department of Media Relations and the university Library. As the chair of the Political Science department noted, "They don't just stay in their building. They forge collaboration."

While junior faculty are working outside their department (with Global Studies, for example), the more seasoned faculty seem to focus their external efforts with local

organizations to create campaign or other classroom opportunities.

In addition, several faculty members have received awards for excellence in teaching, or funds to develop new curricular offerings.

SUMMARY

This is an active, engaged, and respected faculty. They are well balanced between professional and academic backgrounds, and are highly committed to teaching, research, and service. There are written policies for evaluation, promotion, and tenure. The university and Stillwater communities both appreciate and respect the work done by the school's faculty.

Compliance

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

According to the university's Faculty Handbook and a university document titled "Policy and Procedures Letter on Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure Process for Ranked Faculty," as well as the school's "Policy on Reappointment, Promotion, Tenure and Cumulative Review," faculty are expected to engage in teaching, service and scholarly activities. The university policy indicates that, and as a land-grant university, Oklahoma State University "places primary emphasis on the discovery, integration, application, dissemination transfer and use of knowledge" and "Faculty are expected to participate continually in a broad range of scholarly activities which contribute to current knowledge in their field of expertise...."

In the school policy document, there is a section titled "Annual Merit Evaluation." However, this section does not specify how rewards are tied to evaluation outcomes. On the other hand, the self-study states that "Research is an important consideration during the annual Assessment and Development process and an important consideration for salary increases." In addition, the school director has received communication from the college about merit raises in the context of scholarship productivity.

The school director indicated his support and rewards for research and creative activities. For instance, each academic year faculty members may receive \$1,000 to conduct research or to present research at conferences. Pre-tenured faculty typically receive a course deduction (to a 2/1 load) during their first and fourth year and summer research grants (equivalent to one month's salary). Tenured faculty, if they maintain a high level of scholarship productivity, would maintain a 2/2 teaching load (instead of 4/4). According to the Director, faculty members have received merit raises.

Interviews with faculty members confirmed that they understand expectations about scholarly activities, and have received support (e.g., purchasing research equipment or computer software) or rewards (e.g., summer research grants or travel funding) for scholarship productivity. However, they generally agreed that the language about expectations (for promotion to associate or full professor) in the documents should be more specific.

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

The university's "Policy and Procedures Letter on Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure Process for Ranked Faculty" and the school's "Policy on Reappointment, Promotion, Tenure and Cumulative Review" both specify research/creative activity criteria for promotion and tenure.

For example, to attain tenure, according to school policy, a faculty member must be evaluated at a level of "excellent" or outstanding" (instead of "good," "minimal" or

“inadequate”) in research or creative endeavors. Considerations include “the quality of journals, indicated by rejection rates and other measures of prestige.” The candidate can “also provide evidence of the quality of articles by citation among other indices of an article’s impact on the field.” By contrast, appointment to assistant professor requires a “good” level of achievement and potential for excellence. Promotion to full professor “is based on attainment of ‘outstanding’ in assigned responsibilities and achievements at such a level as would provide national or international recognition in the discipline.”

Announcements for available positions include expectations for research or creative activities. For instance, a 2013 advertisement for an assistant professor requires candidates to have “an active agenda of scholarly research and publication.” A 2014 job ad for an associate/full professor states that applicants “should have an established research record.”

Interviews with both pre-tenure and tenured faculty members show that they are aware of the expectations for tenure and promotion. However, they indicated that quantifiable expectations are not clearly defined in writing. In the last six years, two associate professors were promoted to full professors, and two assistant professors were promoted to associate professors with tenure, indicating that the unit’s expectations are in alignment with the university’s expectations.

c). Evaluation criteria for promotion, tenure and merit recognition account for and acknowledge activities appropriate to faculty members’ professional as well as scholarly specializations.

The university’s and school’s tenure/promotion/evaluation policies recognize both traditional research and creative or professional activities. For example, the school policy states that “Quality work, in either academic publishing or through any given creative endeavor, must be recognized as such in some formal way by one’s peers if it is to have a chance at exerting influence in one’s discipline.” It also specifies that “tenured faculty shall be willing to evaluate any reasonable example of scholarship or creative activity that addresses an interesting or important issue, area or process in mass communication.”

Examples of acceptable scholarship, according to the school’s policy, include magazine articles, academic journal articles, multimedia works, online works, photographic works and exhibitions, radio/TV programs written or produced, trade publications, conference or meeting proceedings, final reports from grant activities, articles in law journals or law reviews, books, and book chapters.

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.

Full-time faculty in this unit present and publish research in various areas of journalism and mass communication, including sports media, public diplomacy, advertising and public relations education, homophobia in sports, religion, political knowledge, and social media use. Research and/or creative activities are required for tenure and

promotion. There are other incentives, including travel funds to attend conferences, and summer research grants.

According to the data reported by the unit, as reflected in faculty vitae, in the six years prior to the site-team visit, faculty members produced eight scholarly books, one edited book, 24 book chapters, 65 refereed journal articles, 119 refereed conference papers, two encyclopedia entries, seven invited academic papers, 16 articles in non-referred publications and two non-juried creative works. The faculty also received seven internal grants and seven external grants.

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

Interviews with the faculty confirm that the school provides a positive environment for research and creative activities. Several faculty members are the leaders in their specialties (e.g., editing an AEJMC journal, organizing panels at AEJMC conferences on specific topics).

Faculty members collaborate on research projects with their colleagues inside and outside the unit. In addition, senior faculty informally mentor junior faculty on research, teaching and service. In addition, a review of faculty vitae shows that this faculty has co-authored a significant number of publications and conference papers. Interviews with faculty members and staff confirmed that the majority felt comfortable to express different points of view.

SUMMARY

Considering the mission of the university and school, the site-team considers the types and level of scholarly productivity of the full-time faculty appropriate.

Compliance

Scholarship: Research, Creative and Professional Activities	Total from Unit	Individuals				Totals (20)
		Full Professors (3)	Associate Professors (8)	Assistant Professors (7)	Other Faculty (2)	
Awards and Honors	27	8	18	5		31
Grants Received Internal	7	1	2	4		7
Grants Received External	7	3	1	5		9
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co-authored	8	5	3			8
Books Edited	1		1			1
Book Chapters	24	22	5	1		28
Monographs						
Articles in Refereed Journals	65	50	23	14	5	92
Refereed Conference Papers	119	96	40	12	6	154
Invited Academic Papers	7	1	6			7
Encyclopedia Entries	2			1		1
Reviews			11			
Articles in Nonrefereed Publications	16		6		12	18
Juried Creative Works						
Nonjuried Creative Works	2		1	1		2
Military Publications	3			3		3
Scholarly Presentations to Military	4			4		4

PART II — Standard 6: Student Services

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

a). Faculty and/or professional advising staff ensure that students are aware of unit and institutional requirements for graduation and receive career and academic advising.

Since the last accreditation, the school has increased the minimum GPA for admittance of pre-majors from 2.5 to 2.75. Students are typically admitted after 24 credits and completing a Language Proficiency Examination with a score of 75 percent or better. Both are required to enroll in upper-level courses. Once admitted to the school, students must maintain a 2.0 GPA.

Advising is mandatory at the university. As freshmen, students meet with either a school or freshman CAS adviser. Once students have declared their major as MMJ, SPM or SC, they are assigned to work with one of the two professional school advisers until graduation. Students must meet with their adviser at least once each semester, updating the degree worksheet and “Trial Study” document, which is considered a “contract” at the university.

Each degree program also has an assigned faculty adviser, who provides internship advice and supervision, and career counseling. Advisers by appointment for enrollment, and also offer walk-in opportunities each week. The first week of each fall and spring semester is reserved for walk-ins only. With about 200 students per adviser, ratios are manageable.

Students are effusive in their praise of the advising team. “Ever since I came here, she’s been nothing but helpful; she’s also helped me save money,” said one. “She applied for a scholarship on my behalf that allowed me to stay in school,” said another. One student who had switched majors a couple times reported “she is the best and most accessible adviser I’ve ever had.” Students say the university’s “Finish in 4” program is helpful, ensuring an on-time graduation beginning with freshman year.

b). Faculty are available and accessible to students.

All faculty are required to hold office hours, which are posted outside of office doors and in most syllabi. Faculty are also in contact with students as advisers to student groups, and students report faculty respond to email and often phone or text inquiries in a timely manner. “They really care,” said one student. Another noted, “you can even go in without office hours.”

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

The advising staff sends emails to students to keep them up to date on academic opportunities and requirements. Staff reports actually reducing the number of emails, to make those that are sent more effective. This decision followed feedback from students who stated that there were too many communications (via email) from the university. Students also receive information via Facebook, Twitter, print materials, posters and the

school website. Students feel very connected to staff and faculty, reassured they will be told of opportunities both on and off campus via various channels. Even the director is noted as being “so involved and energetic.” One student said “he’s why we came here.”

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

The school is home to several clubs and organizations that are relevant to the curriculum and develop students’ professional and intellectual abilities and interests. These include:

- Association for Women in Communications
- Ad Club
- Association for Women in Sports Media
- National Association of Black Journalists
- National Broadcast Society
- National Student Advertising Competition
- Pioneer Media
- Public Relations Student Society of America
- Society of Professional Journalists
- School Ambassadors
- Sports Media Club

School clubs and organizations win awards at the college and national levels. The university’s Association for Women in Sports Media earned national chapter of the year honors in 2013 and 2017.

Student media is also robust, coordinated under the umbrella of the O’Colly Media Group (OMG), which includes:

- The O’Colly campus newspaper (published Monday/Wednesday/Friday and online)
- KXZY online radio
- The Daily O daily newscast
- O’Colly Creative Studio production agency
- Mod Muse quarterly fashion magazine (in collaboration with the College of Human Sciences Department of Design)

e). The accredited unit must gather, maintain and analyze enrollment, retention, graduation rates and other aggregate information for improving student services and reducing barriers to student success. The unit annually publishes retention and graduation information on its website.

Data compiled by the school indicates fluctuation in enrollment, retention and graduation rates. Department enrollment has decreased 26 percent since the last accreditation, explained in part because of a requested increase in the entrance GPA requirement from 2.5 to 2.75. Under the reporting structure of the university, retention has improved, with the unit leading the way within the college.

However, it should be noted the reporting structure is atypical, calculating retention on a year-by-year basis. For example, junior year retention is based upon the number of

students entering the class at the start of that academic year, rather than as freshmen. The site team has requested retention data to reflect retention beginning in the sophomore year (the beginning of the program) through senior year, using only one baseline.

SUMMARY

Students and faculty are highly complementary of advising and student services at the school. The group is performing well, optimizing the educational experience and opportunities for students, who express true gratitude for the effort.

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 annual budget appears at first glance to have seen a healthy increase in the last three years (+14.3 percent from 2016-17 to 2018-19), but when the self-study year is compared to the last year of the last accreditation report, it shows an annual budget that is basically flat (+1 percent versus 2013-14). The budget process remains robust, but barely changed in the last six years.

There is a detailed budget for the School of Media & Strategic Communications maintained by the Director, which rolls up into the College of Arts & Sciences. Faculty are given opportunities to provide feedback during the annual faculty retreat, as well as on an ad hoc basis, as needed throughout the year. The management of the budget, including grant applications or additional funding requests, are fully aligned with the strategic plan that was set forth in 2013, to instill, inspire, and illuminate, even though the school has not been able to accomplish all the goals set forth in that plan. That is, in part, due to the same constraints as noted in the last site visit. The school maintenance budget remains fixed at \$30,000, while the school outreach budget continues to be dependent on faculty overload teaching. The school has taken full advantage of three separate technology budgets to maintain and upgrade its equipment, but it continues to be a struggle to do so.

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

Six years on from the last accreditation visit, the school seems to be facing similar resource issues as noted previously. That is, its lack of research grant funds puts it at a disadvantage within the college, while it does not feel that it receives sufficient credit for the student credit hours it is responsible for. It continues to see a need for additional faculty lines, with the comparison to other departments in the college showing a continued disparity in faculty size relative to students enrolled. It has the third highest number of students per faculty member of any department in the college (24, behind Integrative Biology and Communication Science & Disorders). It also has the second lowest budget per student within the college, second to Communication Science & Disorders).

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

The school recognizes the need to upgrade its facilities and, either move to a brand-new building or move into fully renovated space in an existing one, while making noteworthy improvements during this accreditation period that it could achieve within its budget constraints. This includes a major upgrade to its TV studio, upgrading production equipment to be more in line with professional levels, and converting little-used rooms

into focus group and eye-tracking spaces to enable both students and faculty to expand their consumer research capabilities.

The building in which the school resides is bustling and fully utilized. In addition to classrooms and faculty/staff offices, it houses four computer labs (to which the School has exclusive use), four digital audio-editing workstations, two video-editing suites, the TV studio, student advising center, as well as the independent newsroom, The O'Colly, and campus radio station KOSU. That said, the school continues to look toward getting funds for a new building. As one faculty member noted, it is a "tangible representation to students of the value of their degree." At the same time, faculty are not held back in their teaching or research. One person commented, "it would be wonderful to have a new building but wouldn't change what we do." The Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences did note that the university president is aware of the building situation and considers it "a top priority". He was not able to put a timeline on when changes might occur.

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

During the last six years, the school has received \$272,855 in technology grants that it has used to upgrade equipment for students and faculty to enhance instruction. All of the labs are now equipped with high-end computers and/or editing suites. The TV studio has been significantly improved, including an upgrade to high definition equipment. The creation of the focus group and eye-tracking rooms enhance research capabilities. At the same time, there is a need for more. The TV Studio space is small and cramped, and the equipment used by students is aging faster than it can be replaced.

Despite this, students have access to what they need for their classes and for their extra-curricular needs. They feel that they are "doing what the professionals are doing."

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

The university library is one of the flagship buildings on campus, serving as an academic symbol for the university. It supports students and faculty with all their research and study needs.

SUMMARY

The facilities and resources of the school are adequate, but clearly there is an increasingly urgent need for a significant upgrade, both in terms of equipment that is rapidly aging and the building itself. The school continues to manage its budget, and sources of additional funding, well, and has added exciting new research resources that are beneficial for both students and faculty.

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 is actively engaged with alumni, professionals and professional associations to keep curriculum and teaching, whether on-site or online, current and to promote the exchange of ideas.

The school does an impressive job of bringing professionals to campus, and having its faculty engage with professionals and associations off-campus. In addition to the annual Paul Miller Lecture Series, which brings a nationally renowned journalist to the campus, classroom appearances by people in the professions are regular and varied. That is, the guests on campus are not restricted to one sequence, but cover all of them, providing students with a broad array of career opportunities to consider.

Faculty within the school are actively involved with the professional associations relevant to their respective fields, and many serve in executive positions in those organizations, including Society for Professional Journalists (SPJ), Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA), and American Academy of Advertising (AAA). There are active chapters of numerous student organizations, including National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ), Associated Press Sports Editors, and Ad Club. Students also benefit from alumni and professional input and guidance in the portfolio evaluations for graduating seniors each semester. These are conducted for each of the three tracks in the school.

While the school has enhanced its connections to alumni in recent years, this seems like an area where a more consistent and standardized approach could be established. As noted in the prior site team report, there is still no single dedicated point of contact with alumni, and while those who donate to the school receive personalized birthday, thank you, or holiday cards, and are invited to events on campus or to game day tailgates, this continues to be a somewhat lost opportunity, particularly as it relates to sourcing funds from grateful alumni. The Director works with the university Foundation to meet alumni and solicit donations, but turnover within school and the foundation has impeded some of the efforts to maintain regular alumni events.

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.

School faculty are deeply involved in leading efforts to maintain standards for their professions. This is accomplished through individual faculty members' service on local, regional, and national professional committees, engagement with the media on specific topics, and involvement in educational programs in their individual fields.

c). The unit contributes to the improvement of journalism and mass communication as academic disciplines by supporting the faculty's involvement in academic associations and related activities.

Faculty are active participants in numerous academic organizations and, again, often in leadership positions. The SMSC Research Symposium is a monthly event on the Stillwater campus that provides both students and faculty with the opportunity to share their completed or ongoing research with a broader audience and solicit feedback. The event is scheduled on Fridays to provide greater opportunity for people to come and is generally well attended.

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

In addition to the Research Symposium and Paul Miller Lecture Series, faculty are individually and collectively committed to civic engagement, both on campus and in the Oklahoma community, in a wide range of organizations, from the Stillwater Economic Development Authority to FOI Oklahoma, to Tulsa Ballet. Students are actively engaged with the community both in and out of class. They work on campaigns for numerous non-profit and civic organizations, and the O'Colly Media Group, which houses all student media activities, undertakes many features (print, audio, TV) about what is going on in the community. The Creative Studio is one more example of civic engagement, where students provide digital marketing and promotion services to units on campus, as well as to nonprofit community organizations, such as City Lights Foundation in Tulsa which feeds the homeless community, and the Right Path Academy, an equine therapy group that helps disabled children and veterans.

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

The longstanding and renowned High School Journalism Day has been a beacon of the school's annual calendar for many years. This outreach program is specifically designed to encourage and educate the high school community on best practices in quality journalism. Attendance has been healthy, with an average of 150 students coming to campus annually during the last five years. The event includes prominent speakers from news outlets across the state, focusing on key topics such as First Amendment rights and photojournalism. The Sports Media camp, held annually each summer, was the first of its kind in the country to introduce high school students to the idea of studying this in college. It continues to be extremely successful, bringing up to 24 students to campus and exposing them to scholastic journalism within the field of sports journalism.

In addition, the school continues to support and promote the Oklahoma Collegiate Media Association annual conference on the campus. This prestigious event attracts students and faculty from across the state, providing opportunities to hear invited speakers, as well as to participate in competitions that cover writing, photography, and yearbooks, among others.

Last but not least, the semester-end portfolio reviews provide a valuable way for students to gain input and advice from professionals who are working at major journalism, sports media, and strategic communication companies across the country, close to the time when they will be seeking employment.

SUMMARY

The School of Media & Strategic Communications is a very strong partner when it comes to professional and public service. Students and faculty are both highly involved in such activities, helping students gain valuable experience and helping faculty stay current in their areas of interest. Alumni outreach has improved but could be expanded even more. However, the breadth of student clubs, academic organizations, and local organizations are testament to the ways that school fulfills both its journalism and civic obligations to the community and the public.

Compliance

PART II — Standard 9: Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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. Please respond to each of these questions in your report on indicators (a), (b) and (c):

a). The unit defines the goals for learning that students must achieve, including the “Professional Values and Competencies” of the Council.

Under the direction of the Associate Director, the professional values and competencies are woven into the fabric of the school curriculum and student experience. The 12 ACEJMC values and competencies are expressed through “The O-State 8,” which are posted prominently displayed throughout the Paul Miller Building:

- Demonstrate an appreciation of the relevant constitutional freedoms, legal issues and ethical principles involved in mass communications.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the relevance of human diversity in mass communications.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and social role of mass communications.
- Demonstrate critical, creative and individual thinking.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the relevant theories and concepts of mass communications.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the methods and techniques of research and information gathering.
- Demonstrate appropriate writing, editing and production techniques in mass communication.
- Demonstrate an understanding of relevant planning and management methods in mass communication.

To ensure that the curriculum is aligned with the O-State 8 and the ACEJMC professional values and competencies, the school uses a matrix detailing which classes address each of the 12 value and competencies in the three-degree programs. A random check of syllabi reveals learning outcomes aligned with the appropriate value and/or competency.

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

To reflect updates in the curriculum and recommendations during the previous site team visit, the school updated its assessment plan first in 2016, and ultimately introduced and adopted by the faculty in September 2019. The plan includes both direct and indirect measures to assess student learning.

Direct Measures include the requirement of students to develop and maintain a digital portfolio, to be updated until graduation. Portfolios are required to have specific and appropriate assignments or projects from classes, internships or other work-related opportunities. Portfolio links are collected during each capstone course and links are

forwarded to the Associate Director/assessment coordinator. 10-15 percent of senior portfolios are randomly selected for external alumni/professional review. The external reviewers complete an assessment of the digital portfolios via online survey.

Since the last site team visit, the school has added an additional direct measurement assessment tool, the pre-and-post curriculum exam. This 50-question exam is given in the introductory Media Style and Structure course, then again in the final capstone course. It includes questions for each of five core courses, including Media Law, Media Ethics and Media in a Diverse Society.

Indirect assessment includes a graduating senior survey, given electronically to all graduating seniors, a Student Survey of Instruction and internship supervisor evaluations.

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

The unit uses all of the above tools to monitor effectiveness in the classroom and look for opportunities to improve. All assessment results go to the school faculty Assessment Committee, composed of program heads. The committee analyzes results and makes writ-ten recommendations to faculty. Each program's faculty then meets to discuss how to im-plement recommendations in the curriculum.

Since the last accreditation, assessments helped identify the need for more emphasis on quality writing and more regular feedback on student portfolios. The school responded by restructuring the introductory writing class and focusing more on AP Style.

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

The unit no longer sends a newsletter or similar communication to alumni on a regular basis. However, faculty describe graduates as loyal and in touch. The university sends out a survey to all alumni every year to cohorts two years and five years back. Survey results are generally positive, with both quantitative and qualitative responses available to the unit.

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

External assessment reviewers are alumni of the school who are working in the field and have excelled. Each electronic survey includes the opportunity for reviewers to add additional comments and recommendations for the program.

SUMMARY

The assessment process has grown to become an accepted part of the culture in the school. Systems are in place to ensure measures are evaluated, and recommendations identified and implemented. Students too are aware of the process and know that the development of their digital portfolios are an important

part of their success, and the school's. The addition of the pre-and-post curriculum exam adds an additional layer of data from which to make future changes.

Compliance

PART III: Summary by site visit team

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

Strengths

- Leadership that has a clear vision of where the school needs to be in order for its students to be prepared for employment in media and communications.
- Enthusiastic students, many of whom exhibit an uncommon work ethic and a seemingly ferocious drive for excellence.
- An established multimedia curriculum that focuses on keeping up with professional and technological change.
- A faculty with years of teaching experience who have embraced the revolutionary changes of media during the last decade and the addition of great new faculty hires.
- Exceptional advisers who are vital in establishing the welcoming, nurturing culture of the school.

Weaknesses

- A building that has had some improvements, but a structure that does not reflect the accomplishments and aspirations of the school.
- Communication between the school's administration and senior faculty and more commitment by a few senior faculty members to the administration of policies established by faculty.
- Absence of a monthly digital newsletter or an annual magazine.

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

N/A

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

Creating consistent connectivity with alumni in order to facilitate stronger relationships-- ultimately fostering increased fundraising and future opportunities for students.

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

The last team reported: A new building may not be possible within six years but concrete progress in university planning and fund raising should be accomplished by the next visit.

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.

Overall, this was a well-written and clearly laid out document. There were a few places where questions were not answered directly or incorrectly copied from internal SMSC documents. Access to the online self-study was easy.