

Report of ACEJMC Evaluation

Undergraduate program
2025-2026

Name of Institution: Ohio University

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: President, Lori Stewart Gonzalez

Name of Unit: E.W. Scripps School of Journalism

Name and Title of Administrator: Dr. Hans Meyer

Date of 2025-2026 Accrediting Visit: October 26-29, 2025

Date of the previous accrediting visit: Nov. 4-7, 2018

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Re-accreditation

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Re-accreditation

Recommendation by 2025-2026 Visiting Team: Re-accreditation

Prepared and submitted by:

Team Chair

Name and Title: Kristin Gilger, Professor Emerita

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

Signature



Team Member

Name and Title: Earnest Perry, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research

Organization/School: Missouri School of Journalism, University of Missouri

Signature

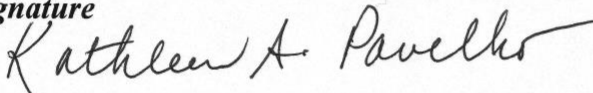


Team Member

Name and Title: Kathleen Pavelko

Organization/School: Consultant to non-profits and CEO Emerita of WITF, Harrisburg, Penn.

Signature



Team Member

Name and Title: Suzanne Horsley, Associate Professor of Advertising and Public Relations

Organization/School: University of Alabama College of Communication and Information Sciences

Signature



PART I: General Information

Name of Institution: Ohio University

Name of Unit: E.W. Scripps School of Journalism

Year of Visit: 2025

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

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

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. It is not necessary to include entire authorizing documents. Public institutions may cite legislative acts; private institutions may cite charters or other authorizing documents.

Ohio University's legal authorization is Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3337 and all subsections of ORC 3337 (<https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/chapter-3337>)

In 1786, Manasseh Cutler and Rufus Putnam helped establish the Ohio Company, whose petition to Congress resulted in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. This ordinance provided for the settlement of the Northwest Territory as well as the establishment of Ohio University, which subsequently was chartered in 1804 as the first institution of higher learning in this new territory. The university is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), formerly the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, to award associate, bachelor, master and doctoral degrees.

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 full accrediting visit: Nov. 4-7, 2018

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

The undergraduate program was first accredited in 1952 and has been accredited fully and continuously since that time.

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

The E.W. Scripps School of Journalism is committed to providing an education that emphasizes professional excellence, critical thinking, and social responsibility.

To maintain and enhance our democratic society and the free exchange of ideas, journalism must be built on the principles of truth, accuracy, and independence. Our faculty search for these principles, our students strive for them, and our alumni live them.

Through a blend of professional education, practical experience, and intellectual exploration, we teach journalism in a way that it can be applied to many professions and to a rewarding life in a multicultural and fast changing world. Whether it's telling a story, building a brand, or engaging in research, we prepare students for their chosen professions now and as those professions change in the future.

— Adopted April 24, 2013

<https://www.ohio.edu/scripps-college/journalism/about/who-we-are>

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Number of weeks in a semester: 15 weeks (14 weeks of classes, 1 week of final exams)

Number of weeks in summer sessions: two at 7 weeks each (includes final exams) -- OR -- one at 14 weeks (includes final exams)

Number of weeks in intersessions: n/a (winter intercession programs are considered extensions of fall semester)

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. *Indicate online degrees.

- Bachelor of Science in Journalism, News & Information track
- Bachelor of Science in Journalism, Strategic Communication track
- Bachelor of Science in Journalism, "Carr Van Anda" program (on campus)
- Bachelor of Science in Journalism, "Carr Van Anda" program (*online)

Note: The "Carr Van Anda" degree traditionally was only an individualized, director-approved curriculum for high-performing students; it now serves as both a traditional "individualized study" program as well as the major for our online-only major.

10. Credit hours required by the university for an undergraduate degree:

120 semester credit hours

11. Give the number of credit hours students may earn for internship experience.

An adviser-approved internship is required for graduation; however, students do not earn academic credit for internships. Exceptions are made if the internship requires students to earn credit (such as internships for many FCC-licensed TV stations/networks), in which cases students are provided 1 credit of independent study after successful completion of the internship. *One credit is the maximum credit hours students can earn for an internship.*

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

The two tracks, News & Information and Strategic Communication, do not have individual coordinators. However, faculty members within each track conferred on a regular basis during the review period under the guidance of Director Eddith Dashiell (through June 2025) and Hans K. Meyer, associate director for undergraduate studies (director since July 2025). That will continue with Dr. Meyer as director and Dr. Elizabeth Hendrickson as associate director for undergraduate studies.

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

Year	Athens	E-Campus	Regional Campuses	Total Enrollment
Fall 2024	22,266	3,734	3,838	29,833
Fall 2025	20,000	6,262	3,658	30,682

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

Name of Sequence or Specialty	Fall 2025 undergraduate majors
News & Information	190
Strategic Communication	134
Carr Van Anda (in-person)	28
Carr Van Anda (online)	9
Total	463

15. Number of students in each section of all skills courses (newswriting, reporting, editing, photography, advertising copy, broadcast news, public relations writing, etc.).

SPRING SEMESTER 2025

Course #	Description	Section	Enrolled
2210	Graphics of Communication	100	19
2311	Multiplatform reporting/writing (lecture)*	100	78
2311	Multiplatform reporting/writing (lab) 101	14	
2311	Multiplatform reporting/writing (lab) 102	17	
2311	Multiplatform reporting/writing (lab) 103	14	
2311	Multiplatform reporting/writing (lab) 104	17	
2311	Multiplatform reporting/writing (lab) 106	16	
3140	Fundamentals of Online Journ.	100	18
3140	Fundamentals of Online Journ.	101	21
3310	Reporting Public Issues	100	14
3330	Editing	100	20

3500	Radio/TV Reporting/Writing	100	19
3630	Reviewing & Criticism	100	14
3700	Advertising and PR Writing	100	20
3700	Advertising and PR Writing	101	7
3750	Advertising Media Planning/Buying	100	18
4410J	Magazine Feature Writing	101	12
4450	Creative Concepts	100	11
4520	Radio and TV Producing	100	7
4650	Opinion Writing	100	17
4790	Data Journalism	100	14
4920	Adv. Multimedia Reporting Practicum	100	6
4921	Adv. Multimedia News Editing Practicum	100	6

Online classes:

<u>Course #</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Enrolled</u>
2311	Multiplatform reporting/writing	1002	19
2311	Multiplatform reporting/writing	1003	19

* JOUR 2311 -- Multiplatform reporting/writing, is taught with a single "all-hands" lecture every Monday and then breakout writing/reporting labs of 20 or fewer students each.

FALL SEMESTER 2025

<u>Course #</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Enrolled</u>
2311	Multiplatform reporting/writing (lecture)	100	59
2311	Multiplatform reporting/writing (lab) 101	13	
2311	Multiplatform reporting/writing (lab) 102	20	
2311	Multiplatform reporting/writing (lab) 103	7	
2311	Multiplatform reporting/writing (lab) 104	19	
3140	Fundamentals of Online Journ.	100	19
3140	Fundamentals of Online Journ.	101	21
3310	Reporting Public Issues	100	18
3330	Editing	100	22
3500	Radio/TV Reporting/Writing	100	20
4150	Environmental and Science Journalism	100	12
4200	Podcasting and Audio Journalism	100	20
4410J	Narrative Journalism	101	18
4530	Strategic Social Media	102	21
4530	Strategic Social Media	100	21
4650	Opinion Writing	100	18
4700	Sports Writing	100	19

Online classes:

<u>Course #</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Enrolled</u>
3700	Advertising and PR Writing	100	11
3700	Advertising and PR Writing	101	11
3750	Advertising Media Planning/Buying	100	20

16. Total expenditures planned by the accredited unit for the 2025–2026 academic year:

The unit expects to spend \$2.4 million for salaries and operating expenses in 2024-2025.

17. List name and rank of all full-time faculty in the accredited unit (Fall 2025).

Aimee Edmondson	Professor; associate dean Scripps College of Communication
Kenneth Collins	Associate professor/ coordinator of electronic media at Ohio University Zanesville
Chuck Borghese	Visiting professor; managing director of NEXT? agency
Bill Clack	Assistant professor of instruction
Janice Collins	Associate professor
Craig Davis	Professor (on sabbatical FA25)
Bernhard Debatin	Professor
Daniel Farkas	Visiting professor
Kelly Ferguson	Associate professor
Elizabeth Hendrickson	Professor; associate director, undergraduate
Parul Jain	Professor
Hans Meyer	Professor, director
Bill Reader	Professor
Jatin Srivastava	Professor; associate director, graduate
Thomas Suddes	Assistant professor of instruction
Benjamin Tetteh	Assistant professor
Mark Turner	Assistant professor
Nerissa Young	Professor of instruction

18. List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in Fall 2025. Also list names of part-time faculty teaching Spring 2025.

Part-time/adjunct faculty, Spring 2025

Terry Smith	former editor, Athens News
Joe Higgins	former editor, Athens Messenger
Chris Stewart	Ohio U. facilities manager, podcast host
Atish Baidya	executive editor, WOUB
Kyle Ranally	sr. director, Strategic Initiations Insights Lead at NBA
Danielle McCarthy	marketing and project manager, Little Birdie Wine Nest
Audrey Mevorah Siegel	director, education and community outreach, Women+Wealth Solutions
Anthony Telloni	global head, content and communications, Wizeline

Part-time/adjunct faculty, Fall 2025

Terry Smith	former editor, Athens News
Chris Stewart	Ohio U. facilities manager, podcast host
Eric Boll	Ph.D. student, Sugarbush environmental reporting fellow
Kyle Ranally	Sr. director, Strategic Initiations Insights Lead at NBA
Danielle McCarthy	marketing and project manager, Little Birdie Wine Nest
Audrey Mevorah Siegel	director, education and community outreach, Women+Wealth Solutions
Anthony Telloni	global head, content and communications, Wizeline
Quang Nguyen	Ph.D. Ohio University (May 2025)
Raja Das	Ph.D. Candidate ABD Ohio University (May 2025)

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

2023-24 academic year: 95

2024-25 academic year: 84

PART II — Standard 1: Mission, Governance and Administration

Background:

The E.W. Scripps School of Journalism is part of Ohio University, a public, R-1 research institution with about 28,000 students. The first public university in Ohio, it is located in the city of Athens at the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains in the southeastern part of the state and serves primarily students from Ohio and four adjoining states.

The School celebrated 100 years of journalism education during the 2023-2024 school year. That year, it also was recognized as a "Historic Site in Journalism" by the Society of Professional Journalists.

The Scripps School is the third largest of five schools within the Scripps College of Communication, each of which specializes in an area of communication (emerging technologies, media arts, visual communication, and communication studies). The School and the College took on the Scripps name in 1982 after a significant donation from the Scripps Foundation.

The School was first accredited in 1952 and last accredited in 2019 after a site team found it compliant on all nine standards. It is currently seeking re-accreditation for its Bachelor of Science in Journalism, which consists of two main tracks: News & Information and Strategic Media. There are 463 majors in the two tracks, with News & Information being the largest. In addition, the School offers the Carr Van Anda program, which serves as both a traditional individualized study program and a new online-only major. A little more than 200 students are pursuing minors in Journalism or Advertising and Public Relations.

The School has undergone dramatic changes over the seven-year review period. Among them: declining student enrollment; budget cuts; loss of faculty lines; elimination of support staff; and the defunding of its master's program. In addition, the University has centralized a number of functions in ways that have made it more difficult for the School to be directly involved in student recruitment, student advising, budgeting, and external communications with alumni, prospective students and the public. At the same time, leadership changes have created an uncertain environment. There have been three University presidents and three provosts since the previous site visit. The School itself has had three directors, the most recent of whom assumed the role this summer.

Among the most significant changes is new legislation outlawing almost all diversity and inclusion efforts at public universities in Ohio. The law, which went into effect in June, requires public institutions to eliminate DEI offices, training programs and scholarships for racial minorities. It also created a post-tenure review system, restricts faculty unions from negotiating on tenure, requires universities to eliminate low-enrollment undergraduate programs, and mandates that students take an American civics course in order to graduate.

The Scripps School, according to the self-study, was at the forefront of arguing against the legislation and the University's decision to acquiesce, and it has re-committed itself to "efforts to create a fair and equitable environment for students, faculty and staff, regardless of background or identity." The legislation, according to the self-study, has "made the faculty want to better define what inclusion meant to us and how important we think it is to our efforts." The School chose to be evaluated under the previous ACEJMC Standard 4 language in order to call attention to its diversity efforts prior to the change in law.

Despite numerous challenges, the School has made progress on a number of fronts over the past seven years. These include launching a student-staffed advertising agency in Athens and the Scripps in D.C. program in Washington, D.C.; creating a video-streaming studio; and developing a new minor in advertising and public relations as well as a certificate in podcasting.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The School's mission statement emphasizes preparing students for media-related professions in a fast-changing media environment. It reads:

The E.W. Scripps School of Journalism is committed to providing an education that emphasizes professional excellence, critical thinking and social responsibility. Through a blend of hands-on education, practical experience and intellectual exploration, we teach journalism in a way that it can be applied to many professions and to a rewarding life in a multicultural and fast-changing world. Whether it's telling a story, building a brand or engaging in research, we prepare students for their chosen professions now and those they end up in down the road — including jobs that may not even yet exist in our ever-changing media landscape.

The School created a new strategic plan in August of this year that sets out ambitious goals for growing enrollment, revamping the curriculum, expanding communication, upgrading technology and facilities, and increasing outreach to students and external constituencies. The plan, developed by faculty over the course of several months, was ratified by the full faculty Oct. 21.

The School's previous strategic plan covered the years 2016 through 2020, which means it operated under an outdated strategic plan for most of this review period. That plan provided a detailed analysis of the challenges facing the School and set out specific goals in some areas.

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

The mission statement is published on the School's home page at www.ohio.edu/scripps-college/journalism. The new strategic plan is posted on an Accreditation page (<https://www.ohio.edu/scripps-college/journalism/about/accreditation>) that also includes ACEJMC learning objectives, the School's assessment plan and performance data.

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

The School's mission statement is clearly reflected in its curriculum and in its instructional approach, both of which emphasize professional preparation through hands-on teaching. Students have ample opportunities to apply what they learn through capstone experiences, student media and internships. Leadership and faculty are committed to providing as much flexibility as possible in the curriculum, reflecting the stated mission to teach journalism in a way that can be applied to many professions. Similarly, the School has responded to changing technologies, reflecting the forward-looking thrust of the mission statement.

According to the self-study, the School was able to achieve a number of its goals set in the 2016 plan. These include revising GE requirements for its students to decrease the number of outside classes Journalism majors must take, enrolling more students in School minors, garnering more national student awards, and committing itself to diversity in all its aspects.

As referenced above, the School has a new strategic plan. Among its goals for the next five years are boosting enrollment by 30%, growing audience engagement on social platforms by 25%, and improving response rates on the freshman/senior survey (a key assessment measure) by 75%. The plan also calls for establishing new industry connections, developing a quarterly newsletter for advisory board members and alumni, and improving communication with students. The plan also sets out curricular goals, including introducing more flexibility in the curriculum, offering students more choices in the courses they take.

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

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

Although the director of the School, Dr. Hans Meyer, has been in place only a few months, he has been with the school for 16 years, five of those as associate director. He is described by colleagues, faculty and alumni as a collegial, transparent, supportive and optimistic leader who is a good listener, who understands the School, and who is doing the best he can in a difficult environment.

Prior to their retirements, two other directors led the School during this review period. Robert Stewart was director from 2010 to 2022, and Eddith Dashiell, the first woman and first person of color to serve as the School's director, served in that role from 2020-2025. Both are widely regarded as effective leaders who were generous in their support of students and faculty.

Faculty who were in place during Stewart's administration specifically noted that he was a driving force in updating the curriculum and improving technology. Faculty also noted Dashiell's deft management of the School during the COVID pandemic and her outspoken advocacy against SB1, the aforementioned law that banned diversity programs on campus. According to the self-study, Dashiell and other members of the School faculty were among the few Ohio University employees who publicly denounced the University's decision to stop offering scholarships for racial minorities and canceling the University's Black Alumni reunion.

The Dean, who has been in place for 15 years and has worked with all three directors, described each as a strong leader with very different skill sets that have served the School well. He sees the current director as an innovator who will help steer the School forward in a fast-changing media environment. The School, he said, is considered the dominant journalism school in the state and "the crown jewel of the University."

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

The information was posted in mid-October, although some fields are left blank.

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

The information was posted in early October 2025: <https://www.ohio.edu/scripps-college/journalism/about/accreditation/public-accountability>. It is found several steps into the website (Journalism/About/Accreditation/Public Accountability) and is searchable.

In summary, the unit has experienced a 27.7% drop in enrollment over the review period, going from 640 students in fall 2018 to 463 in fall 2025. While both tracks were affected, the decline was proportionally steepest in Strategic Media. The unit notes that the pandemic negatively affected enrollment in the early 2000s but numbers have recovered somewhat since. Freshman enrollment for fall 2025 was the highest since 2022. The addition of two minors with a total of 209 students also has helped boost the School's numbers.

The unit reported a first-year retention rate of 94% for students entering in 2023-2024, compared to 84% for the University as a whole. The School's reported retention rates were consistently higher than the University's throughout the review period. Graduation rates also were significantly higher for Journalism majors. The School's four-year graduation rate for the freshman class entering in 2020-2021, for example, was 72% compared to 64% for the University.

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

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

The faculty is deeply involved in the governance of the school and takes a leading role in curriculum development and oversight.

The faculty meets every other week during the semester as well as once each fall for the Bush Seminar, which is focused on strategic planning. Much of the work on behalf of the unit takes place in 10 standing committees that cover all aspects of the School, from curriculum and assessment to technology and student contests. In addition, a number of ad hoc committees have been formed to consider matters related to minors, transfer students, the new online degree program, events and faculty workload.

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

The Ohio University Faculty Handbook describes the process for selecting, appointing and evaluating department and school administrators. Appointments are made by the College dean with the advice and approval of the faculty. The chair of the unit's Promotion and Tenure Committee evaluates the director each spring semester except during the first and last year of service. The chair gathers faculty input

through an online evaluation form, which includes a numerical ranking. That, along with the chair's evaluation, is submitted to the director, all faculty and the College dean.

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

The School follows University procedures for the reporting, investigation and resolution of complaints from faculty, staff and students.

During the review period, two complaints related to the School were filed. Faculty submitted an academic policy grievance related to the assignment of a Journalism faculty member to teach for a different college without approval of the School director. The Provost denied the appeal. The second complaint concerned a School faculty member which was investigated by the University Office of Equity and Civil Rights Compliance. The faculty member was found to be in violation of a policy prohibiting sexual misconduct and was de-tenured and fired, a move supported by a vote of the faculty.

SUMMARY:

The School has been led by three different directors during the review period. The faculty has been largely supportive of all three and has managed the transitions well. The current director has considerable experience in the School and is praised by faculty, administrators, alumni and colleagues in other units as a thoughtful and promising new leader. Faculty are deeply involved in faculty governance and oversight of the curriculum. The School has a mission statement that is supported by faculty and drives decision-making. The unit operated without a current strategic plan for some years, but its new plan, recently approved, sets out clear and ambitious goals. Appropriate policies are in place for selection and evaluation of unit administrators and the resolution of complaints.

Overall evaluation compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

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

Students complete 120 credit hours to graduate. In addition to their major requirements, Journalism students are required to take 42 credits of liberal arts courses that include statistics, economics, English literature, language, African American Studies, and Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies. The remaining credits required for graduation are drawn from a list of “Bricks” courses that cover foundational areas such as humanities, culture, writing and ethics.

All Journalism majors also must complete 15 hours in a second major, minor or certificate program.

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

The School offers four tracks: one in News & Information; one in Strategic Media; and two in the Carr Van Anda program, an individualized, director-approved curriculum for high-performing students that is offered in person and serves as the track for an online major. The latter two tracks are very small, with a total of 37 students combined in fall 2025. The majority of students are in the News & Information track (190 in fall 2025), followed by Strategic Media (134 in fall 2025).

Students in both News & Information and in Strategic Communication complete 42 credits in their respective majors. Carr Van Anda students also complete 42 credits, some of which may be drawn from elsewhere in the College.

Students in all tracks complete the same core curriculum consisting of 18 credits (six courses): Future of Media; Precision Language; Multiplatform Reporting and Writing; Communication Law; Ethics, Mass Media, and Society; and Gender, Race, and Class in Journalism and Media.

After completing the core requirement, students in News & Information complete 12 credits consisting of skills courses. One must be the senior capstone. The others are chosen from a list of options that include Editing, Reporting of Public Issues, Radio & TV Reporting and Fundamentals of Online Journalism. The remaining credits for News & Information students consist of two theory courses (6 credits) and two additional skills courses (6 credits) drawn from a long list of electives. It should be noted that many electives are offered rarely or haven't been offered in years. These include Digital Information, Specialized Business Media, Advanced Editing, and Advanced Magazine Feature Writing.

Strategic Communication majors also complete 12 additional credits after the core. These are prescribed and consist of the following: Introduction to Advertising and Public Relations; Advertising Public Relations Research and Theory; Advertising and Public Relations Writing; and a senior capstone. They

also complete two additional elective skills courses (6 credits) and two additional elective theory courses (6 credits).

In addition to the core courses, students in the Carr Van Anda track complete nine credits that may be drawn, with the permission of the faculty adviser, from four courses other than those offered in the core. They also complete an advanced course (3 credits) taken in lieu of a capstone and 12 additional credits that can be drawn from the Journalism School or the School of Visual Communication. All students also must complete an outside internship, but these are not typically offered for credit.

The School's curriculum emphasizes the teaching of skills, beginning with the 18-credit core, of which 12 credits are skills-based. However, students also take a balance of theory or conceptual courses that align with ACEJMC values and competencies.

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

The unit implemented a number of curricular changes during this review period in an effort to keep the curriculum up to date. These included:

- Adding two courses to its core curriculum – Precision Language and Gender, Race, and Class in Journalism & Media. Both were previously electives. Prior to requiring Precision Language, students had to pass a grammar test to move forward in the program. But faculty felt student writing skills weren't where they needed to be, so they made the course a requirement.
- Completely overhauling General Education requirements for Journalism students. Majors are now required to take fewer GE courses than in the past, although the School still requires more General Education requirements than the University. Notably, the changes include requiring both a Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies and an African American Studies class (previously, students could take either).
- Adding a new certificate in podcasting to the curriculum
- Adding a new minor in Advertising and Public Relations
- Adding a practicum for Strategic Media students that gives them hands-on experience in a new student-staffed media agency.

In terms of technology, the School developed special learning spaces for podcasting and video streaming, often using its own resources to do so. Courses also have been updated to include such topics as AI and other developing technologies. In response to the widespread use of cell phones for shooting photos and video, the School now makes available cell phone kits with stabilizers to students in the Fundamentals of Online Journalism course.

Students interviewed by the site team said they believe the curriculum and faculty have largely kept up with changing technologies, with the exception of artificial intelligence. AI, they said, is discussed in classes, but they are not taught how to use it as a journalistic tool and there are no consistent policies on its use.

Students also said the required Multiplatform Reporting/Writing course is heavily print focused. Students may produce videos or photos for the class, but no such instruction is provided. Students pursuing an interest in broadcast journalism also commented on what they refer to as the School's print focus. While they said they value what they have learned in courses like Editing and Multiplatform

Reporting/Writing, they believe the School could do a better job of teaching the fundamentals of visual, broadcast and audio and offer more broadcast specific courses.

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

The unit provides faculty members with up to \$2,500 annually for travel expenses, which has primarily been used to attend workshops and conferences. However, much of that funding has gone untapped in recent years. The director attributes this to workload issues and a dwindling interest in attending conferences, which is reflected in the scholarship table (see Standard 5). The unit reported far fewer conference presentations and panels, workshops, training and invited lectures in this accreditation cycle than the last one – 14 total compared to 48 (some of the decline is attributable to a decrease in the size of the faculty). To encourage more professional development, the School plans to create a professional development fund of \$3,500 annually per faculty member that individuals can use for a wide range of training options, including virtual training.

However, faculty members remain active in a number of professional organizations and are closely tied to news media and strategic communication practitioners. One faculty member, for example, is an opinion columnist and serves on the editorial board of the Cleveland Plain Dealer. Two others sit on the board of the Athens Independent, a local news startup. One faculty member operates a boutique PR agency, and another does consulting work in strategic communication. The unit is supportive of such activities.

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

The unit conforms to the 20-student limit for skills classes and laboratory sections with a handful of exceptions. Some skills courses are taught with a large lecture once a week, followed by a much smaller writing/reporting lab. However, in spring 2025, the unit reported one skills class, Fundamentals of Online Journalism, over the 20-student limit. In fall 2025, four classes were over the limit – one section of Fundamentals of Online Journalism, one section of Editing, and two sections of Strategic Social Media. (It should be noted that unit listed Strategic Social Media as a skills class in the self-study, but it is not listed as such in the University catalog.)

Faculty members are instructed not to exceed the 20-student limit, but occasionally a faculty member will give a student an override that puts the class out of compliance with the standard.

(f) The unit advocates and encourages opportunities for internship and other professional experiences outside the classroom and supervises and evaluates them when it awards academic credit. Units may award academic credit for internships in fields related to journalism and mass communications, but credit should not exceed six semester credits (or nine quarter hours).

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

Students may take up to nine semester credits (or their equivalent) at professional media outlets owned and operated by the institution where full-time faculty are in charge and where the primary function of the media outlet is to instruct students.

Internships are a high priority for the School, and all students are required to do at least one internship. The School generally does not grant academic credit for internships except in cases where the employer requires it. According to the self-study, this is because the unit does not believe it's fair to ask students to pay for a course when they are not getting reimbursed for their work and when most internships take place off-campus and many take place over the summer. (The unit is considering changing this policy to a 1-credit internship.)

Students are responsible for securing their own internships. Journalism faculty frequently assist students with finding internships, and the Director of Student Development for the College produces a weekly newsletter that includes internship opportunities. Students interviewed said that it can sometimes be a struggle to find internships, but faculty and alumni are helpful, as is the weekly newsletter that is emailed to students.

All internships consist of at least 200 hours, and all internships must be approved by a faculty mentor (not the student's college adviser). Students evaluate their experiences and internship supervisors evaluate student performance. Copies of these documents are sent to the Dean, the student's faculty mentor and the School's assessment committee.

Students intern for a wide range of companies in media, public relations and advertising. These include local and national television stations, digital-only news and entertainment websites, magazines and newspapers. Others intern in corporate communication, nonprofits, political offices and radio. Nearly half the internships are completed at outlets in the state, and nearly a quarter in Washington, D.C. About half take place in person. The remainder are either hybrid or remote. Students who spoke with the site team were enthusiastic about their internship experiences.

The Scripps in D.C. program, a collaboration with the School of Visual Communication, also includes an internship component. Students take four one-week classes, two taught by the School of Journalism and two taught by the School of Visual Communication. They then do a 10-week internship, which has included outlets such as CSPAN; Wildside Media, an entertainment and lifestyle website; various congressional offices; and news organizations such as NPR and CNN.

The School brings in recruiters each year to interview students for internships and jobs. Companies represented include Scripps, NextStar, Gray Media, Sinclair Communications and Spectrum Communications.

Students have many opportunities to gain professional experiences outside of internships. Examples of these are detailed in Standard 8 as examples of community service.

SUMMARY:

Journalism students get a broad liberal arts education that balances skills and theoretical knowledge and reflects ACEJMC values and competencies. Instruction is demanding and, while there is room for improvement, keeps up with industry changes. Courses meet the 20-student enrollment cap with a few exceptions. A robust student internship program has appropriate faculty oversight. Students also gain practical experience in classes and professional programs. The School does an excellent job teaching foundational skills, but students expressed a desire to learn more technical skills (AI, video and photo) early in the curriculum and to have access to more broadcast courses.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 3: Assessment of Learning Outcomes

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The unit has an assessment plan that was last updated in 2023. It describes the goals of the assessment process and the assessment measures in place as well as timelines for data collection and analysis. It also describes the role of the faculty in the assessment process and specifically endorses ACEJMC values and competencies as the foundation for evaluating student learning.

An assessment committee made up of faculty members and chaired by a faculty member is charged with implementing the plan and overseeing the assessment process. The director serves as an ad hoc member. The committee is responsible for developing measurement instruments, collecting data and communicating results to the faculty. Any changes suggested by the committee must be voted on by the full faculty before implementation.

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

[The assessment plan](#) is found on the School's "About" tab under "Accreditation" and is readily accessible.

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

ACEJMC core competencies serve as the foundation of the assessment plan and are used directly in several measures. For example, the unit has employed a syllabus audit (an indirect measure) since 2014-2015 to monitor whether learning outcomes in core syllabi reflect ACEJMC values and competencies. The core competencies and values also are reflected in two direct measures – internship evaluations and the Senior Capstone Project Review – and in one indirect measure – the Alumni Survey.

The unit provided a curriculum matrix tracking required courses to ACEJMC values & competencies, although the matrix did not include the required Strategic Communication capstone and learning outcomes on syllabi did not always match the matrix. In several instances, syllabi from courses with multiple sections did not use the same student learning outcomes, which suggests students may have different learning experiences.

For the Strategic Communication track, terminology and student learning outcomes varied across the required courses. Terms used included strategic communication, public relations, advertising, and integrated marketing communications.

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

The unit's plan outlines three direct measures and five indirect measures. The Direct measures are:

- The Freshman/Senior Survey. This measure is intended to provide longitudinal data on student learning from their freshman to senior year. The survey includes 44 individual items based on ACEJMC values and competencies. It is administered in the fall semester to first-year students and in the spring semester to graduating students. In the past, the measure has suffered from low response rates, particularly amongst seniors. (Only three seniors completed the 2023-2024 survey, so comparison statistics were not run for that year). The unit obtained 63 total responses for the 2024-2025 survey, concluding that seniors performed significantly better than freshmen in all core competencies. The unit is considering ways to improve the response rate by offering incentives or administering the survey in a required senior-level course instead of an elective.
- Internship Evaluations: Supervisors evaluate students on their job performance, work habits, professionalism, knowledge and skills, writing, critical thinking, collecting and evaluating information, respect for differences, and ethics. Students are also asked to evaluate their internship experience. Internship supervisors consistently give students high marks, especially for respect for differences, ethics and work habits. More than 90% of students regularly met employer expectations.

While all students are required to do internships, the measure suffers somewhat from the fact that some students complete their internships early in their academic careers – some as early as freshman year. Additionally, students are evaluated only on one internship, even though many do multiple internships. As a result, it's difficult to establish a consistent connection between student performance and classroom learning.

- The Senior Capstone Project Review. Professionals assess student work in the senior-level News & Information capstone and the senior-level Advertising and Public Relations capstone. In the former, students may produce a print magazine or another faculty-designated project, and for the latter, students produce campaigns for external clients.

Evaluators use a 12-question instrument based on ACEJMC learning outcomes. The evaluators provide both qualitative and quantitative feedback. Eighty students were enrolled in these capstones in the 2024-2025 school year, and 15 capstone projects were assessed. The previous year, 12 out of 93 capstone projects were evaluated. Over the past two years, average quantitative scores were 6.08 and 6.15 on a 7.0 scale. Comments offered both praise and suggestions for improvement, which are shared with instructors.

While the Senior Capstone Project Review is a good measure of student learning, it would be more robust if a greater proportion of projects were evaluated.

The five indirect measures named by the unit are a syllabi audit, an alumni survey, tracking employment of recent graduates, student competitions, and participation in minors and certificates.

- The Syllabi Audit helps ensure that ACEJMC values and competencies are reflected in syllabi, learning outcomes, assignments and readings. Different courses are evaluated each year. The assessment committee collects sample syllabi, conducts the audits, assigns numerical rankings,

offers suggestions on how the course can be improved, and communicates findings to faculty who teach the courses under review.

Most courses evaluated showed a strong alignment with ACEJMC standards, although the reviewers also offered a number of suggestions on how courses could better tie standards to learning objectives and assignments. Instructors also have an opportunity to respond, and some have made changes to their courses as a result.

While this is a productive exercise that helps ensure ACEJMC values & competencies are reflected in course syllabi and improve teaching, the site team does not believe it is a strong measure of student learning.

- Alumni survey. The survey is administered by the University to graduates one year after graduation. In addition to general University questions, individual units may append their own questions. The Journalism School's questions reflect ACEJMC values & competencies.

The University did not provide any data for 2023-2024 or 2024-2025 graduates. The most recent data is for 2022-2023 graduates, but the response rate was so low (14 total responses), that the results have limited value.

- Tracking employment data for graduates. The unit does a good job of collecting employment data for its grads with the help of a part-time administrative assistant. For example, it was able to collect employment data for more than 80% of those awarded degrees in 2024-2025. Of these, more than 80% were working in media, journalism or strategic communication jobs – a strong indication that the program prepares students for their professions.
- Student competitions. A faculty contest committee tracks student awards in regional and national competitions and produces a long list of successes in contests that range from the Hearst Journalism Awards and regional SPJ awards to Press Club of Cleveland and Telly awards.
- Participation in minors and certificates. In 2022, the unit added as an indirect measure student participation in the Journalism and Advertising and the Public Relations minors as well as the podcasting certificate. The reasoning given is that gauging campus-wide enrollment in these programs provides insight on “how non-journalism students perceive the value of the program’s academic offerings.” However, the site team believes that while it’s useful to track program growth, this measure doesn’t fit the criteria for an assessment measure as it doesn’t measure student learning

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

The unit recruits professionals from the field of journalism, advertising and public relations to review student capstone projects. Evaluators have included marketing officers, news editors, copywriters and broadcast professionals, among others. Additionally, professionals supervise student internships and provide evaluations of their interns’ performance.

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

While there are flaws in several of the assessment measures outlined above, by far the biggest problem is the lack of evidence that the School has used assessment data to “close the loop” in any meaningful way. There’s some evidence that the syllabus audit has prompted individual instructors to make minor alterations in their courses, but there’s nothing to indicate the unit has used assessment data to inform program or curricular changes.

The School did make some meaningful curricular changes during the review period, including changing major core requirements, overhauling GE requirements, adding a new minor and a new certificate, and creating a new practicum experience for strategic media students. Many of these changes, if not all, were prompted by feedback from students, alumni and faculty members themselves. For example, the Precision Language course (basically a grammars and fundamentals course) was previously an elective but was made a core requirement based on faculty members’ observations that student writing too often fell below acceptable standards. But the unit was unable to provide any examples showing that it made these changes or acted in other ways based on what it has learned through formal assessment.

SUMMARY:

The unit has a current assessment plan that employs a number of measures that reflect ACEJMC values & competencies and meets baseline criteria for direct and indirect assessment of student learning. However, a number of the measures have flaws that need to be addressed (or the measure dropped altogether) and do not generate sufficient data for valid analysis. Much more important, the unit collects data. but there is little to no evidence that the data is used to guide decision making or curricular changes, something acknowledged by the director and chair of the assessment committee.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: NON-COMPLIANCE

OPTION 1 for schools using the Standard 4 language prior to 2025:

PART II — Standard 4: Diversity and Inclusiveness

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(a) The unit has a written diversity plan that has been implemented and discussed annually, for achieving an inclusive curriculum, a diverse, culturally proficient faculty, staff and student population, and a supportive climate for working and learning and for assessing progress toward achievement of the plan. The diversity plan should focus on domestic minority groups and, where applicable, international groups. The written plan must include the unit's definition of diversity, identify under-represented groups and articulate key performance indicators upon which the unit intends to focus and improve.

The E. W. Scripps School of Journalism's diversity plan has not been updated since it was approved in 2014. As of this site visit, because of University rules, the School is unable to post the plan online. The unit defines inclusion in a way that "ensures that all individuals are treated fairly and with dignity." The plan further emphasizes shared values of professionalism, personal responsibility and excellence and states that it is committed to "empowering all individuals through equal access to opportunities and the promotion of skills, regardless of background or identity."

The School's diversity goals have been integrated into syllabi audits and are a standing item in all faculty committees.

The former director publicly opposed state legislation that eliminated University DEI initiatives. The faculty, working within current restrictions, is firmly committed to continuing its work to foster an inclusive environment as defined in the diversity plan. At the time of the site visit, there was no plan in place to update the diversity plan, but the director now intends to bring it back to the faculty.

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

Per University rules, the unit's diversity plan is not posted on its website.

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

Journalism students are required to take a number of General Education courses that teach cultural competency. They include Religious Studies, a foreign/sign language course, an African American Studies course, and a Women's and Gender studies course. Previously, students chose between the latter two classes, but the curriculum was changed during this review period to require both of Journalism students. Students also may pursue minors and certificates that focus on African American studies and Women, Gender and Sexuality studies.

In addition, the unit added a course, Gender, Race and Class in Journalism and Mass Media, to the core curriculum during this review period.

The School's capstone classes also reflect the importance the unit attaches to understanding and serving diverse populations. For example, students in the News & Information track produce Southeast Ohio Magazine, which forces them to step outside the university bubble to tell a wide range of stories. Strategic communication students in the NEXT?! media agency represent clients that have recently included a medical device manufacturer, a rehabilitation center, and an antenna builder that helps rural residents access news and information from metropolitan areas in Ohio.

Faculty members have conducted workshops and presented papers with an international focus, such as storytelling in Nigeria and teaching techniques in Taiwan, Spain and India.

Both faculty and students said diversity frequently comes up in classes and all viewpoints are respected.

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

Prior to the enactment of Senate Bill 1, the state legislation that bans diversity programs on Ohio campuses, faculty members engaged in DEI trainings related to hiring, curriculum and teaching. When posting a position, the School reached out to groups such as the Association for Women in Communication, the National Association of Black Journalists, the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, and the Indigenous Journalists Association.

The School uses LinkedIn to post positions, and faculty search chairs have made targeted efforts to send postings to applicants of diverse backgrounds. The associate director, who often leads faculty searches, has created a list in LinkedIn of people to contact when opportunities arise. The list includes potential hires from diverse backgrounds.

During this review period, the unit made seven faculty hires: two Black males, three white males, one white female, and one Black female. The resulting racial diversity is very close to what it was in the last site team report. It is now 69% white, compared to 68% white in 2018. The gender makeup of the faculty has shifted, however, becoming proportionally more male. The current faculty is made up of 5 women and 11 men. In 2018, it was 12 women and 13 men.

The School employs a half-dozen or so adjunct instructors each semester. In spring 2025, six of eight adjuncts were men, and in fall 2025, seven of nine were men. A University policy requires adjuncts to reapply for their positions after teaching two consecutive semesters. According to the director, several female adjuncts declined to reapply.

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

The School's student body is proportionately less diverse than the University and the population area. The School reports a student population that is 85% white and 4% Black, with smaller proportions of Latino and Asian students and those of two or more races. That compares to the University, which reports a student population that is 78.8% white and 4.8% Black. The area population is 77% white and 12% Black.

The University does not report retention and graduation ratios based on race, gender or sexual orientation.

Senate Bill 1 prohibits direct recruitment based on race, gender and/or sexual orientation. Previously, the School targeted key areas in Ohio's major cities, along with Baltimore, Maryland, in an effort to reach African American students, in particular, as they are underrepresented in the student body. The unit was successful in recruiting a fall 2025 freshman class that is about 17% larger than the previous year.

The School sponsors a chapter of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, and faculty helped students start a new fashion magazine called VRNT that focuses on people of color and diverse body shapes. The unit has not been able to support a local chapter of NABJ, but there is an active Black Student Communication Caucus, which is open to all students interested in communications and which draws a number of Journalism students.

The School was active in a University-sponsored Black Alumni Reunion event each year, which has been discontinued. The annual E.W. Scripps High School Journalism Workshop held each summer previously recruited Black students and offered them scholarships to attend. That recruitment effort also has been discontinued.

Students of color who spoke with the site team said the School struggles with diversity because of where the University is located and because of state government mandates, but they said they feel well supported in their classes and extracurricular activities and in external and internal experiential opportunities.

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

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

The School adheres to all University policies and procedures related to anti-harassment and anti-discrimination efforts. All faculty complete mandatory training to learn how to identify and report instances of harassment and/or discrimination. During the review period, there was one case of harassment that was formally filed and adjudicated, resulting in the dismissal of an otherwise high-performing full professor. Although the situation was difficult and divisive, it demonstrated how seriously the School takes its duties to maintain a harassment-free environment.

In terms of support for those with disabilities, the School has adopted a "find ways to say 'yes'" approach to accommodating students, faculty, and staff as needed, whether via formal accommodations recommended by the Office of Accessibility Services or informally on a case-by-case basis for students or faculty/staff whose immediate needs cannot wait for OAS review and approval.

The School has consistently worked to ensure that cultural diversity is built into everything it does – from reviewing syllabi for cultural proficiency as part of assessment to curriculum changes and student recruitment. It also is reflected in the selection of speakers and guest presenters for symposia, workshops

and special events; when inviting students to participate in campus- and public-facing School events; and when evaluating faculty in annual performance reviews and promotion/tenure matters.

SUMMARY:

There is no doubt that external pressures have impacted the School's diversity, equity and inclusion efforts. But faculty remain fiercely committed to achieving a fair, equitable and culturally rich environment while adhering to the law. The School's student population still falls well below the diversity of the University and the area population; correcting that will be an even greater challenge moving forward, given current restrictions. The School has maintained the diversity of its faculty despite a number of departures, has made curricular changes that enhance the diversity of students' education, and consistently supports culturally diverse student work and activities.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 5: Faculty

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

Faculty have clear responsibility for development and oversight of the curriculum. While a curriculum committee has been active in researching and recommending curricular changes, the entire faculty is involved in and votes on all curricular decisions.

In 2024-2025, 47 percent of core and required courses are taught by full-time faculty. It was 50 percent and 60 percent, respectively, in the previous two years. This is marked decline from 2018 when 68% of required courses were taught by full-time faculty. The reason is clear: The School lost nine faculty during the review period, eight of them on tenure or tenure-track lines. In addition, two other tenured positions were replaced with visiting faculty who have three-year contracts and no research responsibilities. As a result, the School is increasingly reliant on adjuncts.

Several faculty members commented that the decrease in the number of full-time faculty has added to their workloads and made it difficult to focus on research and creative activity. Many are doing such work in the summer when they are not under contract to work. They also said service obligations have grown.

The School provides strong oversight of part-time faculty. A faculty committee reviews all syllabi to ensure consistency of instruction and connects adjunct faculty with full-time counterparts who have previously taught the class. Adjuncts meet with full-time faculty in individual sessions and attend a group training session at the start of the semester. The Director and associate director look over evaluations at the end of every semester and use those as one determinant of whether the adjunct instructor will continue teaching.

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

The unit's faculty have high academic qualifications and significant industry experience. Full-time faculty hold 11 Ph.D.s, and five master's degrees and have an average of 12.9 years of professional experience.

Eight faculty members participated in various internal and external professional development programs since 2021. Those include curriculum training, pedagogy, leadership, teaching techniques, crisis communication, and artificial intelligence.

Full-time faculty members are active in the Society of Professional Journalists, the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, the American Journalism Historians Association, Investigative Reporters and Editors, College Media Advisors, the Society of Environmental Journalists and others such organizations.

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

During the review period, all faculty members who applied for advancement successfully gained reappointment and tenure and promotion with no appeals.

The School has a single promotion and tenure policy that applies to all continuing faculty. Tenure-track faculty are eligible for tenure, and both they and instructional faculty are eligible for promotion. The process includes a clear annual review of progress toward advancement, full consideration of all a candidate's contributions (especially in regard to research and creative works), and transparency about perceived deficiencies with reasonable guidance toward correction if needed.

The School provides up to \$2,500 a year in travel support for faculty members to conduct research/creative activity or service obligations. It is mainly used to support faculty attendance at professional and academic conferences where they present research and engage in service. The director said he plans to increase the award by \$1,000 during the 2025-2026 academic year, rename it and broaden its use for a wider range of professional development, including online training. Faculty members who volunteer to teach tutorials via the Honors Tutorial College are awarded approximately \$500 per tutorial that can be used to support research/creative activity and related travel.

Tenured faculty are eligible for the Faculty Fellowship Leave program (sabbatical) after seven years of service or seven years after the previous leave. The leave can either be for one semester with full salary or for two semesters with half salary. Proposals are submitted to the full faculty and College-level promotion and tenure committee for review. The Dean makes final decision. Four of the unit's faculty members took sabbaticals during the review period.

(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.

While there are still some prolific researchers on the faculty, overall, there has been a significant drop in scholarly and creative output. The number of grants received (internal and external) was reported as 45 in the last accrediting cycle. It is reported as a total of seven in this cycle. Similarly, there were drops in the number of scholarly books (6 to 3); book chapters (27 to 7), articles in refereed journals (75 to 61); refereed conference papers (81 to 5) and invited academic papers (41 to 7). On the other hand, non-juried created works increased from 31 to 133. Awards and honors were the same in both cycles (20).

Since 2021, there also has been a decline in faculty participation at research/creativity conferences and professional development events. Faculty members said increased workload and service obligations have limited their ability to conduct and present research and creative activity. Several faculty members said they have been forced to move these activities to the summer, outside of their contracted time, to maintain some semblance of scholarly/creative output. As previously referenced, the drop in scholarship and participation in professional activities has been greatly impacted by the loss of tenure and tenure-track faculty lines.

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

Faculty and administrators across campus were prolific in their praise of Journalism faculty. They described their interaction with them as collegial and engaging. Several said they have a "community-

oriented mindset.” The Dean of the College emphasized their willingness to collaborate and their collegiality. He said he is concerned about the drop in scholarship, especially since the University recently attained Research 1 status, but he said he understands that faculty are doing the same amount or more work than before and with fewer numbers. He is seeking ways to establish a University research center that could provide support and convene faculty around unifying research themes.

Faculty members are active in the life of the University. They serve on various School, College and University committees, including the Research Council, Strategic Planning, Assessment, Interdisciplinary and E-Learning, and Promotion and Tenure.

Since the last accreditation cycle, the School also has engaged in more collaborations with other units on campus, such as the Scripps D.C. program.

SUMMARY:

The decrease in the number of full-time faculty members and the number with research obligations has led to more adjunct hires and a decrease in scholarly and creative activities. However, the unit is conscientious about supervising adjuncts, many of whom bring strong professional experience to the classroom, and research output remains respectable, although not prolific. The faculty is held in high regard by external colleagues and administrators.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

Scholarship Table

The faculty whose work is included in this section are tenure-track faculty (with a 40 % teaching, 40 % research, 20 % service) workload and instructional faculty (with an 80 % teaching, 20 % service).

Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activities	Total from Unit*	Individuals				Totals
		Full Professors	Associate Professors	Assistant Professors	Other Faculty**	
Awards and Honors	20	(2_CD) (6_PJ) (2_VL) (2_JS) (2_AE) (1_VL)	(2_JMC)	(1_MT)	(2_NY)	10
Grants Received Internal	4	(2_PJ) (1_HM)			(1_NY)	3
Grants Received External	3	(1_BR/JS) (1_JS)	(1_JMC)			2
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co-authored	3	(1_VL) (1_AE)			(1_NY)	2
Textbooks, Sole- or Co-authored	3	(3_CD)				1
Books Edited	2	(1_BD) (1_VL)				1
Book Chapters	7	(4_BD) (2_EH) (5_VL) (3_BR) (2_JS)		(1_MT)	(1_NY)	18
Monographs	0					0
Articles in Refereed Journals	61	(19_CD) (5_EH) (16_PJ) (10_VL) (2_BR) (1_JS) (3_HM)	(1_JMC)	(3_KF)	(1_NY)	10
Refereed Conference Papers	50	(13_CD) (2_BD) (24_PJ) (2_BR) (2_HM)	(6_JMC)	(1_MT)		7
Invited Academic Papers	7	(1_CD) (3_EH) (3_VL)				3
Encyclopedia Entries	4	(2_VL) (2_HM)				2
Book Reviews	4	(3_EH)	(1_JMC)	(3_KF) (1_MT)		8
Articles in Non-refereed Publications	2	(2_BR) (1_JS)				3
Juried Creative Works	2		(2_JMC)	(3_KF)		5

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Non-juried Creative Works	133	(19 AE)	(5_JMC) (100_TS)	(2_MT)	(7_NY)	5
Other (please specify): guest editor; journal editor/co-editor; workshops/training; invited lectures/keynotes; and conference panels	14	(2_VL) (6_BR) (4 HM)			(2_NY)	4

*Co-authored work should be counted as a single publication in the unit totals. However, if, for example, two members of the faculty are co-authors on the same journal article, it would be reported as a publication for both authors. **Includes all full-time faculty who do not hold listed ranks, such as instructors and others on term appointments. Many faculty in this category may hold teaching appointments without significant scholarship, research or creative requirements.

PART II — Standard 6: Student Services

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

Journalism faculty and administrators are strongly focused on student success. Students praised faculty for taking a personal interest in their educational progress and their careers, often long after graduation. One student commented that a faculty member who is on sabbatical still regularly checks on her progress. Students said all faculty members maintain an open-door policy and often push them to consider paths and opportunities they would not have otherwise. As one student put it, “He helped me see what I wanted before I could put it into words.”

The institution supports student progress more formally through a centralized advising system, an online platform that tracks progress toward graduation, and a campus career counseling center. First-year students participate in Journalism Learning Communities designed to make them feel more connected and adjust to college. Student cohorts attend a weekly 1-credit orientation-type course that introduces them to others in their major and to a faculty mentor.

The unit awarded 124 scholarships in 2024-2025 for a total of \$242,600, 33 more than the previous year. The median amount was \$1,956. This year, to comply with state legislation that prohibits scholarship awards on the basis of race, gender or national origin, 10 of those scholarships were put on hold. The University Student Financial Aid Office worked with donors to alter their agreements to eliminate references to specific groups and five were “unpaused.” For instance, the Clarence Page scholarship was renamed, “The Clarence Page Scholarship *Honoring* African American Journalists,” and became available mid-March, along with the Andrew Alexander Scholarship, which had previously “preferred” “underrepresented” students in the gift agreement. To date, five scholarships have not been awarded. These total an estimated \$16,000 and include the Margaret McKechnie for women journalists, which in past years has carried a \$12,000 award.

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

For many years, Journalism students were advised by faculty members within the School. In 2022, The University mandated a central advising system for all units. Students now have an assigned adviser in the College’s Harris Student Support Center and an assigned faculty mentor within the School.

The change in advising was announced without input from the faculty, some of whom remain resistant. The adjustment has been difficult for some faculty who said they believe it has stifled their ability to advise students in course selection and career opportunities and that students are not getting the same quality of advising. Others have embraced the change and see it as one less administrative task they must deal with.

During the first year or so after the centralized advising system was implemented, the director said relationships between College advisers and the School were fraught, with almost no communication. However, communication has improved over time. The School’s associate director now meets with college advisers each semester to tell them what classes the School will offer and highlight those that may be of interest to groups of students.

At first, the College advisers also approved internships, but after faculty objected, that responsibility reverted to the faculty. Additionally, the Dean agreed that faculty members must agree to students' schedules before the adviser lifts the enrollment hold – an accommodation made only for the Journalism School.

The School's associate director emails students with a checklist of new and interesting classes to consider, and the School uses social media to promote specific classes. The Director is planning to host an evening event with food to give students a chance to meet faculty members and hear about the classes, capstones, and research they offer.

When asked about advising, students effusively praised the advising system. Most said they rely on both their professional advisers and their faculty mentors. As one student said, "They go above and beyond to make sure I get into the courses I need."

The College has a designated staff member who provides students, both in-person and online, with career counseling information. The staff member works with the University career counseling center to provide interview training, one-on-one resume development, etc. Academic advisers also strongly encourage students to seek career advice from faculty mentors.

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

The School begins reaching out to students before they arrive on campus. During UpClose events, which are held once a month in February, March, April and May, prospective students receive a course checklist and an explanation of options within the major. Students also are told of the need for an internship and an outside area of study, which comprises at least five classes outside of the School.

A faculty member, who receives an additional stipend, attends the required Bobcat Student Orientation in May, June and July to provide incoming freshman students with degree requirement information. The current professor attending this event is the faculty mentor for all freshmen.

The University in 2022 also created the Guarantee Plus program, which requires all first semester students to meet with their adviser and come up with a four-year graduation plan that is attached to their official electronic transcript, or DARS. Under University policy, if advising flaws result in a delay in graduation beyond 4.2 years, students pay no additional tuition to complete their degrees.

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

On the Journalism website is a page with listings and links to professional media organizations and extracurricular activities.

The College has a full-time director of student development, who manages and maintains a list of internship and employment opportunities. Students receive (and watch for) a weekly email from her highlighting internship opportunities, speakers and events. She also utilizes LinkedIn and an Instagram channel called "Scripps Careers." The School also employs an email list to provide students with updates as needed.

School faculty members serve on the student media advisory board for The Post campus newspaper, which covers the campus and the region and has a large digital audience. They also serve as advisers to a range of student clubs that include ACRN radio club, Audio Engineering Society, Backdrop Magazine, the OU Multimedia Society, Thread Magazine, the Black Student Communication Caucus, PRSSA and the OU Society of Professional Journalists.

The School works closely with WOUB Public Media (television and radio), which has studios and offices in the Schoonover Center. Up to 200 students volunteer work at WOUB each year, gaining invaluable experience and skill development in all phases of television and radio reporting and production. The station reaches an audience of 1.3 million in Southeast Ohio, a largely rural region that would otherwise have little access to local news and information. Broadcast students indicated that without the opportunity to work at the station, they would not have developed their market-ready skills. While students now volunteer their time and do not receive academic credit, the director indicated that the unit is considering incorporating the station more closely into the curriculum.

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

The University's Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Analytics collects and provides data on retention and graduation rates within the major, College and University. While the faculty and administrators review this data, they have not directly used it to improve the student experience. The Director said the faculty have been "lulled to inaction a bit because the numbers have always been pretty good. However, I think there's more we can do." The School plans to work with the College to chart graduates' first destinations and add a question to the senior survey about how the School can better help students as they move toward graduation.

SUMMARY:

The School and the institution provide a number of effective support services for students, including a centralized advising system that, despite some faculty resistance, appears to be largely working. Students praised the advising they receive and feel they are well informed and connected to the School. The School has not been able to support students with scholarships at the same level as in the past because of state legislation that bans scholarships based on race, gender and sexual orientation. Another concern is the uncertain financial health of WOUB public media. The PBS affiliate lost about \$2 million in federal funding and relies on University support. Without it, students would lose vital experiential opportunities, and Southeast Ohio could become a news desert.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 7: Resources, Facilities and Equipment

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

A combination of state funding cuts and enrollment declines across the University in 2019-2020 resulted in layoffs and buyouts, along with the elimination of most vacant faculty lines. The School had 25 full-time faculty in Fall 2018. It now has 18, although two are assigned to the unit in name only – one teaches in a regional program, and the other is full time in the Dean’s office.

The unit received approval this year from the College Dean to proceed with a search for a tenure-track faculty member to replace a retired faculty member, but the Provost denied that request just before the site team arrived, suggesting that the unit hire another visiting faculty member instead. That would bring the number of faculty directly working in the unit to 17, but three of those would be visiting professors on three-year contracts. The reduction in faculty lines has led to an increased reliance on adjunct faculty, especially in Strategic Communication, as well as a drop in scholarly output, and it adds to uncertainty about the future.

The School also lost three full-time support staff positions, including a financial/budget assistant and a broadcasting technician. It now shares an administrative assistant with another school in the College. The School also lost stipends for master’s students, most of whom served as teaching assistants, straining teaching loads, and for two part-time student positions that were used to help manage the School’s social media accounts and assist in the media streaming lab.

During much of the review period, the University employed a budget model whereby each unit started the fiscal year with a \$1 million deficit and then was charged with making up that deficit by generating new revenue. This prompted many schools, including Journalism, to develop certificates, minors and online degree programs. Recently, the University shifted to a new budget model that bases allocations solely on student credit hours. This has spurred Journalism and other units to add new courses and open up existing courses to the general University population. The Provost has made it clear that new faculty lines and investments in programs are contingent on generating additional credit hours.

In recent years, the School has expanded its technology purchases, largely to build a new media streaming lab and launch the NEXT?! student advertising agency – in line with its strategic goal to upgrade facilities and technology.

In addition to its salary and operating budgets, the unit has an endowment of \$11.8 million, generating more than \$400,000 a year, that it taps to achieve its goals. Endowments include the Kiplinger Program in Public Affairs, the William Randolph Hearst Endowment for Visiting Professionals, and the Scripps Howard Foundation. The latter endowment provides the School with about \$60,000 a year to help meet technology needs and fund the E.W. Scripps High School Journalism Workshop. There also are several individually supported endowments.

In 2024, the School received a \$1.1 million private gift to be spent at the discretion of the director. An ad hoc faculty committee is considering using the money to improve facilities and/or technology.

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

The College manages the budgets of its schools and covers all salaries, including those of adjuncts. Each school is given an annual allocation to cover strategic initiatives and some operational expenses. These funds also are used to supplement faculty travel, student workers and adjunct salaries – the latter in cases where a course is needed but does not meet the College's 20-enrollment criteria.

According to the director, the allocation from the College has remained fairly stable over the review period. However, there has been a considerable drop in salary expenses due to the loss of faculty lines. Overall, the School's budget (operations and salaries) was \$3.5 million in 2018. It is now \$2.4 million, a decline of just over one-third.

The annual resources provided by the College appear to be consistent with what other schools within the College receive. (This could not be independently confirmed by the site team because the College asserted that details regarding other schools' budgets falls outside the purview of Journalism's accreditation process.) However, the School believes that funding for large capital expenditures is uneven, noting that it received \$17,000 to create a streaming media lab while the School of Media Arts and Studies received more than \$100,000 to upgrade its audio production facilities. It should be noted that the College did appropriate \$400,000 last year to create the NEXT?! media agency. The School also used some of its own funds to finance the agency.

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

The School is housed in the seven-story Schoonover Center for Communication, which it shares with the other four units in the College. The building underwent a major renovation in 2013 and is a large and welcoming space, especially on the first floor. Schoonover is connected on almost every floor to the Radio-Television Building which houses television studios, classrooms, labs, and WOUB Public Media.

The Journalism School is located on the second floor, reaching both sides of the building, and includes six classrooms/labs, faculty and administrative offices, a conference room and a small podcasting studio. The largest lab is the broadcast news lab, which has 20 PC workstations and video editing software. The lab is used by broadcast classes and students producing stories for WOUB Public Media as well as sports shows.

The School also built a broadcast streaming lab post-pandemic with a \$17,000 grant from the College to enable broadcast journalism classes to produce a noon newscast four days a week. Previously, students used WOUB facilities, but the station declined to allow classes back in after the pandemic. The new lab is very basic (a "DIY job," as the director phrased it). It includes a streaming deck (Epiphan Pearl 2), four PTZ cameras, microphones, lights and green screens. Computers and monitors were re-purposed from other labs. The School and College spent an additional \$25,000 to upgrade the streaming deck, microphones, cameras and green screens.

Four other labs are used primarily as classroom spaces, with a limited number of computers (ranging from zero in one lab to six in a lab used primarily by graduate students). Students generally use their own laptops, although the rooms lack power strips or docking stations. The workstations that are provided include the full range of Adobe software. The School participates in the College program to provide all students with full access to the Adobe Creative Cloud suite on their personal computers.

Large classes, such as Communications Law and Introduction to Advertising and Public Relations, are held in the College's nicely appointed 140-seat auditorium. While the director indicated that about 90% of the School's classes are held in the Schoonover Center, the other 10% or so are scattered in other buildings on campus.

During the review period, in response to student demand, the School built a small podcast studio in a vacant faculty office to supplement an existing, highly visible College podcast studio in the main lobby. Also on the first floor is the Lasher Learning Center, a spacious room that served as the School's library but is now largely used for gatherings and student work. Students also have access to a virtual reality lab operated by the School of Media Arts and Studies.

The new student media agency, NEXT?!, is located in a renovated house, the Sing Tao Center, a few blocks from the Schoonover Center. It is a beautiful, modern space with a professional agency feel that encourages collaboration and creativity. Emeritus faculty have offices on the second floor.

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

The College manages an equipment checkout room where students can access cameras, tripods, lights, microphones and other gear. Journalism students also can check out state-of-the-art Rodecaster podcasting kits with audio boards as well as kits with broadcast-quality cameras and other gear needed for field reporting.

Students can check out equipment for up to 48 hours with the permission of an instructor, although extensions are available.

SUMMARY:

With a relatively generous endowment, well-appointed facilities and an abundance of equipment, the unit is well-positioned to meet the needs of faculty and students. At the same time, the loss of faculty lines and administrative support is creating stress fractures. The School appears to receive equitable College support. A new budget model has prompted the School to pursue new ways of generating student credit hours.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 8: Professional and Public Service

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The School of Journalism has long nurtured meaningful connections with alumni, a number of whom speak to classes, participate in the annual high school journalism workshop and other events, facilitate internships and jobs for new graduates and otherwise engage with the School.

Members of the School's 21-member Alumni Advisory Board meets quarterly (once per year in person) with the director. They include professionals from broadcast, print, digital, corporate communications and not-for-profit organizations as well as several associated with the Scripps family. While some board members said they felt the board is used productively, others said they would welcome more ways to get involved in the School and connect with students.

Alumni contacted by the site team reported that they hear about the School mostly through its LinkedIn site. One alumnus (Ken Klein) was repeatedly praised for his energetic updating of the site. Several suggested that the School consider employing other platforms, such as Tik Tok or Instagram, to engage with alumni. They also indicated they would appreciate more email updates.

The College sponsors two alumni groups that include a number of Journalism graduates. They are the Young Alumni Council for graduates within the past five years, which focuses on student engagement. Members of the Council speak in classes and record advice for students to be distributed on Instagram and elsewhere. The Dean also has a college alumni council, which provides feedback on college and priorities.

Alumni are also regular participants in the annual Scripps Day, which brings Scripps professionals to campus to meet with classes and students.

The University surveys new graduates to chart their employment and obtain views about the quality of their academic experiences. The Journalism School has not received survey results for the past two years.

(b) The unit provides leadership in the development of high standards of professional practice through such activities as offering continuing education, promoting professional ethics, evaluating professional performance, and addressing communication issues of public consequence and concern.

The School administers the prestigious Kiplinger Fellowship in Public Affairs Journalism, bringing up to 20 working journalists to campus each year to tackle issues related to emerging technologies. The 2025 workshop focused on artificial intelligence. The 2026 topic is "Saving Local News: A Practical Guide."

The School also conducts an annual symposium on pressing media issues. Until 2023, this was called

the Schuneman Symposium, which brought a dozen professionals to campus to meet with students and faculty and discuss topics such as “Different Voices, All Human,” “Covering Trump,” and “Covering Global Crises.” Since 2023, the Symposium has focused on freedom of speech and been renamed the Tyler Weymouth First Amendment Speaker series.

The School also hosts a public lecture series on current topics, is a partner in producing the Scripps Regional Spelling Bee, and hosted a three-week workshop and tour for the Association of Independent Publishers of South Africa.

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

Students regularly produce news and information that benefit the larger community. The School offers a Statehouse News Bureau fellowship program, a one semester or summer program based in Columbus. Two students are assigned to a local media outlet to cover state government and state policy. The stories are distributed to media outlets around the state.

About 200 students, most of them Journalism majors, work at The Post, the award-winning student newspaper that covers university, local and state news. It is a primary local source of information, garnering 400,000 page views a month, in addition to a weekly print product. Similarly, the nearly 200 students who volunteer at WOUB public media each year contribute to the information needs of the community.

Students at the NEXT!? Agency have produced a campaign for City of Hope, a consortium of cancer research hospitals, to inspire contributions as well as a campaign for the GoBus Co., which provides transportation to disabled individuals and college campuses all over Ohio.

A community journalism class has worked with the Athens County Board of Developmental Disabilities to publish a newsletter. In a special topics course, Journalism and Trauma, the professor teaches how to better cover traumatic stories, including suicide. She also has presented on the topic to the Ohio News Network, a group of radio networks in Ohio.

(d) The unit supports scholastic journalism.

Each summer, the School hosts an annual workshop for high school journalism students and advisers. The event began in 1946 and is one of the oldest programs in the nation. Over five days, between 70 and 100 student journalists from all over the country come to Athens to interact with faculty and get hands-on experience.

Students choose from among nine tracks: broadcasting, news design, magazine journalism, news writing, photojournalism, podcasting, sports broadcasting, sports writing, and public relations. The students work on media projects, including articles, broadcasts, design spreads and podcasts. Most of the instructors and presenters are Ohio University alumni who come back to campus and share their experiences and knowledge with the attendees. Students also cover a news conference with a local newsmaker and hear from speakers and panelists on careers and current topics in journalism.

At other times of the year, faculty and alumni visit high schools in Ohio, West Virginia and Pennsylvania to talk about the importance of journalism.

SUMMARY:

The School maintains meaningful connections with many alumni and tracks their progress. Alumni provide feedback to the School through an active advisory board and frequently contribute their time to classes and School events. The School hosts the nation's oldest high school journalism workshop each summer and supports high standards in the profession through programs such as the Kiplinger Program in Public Affairs Journalism. Students contribute to the news and information needs of local communities through their work at the public media station, in classes, and in student media.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

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

1) Summarize the strengths and areas for improvement.

Strengths:

- A solid reputation as a leading program of journalism education, especially within the state of Ohio, which translates into significant external support from alumni and professionals.
- A resilient and collegial faculty that remains focused on its mission despite external challenges and obstacles. As one faculty member put it: “Our name is scrappy Scripps.”
- A highly active student body that takes full advantage of a wide range of experiential learning opportunities in student media organizations, the public media station, internships and capstones and practicums.
- A building, facilities and equipment that compare well with those of the nation’s premier journalism schools.

Weaknesses:

- Steadily declining resources, especially with regard to faculty lines and administrative staff support.
- Steadily declining student enrollment that calls for a robust recruitment program.
- A growing reliance on adjunct faculty and visiting faculty to make up for the loss of tenure and tenure-track lines.
- A significant drop in faculty scholarship and professional contributions to the profession, also attributable in large part to the loss of tenured and tenure-track lines.
- A student body and faculty that are not yet fully representative of the demographic makeup of the communities they serve.

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

Standard 3 Assessment of Learning Outcomes

3) In the case of a recommendation for accreditation or reaccreditation, with standard(s) not in compliance, list the deficiencies that need to be addressed.

The unit needs to address flaws in data collection to enhance the validity of multiple measures and, when necessary, solicit additional information that can be useful in guiding curricular decisions.

Most important, the unit should show evidence that it has “closed the loop” by thoroughly analyzing results and using the data to inform decisions about curriculum, courses, student services and other aspects of School operations.

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

N/A

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

N/A

6) If the unit was previously accredited, summarize noncompliances and significant deficiencies noted in the previous report and subsequent actions.

The unit was found in compliance on all standards in the last accreditation cycle. The 2018 site team noted significant strengths, including: strong leadership; engaged faculty and students; state-of-the art building, equipment and technology; abundant extracurricular activities for students; and strong alumni connections.

Weaknesses included a need to further diversity the faculty and student body, inconsistent quality of advising, a lack of coordination with other schools within the College, and, to some extent, a lack of agility and forward-looking focus.

The self-study addresses these weaknesses and the unit's response in detail.

- Diversity of faculty. While anticipated faculty hires were not realized due to budget cuts, the unit was able to hire seven faculty members, five of them tenure-track, during the review period. Of the seven hires, three are African American, and all three are tenure-track. The faculty now has three Black faculty members compared to four in 2018, but because the size of the faculty has shrunk, the proportion of minority faculty is about the same. In 2018, 68% of the faculty was white; it is now just shy of 69%.
- Diversity of the student body. No progress has been made here. The unit was 81.5% white in 2018; it is now 85% white. The unit notes that deep cuts in faculty and staff have hindered recruitment efforts and new state legislation precludes diversity programs.
- Uneven advising: The 2018 site team noted that while some faculty were committed to advising, others treated it as an aside and suggested the School consider a hybrid model with academic advisers coaching students on class selection, graduation, etc., and faculty serving as career and personal mentors. The College subsequently took over advising, a move the School faculty strongly objected to because it meant students no longer had to meet with faculty. However, with the assignment of faculty members as mentors and improved communication, the new system appears to be working.
- A lack of collaboration and coordination among the Scripps College's schools, with the result that students were not taking advantage of courses, such as photography and graphic design, typically offered in major journalism programs. This issue has been largely addressed. The curriculum has been modified so that Journalism students are now able to take more courses and pursue minors within the College. The School also has developed or grown several productive cross-departmental initiatives, including the podcasting and social media certificates as well as the Scripps in D.C. program.
- A lack of agility and forward thinking. The site team pointed to delayed initiatives to create a public relations minor and make a diversity course a core requirement, both of which have been accomplished. (The first minor is called Advertising and Public Relations but accomplishes the intended purpose). Additionally, the School added a Precision Language (grammar) requirement to its core, completely revamped its General Education requirements, added the above-mentioned certificates and created an online-only bachelor's degree, demonstrating its ability to pull off new initiatives.

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

While the self-study provided a clear picture of the challenges faced by the School and how it has responded, it contained a number of errors and contradictory information. In addition, key information, including a strategic plan, a diversity plan and a learning outcome matrix, was missing. The unit provided all of the requested information to the team and answered numerous questions, although the response rate was often slow and sometimes required further clarification.



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The faculty and staff of the E.W. Scripps School of Journalism at Ohio University sincerely thank the members of the site visit team for their considerable time and effort in preparing the Report of Evaluation for the School's re-accreditation bid. We deeply appreciate the team members' willingness to guide the School so it can put its best foot forward in a meaningful way. Site members worked tirelessly to locate practicable information needed to paint a complete picture of the School's efforts. They were especially patient with a new director learning the ropes.

After reading the team's final report, the faculty and staff would like to offer minimal clarifications and directions as a response.

1) Standard 1: Mission, Governance and Administration

- a. The School did recently add its information to the ACEJMC online directory and intentionally left some fields blank. New state law prohibits sharing demographic and income data about students (subsection C). The School will fill in other blanks as they become available.

2) Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

- a. The School works hard to conform to ACEJMC's 20-student limit for skills classes. However, faculty cutbacks and the College's mandate that classes must have at least 12 students enrolled to be taught have compelled leadership to schedule classes above that number. For example, when a section of four or five students is cancelled, the only option is to add them to another section of the same course, even if that course is already at the 20-student maximum (subsection E).

3) Standard 3: Assessment:

- a. The director has requested the School's curriculum and assessment committees to align the learning objectives listed

- in the University catalog with all course syllabi. This will eliminate the rare occasion that different sections of one course have different learning objectives (subsection B).
- b. The site team noted students are required to submit only one of their internships for credit, rather than all those completed. Asking students to submit evaluations for all their internship is just not a practicable requirement (subsection C).
 - c. The School will prioritize its continued discussions with members of its advisory board to take over the Senior Capstone Project Review assessment to ensure that more projects and individual components receive evaluation (subsection C).
 - d. We plan to revise the syllabi audit measure to more clearly assess how ACEJMC standards are tied to learning objectives and assignments. Faculty believe they do this but agree these connections could be better articulated (subsection C).
 - e. The College has initiated its First Destination Survey and tasked work study students with tracking down students who do not respond to initial invitations. They will use social media such as LinkedIn to determine if they are employed within six months of graduation. Job status information was obtained for more than 90% of journalism students who graduated in May of 2025. We will continue to support the College's efforts and partner with them to add School specific questions from our alumni survey. This information was not available during the site team's visit (subsection C).
 - f. The School is ending its use of the indirect measure of participation in minors and certificates based on the site team's recommendation.
 - g. Numerous faculty members disputed the criticism that assessment data isn't used to close the loop. They noted assessment data has made a difference in their individual classes and has spurred some curriculum choices, such as adding JOUR1330 as a required course to enhance students' writing abilities. However, the faculty agreed that a thorough curriculum review is needed, and assessment data will play a vital role in this endeavor.

4) Standard 4: Diversity

- a. We appreciate the team's recognition of the challenges the state of Ohio imposes and the School's continuing commitment to achieving a fair, equitable, and culturally rich environment. We also accept the team's finding the School falls well below the diversity of the University and the area population. The School has already started reaching out to high schools close to campus and throughout the state that have culturally rich populations. The School's advisory board has also been activated to promote and recruit culturally diverse populations.

5) Standard 5: Faculty

- a. Sometimes it takes creating a table to realize what a school has lost, and the site team pointed out the marked decline in research output since the last accreditation visit. The team recognized the School's faculty numbers have decreased significantly and retiring tenured faculty have largely been replaced with adjuncts and professional faculty. However, the team pointed out mathematically that research output on a per faculty basis is still significantly lower. In response, we, the faculty, don't think the site team considered the impact such significant faculty losses have taken on our morale. Indeed, we believe the amount of research and creative activity the School's members have completed in a time where the state and the university's administration asks more from less is admirable.
- b. The team's appraisal of faculty output also does not consider the program's lack of institutional support, such as the elimination of our master's program and the resulting focus on undergraduate education these last six years. Teaching graduate classes creates an impetus toward research, but now only one or two faculty get to teach graduate courses each semester.
- c. The School knows the current faculty situation is not sustainable and will not, in the long term, provide the journalism education students need. This is reflected in the number of non-faculty members teaching core classes, especially in the strategic communication curriculum where adjuncts teach more than half of the classes.

- d. The School will continue to apply for competitive faculty positions that increase credit hour generation and fulfill the University's strategic mission. But we encourage the University's leaders to take this report seriously and witness the challenge they present the School by forcing it to rely on non-contract faculty (adjuncts and visiting professionals).

6) Standard 6: Student Success

- a. As a point of clarification, College success advisors were never authorized to approve internships. They just started doing it without the School's consent until faculty realized the change. The School worked with the advisors to ensure faculty mentors met with students and approved their internships before the work began.
- b. Lingering tension between the School's faculty and the College success advisors has subsided enough that the School is actively working to open lines of communication. We now work more closely with Assistant Dean Greg Moeller to ensure students get the right classes.
- c. The School also plans to monitor graduation and retention rates more closely to make certain they remain at their characteristically high levels. The director plans to share more information on retention and graduation rates with faculty during faculty meetings.



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