

Report of ACEJMC Evaluation

Undergraduate program

2024–2025

Name of Institution: Florida A&M University

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Timothy Beard, Interim President

Name of Unit: School of Journalism and Graphic Communication/Division of Journalism

Name and Title of Administrator: Mira Lowe, Dean; William Jiles, Journalism Division

Director Date of 2024-25 Accrediting Visit: February 9-12, 2025

Date of the previous accrediting visit: February 4-7, 2018; revisit January 14-16, 2020

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Reaccreditation

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: 2018: Provisional accreditation; 2020: Reaccreditation

Recommendation by 2024-25 Visiting Team: Reaccreditation

Prepared and submitted by:

Team Chair

Name and Title: Earnest L. Perry Jr., Ph.D. Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research Organization/
School: Missouri School of Journalism

Signature Earnest
Perry

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Earnest Perry
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Team Member

Name and Title: Cheryl Procter-Rogers, APR, Fellow PRSA
Organization/School: A Step Ahead

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Rogers

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Team Member

Name and Title: Ingrid Sturgis, Chair, Dept. of Media, Journalism and Film
Organization/School: Howard University

Signature Ingrid Sturgis

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Team Member

Name and Title: Vincent Duffy, News Director
Organization/School: Michigan Public/University of Michigan

Signature Vincent Duffy

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Duffy
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PART I: General information

Name of Institution: Florida A&M University

Name of Unit: School of Journalism & Graphic Communication, Division 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
- X **Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges**
- Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges

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

- Private
- X **Public**
- Other (specify)

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

Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate, baccalaureate, masters, doctorate, and professional degrees. FAMU may also offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the accreditation of FAMU may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org).

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

Yes

Last accreditation visit – February 4-7, 2018

Date of the revisit – January 14-15, 2020

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

1982

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

Mission:

"We prepare students to be confident, multi-platform communicators for an evolving media marketplace, with a pedagogical emphasis on active learning and experiential experiences."

Vision:

"We will be globally recognized as a premier school that produces students with the knowledge, skills and experience to excel in the digital and traditional aspects of journalism, public relations and graphic design."

Adopted in fall 2017/Revised in 2023

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Number of weeks in a semester: 16 weeks in fall and 16 weeks in spring

Number of weeks in a quarter: N/A

Number of weeks in summer sessions: Six weeks summer A, six weeks summer B and 12 weeks for summer C.

Number of weeks in intersessions: N/A

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

-x-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 Broadcast Journalism

Bachelor of Science in Public Relations

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

120 credits beginning Fall 2024, previously 125 credits

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

1 credit hour for internship

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

Director of Journalism/Public Relations William Jiles

Broadcast Journalism Coordinator Kenneth Jones

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

9,269

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

Spring 2025

Journalism	Public Relations	Pre-majors	Total
119	76	121	316

Fall 2024

Journalism	Public Relations	Pre-majors	Total
111	71	125	307

Spring 2024

Journalism	Public Relations	Pre-majors	Total
121	70	93	284

Fall 2023

Journalism	Public Relations	Pre-majors	Total
114	66	165	345

Spring 2023

Journalism	Public Relations	Pre-majors	Total
114	63	154	331

15. Number of students in each section of all skills courses (newswriting, reporting, editing, photography, advertising copy, broadcast news, public relations writing, etc.). List enrollment by section for the term during which the visit will occur and for the preceding term. Submit two semesters with the self-study and update the list as needed for spring 2025 visits. Include a separate list for online skills courses, which also must meet the 20-1 ratio. (The Council has ruled that campaigns courses are exempt from the 20-1 ratio.)

Face-to-face enrollment Semester Spring 2025

Course	Title	Enrollment
JOU 1112-C01	Use of Information Resources	20
JOU 1112-C02	Use of Information Resources	20
JOU 2100-C01	News Reporting & Writing I	18
JOU 2100-C02	News Reporting & Writing I	18
JOU 2100-C03	News Reporting & Writing I	15
JOU 3308-001	Magazine Article Writing	20
JOU 4181-001	Capital Bureau	20

JOU 4342-C01	News Reporting & Writing III	20
JOU 4342-C02	News Reporting & Writing III	20
JOU 4342-C03	News Reporting & Writing III	20
JOU 4945-001	Student Media Practicum	23
PUR 3622-001	Social Media/Data Analytics	18
PUR 4500-001	PR Research & Strategies	19
PUR 4800-001	PR Agency	14
RTV 2230-001	Multimedia Oral Engagement	20
RTV 2520-001	Visual Storytelling	20
RTV 3320-C01	TV News	20
RTV 3332C-C01	Documentary & Film	13
RTV 3681-C01	Advanced TV News	7

Online enrollment Semester Spring 2025

Course	Title	Enrollment
JOU 1040E-501	Language Skills for Media Professionals	20
JOU 1040E-502	Language Skills for Media Professionals	20
JOU 1040E-503	Language Skills for Media Professionals	20
JOU 1040E-504	Language Skills for Media Professionals	15
JOU 3101CE-501	News Reporting & Writing II	17
JOU 3101CE-502	News Reporting & Writing II	15
JOU 3101CE-503	News Reporting & Writing II	9

Face-to-face enrollment Semester Fall 2024

Course	Title	Enrollment
JOU 1112-001	Use of Information Resources	20
JOU 1112-002	Use of Information Resources	20
JOU 2100-C01	News Reporting & Writing I	15
JOU 2100-C02	News Reporting & Writing I	15
JOU 2100-C03	News Reporting & Writing I	15
JOU 3308-001	Magazine Article Writing	20
JOU 4181-001	Capital Bureau	15
JOU 4342-C01	News Reporting & Writing III	20

JOU 4342-C02	News Reporting & Writing III	20
JOU 4342-C03	News Reporting & Writing III	11
PUR 3622-001	Social Media/Data Analytics	20
PUR 3622-002	Social Media/Data Analytics	20
PUR 4500-001	PR Research & Strategies	6
PUR 4800-001	PR Agency	6
RTV 2230-001	Multimedia Oral Engagement	20
RTV 2230-001	Multimedia Oral Engagement	20
RTV 2520-001	Visual Storytelling	20
RTV 2520-001	Visual Storytelling	20
RTV 3320-C01	TV News	16
RTV 3332-C02	TV News	20
RTV 3332C-C01	Documentary & Film	10
RTV 3681-C01	Advanced TV News	6

Online enrollment Semester Fall 2024

Course	Title	Enrollment
JOU 1040E-501	Language Skills for Media Professionals	20
JOU 1040E-502	Language Skills for Media Professionals	20
JOU 1040E-503	Language Skills for Media Professionals	20
JOU 1040E-504	Language Skills for Media Professionals	20
JOU 3101CE-501	News Reporting & Writing II	15
JOU 3101CE-502	News Reporting & Writing II	15
JOU 3101CE-503	News Reporting & Writing II	12

Face-to-face enrollment Semester Spring 2024

Course	Title	Enrollment
JOU 1112	Use of Information Resources	20
JOU 2100-C01	News Reporting & Writing I	20
JOU 2100-C02	News Reporting & Writing I	20
JOU 2100-C04	News Reporting & Writing I	20
JOU 4181-001	Capital Bureau	20

JOU 4342-C01	News Reporting & Writing III	20
JOU 4945-001	Student Media Practicum	20
JOU 4945-001	Student Media Practicum	11
JOU 4905-003	DIS – JOU 2100C RW1	1
PUR 3000-001	Intro to Public Relations	16
PUR 3000-002	Intro to Public Relations	16
PUR 3490-001	Integrated Marketing Communication	20
PUR 3490-002	Integrated Marketing Communication	20
PUR 4500-001	PR Research & Strategies	13
PUR 4800-001	PR Agency	18
RTV 2230-001	Multimedia Oral Engagement	20
RTV 2230-002	Multimedia Oral Engagement	20
RTV 2520-001	Visual Storytelling	20
RTV 2520-001	Visual Storytelling	20
RTV 3320-C01	TV News	18
RTV 3332C-C01	Documentary & Film	11
RTV 3681C-C01	Advanced TV News	5

*DIS is a Directed Independent Study that is relevant to the area of study.

Online enrollment Semester Spring 2024

Course	Title	Enrollment
JOU 1040E-501	Language Skills for Media Professionals	20
JOU 1040E-502	Language Skills for Media Professionals	20
JOU 1040E-503	Language Skills for Media Professionals	20
JOU 3101CE-501	News Reporting & Writing II	20
JOU 3101CE-502	News Reporting & Writing II	20

Face-to-face enrollment Semester Fall 2023

Course	Title	Enrollment
JOU 1112	Use of Information Resources	20
JOU 2100-C01	News Reporting & Writing I	14
JOU 2100-C02	News Reporting & Writing I	20
JOU 2100-C03	News Reporting & Writing I	15
JOU 3308-001	Magazine Article Writing	20

JOU 4181-001	Capital Bureau	20
JOU 4342-C01	News Reporting & Writing III	20
JOU 4342-C02	News Reporting & Writing III	20
JOU 4342-C03	News Reporting & Writing III	20
JOU 4945-001	Student Media Practicum	10
PUR 3622-001	Social Media/Data Analytics	20
PUR 3622-002	Social Media/Data Analytics	20
PUR 4500-001	PR Research & Strategies	7
PUR 4800-001	PR Agency	13
RTV 2230-001	Multimedia Oral Engagement	20
RTV 2520-001	Visual Storytelling	20
RTV 3320-C01	TV News	18
RTV 3332-C02	TV News	14
RTV 3332C-C01	Documentary & Film	15
RTV 3681-C01	Advanced TV News	10

Online enrollment Semester Fall 2023

Course	Title	Enrollment
JOU 1040E-501	Language Skills for Media Professionals	20
JOU 1040E-502	Language Skills for Media Professionals	20
JOU 1040E-503	Language Skills for Media Professionals	19
JOU 1040E-504	Language Skills for Media Professionals	20
JOU 1040E-505	Language Skills for Media Professionals	20
JOU 1040E-506	Language Skills for Media Professionals	17
JOU 3101CE-501	News Reporting & Writing II	20
JOU 3101CE-502	News Reporting & Writing II	17

16. Total expenditures planned by the accredited unit for the 2024–2025 academic year:

\$2,849,485

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

\$1,426,662

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

Faculty Name	Rank	Academic Program
Douglas Blackburn	Associate Professor	Journalism
Bettye Grable	Associate Professor	Public Relations
Clarence Fowler	Visiting Instructor	Journalism
Hsuan Huang	Associate Professor	Public Relations
Leah Hunter	Associate Professor	Journalism
Mira Lowe	Professor and Dean	Journalism
Felicia McGhee-Hilt	Professor and Associate Dean	Journalism
Deborah Thigpen	Visiting Instructor (2023-2024)	Journalism/ PR
Venise Toussaint	Visiting Instructor	Journalism
Valerie White	Associate Professor (Retired Spring 2024)	Journalism
Jeffrey Wilkinson	Professor	Journalism
Kenneth Jones	Professor (Professional Leave Spring 2025)	Journalism
William Jiles	Instructor	Journalism
Arionne Nettles	Instructor (Started Fall 2024)	Journalism
Maureen Tartaglione	Instructor (Started Fall 2024)	Public Relations

18. List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in fall 2024. Also list names of part-time faculty teaching spring 2024. (If your school has its accreditation visit in spring 2025, also provide the spring 2025 adjunct list in the updated information.)

Name	Term	Academic Program
Deborah Thigpen	Fall 2024, Spring 2025	Journalism/PR
Zak Dahlheimer	Summer 2024, Fall 2024	Journalism
Ranata Hughes	Spring 2024, Fall 2024, Spring 2025	Journalism/PR
Chandra Lanier	Spring 2024, Fall 2024, Spring 2025	Journalism
Patricia MacEnulty	Spring 2024, Fall 2024, Spring 2025	Journalism
Glyndell Presley	Spring 2024, Fall 2024, Spring 2025	Journalism
Fadia Patterson	Spring 2024, Fall 2024, Spring 2025	Journalism

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

Total number of degrees awarded:
 2023-24 academic year: 68
 2022-23 academic year: 78

PART II — Standard 1: Mission, Governance and Administration

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(a) The unit has a written mission statement and a written strategic 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 journalism program is guided by the mission and strategic plan of the University, which coincides with the strategic initiatives of the school.

SJGC Mission Statement: We prepare students to be confident, multi-platform communicators for an evolving media marketplace, with a pedagogical emphasis on active learning and experiential experiences.

SJGC Vision Statement: We will be globally recognized as a premier school that produces students with the knowledge, skills, and experience to excel in the digital and traditional aspects of journalism, public relations, and graphic design.

Core Values: Collaboration, Creativity, Innovation, Professionalism

The unit has matched its strategic plan to the University's strategic plan. The groundwork for the strategic plan began at the all-school retreat in August 2022. Facilitated by a higher ed executive and researcher, the faculty and staff did a SWOT analysis, focusing on what unit does well, what unit does uniquely, and how they implement and measure what they do. Based on the input and insights from faculty, staff, students and alumni in subsequent meetings and discussions, coupled with institutional data, a plan was developed, and it was approved by the faculty during the 2023-2024 academic year.

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

The mission statement and strategic plan is prominent and accessible on the SJGC website.

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

The SJGC strategic plan mirrors the University's strategic plan and relies on the foundational core values of Accountability, Inclusion, Innovation, and Integrity. The unit extends the FAMU vision and mission statements by articulating complementary core values of Collaboration, Creativity, Innovation, and Professionalism, and extends it to include strengths, opportunities, and threats. The unit has developed five primary areas where the faculty and administration plan to channel resources to maximize success with targeted goals and suggestions for how they can be achieved. The areas are: student success, academic success, leveraging the brand, long-term fiscal health and sustainability, and organizational effectiveness and transformation.

In consultation with faculty and staff, the dean produced the five-year strategic plan with a goal of identifying key performance indicators to assess the effectiveness of the academic program in the global education market. The dean's office, with input from faculty committees, evaluates progress in the five primary areas to determine how the unit ranks with like programs. Initial discussions about an updated plan began in 2022 and after several studies and drafts, was adopted by the faculty in spring 2024.

(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.

The words that best describe the unit's leadership are stable, collaborative and transformational. Various other leaders across campus praised the leadership for building strong working relationships and producing students that contribute to the campus community. The dean is open and supportive of faculty, students and others on campus. She has worked to secure funding for the unit, but more importantly, has developed relationships both internally and externally to ensure that resource allocations continue.

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

The director, appointed by the dean, is the lead administrator and has authority and responsibility for the delivery of the academic programs in accordance with departmental goals, school priorities and university strategic plans. The director serves a 12-month appointment and is evaluated annually by the dean.

The dean, who has been in place since October 2021, is responsible for the overall budget, fundraising and strengthening relationships with constituents. The provost, the director and several faculty members spoke enthusiastically about the dean's leadership skills, especially as it relates to fundraising, donor and alumni relations, and connecting with industry. She works to secure resources from campus and external sources, including a \$1 million, multi-year grant from The Walt Disney Company for a program aimed at increasing access to careers in storytelling and innovation. The dean also consults with and seeks the advice of appropriate faculty committees.

In the area of diversity, both the director, the dean and the associate deans have guided the unit through turbulent times as a flurry of legislative mandates led to changes in how campuses throughout the state address historical inequities in resources and opportunities. Despite the challenges, the leadership remains committed to providing students with the necessary knowledge and skills to be excellent journalists and public relations professionals in a diverse society.

Sequence coordinators are appointed in consultation with the dean and/or the director and evaluated annually. In April 2024, the faculty discussed the need for a public relations program coordinator to assist the division director with the marketing and recruiting for the PR major and supporting curriculum development and revisions for the PR program. This appointment will be addressed in 2025.

The unit follows the policies and procedures of the University for faculty governance. The campus Faculty Senate plays a significant role in the governance. The unit consistently has representation in the senate, including an associate professor, who served five years as senate president and a member of the university's Board of Trustees. At the time of the site visit, the unit had two elected representatives on the Faculty Senate.

The school has a committee structure to facilitate faculty governance. The specific charges of each committee are updated on an ad-hoc basis. The dean and director compile a list of faculty committees to manage various tasks. Committee chairs are appointed by the dean or the director. Some committees have prescribed membership (tenure and promotion committee). Faculty and administrator searches also have student representatives.

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

<https://lookup.acejmc.org/overview/?unit=326>

(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.

Yes, both are available below:

June 2023 Retention Report:

<https://sjgc.famu.edu/pdf/Retention%20for%20Full%20time%20FTIC%2010%20years%20Follow%20up%20.pdf>

June 2023 Graduation Report:

<https://sjgc.famu.edu/pdf/Graduation%20for%20Full%20time%20FTIC%2010%20years%20Follow%20up%20.pdf>

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 unit operates within acceptable norms.

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

The unit operates within acceptable norms.

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

The unit operates within acceptable norms.

SUMMARY:

The dean has brought stability to the unit by providing strong leadership and working to establish relationships with campus leaders, alumni and donors. The director, who is one of the longest serving faculty members in the unit, stated that hiring of two associate deans has reduced the administrative load and allowed the directors to spend more time working with faculty members and students to move the curriculum forward. Students and staff stated that the dean is accessible, available and cares about them.

Overall evaluation compliance/noncompliance: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

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

The unit moved to update its curriculum in 2020-2022 to enhance student learning outcomes, eliminate redundancies, and better prepare students for the competitive journalism and media industry. The Division of Journalism offers a Bachelor of Science degree in journalism or public relations. Both programs require students to complete 120 credit hours, which includes at least 70 semester credit hours taken outside journalism and public relations. In 2024, the university board of trustees decreased the credit hour requirement for graduation from 125 to 120 credit hours, which has become a higher ed standard in helping to increase retention and shorten time to degree.

Florida A&M University's General Education Assessment Committee, in collaboration with faculty, has defined college-level knowledge and competencies that are linked to the university's mission and goals and requirements for a general education. By taking general education courses, students are expected to exhibit the following skills:

1. Communication: Clear and effective expression in writing and speech.
2. Critical Thinking: Analyzing, solving problems, and creative thinking.
3. Social and Ethical Responsibility: Upholding principles of academic integrity and cooperation.
4. Quantitative Reasoning: Applying numerical concepts to real-world problems.

The unit also meets the spirit of a liberal arts and sciences general education by requiring students to take 60 credit hours of gen ed courses that include Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Psychology, Sociology, Geography, American History, Literature and Economics. In addition, the Division of Journalism offers Introduction to Mass Media and Introduction to Public Relations as service courses that support the humanities in curricula for other units. Other division courses that are open to majors outside the unit are: Language Skills for Media Professionals; Uses of Information Resources; Multimedia Oral Engagement; Social Justice, Thought and the Media; International Issues in the Media; Emerging Media Technologies and Special Topics.

(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 unit offers foundational courses such as Introduction to Mass Media and Introduction to Public Relations that explore media concepts and theories of the disciplines. Relevant theories and concepts are also built into core courses such as Communication Law & Ethics and PR Research & Strategies. In the journalism major, fundamental principles and professional practices are taught in Use of Information Resources, Language Skills for Media Professionals, Reporting & Writing I, II and III. In the upper division courses, students apply their knowledge of theory to practice through experiential learning in TV News, Capital Bureau, Magazine Article Writing, Advanced TV News, Documentary & Film.

In public relations, students apply their theoretical knowledge for practical application in PR Agency, Integrated Marketing Communication and Strategic Communication. All PR majors must also take professional skills courses: Visual Storytelling, Multimedia Oral Engagement and Social Media/Data Analytics.

By taking general education courses, students are expected to exhibit the following skills:

1. Communication: Clear and effective expression in writing and speech.
2. Critical Thinking: Analyzing, solving problems, and creative thinking.
3. Social and Ethical Responsibility: Upholding principles of academic integrity, and cooperation.
4. Quantitative Reasoning: Applying numerical concepts to solve real-world problems.

(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.

Since 2018, the unit's curriculum has been revised to emphasize multimedia and digital content, preparing students for careers in journalism, PR, and media. Students start with web design, visual storytelling and writing courses and end with professional presentations to faculty and industry professionals during the Senior Capstone course. The journalism division's Professional Development Colloquium course also focuses on preparing students for the workforce through instruction and guest speakers. The success of this approach is evident through student employment at top media outlets like CNN, Bloomberg News, Paramount, USA TODAY, and The E.W. Scripps Company.

One alum from the news industry said the students come prepared and ready to work in a rigorous news environment, and the students who interned with her company have a 98% placement rate after their internship was completed.

The Division of Journalism addresses professional expectations in digital and multimedia competencies through the curriculum. This includes teaching students to effectively use digital tools, platforms, and resources, and developing the ability to create, manage and analyze multimedia content. Other methods consist of curriculum reviews by faculty, input from the school's external advisory board, alumni, employers, and attendance at professional conferences.

The Curriculum Committee meets monthly to discuss updates to the curriculum based on research and feedback from conferences and other areas. One faculty member shared that they reviewed the standards of exemplar ACEJMC-accredited peer institutions to help shape their recent pedagogical changes.

(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.

Faculty and administrators attend several training workshops and conferences in person and virtually throughout the year in addition to serving as presenters and panelists. They also remain connected to their respective professions through memberships to industry organizations and service on committees. This involvement enhances instruction, strengthens student outcomes, and keeps faculty and administrators abreast of industry trends and workforce needs. Conferences attended by faculty and administrators include:

- NABJ Annual Conference
- AEJMC Annual Conference
- ASJMC Conference

- PRSSA ICON Conference
- BEA-at-Large Conference
- BEA Annual Spring Conference
- BEA Fall Conference
- ICA Annual Conference

In addition to attending external workshops, faculty typically organize in-house skills training at the beginning of the academic year. Their development and professional engagement are supported through the SJGC Knight Foundation Faculty Development Fund. By attending conferences and training, faculty enhance their skills, stay up to date with best practices in their field and incorporate the latest research findings, trends, and tech advancements into their instruction. Feedback on professional expectations is also gathered from SJGC's external advisory board and alumni. The unit's faculty has taken advantage of the following training activities in recent years:

- Faculty certification in E-Learning, leading to hybrid courses
- Sessions of the Broadcast Education Association via the National Association of Broadcasters
- Dow Jones News Fund's Multimedia Training Academy
- Solutions Journalism Network HBCU/Black Press Academy + Lede Fellowship
- Workshops of the Investigative Reporters & Editors (IRE), National Association of Black Journalists, and Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication

(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 School of Journalism & Graphic Communication was previously sanctioned for having skills and laboratory courses that exceeded the 20-1 ratio of students to instructor. The site visit indicates that they have been able to keep within the ratio over the past three years.

(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).

The unit's Office of Career Success (OCS) offers a robust, industry-focused internship program. OCS fosters partnerships with companies and professional organizations across the U.S., ensuring valuable opportunities for all SJGC students. The selection of internship sites is based on both primary and secondary research. OCS uses various resources to find top opportunities. SJGC Internship Coordinator oversees the internship process to guarantee credible and effective work experiences. Journalism and PR students must enroll in a 1-credit internship course, where the internship coordinator and worksite supervisors monitor and evaluate their progress. The school also strongly encourages students to pursue additional non-credit internships to gain additional experience.

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.

Interning students are required to work 15-20 hours per week on assigned tasks during the spring and fall semesters. They must submit deliverables to the internship coordinator by the end of the semester and have their site supervisor provide an evaluation, which offers valuable feedback to the OCS. The final grade is based on an overall assessment of work performance and course participation, with students earning credit upon successful completion.

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.

SJGC is home to four multimedia properties: TV 20, WANM 90.5, The FAMUAN, and Journey magazine. These platforms provide students with practical, hands-on experience in the profession. The building houses 12 computer labs and studios and editing bays, offering ample space for students to hone their skills. Experiential learning is a cornerstone of the student experience, with courses and labs like the PR Agency, Capital Bureau, Advanced TV News, Reporting & Writing III, Visual Storytelling and Documentary & Film.

SUMMARY:

Overall, the unit has kept up with curriculum development to address changes in the field. For example, it has moved to 120 credit hours, which has become a higher ed standard in helping to increase retention and shorten time to degree. One faculty member said they examined best practices at leading peer institutions and national jobs data to guide their curriculum changes. The Journalism unit offers a robust pedagogy in emerging technologies and maintains a solid balance of theory and practice. The Public Relations division could benefit from more focused attention to beef up offerings for students in the discipline. For example, the Commission on Public Relations Education (CPRE), in collaboration with the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), provides guidelines for undergraduate public relations curricula to ensure programs effectively prepare students for the profession.

Overall evaluation, compliance/noncompliance: 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's written assessment plan utilizes a holistic approach to assessment and continuous improvements that identifies and evaluates salient student learning outcomes through FAMU's annual assessment process. The plan is up to date and it has consistently identified the core competencies and objectives set forth for assessment. The assessment measures and benchmarks for success lead to actionable data that can be used to craft strategies to enhance student performance, and circle back to consider the impact of those strategies. The process provides data that helps the program be responsive to the rapidly changing journalism and public relations environment.

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

Yes, the unit's assessment plan is prominent and easy to find under the accreditation tab on its website.

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

The unit's student learning outcomes are aligned to ACEJMC's core values and programmatic goals, using course-level assessment which includes formative and summative feedback. Students are expected to demonstrate pertinent skills applicable to their profession through competency in the following objectives: Communication, Critical Thinking, Content/Discipline Specific Knowledge, Cultural Diversity, Research, Technology Literacy and Ethical Values. The objectives were built to represent the intersection between course learning and the Council's professional Values and Competencies.

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

The unit employs a mixture of direct and indirect measures to evaluate student learning. Faculty reviewed the course-level outcomes to determine where a specific student learning outcome should be assessed. A faculty team also reviews the student learning outcomes to align with courses to confirm where assessment of the student learning outcomes would occur. The team then identified what assessment was occurring within the course to determine what assignment or task would be used as the assessment measure.

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

One direct measure used by the unit in the final capstone course in the senior year is a presentation where students are required to present a website portfolio, visual/digital and creative work, and 10 articles/press releases written over the course of their time in the program. The evaluation of the project and presentation is done by a combination of faculty members and program alumni/media professionals.

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

The assessment committee works with the curriculum committee to ensure that the measures align with student learning outcomes addressed in the curriculum. Faculty who teach courses work with the assessment committee to determine if changes should be adopted and implemented. Courses with multiple sections have one faculty member appointed to oversee assessment and data collection.

Proposed changes to assessment plans are evaluated to ensure that the student learning outcomes determined by faculty were written in measurable terms based on the faculty’s expectation of student learning, and that appropriate targets were identified using direct and indirect measures of evaluation. The assessment committee and faculty use the data to not only make modifications to curriculum, instruction, courses, and assessment measures, but to track the impact of these changes from year to year.

Based on assessment, the faculty approved a curriculum revision in journalism and public relations to better align with those of equivalent and competing journalism programs and to update the program to align with skill sets necessary in current media industries. Examples of closing the loop in the curriculum updates include combining the communication law and media ethics courses based on research of curriculum at similar programs and to bring the school in line with the university required credit hour limits. Faculty members also approved the creation of a reporting course at the state capital and a public relations agency course to give students practical experience in professional settings to better prepare them to succeed as media professionals. Faculty also approved the creation of a social justice and advocacy in the media course to address the growing importance of those topics in the profession.

SUMMARY:

In the previous site visit, the unit was found out of compliance on this standard. The revisit team observed that faculty training sessions, and partnering with the university on assessment had improved the process. Those efforts continued and are stronger today. The unit has effective measurements in freshman level courses and has begun work on strengthening its measurements in upper-level courses. Assessment helped identify opportunities for improvement in several upper-level courses that led to changes that will better prepare students for careers in the profession. The use of university provided data collection and analysis operations have been helpful, but the campus exit survey information is lacking. Administrators and faculty are working on a more specific exit survey for the unit’s graduates.

Overall evaluation, compliance/noncompliance: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 4: Diversity and Inclusiveness

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The unit has developed a plan focusing on affordability and accessibility which aligns with the university's strategic plan that includes student recruitment, faculty hiring, and curriculum design. A revised and more detailed plan with key performance indicators (KPIs) is still pending faculty approval. The unit currently has a faculty that includes experienced professors and instructors from a variety of cultures, backgrounds, with deep industry experience, and relationships to support successful student outcomes.

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

Due to a recent Presidential Executive Order and legislation passed by the state, maintaining a diversity plan on the university's website is now illegal in Florida. The university leadership has acknowledged these federal policy changes and is actively monitoring compliance while ensuring continued support for student success and institutional mission alignment.

(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.

Courses such as Communication Law & Ethics and International Issues & the Media incorporate global perspectives and case studies to prepare students for global career opportunities. The standard is met by exposing students in each academic track to the journalistic beliefs, ideas, practices, and dignity of all mass media cultures from around the world. The faculty teaches students to understand media and its practices in the Western culture, while recognizing, understanding, and respecting mass media structures and practices by people who may have come from different national, ethnic, political, economic, racial, and religious backgrounds. The unit has welcomed speakers of different nationalities. SJGC students have taken advantage of study abroad opportunities in Spain, Italy, Cuba, South Africa, Hong Kong, and other countries.

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

The unit has made efforts to foster faculty awareness of affordability and accessibility challenges and there has been formalized training programs for enhancing faculty competency in these areas. Implementing mandated faculty development workshops may improve understanding and the integration of key global themes.

(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.

As an HBCU, the unit naturally serves a predominantly Black student population, and outreach to Hispanic, Asian, and international students remains an area for growth. The proposed initiative to hire a full-time recruiter may help address this challenge.

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

The unit provides accommodations for students with disabilities and active support for students to assess all university benefits and opportunities. The unit has a formal process for assessing satisfaction among students and faculty (e.g., surveys or feedback sessions) that provides valuable insights for continuous improvement.

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.

SUMMARY:

The unit demonstrates substantial compliance with Standard 4, with commendable student affordability and accessibility efforts. The new plan will go a long way to support student success and align the unit with the university's mission and strategic plan.

Overall evaluation, compliance/noncompliance: COMPLIANCE

Academic Year: 2023 – 2024 Journalism and Public Relations Full-time Faculty

Group	Male	Female	% of total in unit
Black/African American	3	6	69.23
White	2	1	23.08
American Indian/Alaskan native	0	0	0
Asian	0	1	7.69
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	0	0	0
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	0	0
Two or More Races	0	0	0

Academic Year: 2023 – 2024 Part-time/Adjunct Faculty

Group	Female	% of total faculty	Male	% of total faculty
Black/African American	4	57.14%	4	44.44%
White	2	28.57%	3	33.33%
American Indian/Alaskan native	0	0	0	0
Asian	1	14.28%	1	11.11%
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	0	0	0	0
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
Two or More Races	0	0	1.68	0
Other Race	0	0	0	0

Link for [Academic year: 2023 – 2024, University Faculty’s Demographics](#)

PART II — Standard 5: Faculty

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The School of Journalism & Graphic Communication has a well-rounded faculty—62 percent women, 38 percent men, and predominantly African American or people of color—reflects the Journalism Division’s student population and HBCU mission. Sixty-nine percent of faculty are tenured or tenure-track, focusing partly on research, while 31 percent are teaching faculty with significant professional experience dedicated to course instruction. To support the teaching of core and new courses, the unit recently hired two faculty – Instructor for Public Relations and Garth Reeves Eminent Scholar and Instructor in Digital Journalism. Current searches are underway for an Endowed (Knight) Chair, Instructor for Broadcast Journalism and Assistant Professor for Visual Storytelling. With the recent retirement of an Associate Professor, the unit will have an opening for another full-time faculty position.

Fall 2021	85% Full-time Faculty, 33 out of 39 courses	15% Part-time Faculty out of 39 courses
Spring 2022	79% Full-time Faculty, 23 out of 29 courses	21% Part-time Faculty, 6 out of 29 courses
Fall 2022	67% Full-time Faculty, 26 out of 39 courses	33% Part-time Faculty, 13 out of 39 courses
Spring 2023	71% Full-time Faculty, 25 out of 35 courses	29 Part-time Faculty, 10 out of 35 courses
Fall 2023	74% Full-time Faculty, 29 out of 39 courses	26% Part-time Faculty, 10 out of 39 courses
Spring 2024	78% Full-time Faculty, 29 out of 39 courses	22% Part-time Faculty, 10 out of 39 courses

(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.

Each year, faculty has participated in workshops offered by the University’s Teaching and Learning Center for professional development, teaching, and other pedagogy enhancements. Due to the 2020 pandemic, increased attention was given to professional development to ensure faculty have the skills necessary to teach and engage with students online. As such, most faculty in public relations and journalism have at a minimum undergone training through FAMU’s Office of Instructional Technology for certification of online education.

Since Fall 2023, the technology department has developed opportunities for faculty to train with Adobe, Google and Apple with the incentives of earning digital badges and skills to implement technology in classroom teaching. The unit also worked with companies, such as Muck Rack and NUVI (a social media and internet monitoring program) to provide faculty with small groups or one-on-one training.

In Spring 2024, the Center awarded a one-year scholarship to a public relations faculty member to conduct an intervention study to advance pedagogy and learning outcomes. Another faculty was

awarded a Dow Jones News fellowship to participate in the Multimedia Training Academy in 2022. In addition, the unit's curriculum committee provided professional development workshops to faculty teaching courses in the new curriculum. The first workshop took place in Fall of 2022 to cover new courses in broadcast journalism, and the second in Fall of 2023 to cover public relations courses. Faculty members also benefited from attending professional and academic conferences, including the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), the Broadcast Education Association, and AEJMC, for professional development.

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

The Tenure and Promotion Committee revised and updated the unit's tenure and promotion guidelines in March 2024, which had not been revised since 2005. The new guidelines offer criteria to better evaluate creative works, in addition to traditional research. The unit recruited and hired two research-driven tenure-track faculty, one at the assistant professor rank and one at the associate professor rank, both with Ph.Ds. Other actions included establishing a 3-3 teaching load to support research productivity; providing funding for faculty development and research; and promoting the research efforts of faculty to internal and external stakeholders. These deliberate steps are helping to foster faculty research and creative productivity.

(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.

During the review period, seven tenured and tenure-track faculty (including two administrators) published a total of 12 peer-reviewed scholarly articles in refereed journals such as Health Communication, Journal of Health Psychology, Journal of Community Psychology, Journalism and Mass Communication Educator, International Journal of Communication, Howard Journal of Communication, and The China Review. Fifteen book chapters and two entries in the International Encyclopedia of Health Communication have been published. Division faculty produced 14 refereed paper presentations to conferences, including the International Communication Association, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Broadcasting Education Association, Society of Behavioral Medicine, and Kentucky Conference on Health Communication. There are also several ongoing research projects and papers in health communication, post COVID mental health, online civility, media framing and visual communications. In the last six years, an assistant professor was awarded two grants totaling \$15,000 from the University for a year-long research project on COVID-19 vaccination among young Black adults and a SoTL intervention study on teaching and learning using artificial intelligence (AI). An associate professor was awarded a \$7,500 Solutions Journalism grant to enhance the practice and teaching of Solutions Journalism. Furthermore, Journalism Division faculty have participated in 25 refereed conference panels, professional and creative activities. The "Other" category in the grid includes participating/chairing in non-refereed conference discussion panels, moderating academic seminars, writing commentary and opinions in publications, and speaking at professional conferences.

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

In various meetings during the site visit, faculty members from different parts of the university commended the unit's leadership and faculty for collegiality, professionalism, the open exchange of ideas and trust. The dean was cited by several faculty members outside the department as "transformational

leader,” “strategic thinker,” who is supportive of other units and willing to collaborate on various initiatives. The dean was also cited as having the trust of philanthropic partners. The unit was also called one of the most popular schools.

SUMMARY:

In the 2018 site visit report, The Division of Journalism was sanctioned for a significant decline in scholarly output over the previous six years. In this site visit, faculty retirements and resignations have led to faculty shortages and course overloads, which hindered research and creative activity. In the 2020 revisit: the report noted incremental improvement. This slow movement is noted again in this review. An upper school administrator shared that the university is working to edify the ability of faculty to increase scholarly and creative output through more opportunities to share through initiatives such as a peer-to-peer Research Circle to support faculty projects, encouraging the use of seeding grants and an updated tenure process that better evaluates creative projects.

Overall evaluation, compliance/noncompliance: COMPLIANCE

Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activities	Total from Unit*	Full Professors (4)	Associate Professors (4)	Assistant Professors (1)	Other Faculty** (4)	Totals (13)
Awards and Honors	1	0	1	0	0	1
Grants Received Internal	2	0	0	2	0	2
Grants Received External	2	1	1	0	0	2
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co- authored	0	0	0	0	0	0
Textbooks, Sole- or Co- authored	0	0	0	0	0	0
Books Edited	0	0	0	0	0	0
Book Chapters	15	11	1	2	0	14
Monographs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Articles in Refereed Journals	12	8	1	3	0	12
Refereed Conference Papers	14	6	0	8	0	14
Invited Academic Papers	0	0	0	0	0	0
Encyclopedia Entries	2	0	0	2	0	2
Book Reviews	0	0	0	0	0	0
Articles in Non-refereed Publications	2	0	0	0	0	2
Juried Creative Works	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-juried Creative Works	2	0	2	0	0	2
Academic and Professional Conference Presentations (Non- refereed)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Panel Presentations at Refereed Conferences	25	21	1	3	0	25
Other (please specify)***	13	5	3	5	0	13

PART II — Standard 6: Student Services

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The SJGC has 12 full-time faculty members who provide instruction and internship coordinator who also teach courses. The unit also employs two full-time advisors specifically for SJGC students.

In addition to specific SJGC staff, FAMU also provides student academic support services including tutoring, mental health counseling services, financial counseling services, and a career center. All these efforts combine to promote learning to ensure timely completion of students' degrees in journalism and public relations.

The unit has various scholarship funds under its control, and in the 2023-2024 academic year 107 students received scholarships (about a third of those enrolled), averaging \$5000 per student. Both the number of students receiving scholarships and the amount of scholarship awards has increased over the last three years.

In addition to scholarships provided by the unit and the institution, the SJGC dean maintains a special assistance hardship fund for students who have exhausted all other funding sources and are in jeopardy of not completing their degree plans.

The SJGC provides detailed curriculum guides for journalism and public relations, which if closely followed should allow for graduation in four years. The guides outline the necessary courses, graduation procedures, and specific requirements necessary to obtain a degree. Students are also informed of degree requirements at orientations and in meetings with the division directors and deans.

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

The SJGC uses a digital advising system where students can book appointments with their designated academic advisors through the SJGC Connect page. Advisors are located in the building and are available by appointment, with walk-in hours on Wednesdays.

During the previous site team visit, advising at FAMU had recently been centralized on campus with one office advising students from all disciplines. In 2023 the university decentralized the advising system again and SJGC has dedicated advisors again. Students report on the whole advising is clear and the advisors, while new, are knowledgeable and willing to work with students to help them graduate on time.

The unit has placed a Student Enrollment Station in the advising office so students could enroll in classes immediately after speaking with their advisor. The advisors say this has significantly improved the number of students remembering to enroll in the correct courses or make needed changes on time.

The advisors use a course progression monitoring tool called CIVITAS to track each student's progress through their programs. CIVITAS allows advisors to view reports on students' grades in all assignments, projects and exams and employ early special needs intervention when students appear to fall behind or fall into jeopardy due to poor grades.

The CIVITAS platform also provides insights about the advisors' engagement with students. The tool tracks interactions, appointments, and topics discussed, allowing the advising team to support student needs throughout their college experience.

SJGC regularly assesses the quality of its advising services through student surveys and exit data.

Full-time faculty include their office hours in the course syllabus and post their hours at their office doors. Students report that many faculty are frequently available to them and will often meet with students beyond their posted hours.

SJGC requires at least one internship for academic credit in order to graduate. The unit has a designated internship coordinator who helps students find internships and recruits businesses and organizations that will welcome interns from FAMU. The internship coordinator also regularly invites media and public relations professionals to the school to meet with students about internships and job opportunities.

Numerous remote internships are available for students with economic or transportation barriers to in-person internships in Tallahassee or out of state.

Media and public relations companies at a breakfast with the site team and in surveys speak highly of their experiences with unit students and say they are confident and prepared for the workforce upon graduation.

“We recruit FAMU’s journalism students every year. Two things about these students stand out: preparation and excitement. The students are well prepared for their first jobs. We see that in their resumes and in the way they interview. Just as important, FAMU journalism students are always excited about their future careers, and that clears a big hurdle in launching them toward success.”-*Chip Mahaney, Emerging Talent Leader, The E.W. Scripps Company*

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

The SJGC advising team provides students with a syllabus that outlines expectations for the academic year. This guide provides a timeline with due dates for enrollment and academic reminders.

The unit produces an occasional student newsletter, but a lot of information is shared through fliers and posters on bulletin boards located throughout the building and in the elevator. The posters all include a QR code that takes students to a webpage containing commonly used policies and forms. The list includes everything from school “Curriculum Guides” to “How to apply for graduation” to “Student laptop recommendations.” The page also has contact information for administrators and links to schedule an advising appointment. It successfully serves to create a one-stop web page on students' phones.

(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.

The school has active student chapters of three professional organizations: National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ), Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) and Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA). All chapters have their own office in the building and a faculty/staff advisor who guides chapter activities, service projects and collaborations. The unit provides financial support for chapter students to attend the national conventions of these professional associations.

The student chapters of these three organizations produce various events throughout the academic year to network, provide professional development, and raise awareness about journalism and public relations.

Chapters also invite alumni to speak with students about their career experiences.

In addition to these traditional professional student chapters, SJGC also supports the following organizations for student academic and professional development:

SJGC + IPREX (The Global PR and Communication Network) - This is designed for junior and senior public relations students to establish connections with PR, communications, and marketing agencies worldwide.

SJGC Writing Lab (The Writer's Block) - This writing lab is designed to improve the written communication skills of students. It is available for students who may have writing deficiencies, and also provides opportunities for all students to improve their writing in journalism, public relations, graphic design and all aspects of media communication.

Learning Centers - SJGC students can access tutoring services in-person at various Learning Centers around campus. The Learning Centers provide academic help to all students in the areas of English, Math, and Science.

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

The unit utilizes the University's Institutional Research & Analytics Dashboard for data related to enrollment, graduation, and retention of students. This data is available for each college and school at the University level down to the unit level.

Graduation and retention data, along with many other measures are taken annually and easily found online as an "academic scorecard." The advising program CIVITAS flags students who have not graduated or registered for their next semester courses, and advisors work to contact those students via email or phone calls to determine why or remind them to do so.

SUMMARY:

The SJGC has many systems in place to support students and help them achieve academic and eventually professional success. Advising is streamlined and accessible, the curriculum is clear for both journalism and public relations students, and efforts are made to catch students in jeopardy before they fall through the cracks. There is ample assistance for students in finding required internships, and "Grads Are Back Days" along with frequent professional speakers and career fairs allow students prime opportunities to network and potentially find jobs.

Overall evaluation, compliance/noncompliance: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 7: Resources, Facilities and Equipment

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The unit’s budget has increased in each of the last three years. Most of the unit’s budget is dedicated to administrative and faculty salaries, and equipment. Facilities are maintained by the University, which allows the programs to use their allotted funding toward resources that promote student learning, faculty development and scholarship. Funds for travel and research are handled through the SJGC Knight Foundation Faculty Development Fund.

Budget Items	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024 (Self-study year)
Administrative salaries	\$338,681.71	\$392,290.00	\$400,090.00
Teaching salaries (full time)	\$921,697.00	\$1,196,503.00	\$1,217,346.00
Teaching salaries (part time/adjunct)	\$95,727.00	\$125,318.68	\$133,784.00
Teaching assistants	n/a	n/a	n/a
Clerical salaries	\$82,820.00	\$172,000.00	\$181,500.00
Equipment	\$166,781.73	\$166,423.76	\$318,547.93
Equipment maintenance	\$27,767.79	\$38,073.83	\$33,838.55
Supplies	\$11,345.05	\$3,469.95	\$3,812.64
Library resources	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
Databases, online information services	\$59,066.72	\$64,474.22	\$65,787.94
Travel*	n/a	n/a	n/a
Research*	n/a	n/a	n/a
Other (please list)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total Annual Journalism/PR Budget	\$1,743,887.00	\$2,198,553.44	\$2,394,707.06

* Expenditures for faculty research and related travel are covered by the SJGC Knight Foundation Faculty Development Fund.

In addition to designated funds from the University, the school has been very successful in finding additional funding through special allocations and grants. Examples of recent successful campaigns include:

- Title III funding of \$775,000 (2023-2024) for technological innovation
 - A multi-year \$1,000,000 grant from the Walt Disney Company (2022-2023) to establish the Disney Storytellers Fund at FAMU, providing tuition and housing scholarships, stipends, and professional development to students
- A \$175,000 grant from the NBCU Academy (2021-2022) for student and course support

(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 budget for the unit for the most recent year was \$3,518,427 and is comparable to that of similar schools within the University including the School of Architecture and Engineering Technology (\$3.6 million) and the School of the Environment (\$2.4 million).

Because of the many technology-driven classes and extracurriculars in the unit, there is a frequent need to upgrade broadcasting equipment and software. The unit has been very successful in securing grants, donations and supplemental funding to keep the equipment used by students current and in good working order.

There is concern about future funding as the University is taking a close look at all future hires. This could stress a small faculty if any were to leave or retire and could not be quickly replaced.

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

The unit is located in a 100,000-square-foot building for faculty offices, classrooms and four multimedia properties: TV 20, WANM 90.5, The FAMUAN newspaper, and Journey magazine.

The building houses at least a dozen computer labs with more than 300 workstations (a combination of PC and MAC), 16 edit bays, and 2 television studios with modern control rooms.

The student media facilities available to students include:

TV 20 - an educational access cable channel that reaches 80,000 households in four North Florida counties. It operates 24 hours a day and the programming includes live student newscasts on Mondays and Wednesdays. The channel also broadcasts many university events including commencement, convocation, concerts, and guest speakers.

TV 20 has a full-time station director and an assistant director. The studio and control room are in line with industry standards. The equipment includes Hitachi HD/4K Studio Configured Camera Systems and AP ENPS productions software. This allows students to get hands-on experience with equipment used by media companies, deliver high-quality programming for airing and streaming to local and remote audiences, and produce high-resolution content for their reels.

WANM-FM 90.5 - this educational non-commercial radio station, also known as “The Flava Station,” has a full-time station director and a team of students who program, operate and manage the day-to-day operations. The student-run campus station broadcasts with 1600 watts and operates 24 hours a day. Its format includes Gospel, Jazz, Blues, Soul, R&B, Hip-Hop and Reggae. In addition to music, it provides student produced news- and sports casts, current events/pop culture talk shows, sports shows and coverage of FAMU campus events.

The station has modern, digital broadcast consoles and software in three control rooms.

The Convergence Newsroom hosts The FAMUAN (the school newspaper) and Journey Magazine, and the newsrooms for the student radio station and TV-20. It is a collaborative environment where students from different platforms work together. The newsroom also serves as a press conference room for newsmakers and guest speakers.

The newsroom features four Apple iMac computers with Adobe Creative Cloud software, Apple Final Cut Pro, and CNN Newsource, plus eight HP computers with AP ENPS. Students can be found throughout the day working on packages, newscasts and producing material.

Journey Magazine publishes stories regularly online and provides a full print edition once each semester. Students note that they produce enough material to publish more than one print edition each semester but say the funding to do so is not available.

The FAMUAN is a digital only school newspaper, with stories updated daily.

The unit has its own Journalism and Graphic Communication Library housed in the building, staffed by a full time librarian. Books, hard copies of academic journals and periodicals, and multiple computers are available to students.

(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 building's numerous classrooms, offices, computer labs, studios, and gathering areas create a clean, modern and inviting environment for teaching and learning.

Audio and video production facilities are open for student use 11 hours daily, with additional hours as needed. The equipment in all the studios is modern and digital, and have staff available for help if needed.

A partnership with Adobe gives every student on campus free access to all Adobe production software for audio, video and graphic production. This software is also available on the many computers in labs around the building.

The unit has video cameras, tripods, photography cameras and other recording equipment available for checkout during business hours. Students can check out equipment as long as necessary depending on their project or assignment. Students report they have access to the equipment when it is needed, and they don't have trouble getting it.

Laptops can also be checked out by students on an as-needed basis.

SUMMARY:

The School of Journalism & Graphic Communication has the resources it needs to meet its mission and educate its students. It is treated fairly by the university and the dean has shown great success in securing grants and outside funding to keep equipment up to date. Students feel fortunate to have opportunities to put their education in practice at professional level broadcast and print facilities.

Overall evaluation, compliance/noncompliance: 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 unit actively engages with its alumni and industry professionals through initiatives like Grads Are Back (GAB), Board of Visitors (BOV) meetings, and career fairs. These interactions ensure curriculum alignment with industry standards and provide students with networking opportunities. Alumni surveys and social media engagement helps to track employment outcomes. Recently the unit reached out to alums via email, social media, Canvas, flyer (QR Code), word of mouth, and text messages to survey them on where they were located and the status of their career journey. Alumni are currently working at places like Sirius XM, Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), ESPN, Yahoo Finance, Moore Agency, CNN, NBCUniversal, Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Disney, Bloomberg, TEGNA, Los Angeles Times, Meta, Microsoft, Carnival Cruise Line, Golin, Conde Nast, and Google.

(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.

Faculty participate in professional organizations such as NABJ, PRSA, and SPJ, and contribute to professional discourse through guest lectures and workshops. The unit has hosted ethical discourse events like the Civil Discourse Program, fostering discussions on media integrity and other topics that impact careers in journalism and public relations. When speaking with faculty, there was agreement that the unit offers and supports professional development.

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

The unit contributes to its community through student service-learning projects, media literacy initiatives, and partnerships with local schools. The public relations and journalism faculty have shown a strong commitment to professional and public service through various activities. For example, Dr. Bettye Grable has served as a judge for the Tallahassee Short Films competition and the Annual Florida Statewide History Day, and as a book reviewer for the University of Florida Press. Prof. Kenneth Jones has coordinated educational tours, managed media relations, engaged in community outreach, and volunteered for numerous organizations. Faculty advisors support student organizations who perform community service such as working at homeless shelters and community clean-up projects.

(d) The unit supports scholastic journalism.

The unit actively supports scholastic journalism through faculty mentorship, high school outreach programs, and journalism competitions. In partnership with the FAMU Developmental Research School (DRS), a K-12 school, the unit has organized informational sessions and tours for students to experience the broadcast facilities and learn from faculty and staff. The unit is exploring a deeper collaboration with DRS and its Digital Media and Multimedia Design (DMMD) Academy in the coming year.

The unit opens its doors to host students participating in various programs such as the Black Male Explorers, TRIO program, Tallahassee State College Summer Verizon Camp and Teen Leaders of

America Residential Summer Program throughout the academic year. These opportunities allow the unit to engage with groups about media and expose them to the journalism/PR program. Additionally, the unit takes part in university-sponsored events such as the annual STEM Day for students in grades 6-12, to expose them to technology, digital media, and immersive storytelling.

SUMMARY:

The unit excels in professional and public service through robust alumni engagement, industry collaborations and partnerships, and community contributions. Community groups use campus facilities, including notable alumni, and other notable celebrities and major corporations.

Overall evaluation, compliance/noncompliance: COMPLIANCE

PART III: Summary by site visit team

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

Strengths:

The Florida A&M University School of Journalism & Graphic Communication (FAMU SJGC) stands as a school of great distinction, driven by a visionary leader in Dean Mira Lowe. She has transformed the unit's culture in just three short years. Her efforts are supported and acknowledged by the Provost and other administrators at the university. Unit collaboration fosters deeper connections with the larger community through strategic partnerships, innovative programs, and engaging activities that bring even more industry professionals and thought leaders to drive student opportunities and insights. The unit has always been a model for other schools within the university and is now being branded as the center for excellence in creativity across campus and the larger community. The school's state-of-the-art technology and facilities ensure that students gain hands-on experience with professional equipment, seamlessly preparing them for real-world opportunities. At the heart of it all, the dedicated faculty foster a strong sense of family and community, prioritizing collaboration and student success, making the unit a nurturing environment where future industry leaders are cultivated.

Industry leaders, news organizations, public relations agencies, major corporations and other entities regularly seek out SJGC students, recruiting them for competitive internships and employment that demand advanced skills, further proving the school's reputation for producing workforce-ready professionals. Seniors consistently secure multiple job offers before graduation, going on to lead in their respective fields—ranging from network news presidents to entertainment icons and influential business leaders. With nearly 100 percent of graduates securing employment in a variety of industries globally, the unit remains a powerhouse for career success.

Weaknesses:

Although the unit has made strides in assessment, some faculty struggle to understand its importance in continuing to make curriculum adjustments so that what is taught remains current. Also, because of curriculum changes, assessment measurements in upper-level capstone courses need to be changed.

There is an over-emphasis on television broadcast news in course work and student experiences that can exclude other platforms and journalistic disciplines. Students expressed frustration with not having significant exposure to courses in sports journalism, investigative journalism, in-depth radio production, etc.

The unit is not taking full advantage of the opportunities provided by growing national enrollment in public relations programs.

Although there has been improvement in research productivity, more needs to be done, including more recognition of and support for creative projects by faculty who engage in professional practices.

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

In 2018, the unit was in noncompliance on Standard 5: Scholarship: Research, Creative and Professional Activity, and Standard 9 Assessment of Learning Outcomes. The team determined that the unit's research productivity did not meet strategic goals. The unit also failed to review direct and indirect measures to assure assessment results that could be appropriately analyzed. A 2020 revisit found the unit in compliance on both standards. The unit re-established a research fund from the Knight Foundation, established a research committee and worked to begin collaborative research with other units. In assessment, the unit conducted training sessions and course reviews to better connect with ACEJMC core competencies, coordinated with campus to utilize its assessment system to collect and analyze data. The unit has continued and strengthened many of those practices in the four years since the revisit.

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

The self-study effectively demonstrated the unit's strengths, commitments, and challenges while aligning with ACEJMC accreditation standards. It provided a thorough and transparent assessment of the program, presenting a balanced view of successes and areas for growth. The thoughtfulness in addressing faculty engagement, curriculum enhancements, and industry alignment reflected a unit that is proactively improving its academic and professional offerings.

While minor areas for refinement exist, the self-study was a strong representation of the unit's work and a valuable tool for guiding accreditation discussions.