

## **UCC Program Review Committee Summary of Review**

**Program:** Journalism

**Date of last review:** AY 2015-2016

**Date of this review:** AY 2021-2022

The program offers the following degrees, minors, and certificates:

- Ph.D. in Mass Communication
- Master of Science in Journalism
- Bachelor of Science in Journalism
- Minor in Advertising and Public Relations
- Minor in Journalism

**Recommendation:** This program is found to be viable.

See report for commendations, concerns, and recommendations.

The report was forwarded to the schools's director and the college dean. Their responses are attached.

The Graduate Council's comments are included as well.

**The Seven-Year Program Review  
University E. W. Scripps  
School of Journalism at Ohio University**

*Final Draft: Dec. 10, 2021*

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(Outside Evaluator)

Ohio University E. W. Scripps School of Journalism 7-Year Academic Program Review  
Determination: Program is **viable**

**Please provide a narrative describing your observations and judgments regarding the overall state and quality of the program. Please address, at the minimum, the following questions in your summary. Provide any additional relevant information as needed.**

**Overview**

The seven-year program review of the University E. W. Scripps School of Journalism at Ohio University was conducted in November 2021 as a virtual site visit on Nov. 17 & 18 with multiple sessions held between 8 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.

The review committee consisted of Professor Mia Moody-Ramirez, Baylor University (external reviewer) and Ohio University professors Brian Hoyt (College of Business/Lancaster Campus) and Anna Brooks (Exercise Physiology). The site visit was held remotely via Teams due to the COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions on travel/campus access. The committee determined that the E. W. Scripps School of Journalism program is and plays an important role in Ohio University overall.

The committee was provided with the unit's seven-year self study in November 2021. The self study provided the essential information needed for the review; additional documents provided to the committee included the unit's diversity plan, knowledge survey, internship evaluation, and video tour of School of Journalism.

The review period is 2014-21. The review committee noted that the unit experienced reductions in faculty, enrollment related to deep budget cuts/enrollment declines across Ohio University since 2019-20. These cuts were compounded by the COVID-19 crisis, which struck Ohio University in February 2020 (just before the unit's spring break).

**1. Evaluation of the program as a whole**

E. W. Scripps School of Journalism has been continuously and fully accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications in Journalism since 1952. It has two tracks: News & Information and Strategic Communication. In addition, it has a graduate program, which

includes a Master of Science degree in Journalism and a Ph.D. program with a minor in Journalism, and a minor in Advertising and Public Relations.

The J-School report indicates its retention and graduation rates are higher than most other schools in the university. Likewise, most of its majors speak highly of the school.

**Is the current number and distribution of faculty sufficient to carry out the broad overall mission of the unit (Teaching; Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity; Service).**

According to the self-study, the unit once had 23 full-time faculty members; It now has 15. Some faculty members indicated they are struggling to meet the demands of teaching and advising. In addition, faculty indicated they have increased service loads and research/creative demands. Many individuals interviewed during the site visit mentioned needing more teaching power.

However, the unit's faculty members are committed to educating the next generation of journalists.

**Is the level of service, outside of teaching, appropriate for the program given its size and the role that it plays in the University and broader communities it interacts with? Is the unit able to fulfill its service mission?**

Professors help students hone their skills. They become more confident writers, communicators, storytellers, and users of equipment associated with the communication/journalism industry. Students note that professors in the program have professional backgrounds in the communication industry.

The OU J-School is noted for its use of faculty—not staff—advisers to guide students. Faculty receive a course-load release for this task. Advising surveys are done by students every year. In theory, merit raises are tied to survey feedback (however, merit raises have been on hold for several years).

Students stated they enjoy being advised by faculty members who are journalism veterans. Faculty stated that having faculty advisers has been a great recruitment tool for the unit. One student stated, "They have our best interests in mind. They are passionate about their work."

Other bright spots in the program include a podcast certificate. A faculty member has repurposed an empty office to make a facility available. The honors program is diverse and progressive in its recruitment efforts. The new director has recruited a high percentage of diverse students to participate in the program.

The unit gives out a quarter of a million in scholarships a year at a big awards banquet in the spring.

**Does the unit have an appropriate level of financial resources, staff, physical facilities, library resources, and technology to fulfill its mission?**

The unit has one office assistant, a director and 15 full-time faculty members. The office assistant has seven work-study students who work part time to assist with everyday needs in the office. However, College resources for J-school faculty lines have been frozen. With recent University buyouts and retirements, many faculty members have opted to retire early, which has created a shortage of professors in the department.

Students mentioned not having as many courses from which to choose. They stated they had a larger selection of courses few years ago. It is recommended the unit to make an effort to hire more full-time faculty before the next site visit (Although, this may be may be impossible with budget cuts and University limitations).

Funds are available to help faculty produce research. All newly hired faculty members on tenure track are allocated \$15,000 that must be spent in three or four years. Tenure-track faculty indicated funds are also available for diversity-related research. In addition, they noted that OU provides funds for research \$8,000 (internal grant). Faculty receive \$2,500 a year for domestic conference travel. Additional funds are available for international travel.

Faculty note that resources are provided by the J-School based on endowments from HTC funds, which individual faculty earn by taking on extra work. Some faculty indicated they have funds for laptops, travel and other needs.

#### 1. Undergraduate Program:

##### **Is the unit fulfilling its service role, adequately preparing non-majors for future coursework and/or satisfying the needs for general education?**

Students are eager to join the OU family and to be a part of the E.W. Scripps program. Some students said they are eligible to graduate early, but they have opted to stay on for an extra year. Students described the unit as being very hands-on. They noted that the program offers many opportunities to work in journalism, particularly in specific areas of interests that they may not find at other universities. One student mentioned that an OU degree “stands out on your resume and LinkedIn.”

Students mentioned the department had a popular broadcast cluster program that produced a half-hour newscast by rotating students through every position. The four classes involved in the program were Advanced Editing, Producing, Online Reporting, and Advanced Reporting. Students praised the cluster program, which produced quality, well-trained students. The program ended during the pandemic after the school lost access to cable channel. Faculty members hope to make the program viable post-Covid.

Alumni indicated career development is sufficient. There is an electronic newsletter, jobs podcast and Handshake. In addition, a variety of student organizations have workshops which teach them how to interpret the DARS. Faculty help students with the holistic planning of finding internships and jobs; however, students must commit to it. The unit also regularly invites guests from the industry, and offers resume workshops.

One student stated, “the journalism school has helped me improve my reporting skills. I wasn’t sure what I wanted to take, but they welcomed me with open arms.”

##### **Is the program attracting students likely to succeed in the program? Is the number of students appropriate for the program? Is the program attracting a diverse group of students?**

The unit reports suffering a steep decline in majors this review period. The decrease in enrollment

numbers is due, in part, to budget cutbacks and external factors, such as misinformation campaigns about the realities of the journalism job market and the perception that “print journalism is dying.”

The self study indicates response rates to exit surveys have been low, which means the findings are not statistically generalizable. However, the alumni who respond to the surveys indicate they are extremely to very satisfied with the education they received while at OU. They were also pleased with the quality of instruction, the rigor of the curriculum, and their interactions with faculty and their classmates. Most journalism alumni who responded to the surveys indicated they are employed in full-time jobs and earning more than \$42,000 a year to start.

Worth noting is alumni responses also revealed there is room for improvement in the quality of the school’s advising, guidance, career planning and placement. Faculty members hope to address these concerns with the recent addition of four new success advisers in the Scripps College of Communication. Specifically, the school aims to improve its ratings in advising and career planning prior to the next review. Many faculty members have complained about the addition of those advisers, but not restoring support staff (especially not restoring the position of a full-time assistant).

To provide another dataset on alumni success, the J-School has developed an in-house assessment measure that tracks social media profiles of alumni. Student workers help carry out system. They search LinkedIn for information on where alumni are employed. The data is collected and forwarded to faculty and staff for analysis.

### **Diversity in Students**

Although the unit has more diversity among students than among faculty; students also mentioned not having much diversity in students.

**Diversity — Enrollment: Freshman - Ethnicity**

|      | Total | White | Non-white  |
|------|-------|-------|------------|
| 2013 | 224   | 190   | 34 (15%)   |
| 2014 | 205   | 168   | 37 (18%)   |
| 2015 | 199   | 168   | 31 (16%)   |
| 2016 | 156   | 137   | 19 (12.2%) |
| 2017 | 146   | 115   | 31 (21%)   |
| 2018 | 139   | 113   | 26 (19%)   |
| 2019 | 113   | 99    | 14 (12.4%) |
| 2020 | 129   | 106   | 23 (18%)   |

The unit does not have a student chapter of NABJ. They discussed reinstating a chapter; however, students pushed back because they are more interested in the Black Student Communication Caucus organization.

Students are required to take a gender, race and media course.

### **Diversity in Faculty**

The self study indicates faculty and staff have made diversity a high priority in developing job

descriptions, distributing job ads, conducting in-person recruitment at conferences and seminars, and screening applicants for interviews.

The location of the Athens campus has made it hard to recruit and retain faculty of color who may among media-professionals-turned-scholars prefer closer proximity to more urban areas. Worth noting is there are many women on the faculty. With the many frozen faculty lines that may eventually come available, the unit has the opportunity to hire faculty from diverse backgrounds.

In an effort to recruit a more diverse faculty, the J-School has attempted in recent years to pursue “opportunity hire” or candidates from diverse population who express interest in the unit’s program. The unit succeeded in recruiting and hiring a Black male faculty member after recruiting him for several years. He joined the faculty and is on tenure track. Also worth noting is the Program Director is a Black woman.

Upon request, the unit provided a copy of its diversity plan, which extended through 2014. The plan provides a roadmap and specific guidelines to facilitate and achieve greater diversity and inclusion within the School’s faculty and student population. The diversity plan notes that it is working within the confines of university policy. It includes ideas for how the J-School might reach its goals for retention and recruitment of faculty and students. Tips include increasing scholarships funds for students, developing a diverse pipeline of candidates, recruiting at professional organizations. However, there are not any goals, outcomes or measures in place for diversity.

### **Are the resources and the number of and distribution of faculty sufficient to support the undergraduate program?**

Overall, students said they have access to equipment that is adequate for their needs. However, some students mentioned checking out equipment that and finding out it is broken or not as nice as equipment in other departments.

The J-School was recently challenged with a \$5 million budget cut. The J-School lost faculty because of budget cuts. There was an impact in graduate program. The dean made a decision on where funding for those programs would go. The dean said he made strategic decisions to prevent having to lay off instructional faculty.

The unit has experienced a decline in enrollment numbers and a significant decrease in the number of faculty members, which has resulted in a significant decrease in the diversity of faculty.

An online program is also in the pipeline. If approved, it will allow students to set their own course of study. The online program has received mixed reviews. One faculty member stated, “The online program feels outside our mission.” Another faculty member mentioned, “We pride ourselves on being a residential campus.” The online program hasn’t been approved, but the unit is operating as if it is going to be approved.

If approved, the online program will bring revenue to the department. The revenue may provide funds for salary lines.

During the site visit, many faculty members mentioned recent budget cuts and unfilled faculty lines and fewer faculty members. Adjunct faculty have filled the void; however, they are not as committed as full-time faculty. Overall, service loads have increased with fewer faculty expected to do more work (especially due to cuts in support staff and GA funding).

Part-time faculty are unable to devote the time needed to make the program thrive and grow. Faculty have more students to advise because the school has recently experienced issues with: retirements due to buyouts, a decrease in stipends for graduate students and switching to an online platform at the beginning of the pandemic.

The unit eliminated a collaborative broadcast media program and an exchange program with Germany due to budget cuts. Faculty members and students indicated they miss both programs.

**Are pedagogical practices appropriate? Are program learning outcomes adequately assessed?**

It appears the program is doing a good job assessing learning outcomes based in accordance with the ACEJMC values and competencies. Its assessment plan has four indirect and three direct assessment measures.

**Indirect measures:** 1) Syllabi audits 2) Alumni 3) survey responses 4) Tracking alumni using social media 5) Student competitions/awards

**Direct measures:** 1) Employer Internship Performance Evaluations 2) Freshmen/Senior Knowledge Survey 3) Senior Capstone Project Review

The unit closes the loop by sharing results with faculty and making changes to curriculum and courses based on feedback from each direct and indirect measure.

**Evaluation of graduate program:**

Graduate students mentioned being satisfied with the graduate program. For the most part, they stated they receive a great education from devoted faculty members who have professional experience and care about students. One student mentioned a faculty member, in particular, being super encouraging. She chose the graduate program because of funding. “I am grateful that I can create the path I want. I came because of the reputation of the journalism school. I fell in love with the professors. She met with me numerous times to talk about the program. She was the best resource. I have no regrets for doing it.”

Another student, who receives a Fulbright Scholarship, stated: I applied to five journalism schools. I am a nontraditional student. I spent my whole adult life working as a journalist. I wanted to find a school with professors who had spent 20 years in a newsroom. Here, most professors had many years of experience in the newsroom. Having a native professor in the department helped me make my decision.”

The students indicated that it is hard to tell if the number of students in each course is appropriate because many of the courses have been online because of the pandemic.

The graduate program attracts students from diverse backgrounds with varying levels of experience. It

has great diversity—both domestic and international. The students are researching diverse topics as well.

**Does the program provide adequate mentoring and advising to students to prepare them for discipline-related careers?**

Students have faculty mentors who are interested in their career areas; however, there are few courses from which to choose. One student mentioned she couldn't find an elective to take in the fall. There is a shortage, possibly due to the shortage in faculty. Another student mentioned she would like to see the doctoral program be made into a four-year program to allow students to teach.

**Are the resources and the number of and distribution of faculty sufficient to support the graduate program? Does the program offer appropriate financial support to graduate students?**

Graduate students who participated in the discussion felt they get adequate support for their jobs. However, some reported feeling overworked as office worker/graduate assistants depending on faculty assignments.

Other comments:

- Stipends have been reduced.
- The cost of living is high in Athens. Students do not receive enough graduate funding to pay for housing and other expenses.
- The unit has cut many assistantships.
- As a GA, it seems like a lot of work, for not a lot of pay.

Graduate students indicated they had more than enough funds to travel prior to the pandemic; however, they have not needed it in recent years. They mentioned difficulty accessing funds and a complicated system for reimbursement. Conversely, students noted concerns regarding resources. Several students mentioned having difficulty using SPSS on private computers. They also noted that Covid hindered the learning environment. One student said she checked out a laptop and it was very slow.

Graduate students also mentioned the need for a cultivation of community; and they would like to know what their peers are publishing. One student stated, "I wish we had a collaborative space or a working lounge. We don't know each other. We feel isolated. It would be nice to have a dinner party with graduate students."

**Are students able to move into to discipline-related careers?**

Yes, graduate students interviewed said they are able to move into discipline-related careers if they so desire. Students mentioned being interested in careers in public relations/strategic communications, television studio, and magazine.

Most students interviewed are already employed. One graduate student has a job at the Middle East Institute in DC. Another international student is planning to move home after completing the program. This particular student stated that he is better off having experience in the United States prior to going home.

**Areas of concern:**

- Decrease in full-time faculty members.
- Decrease in student enrollment numbers.
- Elimination of the newscast cluster.
- Diversity in faculty and students.
- Lack of community for graduate students.

**Recommendations:**

- Continue to make diversity and recruitment of diverse students and faculty a priority.
- Make succession planning a priority.
- Reinstate the newscast cluster.
- Consider creating a database of internship opportunities to cut down on the number of emails about internship opportunities.
- Consider offering more diversity internships.
- Have smaller and more focused involvement fairs to introduce students to different organizations offered in the J-School.
- Make sure Handshake is relevant to J-School.

**Commendations:**

- Professors have the best interest of students in mind.
- Professors have professional backgrounds and are passionate about their work.
- In-house advisement by faculty.
- Adequate equipment.
- Podcasting certificate.
- Honors tutorial program.
- Students can stay an extra year to get a 4+1 (in the Pipeline).

**Overall judgment: Is the program viable as a whole? Viable**

## E. W. Scripps School of Journalism 7-Year Academic Program Review

November 2021

Internal Reviewers:

Anna Brooks, Associate Professor of Instruction, Exercise Physiology

Brian Hoyt, Professor, Management

### Overview of School of Journalism

#### **Faculty and School of Journalism mission**

The current number and distribution of faculty are sufficient to carry out the mission of the E.W. Scripps School of Journalism. However, there are areas of their mission that could be improved by adding additional and more diverse faculty members. The mission states that journalism will be taught through “a blend of professional education, practical experiences and intellectual exploration...”. Due to a decrease in faculty, one practical experience, a class cluster with a News@Noon production, has recently ended. Both faculty and students saw value in this experience and bringing it back would further support the school’s mission. Due to the elimination of faculty lines, the current teaching, advising and administrative loads placed on faculty may limit their future creative activity. The school suggests that adding more full-time faculty and even renewing an administrative staff to the school could help lighten the load on the current faculty and allow them to provide more and better-quality experiences like those mentioned in their mission statement. Currently, with the school having fewer faculty and administrators than ever, they are still managing to teach at their contracted loads, advise all of their own students and produce scholarly work that is important in the journalism field.

#### **Faculty Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities**

The SJ faculty, overall, are an engaged and creative faculty. As a group they excel in scholarly and creative works including authoring books, textbooks, conference papers, book chapters, and invited speakers at conferences and discipline related workshops. The strong pedagogical productivity aligns with the SJ mission and the accrediting body’s emphasis on skills and applied knowledge. External funding is an area that could alleviate some of the recent budget cuts and provide faculty with the financial support to continue the innovative and important preparations for future shifts in news and information as well as strategic communication.

#### **School, College, University Service**

The research, scholarship and creative activity mission for the school “encourages activity at all levels: campus, local, regional, statewide, national, and international”. A high level of service to the university and the geographical and professional journalism community is demonstrated by the faculty within this unit. Many faculty serve student based journalism organizations on campus such as *the Post* and *Backdrop Magazine*. They also are active in academic and professional organizations, and many at a high level, serving as volunteer officers and committee members, judges and coordinators for professional and academic award competitions. The faculty offer great service to the community, mentoring local high school educators, providing commentary and coverage on local events. The school is well known

within the university and the journalism community for its reputation and the service load held by the faculty is a large part of the exposure of the program.

### **Resource Allocation**

During this 7-year cycle for SJ Ohio University is in the midst of a severe budget crunch with numerous budget cuts, a furlough, several early retirement separation offers, and laying off faculty (not renewing contracts), staff, and some administrators. The impact on SJ has been noticeable with funding for MSJ graduate assistantships eliminated, loss of staff, and funding for faculty and student support reduced. Only essential technology (hardware and software) is approved by Ohio University's IT department. Physical facilities and library resources are adequate. While the mission of SJ is being maintained by collaborative efforts of faculty, staff, and administrators the long-term impact is of concern, especially if the budget issues continue.

## **Undergraduate Program**

### **General Education and Service to Non-Majors**

The school has several general education classes that students can take to get exposed to journalism without being enrolled in the program. The Journalism minor and a newly created Advertising and Public Relations minor have been declared by 40 and 79 Ohio University students respectively. The school has also created two undergraduate certificates, Social Media and Podcasting that are generating interest across the university. These general education courses, minors and certificates provide a great service to the university allowing students outside of the major of journalism to gain some of the professional skills the school is so well known for. These programs should continue to be encouraged.

### **School of Journalism's Recruiting and Enrollment**

Ohio University's School of Journalism has a very good, national reputation. Students seek out and are referred to this program for its reputation and for the expertise of the faculty that they get to work with. These students' success is demonstrated by the school's very high retention (80-82%) and four year graduation (almost 75%) rates. Student numbers have decreased over time which is a trend noted nationally by most accredited journalism schools. Faculty have attempted to increase recruiting and the recruiting of more diverse students. Most recruiting at the university has been centralized and staffing cuts have made recruiting more difficult. One of the major recruiting tools for the school is the High School Journalism Workshop. The participation in this program has increased in the past six years exposing more area teens to the field of journalism. These recruitment efforts should be supported.

### **Strengths of Undergraduate Curriculum**

The School of Journalism is accredited by the Accrediting Council for Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC) and its student learning outcomes are based on the ACEJMC professional values and competencies. The school has many practices in place to assess these learning outcomes and the quality of their program. The school uses syllabus audits, employer internship performance evaluations, a freshman/senior knowledge survey and the senior capstone project to ensure students are receiving an adequate background and are ready to pursue discipline related careers or graduate work following graduation. Internship evaluators have rated students overwhelmingly as excellent in all categories of evaluation. Additionally, the knowledge scores of seniors were higher than freshmen in all

areas assessed indicating students have significantly gained new knowledge in their time in the Scripps Schools of Journalism. These knowledge surveys and internship evaluation surveys completed by supervisors are valuable tools and should be continued. The syllabus audits have noted that domestic and global diversity could be mentioned more in journalism elective courses. Perhaps adding diverse faculty could improve these scores.

## **Resources and Faculty**

The School of Journalism (SJ) is in a precarious balancing position right now with faculty numbers. They have lost several faculties in the past 3 years impacting the skill and knowledge base of the SJ as well as the desired diversity make-up of the faculty at large. The loss of faculty up to this point has been sufficient to support the undergraduate program as a result of enrollment trends downward. Right now, with the university's budget difficulties there is a freeze on adding faculty lines and putting pressure on resources to support new initiatives (i.e., new podcasting certification) and meeting faculty diversity goals that appropriately support a more diverse student population in the SJ. With a new round of early separation offers to faculty in the SJ they are likely to lose one or more faculty. Staff cuts have placed additional burdens on faculty and directors in administrative areas.

The SJ is committed to increasing engagement with the new centralized structures put in place to save money for the university. Using the Scripps College Success Advisors, working with University Communication and Marketing directly, and sharing resources among the College's other units will provide some relief and re-allocation of resources needed to support faculty and students. The College has a firm plan for allocating resources to fill faculty lines with specific skill sets, credentials, and experience as soon as the immediate budget crisis subsides. These faculty hires will also be used to improve the diversity of the faculty at large.

The school of journalism has accomplished several notable outcomes related to the allocation of resources and faculty responses including the following:

1. Even with the reduced faculty members the SJ has maintained its established student advising model where all faculty members have approximately 25 advisees. Freshmen are advised by one faculty member and then handed off to individual faculty advisors. This advising model is valued by both students and faculty and provides opportunities for faculty to guide students professionally as well as academically.
2. Under the leadership of Dr. Elizabeth Hendrickson, SJ has launched a new Podcast Certificate and Podcast studio. This initiative is being offered using existing faculty from SJ and other schools in the College.
3. Several SJ faculty have won school, college, and university advising awards

While recognizing the budget constraints the following list of considerations are worth mentioning.

1. Faculty could work with the SJ Director, other schools in college, and the College Dean to secure internal and external grant funds. These funds could be used to purchase equipment and software for faculty and students.
2. Continue to work with alumni and corporate partners for funding opportunities and partnerships
3. Continue efforts to utilize faculty expertise and networks in the field to establish ventures similar to Podcasting Center and Certificate. These efforts are likely to attract a new student profile (majors, double majors, and non-majors) resulting in enrollment growth in SJ. This growth will help leverage new faculty hires.

### **Program Learning Outcomes**

The School of Journalism (SJ) is accredited via the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC). SJ's curriculum and learning outcomes are driven by ACEJMC's nine accrediting standards, specifically the Professional Values and Competencies section. To more effectively prepare students for professions that are rapidly shifting (i.e. newspaper vs. web-based) the SJ has focused on important competencies that are foundational to position or delivery of news and information or strategic communication. ACEJMC competencies include from critical thinking and statistical concepts to working ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness, and diversity. The Honors Tutorial College / Journalism program offers an individualized course of study for exceptional students in the SJ. The program provides an intensive immersion into the field of journalism using a tutorial framework with SJ faculty meeting individually with students. The program requires a professional project or thesis in the 4<sup>th</sup> year. A new podcasting certificate and podcast studio demonstrate effective pivoting toward changing mediums in the field of journalism. SJ has a required internship experience that provides students an opportunity to apply important skills, knowledge, and attitudes developed during the program. Indirect assessment of learning includes syllabi audits, alumni surveys and social media tracking, and individual student and student association awards. Direct assessments of learning include internship evaluations by partners, and senior capstone projects.

The school of journalism has several notable outcomes related to achieving important program learning outcomes.

1. The Podcasting Certificate, in its first-year cycle is drawing a solid cohort (20 max) moving through the 5 course (15 credit hours) certificate program. Students have a hands-on experience where they learn the fundamentals of writing, producing, and distributing podcasts. This certificate has strong potential as an attractive certificate for journalism majors, other majors in Scripps College, and non-communication majors (i.e. marketing, sports administration, sciences, health and wellness, etc.)
2. The internship program is a tremendous opportunity for students to test their skills and knowledge in positions they aspire to fill after graduation. Interns are placed in large and small organizations, different industry sectors (broadcast and print news, entertainment, sports, not-for-profit, and government agencies). Networking and job placement are common results for student internships. Intern partners rated SJ interns overwhelmingly excellent or above average in all categories (problem solving, communication, work knowledge, work habits, professionalism, ethics, job performance, and overall evaluation).

3. Student competitive awards – in 2019-20 students won 38 awards and 17 in 20-21 (covid year). These awards are from nationally recognized associations and organizations in the journalism field including the Society of Professional Journalists, Hearst Awards and the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. In addition to these individual awards SJ students are members in professional organizations. SJ's Hugh M. Culbertson Chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) awarded the Star Chapter Award for seven consecutive years.
4. Post-graduation employment – Alumni surveys (5 year post graduation) reported positive responses in career preparation, faculty advising, quality of instruction, and overall satisfaction with their education among other measures. Social media tracking for the class of 2020 reported 86.5 percent of 2020 graduates (n=111) located are working in journalism or strategic communications.
5. Freshmen/senior knowledge survey – The 44 items in the survey measure the ACEJMC professional values and competencies. The survey measures differences in learning between freshmen and seniors as measured by ACEJMC competencies. Seniors demonstrated a higher mean average on all measures and was statistically significant at  $\leq .05$ .
6. Senior capstone project – Students are required to complete a multimedia project that is reviewed by faculty and at least one industry professional for evaluation and feedback.

While recognizing the successful achievements related to learning outcomes the following list of considerations are worth mentioning.

1. General Education changes – Ohio University's new Bricks General Education structure is in implemented and SJ can evaluate the preparation students receive coming into the journalism school. Perhaps courses in Bricks cover material previous courses in SJ covered and adjustments to skill content can be made.
2. With the recent loss of the very popular, unique hands-on skill development cluster experience perhaps the Podcast Certification and Podcast studio could be the new cluster experience.

### **Preparation of students for career or academic work**

The SJ uses a wholistic and competency-based approach to prepare students for careers in news and information as well as strategic communication. The integration of ACEJMC accreditation guidelines for Professional Values and Competencies focus on preparing students to positively impact the field of journalism.

Specific activities, programs, and efforts have been implemented to prepare graduates for success in the chosen fields.

1. Co-curricular - students in the SJ have many opportunities to engage in co-curricular activities that provide direct application of skills and knowledge in journalism that mirror career positions. Co-curricular that provide career direction include learning communities, student organizations (i.e. Associated Press Sports Editors chapter, Black Student Communication Caucus, Ohio Sports Broadcasting Club, Public Relations Student Society of America, Society of Professional Journalists), newspapers (i.e. The Post), public media (WOUB), SJ Statehouse News Bureau, and Scripps semester in DC among others.

2. Internships and senior project – SJ has placed interns in over 175 organizations in 12 industry sectors.
3. SJ's extensive alumni network and professional experience of faculty provide significant industry and job specific knowledge base for students to tap.
4. Career counseling through Scripps College student success advisors
5. Graduate school – SJ students take major courses and electives that prepare them for graduate school including research methods.
6. Innovative programs and courses prepare students for tasks and emerging careers in journalism and strategic communication including the Podcast Certificate/studio, a new video magazine course, the new Online Publication Development course, and courses that include data journalism.

The school of journalism has several notable outcomes related to preparing graduates for work or future academic endeavors.

1. OU graduates are accepted into OU's MSJ and Ph.D. programs
2. OU graduates are accepted into other well regarded MSJ and Ph.D. programs
3. OU SJ graduates move into career directly after graduation. Social media tracking for the class of 2020 reported 86.5 percent of 2020 graduates (n=111) located are working in journalism or strategic communications.
4. SJ has a strong alumni network with many returning to campus to speak with and mentor students as well as provide connections for internships.

## Graduate Program

### **Recruitment and Enrollment**

The Scripps School of Journalism offers a Master of Science in Journalism and a PhD in Mass Communication (which is in connection with the School of Media Arts and Studies). These programs are nationally known and the students in these programs contribute to academic publications and presentations at some of the most important national and international conferences in the communication field. Many students have won awards for their research. Due to the school's graduate student funding being cut in 2020 the enrollment in these programs has decreased. The school will also suspend its dual master's program it offered in cooperation with Leipzig University due to budget cuts, which will decrease the diversity of the program. Some of the decrease in master's program student enrollment is also due to the program length. During the university's transition from quarters to semesters the master's program went from a very attractive one-year program to a two-year program. The school relies on these graduate students to assist with course instruction so the low enrollment impacts teaching as well as research and creative activity throughout the school. The faculty are working on several creative strategies to boost the enrollment across these programs. There are plans to create a 4+1 program to attract current bachelor's degree students to stay at Ohio University to complete their master's in journalism. The school and college are working together to attempt to create strategies to fund these individuals and hope to begin to recruit PhD students for the start of the Fall 2022 semester.

### **Preparation of Students for Career Success**

The MSJ and Ph.D. programs provide students with the necessary skills and knowledge to enter the workforce as practitioners or in higher education. Specific activities, programs, and efforts have been implemented to prepare graduates for success in the chosen fields. The School of Journalism (SJ) is evaluating a 3+1 and 4+1 curriculum change to recruit OU undergraduate students more effectively. Presently a rigorous practice-based capstone requirement is included in the curriculum. Students must complete either a thesis, professional project, or reading/papers and presentation to a panel. Both the MSJ and Ph.D. include 3 academic components. The core requirements provide a foundation in theoretical and practical issues. The second component includes elective requirements where students focus on exploration and pursuit of individual interests. The last component is a capstone experience. In addition, SJ and Ph.D. students who are pursuing careers in academe complete a “Journalism Teaching Seminar” and are mentored by faculty. SJ has developed a comprehensive plan to develop an outcome tracking data base. The data base will collect student characteristics and performance measures during the program. The database can also be populated with post graduate information (i.e. first job after graduation).

### **Mentoring and Advising**

The mentoring and advising models used in the MSJ and Ph.D. programs support student success in career pursuits in the journalism and communication field and academic endeavors. Ph.D. students are advised by the graduate director in the first year, select a dissertation chair before year 2, and form a 4-person “course of study committee”. The committee make up includes 2 Journalism faculty, one from Scripps College, and one faculty member from another college. Ph.D. students also receive mentoring in required courses (Jour 5010 Intro to Graduate Study and JOUR 6940 Research in Journalism and Communication). Ph.D. students are also mentored through the research and publication process. MSJ students are mentored for continued academic work (Ph.D.) and placement in the workforce. All SJ faculty are available and encouraged to work with and mentor graduate students. SJ faculty teach in both the undergraduate and graduate programs which strengthens the continuity for mentoring both MSJ and Ph.D. students.

The school of journalism has several notable outcomes related to mentoring and advising graduate students.

1. Ph.D. graduates have authored (single and multiple) during their program
2. Graduates have won dissertation awards
3. Ph.D. graduates have presented at academic conferences
4. Ph.D. graduates have moved onto successful careers in higher education including several prestigious programs.
5. MSJ students successfully transition to Ph.D. programs including OU’s and other institutions.
6. MSJ students who participate in the exchange program with Leipzig have successfully worked for international media companies after graduation.

In addition to the noted mentoring practices the following suggestions could add value to supporting student success.

1. Add an elective course/training on grant proposal search and writing
2. Gather graduate school alumni information via social media search and report findings for SJ reports and recruiting as part of new database.

## **Resources and Faculty**

The number of faculty is at a program low. However, due to a lack of funding for graduate students, the student population is also low. Faculty are working to support their teaching loads and graduate student advising. All faculty work with graduate students and can teach graduate or combined undergraduate and graduate courses. This gives the program an opportunity to be flexible and best serve their graduate students with the diverse strengths of the faculty and needs of the students. When the program restores funding to graduate students and has more normal graduate student numbers the current number of faculty and resources may not be sufficient to adequately support this well-known program.

## **Financial Support for Students**

In 2020 the funding for graduate student tuition waivers and stipends was cut. Previously this funding had helped the school remain competitive and attract a diverse group of top students from around the world and stay on par with peer schools that lead the ACEJMC-accredited journalism programs in the United States. This has caused the graduate student numbers to dwindle with no new PhD students admitted in 2021. This is the first time the program has not had students since it was created in 1968. These students not only are a great asset to the university through their already mentioned award-winning scholarship but these waivers and stipends were given as payment for their teaching assistance. With an already reduced faculty, due to non-renewed lines, a decrease in graduate student teaching assistants has put a strain on the faculty and resulted in heavy teaching loads throughout the school. Also, the lack of funding for master's degree students has practically eliminated the ability to recruit students from their sister school, the Scripps Howard School of Journalism and Communications at Hampton University, a historically black university.

Faculty are working to develop creative strategies to revive their graduate programs. In addition to the 4+1 master's degree program mentioned earlier, master's degree students are sought to work and are paid by other departments across campus or the university as communication, marketing or social media specialists. However, this is usually an hourly wage which is much less than the previous waiver and stipend. Another strategy being looked at is seeking Graduate Research Scholarships where other departments may fund these students to work on social media strategies or writing within their school.

## **Program Learning Outcomes**

Student learning outcomes are assessed through course progress and scores on assignments, quizzes and exams. PhD students complete comprehensive exams and are assessed for their teaching through course evaluations. Grading of capstone projects of master's degree students and dissertations for PhD students serves as an assessment fitted to the area of interest of each specific student. These are assessed by a committee to ensure the assessment is holistic and reliable and ensures the students' work meets the professional standards of the field.

## Summary Remarks

### Areas of concern.

- Funding for master's and PhD students
- Lowest ever faculty numbers, faculty lines not being filled after retirement
- Lack of diversity in faculty
- Elimination of undergraduate practical class cluster
- Heavy administrative load on faculty

### Recommendations.

- Diversity hires
- Continue work on master's 4+1
- Continue looking into PhD funding options through other departments/schools/colleges

### Commendations.

- Has managed their course load with the dwindling faculty and eliminated staff positions
- Manages several unique field trip/immersive experiences for students.
- Has explored options to bring back undergraduate class cluster as part of News@Noon program.

### Overall judgment: Is the program viable as a whole?

- a. Yes



**OHIO**  
UNIVERSITY

**E.W. SCRIPPS SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM**

Schoonover Center 200  
1 Ohio University  
Athens, OH 45701-2979

January 24, 2022

To: Bärbel Such, Chair, UCC Program Review Committee  
CC: Scott Titsworth, Dean, Scripps College of Communication

Re: E. W. Scripps School of Journalism Seven Year Review—School Response to Report

The E. W. Scripps School of Journalism would like to formally thank the team for their work conducting the school’s (virtual) seven-year review on Nov. 17 & 18, 2021 and for determining that our journalism program, which is also accredited by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC), is **viable**.

As required in the program review process, we respond in detail to the review team’s commendations, areas of concern, and recommendations, as outlined below.

| Review Comments   | School Response  |
|---|--|
| <b>Commendations</b>  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>--Professors have the best interest of students in mind.</li> <li>--Professors have professional backgrounds and are passionate about their work.</li> </ul> | <p>Thank you for these positive comments. The school has always been student-centered, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. We use our collective experiences as professional journalists and strategic communication practitioners to make our courses engaging for our students. The E.W. Scripps School of Journalism is committed to providing an education that emphasizes professional excellence, critical thinking, and social responsibility, while being an advocate of the First Amendment rights to speak and to publish as individuals and members of the news media.</p> |
| <p>Manages course load with dwindling faculty and eliminated staff positions.</p>   | <p>Thank you for acknowledging the hard work and extra effort we are putting into meeting the educational needs of our students given the small number of full-time faculty. While the external reviewer commended the school on being able to function with a dwindling faculty, the internal team listed this as <b>an area of concern</b>. We agree. We cannot continue function indefinitely with a continuous dwindling faculty.</p>  |
| <p>In-house advisement by faculty</p>   | <p>Faculty advising has been an important recruiting tool for the school. Prospective students and their parents appreciate having advisers who are journalism and strategic communication professionals. Advising students is so important to the school, we have incorporated that responsibility as part of our peer review process.</p>  |

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|  | We are evaluated on our advising in addition to teaching, research, and service.  |
| Manages several unique field trip/immersive experiences for students.  | Experiential learning and community engagement have been standard operating procedures in the J-School for the past 100 years. We have always believed these experiences make our graduates more marketable after they graduate.  |
| The journalism program in the Honors Tutorial College  | The HTC/J program is among the largest programs in the Honors Tutorial College. Our HTC/J students are productive in the areas of research and entrepreneurialship.   |
| Students can stay an extra year to get a 4+1 (in the pipeline)   | The school is considering the creation of a 4+1 option. All funding for our MSJ program was cut, so this is one way to keep a master's program while we continue to pursue funding avenues. There is a demand for our MSJ among our undergraduates who would like to stay an extra year to take more skills and theoretical classes to get for today's challenging and changing job market in media.  |
| <b>Areas of Concern</b>  |   |
| Lowest ever faculty numbers, faculty lines not being filled after retirement [resignations and one termination]. | The school cannot continue to function with fewer and fewer faculty. More retirements are expected within the next 1-3 years. The school must be allowed to fill some of the lost positions to maintain the quality of our program, meet the students' educational needs, and meet the accreditation guidelines for the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC).  |
| Decrease in student enrollment numbers   | The decline in student enrollment follows the trend experienced by Ohio University as a whole. The official Ohio University enrollment census has shown a broad decline in enrollment across the Athens and regional campuses. Low starting salaries, changes in the newspaper industry, and the increased attacks on U.S. journalists---both literally and figuratively--over the past 5-6 years may also be reasons not as many students are choosing journalism as a major. The pandemic has hampered our recruiting efforts. The faculty is working closely with the College of Communication and Admissions to take advantage of every recruitment opportunity: our weekday prospective student visit, participating Admissions' recruitment programs. |
| Elimination of undergraduate [TV] newscast cluster [practicum]   | News@Noon, a collection of four TV undergraduate journalism courses (12 hrs) in which students produce live newscasts in a classroom environment, has been a major recruiting tool to attract students who are interested in TV news. Employers in the industry also value the skills the students learn as part of this practicum and visit the class to recruit interns and graduating seniors for entry-level positions.   |

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|  | <p>Currently, the school is not able to offer this TV newscast practicum, and this has severely hampered recruitment efforts and our ability to properly train our students. The temporary unavailability of the TV newscast cluster was the result of multiple factors: the school losing its own broadcast studio when we moved from Scripps Hall to the Schoonover Center, budget cuts, loss of access to the local community access channel, and the inability to get approval to fill a tech position after the staff member in that position retired in December 2019. The external reviewer, however, did commend us for our efforts to explore options to bring back the newscast cluster as soon as possible. There are jobs available in the TV news industry—especially for producers. The school receives requests from news directors across the country for students interested in being a TV news producer. The jobs are there. We need to be able to resume training our students with the skills sets they need to get these jobs.</p> |
| Diversity in faculty and students  | <p>Diversity is one of the standards the J-School must meet under the accreditation guidelines for the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC). Our diversity course is now a required core course for all our majors---not just an elective. We lost a number faculty of color during the period under review, but a university hiring freeze has prevented us from being able to recruit and hire more faculty of color.</p>  |
| Funding for master's and PhD students  | <p>Since the period of review, the J-School's graduate program have been cut significantly. We now have zero funding for our MSJ, as previously mentioned. This is highly problematic in that the master's has always been a strong feeder into our doctoral program. Also concerning, our MSJ students have provided significant teaching power for our undergraduate curriculum. Our MSJ graduates have gone on to work at prestigious media companies around the world or moved on to a doctoral program to prepare for a career in academe. The doctoral funding has been restored—after a one-year hiatus. We are optimistic that our reconfigured Ph.D. program with sister school MDIA will be stronger than ever.</p>   |
| <b>Recommendations</b>   |   |
| Continue to make diversity and recruitment of diverse students and faculty a priority. | <p>The school did get approval to make one diversity hire for AY 2021-22. Increasing the number of diversity students and faculty has always been a priority for the J-School.</p>  |
| Make succession planning a priority.   | <p>As our faculty dwindles, so does our ability to fill administrative roles in the school (e.g., director, graduate director, undergraduate director, director of international programs). With more expected retirements and/or resignations over the next 1-3</p>  |

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|  | <p>years, the school will need college and provost financial support to hire faculty able to contribute to the school in two or more of the following areas: graduate program; school's national/international reputation for research; undergraduate core courses; technical expertise to help rebuild our TV news practicum; professional expertise to teach in the strategic communication track; an interest in administration.</p>  |
| <p>Reinstate the [TV] newscast cluster.</p>  | <p>We are in the process of re-configuring available space to create a livestreaming studio so students can resume producing their own newscasts in a classroom environment—via the internet instead of a broadcast channel. The Scripps College has promised to help the school find the funds to purchase the necessary equipment for a livestreaming lab. The school, however, still needs an instructor with the expertise to teach and maintain the technology needed for this practicum so a second faculty member can focus on teaching the news content (developing story ideas/sources, reporting, writing, and producing). Two faculty members need to be assigned to teach the TV news cluster/practicum for the students to produce and share their work.</p>  |
| <p>Consider creating a database of internship opportunities to cut down on the number of emails about internship opportunities.</p>        | <p>Ohio University wants all programs to take advantage of Handshake as the resource for students searching for internship/job opportunities. The Scripps College of Communication produces weekly podcasts to inform our students about internship/job opportunities. With our small faculty, we do not have the resources to create our own database. The school will coordinate more with the Scripps College to cut down on the number of school-level emails. The school will also continue its effort to get more employers in the journalism and strategic communication industries to register for Handshake.</p>  |
| <p>Have smaller and more focused [student] involvement fairs to introduce students to different organizations offered in the J-School.</p> | <p>Our student organizations are very proactive about promoting themselves at every opportunity such as during university and college involvement fairs. Every first-year student in the J-School is required to take a fall introductory course (JOUR 1010 Future of Media). This course includes class visits from representatives from every student organization that focuses on journalism or strategic communication. Before the end of their first semester at OU, many of our freshmen students are already involved with one or more journalism/strat comm-related organizations and student media. By the end of their first semester at Ohio University, every first-year student in the J-School knows about all the journalism and strategic communication co-curricular and experiential learning opportunities.</p> |

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| Continue to work on master's 4+1 | The MSJ Graduate Committee plans to bring a new 4+1 proposal to the full faculty before the end of the Spring 2022 semester. We are also working with the Honors Tutorial College to create a pathway for our HTC/Journalism students. |
|----------------------------------|--|

We appreciate the site team committee's time and effort with our review. The team's recommendations have provided us with additional guidance as we prepare for our next re-accreditation by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC) in the 2025-26 academic year.

Sincerely,



Eddith A. Dashiell  
Director  
E. W. Scripps School of Journalism  
230 Schoonover Center  
[dashiell@ohio.edu](mailto:dashiell@ohio.edu)



OHIO  
UNIVERSITY

Scripps College of Communication

December 12, 2021

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T: 740.503.4883  
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TO: Bärbel Such, Chair UCC Programs Review Committee  
FR: Scott Titsworth, Dean, Scripps College of Communication  
RE: E. W. Scripps School of Journalism 7-Year Review

As Dean of the Scripps College I had the opportunity to meet with the review team for the E. W. Scripps School of Journalism (JOUR), review the self-study created by the school, and also to review the response written by the school by Director Eddith Dashiell. I agree with the overall conclusion that JOUR is a **VIABLE** program. In this memo I highlight ways in which the college office will work with COMS on several action items.

During my meeting with the review team, I commented to the reviewers that the School of Journalism is dedicated to high-impact learning experiences for students. With a degree requirement that all students participate in an external internship, coupled with multiple on-campus opportunities to engage in professional work (e.g., WOUB, ESPN3, The Ohio University Post, and many others), the school has intentionally shaped its curriculum to blend classroom instruction with high-quality application. A highly engaged alumni base along with several connections to industry ensures that students are repeatedly exposed to leading industry practitioners. The success of our students is evident in the achievements of our alumni as well as multiple national awards of excellence achieved by students in the program. Indeed, the E. W. Scripps School of Journalism is an exceptional program because of its high quality, collaborative atmosphere, and desire to promote student success throughout the program.

Areas of opportunity and concern raised by the review team meaningfully summarized priorities for the school in the coming years. Moreover, Dr. Dashell's responses to those areas suggest that the school is keenly aware of those needs and taking steps, as possible, to address them. From the perspective of the dean's office, I agree with the concerns. I offer the following comments to elaborate further:

1. The review pointed out the dramatic reduction in faculty over the last several years. Of course, nearly every unit at Ohio University has experienced similar reductions to some degree or another. What will be critical for JOUR moving forward is to prioritize which positions are most critical to the school, as it is unlikely that the university will be in a position for multiple hires in any given year. Moreover, such positions will need to be justified based on student demand, program evolution, and other factors. I certainly believe that maintaining faculty in the area of digital broadcasting and digital journalism is vital for the future of the school. I will work with Dr. Dashiell to ensure that clear priorities are identified. I am pleased that we were able to hire a tenure-track faculty member this year to support multiple objectives for the school.
2. The Dean's office has already started working with the school to create a digital streaming lab, which can become the foundation for re-envisioning and reinstating the Newscast Cluster. We have obtained funding for that studio through university CARES Act resources and have already started ordering equipment; my expectation is that the studio will be operational in Fall semester. Linking this to point #1, using any hire

opportunity to emphasize digital and streaming news and information will be a critical priority to obtain maximum opportunity with this new facility.

3. I have started conversations with Dr. Dashiell, and soon with the faculty, about funding a strategic planning/action initiative that will coincide with the school's 100-year anniversary. Though the exact scale is still being determined, the college has a meaningful amount of "one-time" money that could be devoted to enacting initiatives that will focus and elevate the school. The explicit intention of this initiative will be to refine the value proposition for the school that will be appealing to potential applicants. This planning and action initiative will commence prior to the end of this semester with the objective of having specific action plans ready for implementation starting in the Fall. I believe that this initiative will be significant in addressing nearly all of the points raised during the review process, and there is no question that the review report will be essential in guiding the process.

In closing, I reiterate that the E. W. Scripps School of Journalism is an academic unit that has significant strengths and remains a viable program. Though there are obviously areas for growth and revision, the academic programs offered by the school are exceptionally strong.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Scott Titsworth".

Scott Titsworth, Ph.D.  
Professor and Dean

**From:** [Charlotte Elster](#)  
**To:** [Such, Barbel](#)  
**Cc:** [Elster, Charlotte](#)  
**Subject:** Comments from the Grad Council  
**Date:** Sunday, March 13, 2022 2:29:58 PM

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**NOTICE:** This message was sent from outside Ohio University. Please use caution when clicking links or opening attachments in this message.

Hi Baerbel,

on March 4, the graduate council met and commented on the review for the following programs:

School of Journalism: Graduate council concurs with the findings that the program is viable.

We also concur with concerns and recommendations. We also noted that program lot a considerable number of faculty during the review period, and the infusion of 1 or 2 new faculty may be appropriate to maintain the quality of the program.

At the moment it looks as if graduate council may cancel its April 1 meeting, so everything you send to me will be considered at the April 29 meeting.

viele Gruesse, Charlotte

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