



May 13, 2026

President Phil Schubert
Abilene Christian University

Dear President Schubert:

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications met May 5, 2026, in Washington, D.C., and voted 19-0 that the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication receive reaccreditation for all academic programs under review. There was one recusal for conflict of interest. Kenneth Pybus, department chair, was present.

The site team found the program out of compliance on Standard 3: Assessment of Learning Outcomes and recommended full reaccreditation.

Our policies require accredited units with a standard out of compliance to demonstrate, within three years, that the deficiencies in the standard have been rectified. The site team report identified the following issues in Standard 3:

- 1) In practice, the unit now assesses only its courses, but to close the loop it should engage in rigorous, data-driven, program-level assessment as specified (but not implemented) in its current assessment plan.
- 2) While the unit already gathers considerable data to evaluate its programs (internship evaluations, external assessment of student advertising and PR campaigns), this data should be used, along with other tools, to incorporate external professionals in the evaluation of its programs.
- 3) Increase effort to inform students of program-level outcomes through syllabi and other channels.

The unit must notify ACEJMC in writing within one year outlining its plans to correct deficiencies in Standard 3: Assessment of Learning Outcomes. The report should note issues that may delay achieving compliance with the standard. The report will be submitted in spring 2027. Requests for extensions will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Our office will be in touch with Dr. Pybus later this year to go over the details of this report.

The unit will also be required to submit a final report no later than 2029 that shows compliance with Standard 3. A Council-appointed panel will review the evidence presented and report its findings to the Council.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate with your faculty and administrators in the assessment of your program. The goal of the Accrediting Council is to help improve the quality of education a program offers to its students. Please accept my best wishes for success for the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, its students, faculty, and the professional media constituencies it serves.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Geimann". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Steve Geimann
ACEJMC President

cc: Kenneth Pybus, Department Chair
David Davies, Site Team Chair
Rafael Lorente, Accrediting Committee Chair
Susan Walton, ACEJMC Executive Director
Darren Phillips, ACEJMC Associate Executive Director