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Journalism and Mass Communications Accreditation

Principles, Policies and Process of Accreditation

Accrediting Standards

Directories

ACEJMC publishes "Journalism and Mass Communications Accreditation" annually in the fall. The Council also maintains a website at www.acejmc.org.

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ACEJMC Mission Statement

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications is dedicated to excellence and high standards in professional education in journalism and mass communications.

The Council endorses professional education that recognizes and incorporates technological advances, changing professional and economic practice, and public interests and demands.

The Council believes that students can best prepare for careers in journalism and mass communications by studying in accredited professional programs at colleges and universities. The Council embraces the value of a broad, multidisciplinary curriculum that nurtures critical thinking, analytic reasoning and problem-solving skills that are the essential foundation for journalism and mass communications education.

The Council is committed to freedom of inquiry, freedom of expression and freedom of the press as indispensable values in a free society. It expects the professional education offered by accredited programs to encourage inquiry, dissent and free expression.

To serve this mission, the Council has established educational requirements and standards and provides a process of voluntary program review by professionals and educators, awarding accredited status to programs that meet its standards. Through this process, the Council assures students, parents, journalism and mass communications professionals, and the public, that accredited programs meet rigorous standards for professional education.

The Council recognizes and safeguards the individual nature of each accredited program. It encourages educational innovation by programs in their efforts to meet accreditation requirements and standards to prepare students for careers in journalism and mass communications around the world.

ACEJMC Vision Statement

Journalism and mass communications are among the most vital forces in the maintenance of society and are fundamental to a democratic government and a free society. These forces transmit and interpret culture and bind society together; they seek to protect the rights of citizens and to inform and enlighten them as they pursue their public and private interests; and they embody the values of free inquiry, dissent and expression.

Journalism and mass communications demand integrity, fairness, understanding and skill from both the professionals who practice journalism and mass communications and from the educators who teach the professionals of tomorrow.

To sustain its mission of fostering high standards for the educational preparation of journalism and mass communications professionals, the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications dedicates itself to providing leadership to:

establish, preserve and advance standards of excellence in journalism and mass communications education;

monitor and report on trends and developments in the fields served by accredited programs in journalism and mass communications;

provide a forum for journalism and mass communications educators and professionals to assess the effects of these trends and developments on professional practice and business models to ensure that educational requirements and standards are rigorous and current;

assist journalism and mass communications programs in understanding professional and academic standards and in seeking accreditation;

convey to students, parents, educators, journalism and mass communications professionals, and the general public, the value and benefits of accreditation and its role to ensure accredited programs meet rigorous and current standards of quality in professional education in journalism and mass communications.

Purposes and Benefits of Accreditation

Journalism and mass communications are vital forces in democratic societies, and sound intellectual training and competence are essential for those who engage in them.

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications is a voluntary agency that strives to stimulate and encourage sound educational programs in these fields. The Council seeks to define and gain wide acceptance for standards of education for careers in journalism and mass communications.

Accreditation serves students, parents, faculty, employers, universities and the public at large. It is intended to ensure continued improvement in the quality of instruction in journalism and mass communications through reevaluation, including a thorough and useful self-study, at six-year intervals.

Further, accreditation provides administrators and faculty with the stimulation that comes from exchanging viewpoints with persons outside their own institutions and outside the academy. The accreditation process provides a forum for hearing and acting on complaints by students, faculty and the public.

Finally, it ensures that journalism and mass communications education continues to provide both breadth and depth of exposure to the liberal arts and sciences.

Part I. Accreditation Authority

Accreditation Defined

Courtesy of Council for Higher Education Accreditation

Accreditation in higher education is defined as a collegial process based on self- and peer assessment for public accountability and improvement of academic quality. Peers assess the quality of an institution or academic program and assist the faculty and staff in improvement. An accreditation of an academic program or an entire institution typically involves three major activities:

The faculty, administrators, and staff of the institution or academic program conduct a self-study using the accrediting organization's set of expectations about quality (standards, criteria) as their guide.

A team of peers, selected by the accrediting organization, reviews the evidence, visits the campus to interview the faculty and staff, and writes a report of its assessment including recommendation to the commission of the accrediting organization (group of peer faculty and staff, professionals, and public members).

Guided by a set of expectations about quality and integrity, the commission reviews the evidence and recommendation, makes a judgment, and communicates the decision to the institution and other constituencies if appropriate.

Accreditation is an integral part of our system of higher education. Our system consists of both public and private institutions with a wide range of types of missions, from national research universities and regional comprehensive institutions to liberal arts colleges and very small faith-related colleges to community colleges and vocational institutions.

The genius of this system is that, unlike other countries, we do not have mandatory national curricula for colleges; we do not have a national ministry of education that regulates academic standards; and students are free to choose what type of education they pursue depending on their ability and educational goals. Because it developed from this diverse set of institutions, accreditation is a flexible and adaptive process.

Institutions that seek accreditation can do so from a wide range of accrediting organizations – from national bodies that are oriented to a particular type of institution, to regional organizations that encompass a wide range of types of institutions, to specialized organizations that focus on a single discipline or profession.

History and Structure of ACEJMC

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications is the agency formally recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation for accrediting professional education programs in journalism and mass communications at institutions of higher learning.

ACEJMC's current CHEA-recognized scope is: "Programs in regionally and nationally accredited institutions within the United States and internationally that provide professional education in journalism and mass communications at the baccalaureate and master's degree level (only profession-focused master's level programs)."

The structure for evaluating and accrediting journalism and mass communications programs was established in 1945, when the American Council on Education in Journalism was formed. Its name was changed to the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications in 1980.

The Council originally was an association of journalism education and newspaper organizations. Its membership now includes national associations representing newspapers, broadcasting, advertising, public relations, professional societies, and education in journalism and mass communications. Its three public members are affiliated with neither industry nor education in journalism and mass communications.

Membership on the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications is open to all membership associations of educators or professionals (including foundations related to such associations) that are involved with the professional education of students for careers in journalism, mass communications, telecommunications and other media. Admission to the Council is subject to approval by a majority of the Accrediting Council.

The Council is assisted in its work by the office of an executive director, an Accrediting Committee, an Executive Committee, teams that conduct site visits, and an Appeals Board. The executive director's office maintains records, provides assistance regarding the self-study process, arranges site visits and meetings for the Council, and manages the day-to-day operations of the organization.

The Council elects an Accrediting Committee composed of journalism and mass communications educators and industry representatives to advise it on the accreditation status of journalism and mass communications units. A majority of Accrediting Committee members are educators. The Committee meets each spring to make its recommendations based on the reports prepared by the site teams and responses from the institutions.

The members of a site team are persons qualified to evaluate the units and curricula offered by a particular institution. The institution to be visited approves site team members before invitations are made to the individuals.

The Council comprises member association representatives and three public members. Each member has one vote. The Council makes final decisions about the accreditation of visited units, the periodic revision of its standards and procedures, and the publication of information about accreditation of journalism and mass communications programs. The Council usually meets twice each year.

The Council elects a president and a vice president from the representatives who make up the Council. The Council also selects its executive director.

The Executive Committee comprises the president and vice president of the Accrediting Council, the chair and vice chair of the Accrediting Committee, and the executive director. This committee assists the executive director and the Council president in responding to questions and in providing guidance and recommendations for decisions the president may have to make before the next full Council meeting.

The Appeals Board, appointed each year by the president, hears appeals from schools and departments regarding accreditation decisions made by the Council.

Part II. Principles of Accreditation

ACEJMC adheres to certain principles designed to recognize, protect and ensure the integrity of the academic institutions that participate in the accrediting process.

Mission of Journalism and Mass Communications
The mission of journalism and mass communications professions in a democratic society is to inform, enlighten and champion freedoms of speech and press. These professions seek to enable people to fulfill their responsibilities as citizens who mean to govern themselves. They seek to help people protect, pursue and promote their rights and interests in their personal lives and in their work in public and philanthropic service, in commerce and industry and in the professions.

Mission of Education in Journalism and Mass Communications
Professional programs should prepare students with a body of knowledge and a system of inquiry, scholarship and training for careers in which citizen and employer alike can rely upon them for their professionalism, knowledge, ethics and skill.

Institutional Uniqueness
The Accrediting Council does not define specific curricula, courses or methods of instruction. It recognizes that each institution has its unique situation, mission and resources, and this uniqueness is an asset to be safeguarded. The Council judges programs against the objectives that units and institutions set for themselves and against the standards that the Council sets forth for preparing students for professional careers in journalism and mass communications.

Commitment to Diversity and Inclusiveness
To inform and enlighten, the professions of journalism and mass communications should understand and reflect the diversity and complexity of people, perspectives and beliefs in a global society and in the multicultural communities they serve.

Programs seeking accreditation should develop curricula and instruction that educate faculty and prepare students with the multicultural knowledge, values and skills essential for professional practice.

ACEJMC Glossary of Diversity and Inclusiveness Terms

Bias – A preconceived opinion or judgment, typically negative, that may affect one's ability to make fair or objective decisions.

Cultural Proficiency – The ability to communicate effectively and work with people from a variety of cultural backgrounds, recognizing and respecting differences while fostering understanding and collaboration.

Discrimination – Unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of nationality, race, age or gender.

Equal Opportunity – Ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their backgrounds, have the same chances to succeed, including fair access to resources, opportunities and advancement.

Equity – Fairness and equal opportunity. People have different circumstances and therefore need different resources and types of support to achieve equal outcomes.

Harassment – Any unwanted or inappropriate behavior that demeans, threatens, or intimidates individuals based on their identity or background.

Involvement – The practice of creating environments in which every person feels respected, valued, and able to fully participate, regardless of their backgrounds or identities.

Underrepresented Individuals or Groups – Persons with limited representation in the field of journalism or media communication whose involvement helps provide a broader range of viewpoints.

Curricular Balance and the Journalism and Mass Communications Degree

The content and quality of a student's entire degree program are of vital educational importance and are the responsibility of journalism and mass communications units. The Council embraces the value of a liberal arts and sciences curriculum as the essential foundation for professional education in journalism and mass communications. Professional education applies the knowledge and perspectives of arts and sciences disciplines to the understanding of the modern world and to the evolution and workings of diverse communities.

The Council urges journalism and mass communications programs to advise students to acquire appropriately supervised experiences in campus media and professional internships.

Professional Values and Competencies

Individual professions in journalism and mass communication may require certain specialized values and competencies. Irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of the following 10 core values and competencies and be able to:

• apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, in a global context, and for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located;

• demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;

• demonstrate culturally proficient communication that empowers those traditionally disenfranchised

in society, especially as grounded in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and ability, domestically and globally, across communication and media contexts;

• present images and information effectively and creatively, using appropriate tools and technologies;

• write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;

• demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and service to all people and communities;

• apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;

• effectively and correctly apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;

• critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;

• apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Assessment of Student Learning
The Council seeks to promote student learning and encourages experimentation and innovation. The Council evaluates curricula and instruction based on evidence and expects programs seeking accreditation to assess students' attainment of professional values and competencies.

Assessment is a system of evaluation of student learning at the course or unit level (as opposed to grading at the individual level).

Three criteria should guide assessment of student learning:

Awareness: familiarity with specific information, including facts, concepts, theories, laws and regulations, processes and effects.

Understanding: assimilation and comprehension of information, concepts, theories and ideas.

Application: competence in relating and applying skills, information, concepts, theories and ideas to the accomplishment of tasks.

Student learning is evaluated to develop curriculum, improve teaching and enhance student learning; document what students have learned; and provide accountability.

Evaluation of student learning also enables the Council and its representatives to make fairer and more consistent judgments across units and programs.

The Council publishes a guide to assessment methods on the ACEJMC website under Resources.

Transfer Credit
The Council recommends that accredited schools accept for transfer from junior colleges no more than 12 semester hours (or equivalent) in journalism courses.

Role of Practitioners
The Council recognizes that, although the academic community must firmly control academic policies and programs, the accrediting process provides a means by which practitioners have a voice in evaluating the teaching of professional practice. They also can participate in the wider effort of the academic community to formulate educational standards.

The Burden of Accreditation
The Council tries to keep the burden of accreditation as light as possible. It recognizes the time and expense involved in preparing the self-study report and in hosting the site-visit team. It endeavors to respect the institution under review and to minimize in every way the distractions and expense of the process.

Part III. Policies of Accreditation

Eligibility for Accreditation

ACEJMC accredits units that offer professional programs that prepare students for careers in journalism and mass communications. The Council only has jurisdiction over professional, applied programs as defined in this document.

The unit bears the responsibility of defining – and justifying as appropriate for review – those components that it considers to be within the authorized scope of the Council's assessment. Some units, for example, might define media studies or telecommunication policy components as non-professional and, therefore, beyond the scope of review; others might define them, because of their structure or effect on the professional components of the unit, to be within the scope of ACEJMC review.

Schools seeking initial accreditation are required to arrange a pre-visit at the campus with the ACEJMC executive director within three to five years before an initial accreditation review. Schools pay only the expenses for travel, lodging and meals.

An invitation to accredit must be made for a unit. A unit is defined as a permanent, budgeted administrative entity that establishes the professional curriculum, has a full-time, definable faculty, is formally represented in the organizational chart of the institution, and receives a separate designation in its catalog.

The unit may be a college, school, or department that offers professional education in journalism and mass communications. Whatever the unit designation, its professional components must have sufficient autonomy to establish curriculum and freedom to act as a faculty. Therefore, the Council normally will not review a unit with less than departmental status. It will not review interdepartment or intercollege majors, except where there is a clearly designated and articulated budget, faculty and administrative structure. Each unit under review will be required to provide a budget and faculty breakout for all professional components and to provide evidence of designated leadership of those professional components.

The chief executive officer of the institution seeking accreditation must invite the review of a distinctive unit as defined above. Sometimes the invitation may be to review two separate departments that may be located in one or more colleges.

The site review team will focus its examination on all the professional educational activities that are carried on by the unit under review. It will, however, examine the entire administrative unit in which the effective control of such education is vested by assessing the relationships among the unit's professional and non-professional components. It will, for example, examine ways in which the non-professional components enhance or detract from the professional programs in journalism and mass communications through their effect on the budget, curriculum, hiring of faculty, awarding of tenure

and establishment of general policy regarding professional education. The team will assess the quality of the unit's professional components in terms of their stated objectives and in light of the specific standards of accreditation outlined in this publication.

If an accredited unit consists of professional and non-professional components, all Council publications will list only its professional components and will note only those components that fall within the scope of ACEJMC's review.

ACEJMC will not evaluate a unit that does not adhere to the Council's public accountability requirement to provide reliable and current retention and graduation data on its website. See "Probation and Suspension" Pages 36-37 for more information.

ACEJMC will not evaluate units within institutions that are not recognized by a regional or nationally recognized accrediting agency. This recognition, where such a body exists, is a prerequisite for accreditation of a unit by ACEJMC.

ACEJMC will not renew a unit's accreditation or consider initial accreditation while the institution is the subject of an interim action by a regional or national accrediting agency, or by a state regulatory agency, potentially leading to loss of accreditation status or of legal authority to provide postsecondary education; or while the due-process procedures required by such interim action remain incomplete.

Accreditation of Programs Outside the United States

ACEJMC's eligibility requirements for accreditation are the same for all programs, including those located outside of the 50 U.S. states. ACEJMC will evaluate only those international programs that are recognized by U.S.-based accrediting organizations and/or the appropriate governmental and nongovernmental quality assurance entities in that country or region.

A site visit will not occur until a completed Notice of Accreditation Review form is submitted to ACEJMC's executive director. This form, provided by ACEJMC to the unit seeking accreditation, must be completed and returned to the executive director. Once the completed form is received, ACEJMC will notify the appropriate authorizing agencies of the unit's intent to seek accreditation and will invite their comment.

All communication and documents presented in the accreditation review process must be in English.

Review of Professional Graduate Programs

The Council evaluates only professional, not academic, master's programs. The Council does not evaluate Ph.D. programs or other graduate and undergraduate programs that are designed as preparation for academic careers or that provide non-professional education. A professional master's degree program in journalism and mass communications is one that prepares students to:

• meet ACEJMC's basic competencies, with the added competency of contributing to knowledge appropriate to the profession;

• think intelligently, strategically and critically about the fundamental and complex social and cultural issues of the profession;

• master the skills and responsibilities of the profession with grounding in professional experience;

• perform the profession's roles ethically.

Graduate professional programs must distinguish themselves from undergraduate professional programs by offering advanced, rigorous courses. The majority of courses must be taught by graduate faculty. A professional master's degree program requires that half of its courses are of a professional nature and require a professionally oriented thesis, project or comprehensive examination.

If a unit requests that its professional graduate program(s) be evaluated for accreditation, it integrates material about the graduate program into its self-study report, with information about the graduate program clearly identified in the Indicators and Evidence sections for each standard. The burden of proof is on the unit to explain how its professional graduate program meets appropriate indicators.

Site-visit teams will make a separate overall recommendation for the accreditation status of the graduate program. It is possible that a team could recommend (and the Committee and Council approve) a different status for a unit's undergraduate program and its professional graduate program. Site-visit teams also will write a separate summary for each standard for graduate programs.

Review of Online Degrees

Online degrees from ACEJMC accredited programs will meet the same eligibility requirements, standards of quality and review process as onsite programs.

ACEJMC standards apply to all delivery channels including, but not limited to, traditional face-to-face instruction on the home campus or other locations, distance instruction (synchronous and/or asynchronous) using any technology, or a blend of distance and face-to-face instruction.

Conflict of Interest

This policy applies to the entire accrediting process, from the selection of site-visit teams through the final deliberations of the Council. The executive director will share this policy with each site team invitee. The chair of the Accrediting Committee and the president of the Accrediting Council will call attention to the policy at the start of each of their respective meetings.

Every precaution must be taken to ensure that all participants in the accrediting process develop and express objective opinions and make decisions free from self-interest and personal bias. It is essential that the accrediting process be as free as possible from even the appearance of conflict of interest.

Accordingly, members of site-visit teams, the Committee and the Council must disqualify themselves from accepting site-visit invitations or participating in the discussion of and voting upon accreditation issues in which they have a conflict of interest. The Council's administrative staff members, including the executive director's staff, also must guard against conflicts of interest in all accreditation activities.

The primary responsibility for determining potential conflicts of interest rests with each participant in the accrediting process. Participants who question whether they have a conflict of interest should consult with the president of the Council.

Those with conflicts of interest include, but are not limited, to:

a) graduates of the institution under review;
b) former employees of that institution;
c) those who have been consultants to the unit within the past six (6) years;
d) those who have been under consideration for employment as finalists in a search by the unit within the past six (6) years;
e) employees of the same education system;
f) those who have any other relationship with the unit that might necessitate removing themselves from the process.

Committee or Council members whose units are being considered for accreditation or reaccreditation may not vote on those units. Such Committee or Council members must leave the table while votes are being cast and counted, but they may remain in the room. Such members may not participate in the program discussion but may respond to questions when requested to do so by other Committee or Council members.

Committee or Council members who have been a part of a site team for the unit under discussion may not vote on that unit. They must leave the table while votes are being cast but may remain in the room and can respond to questions from other Committee or Council members. They must not introduce more information into the discussion than is already available from the formal written materials before the Committee or the Council. The purpose here is to create fair and equitable conditions for those units whose site teams may not be represented on the Committee and Council.

Conflict of interest challenges will be resolved by the chair of the Committee and the president of the Council at their respective regular meetings.

This policy refers to the concept of conflict of interest in the context of accreditation decisions. The prohibitions and limitations are not intended to exclude participation and decision-making in other areas, such as policy development and standard setting.

Everyone who participates in the review of a unit will be asked to read and sign a copy of ACEJMC's conflict of interest policy.

Appeals Process

The president of ACEJMC appoints a three-person board each October to hear accreditation appeals. This Appeals Board comprises two journalism/mass communications educators and one journalism/mass communications practitioner. None can be a member of the Council, the Accrediting Committee, or the site team that visited the institution initiating the appeal. No one who has a conflict of interest shall serve on the board.

When the Council decides to award provisional accreditation or to deny accreditation altogether, the president of the Council, in a letter, informs the president of the institution and the administrator of the unit and gives the reasons for the Council's decision. The appeal procedure is explained in this letter.

If the president of the institution desires to appeal the decision, the appeal must be made in writing within thirty (30) days of notification of the accrediting decision by the ACEJMC president. Appeals of accreditation decisions must be based on one or both of the following: 1) evidence that the Council failed to adhere to applicable adopted procedures; 2) evidence that, based upon the record before the Council, the decision was arbitrary and capricious or not supported by substantial evidence.

The ACEJMC president shall, within thirty (30) days after receiving a written statement of appeal, send each member of the Appeals Board a copy of the statement. The chair of the Appeals Board shall immediately notify the members of the site-visit team, sending to each member a copy of the statement of appeal. The site team members shall, within fifteen (15) days, respond to the statement of appeal in writing. The site team members' responses should be addressed to the chair of the Appeals Board, who shall forward copies of the site team's responses to each member of the board.

The Appeals Board will meet before the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Council. The chief administrative officers of the institution making the appeal and the site team chair shall be notified of the time, date and place of the meeting. They may attend the meeting, present oral and written arguments, and receive questions from the Appeals Board. The institution has the right to representation by counsel in any appeal proceedings.

Ordinarily, the Appeals Board will base its recommendation upon relevant written documents, but at its discretion it may consider points raised in the oral and written presentations. The chair of the Appeals Board writes a summary of the board's recommendation. The board's recommendation and the chair's written summary should be given to ACEJMC Council members no later than the night before the Council meeting. The chair of the Appeals Board presents the recommendation to Council members during the Council meeting.

The ACEJMC Council then considers the recommendation by the Appeals Board and exercises its responsibility for making the final accreditation decision. The ACEJMC president will notify the chief administrator of the institution and the administrator of the journalism and mass communications unit in a letter of the decision on the appeal and the reasons for the decision.

All expenses associated with the appeal, including travel, shall be paid by the institution initiating the appeal. The institution initiating the appeal must remit 80% of the estimated costs of the appeal hearing to the ACEJMC executive director's office two weeks before the date of the scheduled Appeals Board meeting.

While an appeal is pending and before a final decision on the appeal is made by ACEJMC, there shall be no change in the accreditation status for the institution making the appeal.

Complaints Process

Students, faculty, staff, administrators and other persons may report incidents in which they can present evidence an accredited unit or ACEJMC has violated accreditation standards, policies and procedures. The Council requires administrators of accredited units to inform unit personnel of this policy.

The Council does not adjudicate, arbitrate or mediate individual faculty or student grievances against a program, nor does it act as a court of appeals in individual matters of admissions, faculty appointments, promotion or dismissal of faculty, staff and students.

Complaints must be made in writing and should be addressed to the president of ACEJMC. Complaints must be accompanied by documentation showing a specific, substantive violation of one or more standards, policies or procedures.

After receipt of a complaint against an accredited unit, the president will convene the Executive Committee within 15 days to determine the validity of the complaint. If further action is warranted, the president will direct the executive director to 1) notify the accredited unit of the complaint and 2) gather relevant information and provide a response for the Executive Committee within 30 days.

The Executive Committee may then 1) dismiss the complaint or 2) find the unit in violation of one or more standards. The Executive Committee may determine a violation requires a change in the unit's accreditation status.

After receipt of a complaint against ACEJMC, the president will convene the Executive Committee within 15 days to determine the validity of the complaint. If further action is warranted, the president will direct the executive director to gather relevant information and provide a response to the complaint within 15 days. The Executive Committee may then 1) dismiss the complaint; 2) determine that an ACEJMC representative or employee may have violated a standard, policy or procedure, and counsel that individual; or 3) take further action as circumstances warrant, up to and including termination. In the case of a complaint against a member of the Executive Committee, the president will direct the complaint to the Appeals Board.

The president of the Council will notify the complainant and unit or individual of decisions in writing. Decisions of the Executive Committee or Appeals Board may be appealed to the Council for consideration at the Council's next regularly scheduled meeting.

The Council requires all units seeking accreditation to maintain records of student complaints and their resolutions. As part of the site visit, a site-team member examines the unit's record of student complaints. The Council expects this record to show timely, equitable and fair resolution of student complaints that are pertinent to the unit's compliance with accreditation standards. ACEJMC maintains records of complaints it receives and their resolutions.

Open Meetings

All meetings of the Accrediting Council and its committees are open to the public. This includes meetings of the Accrediting Committee and the Appeals Board. Votes on accrediting decisions are taken in open session. The Council may go into closed session when the discussion centers on individuals; however, no official action may be taken in closed session. (For information on open records, see "Records," Page 26.)

Review of Standards and Procedures

The Council uses several systematic methods to ensure that its accreditation standards are valid and reliable indicators of the quality of education and training provided by accredited programs, and that the standards are relevant to the education and training needs of students. The Council also reviews the validity, reliability and relevancy of the processes used to apply the standards.

If any of these methods reveals potential problems, the Council may appoint a committee to examine any standard and determine whether it remains a valid, reliable and relevant indicator of educational quality. This examination may lead to a recommendation for revision of the standard. Potential problems of validity, reliability or relevancy of the Council's processes may be resolved similarly, or may be resolved administratively.

The Council measures the validity of its accreditation standards and processes by which they are applied by determining whether the standards actually assess: 1) the quality of a journalism/mass communications program, and 2) the efforts of a program to improve its quality.

The Council measures the reliability of the standards and processes by determining whether they provide a consistent and replicable framework for assessing the educational quality of different programs. The Council measures the relevancy of the standards and processes by determining whether they are related to current educational and training needs of students of journalism and mass communications.

The Council uses the following methods to ensure the validity and relevancy of its standards and processes:

Congruency with external agencies' recognition criteria: The Council's staff examines ACEJMC's standards and processes annually to determine whether they remain congruent with the recognition criteria set by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

Validation by affected parties: After each annual accreditation review cycle, the Council's staff sends a questionnaire to each site team chair and the administrator of each program that has been reviewed. This questionnaire specifically asks these individuals to assess the validity, reliability and relevancy of the Council's standards and processes.

Broad contributions to revision: The Council ensures and documents that the broadest possible communities of interest contribute to developments or revisions of the standards and processes.

Review of noncompliance findings: The Council's staff reports annually to the Council the number of noncompliance findings reported for each standard.

Regular review of standards: Every 10 years, the Council appoints a Standards Review Committee to undertake a full review of the accreditation standards using the records of the above-mentioned processes and any other appropriate sources. This committee may recommend revision of the standards. Standards may individually be reviewed as needed.

The Council uses the following methods to ensure the reliability of its standards and processes:

Preparation of site team members: The Council conducts training sessions designed to increase site team members' knowledge of the accrediting process. Attendance at these sessions is not required of experienced team members, but it is strongly encouraged for potential new team members. Each site team member receives training materials that explain the activities and responsibilities of a site team.

Evaluation of site visits: After each site visit, the unit administrator and the chair of the site team are each asked to provide an evaluation of the site visit and the work of the team members. The evaluations are sent to the ACEJMC executive director. The Council uses these evaluations to assess the process and procedures used to conduct site visits. The evaluations also help to guide the executive director and others in the selection of site team members for subsequent visits and to develop general information and training materials for new and prospective team members.

Experience of site team chairs: Individuals are assigned to the position of site team chair only after they have served as members of several site teams and have demonstrated leadership and a thorough understanding of the accreditation process.

Records of previous decisions: The Council's staff maintains records that show, for each accreditation decision, findings of noncompliance with standards, accreditation recommendations by site teams and the Accrediting Committee, accreditation decisions by the Accrediting Council, and explanatory comment. These records may be used to ensure that current decisions are consistent with previous decisions.

Public Notice of Accrediting Actions

The Council publishes the names of units to be reviewed for initial accreditation or reaccreditation well in advance of the reviews. This notice is accompanied by an explicit invitation for comment by third parties. The invitation should specify that comments are to be submitted in writing and should be limited to addressing the academic units up for review and whether they are in compliance with ACEJMC's published accreditation standards.

Within 30 days of accreditation decisions, the Council notifies other appropriate accrediting agencies, appropriate state regulatory agencies and the public of final decisions to award accreditation, reaccreditation, or provisional accreditation; final decisions to deny, withdraw, suspend, or terminate any unit's accreditation, or take other adverse action; and final decisions by units to voluntarily withdraw from accreditation or allow their accreditation to lapse.

Within 60 days of a final decision to deny, withdraw, suspend, or terminate any unit's accreditation, or take other adverse action, the Council makes available to other appropriate accrediting agencies, appropriate state regulatory agencies, and the public upon request, a brief statement of the reasons for the decision, accompanied by any comments the affected unit may wish to make regarding the decision.

The Council submits to the Council for Higher Education Accreditation copies of its annually updated directory of accredited programs; any proposed changes in its policies, procedures, or accreditation standards that might alter its scope of recognition or compliance with CHEA requirements; any annual report it may prepare; and any annual data summary or other information that CHEA may request.

Benefits of Accreditation

Among the benefits of accreditation, two are especially important. One is the substantial value of the self-study and peer review that the process requires. The other is the assurance of quality and standards that accreditation gives to parents and prospective students, prospective employers and the general public. This second benefit is supported by the Council's commitment to full public disclosure of its actions.

Shortly after its meetings, ACEJMC releases a report of the Council's actions regarding the accreditation status of institutions that it reviews. The public announcement of its actions is made after ACEJMC notifies the institutions and provides them an explanation of the decisions.

Schools that receive provisional status will carry that designation in all of the Council's published information. These schools are required by the Council, when referencing their accreditation status, to list themselves as having provisional status. Schools seeking accreditation for the first time may be granted provisional status; however, they will not be listed in any Council material until they obtain full accreditation.

ACEJMC makes available an accreditation seal to all of its accredited programs for use in promoting their accreditation.

Information to the Public

ACEJMC encourages its accredited institutions to publicize their accredited designation in school literature and on school web pages. Institutions should ensure such publicity about accreditation accurately reflects ACEJMC actions.

Such publicity should include the specific academic or instructional programs covered by ACEJMC accreditation, as well as ACEJMC's full name, current address and contact information. The institution should ensure that making public a portion of the team report does not present a misleading picture of the content of the overall evaluation.

The Council president or executive director will notify the president of an institution when ACEJMC becomes aware that the school's use of the term "accreditation" is not in accord with ACEJMC action or is otherwise misleading. Accredited units are to use ACEJMC accreditation to promote only the degrees or specialties reviewed by ACEJMC. Unaccredited units cannot use any association with ACEJMC in promoting their programs.

In the event of such an occurrence, ACEJMC will ask the institution to correct the situation. If the institution is unwilling to do so, the Council will issue a public statement to clarify the accreditation status of a unit or specialty and will take further action as necessary.

Records

The Council keeps complete and accurate records of accreditation reviews of each program, including site team reports, responses by units to team reports, and reports of any interim, periodic, or special reviews. The Council also keeps complete records of all accreditation decisions, minutes of Council and Committee meetings, documents relating to appeals and complaints, and other documents related to its accrediting activities.

Each accredited unit's most recent site team report and the Council's most recent accreditation decision are available on ACEJMC's website under Accredited Programs at www.acejmc.org.

Older site team reports are generally available by contacting the ACEJMC office. Reports that predate the 1989-1990 academic year, when ACEJMC's open-meetings policy went into effect, are not available.

Part IV. Process of Accreditation

Invitation from the Institution

For both initial accreditation and renewal of accreditation, the process starts when the chief executive officer of the university seeking accreditation sends a letter of invitation to the ACEJMC executive director. Units located outside the 50 U.S. states also must submit a Notice of Accreditation Review form at this time. This form, provided by ACEJMC to the unit seeking accreditation, must be completed and returned to the executive director. After the initial site visit, subsequent visits are made at six-year intervals upon invitation.

The Council works on a multi-year cycle for scheduling visits. A new school must inform the ACEJMC executive director at least three years before it expects a visit in order to be placed on the schedule and to allow time for a pre-visit.

An institution that has invited ACEJMC to examine its program and render an accreditation judgment may withdraw its invitation at any time before the Accrediting Council makes its final decision on the accreditation status of the unit. ACEJMC may terminate the accreditation/reaccreditation review process for a unit if, after due notice, the institution fails to initiate the required accreditation invitation or is otherwise uncooperative with ACEJMC in scheduling the site review. When the time for accreditation renewal nears, the ACEJMC executive director reminds the institution.

Postponement of Accrediting Visits

The ACEJMC executive director has the authority to grant postponements for one year. The full Council considers requests for a second year's postponement. If the executive director denies a postponement request, the school has fifteen (15) days after receipt of notification of the denial to appeal the decision to the Council's Executive Committee. If a postponement is approved, an asterisk will be placed beside the school's listing in this publication and on ACEJMC's website indicating that the school has delayed its accreditation visit.

The deadline for requesting a postponement, for both new units seeking accreditation and for units seeking reaccreditation, is generally July 1 two years before the scheduled site visit. For example, the deadline for requesting a postponement for a unit on the 2027-2028 site-visit schedule would be July 1, 2026. The deadline for requesting a postponement for a unit on the 2028-2029 site-visit schedule would be July 1, 2027. Schools seeking a postponement are expected to meet the deadline unless the reason(s) for requesting the postponement are both late-breaking and unforeseen (e.g., natural disaster, pandemic, civil/political unrest, etc.).

ACEJMC does not routinely postpone accrediting visits. Postponements are only granted under extraordinary circumstances. ACEJMC will not grant postponements for purposes of convenience or scheduling, or for matters pertaining to new facilities, internal review, or administrative changes.

The Self-Study

The heart of the accrediting process is the self-study, a systematic examination by the unit of the environment in which it operates, its mission, range of activities, accomplishments, and plans for the future. The twin objectives of the accrediting process – quality assessment and quality enhancement – depend on a thorough self-study. The contents of the self-study should reflect input from faculty and administrators and should only be submitted if there is general agreement that it is an accurate assessment of the unit.

The self-study should concentrate on the extent to which a unit achieves its goals. Thus, the self-study's findings and judgments about the quality of the curriculum, learning outcomes, faculty, equipment, facilities, budgets and the like should be evaluated in the context of how well a unit is serving its stated purpose. The self-study will contain the unit's mission statement to aid the site team, Accrediting Committee and Council in evaluating the extent to which a unit is meeting its goals.

The periodic self-study is also a mechanism for change. It permits a unit to address the need to change its mission or its programs and activities. For example, a self-study conducted in advance of a site visit might identify a need to change a specific set of learning objectives. During the site visit, if the unit can demonstrate that it has made measurable progress in implementing this change and can provide evidence that institutional administrators support the change, and if the unit has a history of achieving its goals in the past, the site team should take this as evidence that the self-study is, in fact, functioning as a mechanism for change and is ultimately working to enhance and improve the quality of the program under review.

The Self-Study in Relation to Accrediting Standards

While assessing whether a unit is meeting objective industry and academic standards should naturally fall within the scope of any comprehensive self-examination, the self-study serves a broader purpose that extends beyond mere compliance assessment.

The self-study is not done for ACEJMC alone. It should not be looked upon as merely a compliance exercise. An effective self-study depends upon internal motivation. The unit participates voluntarily in the accrediting process as a means of quality assessment as well as quality enhancement. While the self-study must include an evaluation of the unit's performance against ACEJMC's published standards, it should also aid in effecting positive change by identifying opportunities for enhancement, growth and improvement.

Organizing the Self-Study

The self-study shall be conducted during the academic year before the site team's visit. The self-study generally is conducted every six years.

The design of the self-study will be unique to the unit, depending on its size, the range of its responsibilities, and the specific purposes of the self-study beyond an assessment of the extent to which the unit complies with the accrediting standards.

A self-study has two general objectives. First is the assessment of the extent to which the unit is accomplishing its goals, including its compliance with accrediting standards, and its capacity to do so in the future. Second is the development of a plan of action. Two questions to help measure the success of the self-study process are: Did the self-study effect change? If so, did the changes make things better?

The size and complexity of the unit will affect the structure of the self-study. It is often useful to designate a coordinator to lead the work. The coordinator may work through a steering committee, which will be particularly active in the planning and design phase and in the development of the final report and recommendations. This committee may delegate to others both inside and outside the unit the responsibility for collecting data and evaluating parts of the program.

Additionally, during the planning and design phase, the unit reviews existing planning documents, previous accrediting reports, and the current ACEJMC standards. It also develops a list of key questions to be addressed in the self-study.

At this stage, the unit may set a tentative timetable, draft a preliminary outline for the report, identify the methods that it will use to evaluate its program(s) and activities, develop a master list of data needed for the study, decide how recommendations and action items will be developed, and assign someone to write the report.

The study usually includes an examination of the environment in which the unit functions (within the institution as well as outside), an assessment of the number and quality of students served, the values of the faculty and the institution, the competitive advantages that the unit enjoys, and the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

These assessments may be followed by an examination and revision of the mission of the unit and the identification of goals, programs and activities to accomplish the mission. A next step would be the assessment of the extent to which the unit is able to accomplish its goals. Finally, the unit develops plans to enhance its chances of success and identifies a mechanism to evaluate those plans.

Having developed a mission statement, a unit might go on to examine its goals and decide whether they are clear and appropriate to the mission. Next, a unit will consider whether the programs and activities it has undertaken to accomplish those goals are consistent with the goals, whether they are working, what problems exist, possible solutions, and the adequacy of resources to meet the goals.

Finally, a unit should explore the extent of its compliance with accreditation standards and how to bring itself into fuller compliance.

The Council views a good self-study as being essential for a successful site visit. The site-visit team is asked to assess the quality of the self-study, and the team report includes that summary opinion.

Preparing the Self-Study Report

The ACEJMC executive director sends each unit that has requested a site review the digital templates to use in the preparation of the text and tables contained in the self-study report. These template files provide a coherent structure for gathering and presenting the quantitative and qualitative information that establishes the foundation of an effective self-study document. The templates are sent in September of the academic year before the site visit occurs.

The self-study report contains two parts. Part I is a set of responses to general questions about the unit. Part II provides more detailed information about compliance with the accreditation standards and supporting documentation.

Part I is essentially an introduction to the report. It covers such basics as size of enrollment in each academic specialty, the unit's mission, faculty makeup, and accreditation history. The information in Part I is included in the site team's report to the Committee and Council.

Part II of the report comprises two main sections. The first section provides supplementary information about the unit's mission and scope. This section includes summaries of the unit's history and traditions, its purpose and activities, and its goals and plans for the future.

The second main section under Part II comprises a series of subsections in which the unit documents its compliance with each one of ACEJMC's accreditation standards. These subsections contain text and tables that provide detailed information related to each standard.

The best self-studies are well written and concise and focus on key issues. They also should include input from a unit's faculty and administration. They present a candid and balanced view of the unit's strengths and weaknesses, and they provide a systematic analysis of the unit's compliance with the accreditation standards.

Compiling information for the self-study is not intended to burden a unit unduly. Whenever possible, the unit should present information and data in forms readily available.

Submission and Review of the Self-Study Report

The unit first submits its self-study report in digital format to the ACEJMC office for preliminary review. The due date is established when the site visit date is scheduled. The ACEJMC executive director will examine the report to determine whether it provides a satisfactory foundation for the site visit.

The executive director first reviews the self-study for completeness. Suggestions, if any, are then sent only to the unit head. The unit head determines whether any further revisions are needed and sends the self-study on to the site team chair.

Occasionally, the ACEJMC executive director's examination will identify significant inadequacies. The

executive director has the authority to postpone or cancel an accreditation visit if the self-study is not of sufficient quality for the site team to evaluate a unit.

In other cases, the executive director may ask that additional information be supplied to the site team. The executive director also may cancel an accrediting visit if the unit misses its self-study submission deadline.

It is the responsibility of the unit to inform the Council of any significant changes to the unit that occur between submission of the self-study and the site visit, or between the site visit and the spring Committee and Council meetings.

Exemption Requests

If a unit wishes to be exempt from all or part of a specific indicator, it must provide reasons and evidence for the exemption in its self-study. When the unit submits its self-study for review, it must specifically request exemption and identify the standard(s) and page(s) where it makes its case.

When the unit submits its self-study to each team member, it must repeat this request. The site team has both the authority and duty to grant or deny the request and must justify its decision in its site visit report.

The Self-Study Report and the Site-Visit Team

The principal responsibility of the site-visit team is quality assessment. The team must prepare its own report regarding the extent to which, in its judgment, the unit meets the standards of good practice expressed in the general principles and the accrediting standards of ACEJMC. The team must recommend to the Accrediting Committee and to the Accrediting Council the approval, denial, continuation, or change in the accreditation status of a unit.

From its examination of the self-study report before the visit, the team will develop questions about the unit to explore during the visit. The self-study report provides the basis of the team's initial understanding of the unit, its mission, the range of its programs and activities, its evaluation of itself and its plans for the future. Thus, a report that merely describes the unit is not a satisfactory base on which to build a useful site visit.

A self-study report developed from careful analysis of the unit's programs and activities will eliminate tension that sometimes develops between the site team and unit personnel concerning what a team might "find" during the visit. A good self-study should eliminate surprises. It also indicates the unit is well managed, establishes priorities accurately, and uses resources effectively.

Beyond its primary functions of quality assessment and the development of a recommendation about the accreditation status of the unit, a site-visit team may be useful to the unit in other ways. The self-study might identify questions that unit personnel may wish to ask the experts on the team during the

site visit. In that way, the role of the site team members may be expanded to include advisement in addition to quality assessment. Unit heads should discuss requests for such assistance with the ACEJMC executive director and the site team chair in advance of the site visit.

Some units couple an accreditation review with an internal program review. ACEJMC recommends holding the accreditation review first and then using the site team's findings to help plan an additional internal review.

Some units also couple their ACEJMC review with a PRSA Certification for Education in Public Relations review.

Selection of the Site-Visit Team

Site-visit teams are chosen by the ACEJMC executive director in consultation with administrative staff and ACEJMC officers. The institution seeking accreditation has the right to review the composition and curricula vitae of the site-team members. It has the right to ask that team members who may have a conflict of interest be replaced, and it has the right to expect a majority of members will be from peer institutions and industry groups and organizations with interests in programs that the institution offers.

Persons invited to serve as members of site teams are expected to disqualify themselves if they are aware of any situation or circumstance that might be a conflict of interest (or be construed as a conflict of interest) and, thus, call into question the independence of their judgments and decisions. See Pages 19-20 for complete information on the Council's conflict-of-interest policy.

ACEJMC maintains a pool of potential team members, including female and racial/ethnic minority practitioners and educators. The Council strongly encourages that every effort be made to include on each site-visit team at least one industry representative or educator who is a member of an ethnic/racial minority group and at least one female practitioner or educator. The site-visit team also should include at least one person who is not a member of the Accrediting Committee or the Accrediting Council.

Responsibility of the Institution for the Site Visit

During the site visit, the team will try to learn firsthand all that it can about the unit, its specialties and its place within the institution. Site teams examine every aspect of the unit and institution that might affect the quality of the program. Team members assess quality through interviews with faculty, administrators, students and representatives of other schools; class visits; examination of student records, alumni records and communications; examination of equipment and buildings; and analysis of budgets.

Visits are staggered over a period starting in early fall and ending in February. Precise visit dates are determined by the ACEJMC executive director and the unit administrators. The administrator of the unit being visited is responsible for arranging hotel accommodations for the site-visit team.

Visits normally start on Sunday night and run through Wednesday morning, but the days and length of the visits can vary depending on the size and complexity of a unit's program and other circumstances. The

unit administrator is asked to prepare a detailed schedule for the accreditation visit and consult with the team chair on planning the schedule. A sample site-visit schedule is typically provided by the ACEJMC executive director.

The unit's administrator has dinner with the team on the first night. It is inappropriate for sequence heads and other faculty members to attend the first night's dinner. It is permissible for the school's dean, associate dean or director to attend. The administrator can clarify points in the self-study, answer questions about the visit and schedule, and provide updated or supplementary information.
The site-team chair may wish to arrange for a tour of the building the first night.

On the first full day of the visit, the unit hosts a breakfast for the site team with faculty and a lunch with some of its advisory board members, alumni and other university faculty. Although this is not absolutely necessary, it does provide an opportunity to become acquainted. With these exceptions, site team members may not accept invitations to social affairs such as receptions, cocktail parties or meals.

During the visit, team members attend classes and interview faculty members. The team conducts two 45-minute group interviews with students on separate days of the visit. Each interview should be with 20 or more students, if possible. If the unit offers more than one sequence, the unit administrator should arrange for meetings on the second day of the visit with students in each sequence. The team also meets with the dean or provost to whom the unit administrator reports.

In the morning on the last day of the visit, the site team meets with the chief executive officer of the institution to present the site team report.

Unit heads are expected to provide site team members with a dedicated workroom equipped with desks or tables, computers, internet access, a printer, water, and light snacks, if possible. The team should also have easy access to a copier. Regarding internet access, the unit head should ensure in advance of the visit that the site team will have access to reliable Wi-Fi and that all members of the site team have been completely cleared by the school's IT department to log in and use it. Additionally, the unit is expected to confirm, well before the team's arrival, that the computers the team will use are equipped with the necessary software to open, read and edit the site report and all associated files.

Many administrators find it useful to distribute a memo about the visit to faculty and students before the site-team visit. They also should inform them of the team's recommendation after the team leaves. Administrators often give faculty members a copy of the team report.

Site Visit Report and Response from the Institution

On the last day of the visit, the team must provide its written report. The report is the culmination of the visit and is an important document. A draft must be completed before the team leaves the campus. The team is required to leave copies of the report, including the team's recommendations regarding the accreditation status of the unit, with the unit head and with the chief executive officer of the institution (or the highest administrator of the institution on the campus at the time of the visit). Both

administrators receive a copy of the report and an invitation to respond with questions, suggestions, objections and corrections of any factual errors.

Although the on-campus reporting process may vary because of schedules of campus officers, the team usually discusses its draft first with the head of the unit under review, and then with the chief executive officer of the institution. If possible, unit administrators should give the chief executive officer a copy of the report before the meeting between the CEO and the site team that takes place on the final day of the visit. At that meeting, the site-team chair should explain that the recommendation to accredit rests, first, with the Accrediting Committee, and the final decision rests with the Accrediting Council.

The site-team chair shall request errors of factual information or interpretation (if any) be corrected by the unit head in a report to be sent immediately to the site-team chair, with an informational copy sent to the ACEJMC executive director. The cover sheet of the team report includes a statement that it is a draft and may contain errors, that the school or institution may respond and offer corrections, and that the Council makes final accreditation decisions. Institution officials may file challenges of fact and judgment with the site-team chair during the three weeks following the visit. Upon receipt of the revised report from the unit and/or the institution, the site-team chair shall confer with other members of the team and make such alterations in the team's report as they collectively deem appropriate.

Approximately three weeks after the site visit, the site-team chair forwards the team's formal recommendation and final draft of the report to the ACEJMC executive director with copies to appropriate institution officials. When the team chair sends the team report to the executive director, the report is shared with ACEJMC Committee members and the Accrediting Council. Unit administrators may choose to share the final draft of the report publicly at any point during the process, but ACEJMC will not publish the report on its website until after the Council makes final accreditation decisions at its spring meeting.

Time Limits in Site Visit Process

The physical site visit establishes the frame of reference for the entire accrediting process. The accreditation decision is based on what is in place in the unit at the time of the site visit. The reaccreditation process is based on the activities, programs and materials the unit provided to students, faculty, alumni, parents and other interested parties since the previous site visit. Initial accreditation visits focus on the reporting and evidence in the self-study and any notable developments during the six-year review period. The site team makes its recommendation based on its observations, the self-study, and the catalog and other materials that the unit provides, and in comparison to the ACEJMC standards in place at the time of the visit.

Accreditation Decisions

The Accrediting Committee meets once a year, usually in March, to review site team reports. During this meeting, each site-team chair presents an executive summary of the site visit. Committee members often seek additional information from team chairs about the site visit and ask for clarification of information in the team report. The Committee then forwards its recommendations to the Accrediting

Council, which meets later in the spring to consider accreditation decisions. The Committee chair presents the Committee's recommendations to the Council. In the event a site team's recommendation is overturned at the Committee level, the site team chair should be available during the Council meeting to answer any questions. The unit under review is responsible for paying any additional costs involved.

Meetings of both the Committee and the Council are open, and unit administrators or representatives are encouraged to attend to observe and to respond to questions from Committee or Council members.

The Council makes final decisions of accreditation status for the units under review. The president of the Council writes a letter to the institution's chief executive officer with a copy to the unit administrator, informing them of the Council's decision.

The letter contains a statement of any deficiencies noted and, when the decision is for provisional accreditation or denial, provides notice of the right to appeal.

Accreditation Status

Accreditation is for a six-year period. Council decisions fall into three categories – **accreditation** (either with or without one or more standards out of compliance), **provisional accreditation**, and **denial.**

A policy enacted in 2024-25 requires accredited units with a standard out of compliance to demonstrate, within three years, that the deficiencies have been rectified. When the Council accredits a program that the site team has cited for noncompliance on a standard, the unit head must submit a report to ACEJMC within one year outlining its plans to correct the deficiencies. The report should note issues that may delay quickly achieving compliance. Within the next two years after the one-year report is submitted, the unit head will be required to submit a final report with evidence showing compliance on the standard(s) at issue. A Council-appointed panel will review the unit's final report and deliver its findings to the Council. Requests for extensions after the one-year report is submitted will be considered by the Council on a case-by-case basis.

A unit may receive **provisional accreditation** when the Council has found deficiencies that are serious enough to warrant reevaluation by a site team but are not so serious that they can't be corrected in a relatively short period of time. The term of provisional accreditation is two years. A unit with provisional status has the option to schedule a revisit within one year of the time the provisional accreditation was granted. The site-team chair, accompanied by another individual agreed upon by the ACEJMC executive director and the unit, conducts a brief revisit near the end of the provisional period. The revisit team assesses the unit's success in addressing deficiencies and writes a report, with an accreditation recommendation, that is considered by the Committee and Council. Provisional accreditation cannot be extended beyond established terms.

When the accreditation is provisional, the Council president includes details of the deficiencies and the process for Council reconsideration in a letter to the chief administrator of the institution. Provisional

accreditation is a valuable opportunity for the unit to retain accredited status while it addresses and corrects deficiencies.

Units seeking first-time accreditation do not qualify for provisional accreditation. If a unit seeking first-time accreditation has deficiencies that place it below the qualifying threshold for accreditation, but those deficiencies are not serious enough to warrant denial, the unit will remain unaccredited while completing the corrective process for provisional programs as outlined above. Accreditation, if then granted, is in effect for the remainder of the original six-year accreditation cycle. For example, if a unit clears the deficiencies and is accredited at the end of the usual two-year corrective process, its accreditation will be in effect for four years.

If accreditation is **denied**, the school must wait at least two years to request an accreditation review and site visit. This subsequent review and site visit are treated as an initial review.

If a college or university containing a unit accredited by ACEJMC is placed on probationary status or has its regional or national accreditation revoked by a recognized accrediting agency, ACEJMC will review the unit's accreditation status within 90 days to determine whether cause exists for withdrawal or other alteration of its ACEJMC accreditation status.

Probation and Suspension

In the interest of public accountability and disclosure, ACEJMC requires accredited units to publish retention and graduation data in a prominent, easy-to-find place on their websites. Data must be updated annually by Aug. 15, and the ACEJMC office is to be notified of the update.

Units that do not meet this requirement will be placed on probation until the data are provided or until Aug. 15 of the following year, at which time the unit will be suspended.

A unit on probation will be listed as such on the website and in ACEJMC newsletters. The program must pay its annual dues while on probation.

A suspended program will be listed as such on ACEJMC's website and in its newsletters. A suspended program will not pay dues. A suspended program will remain on the accreditation review cycle schedule, but a site visit will not be scheduled until the public accountability requirement is met.

A suspended program will be reinstated immediately when the data are published and dues are paid.

Information about all ACEJMC-accredited units can be found on ACEJMC's website under the Accredited Programs tab. ACEJMC publishes a profile for each unit that includes a copy of the unit's most recent accreditation decision letter and site team report, the unit's accreditation/reaccreditation year, contact information, a list of accredited degree programs and areas of specialization offered, and a web link to the unit's published student data including its most recent retention and graduation data.

Revisit Procedure

Units that receive provisional accreditation have the option of a one-year or two-year provisional period in advance of the required revisit. A request for a revisit must be sent in writing from the unit administrator to the ACEJMC executive director's office by July 1 preceding the academic year in which the revisit will occur. The ACEJMC executive director will coordinate with the unit and team chair to schedule the revisit between November and early February. The unit will receive a report template and copy of the original site-visit report. The report should be submitted to both the ACEJMC executive director's office and the revisit team no later than six weeks before the revisit date.

Costs

Fees paid by units seeking accreditation or reaccreditation are intended to cover the total costs of conducting the site visits and a portion of the other expenses associated with the accreditation process, including Accrediting Committee and Council meetings and administrative staff work. The Council establishes the amount of the accreditation fees.

Domestic units seeking accreditation for the first time pay a $1,000 application fee; international units pay a $1,500 application fee. Fees are due at the time ACEJMC is invited to evaluate the unit and the site-visit date has been set. Should the invitation to ACEJMC be withdrawn before the site visit, this fee will not be returned. Additionally, units seeking accreditation/reaccreditation pay a $750 administrative fee to help cover the cost of the review process.

Units seeking accreditation or reaccreditation reimburse the Council for expenses incurred by the site-visit team for transportation, meals and other related costs. The unit will also reimburse ACEJMC for the cost of sending the site-team chair to the Accrediting Committee's annual March meeting. The team chair attends this meeting to present the site team's report to the Committee.

After the site visit has been completed and the site team members' expense forms and receipts have all been submitted to ACEJMC, ACEJMC administrative staff will send a single invoice to the unit requesting reimbursement for the total cost of the site visit. **ACEJMC must receive this payment before the Council meeting, which typically occurs in early-May.**

Following the team chair's presentation to the Accrediting Committee, ACEJMC will bill the unit for the cost of the team chair's attendance at the meeting. **Payment is due before the Council meeting.**

In the event the Accrediting Committee overturns the site team's recommendation, the team chair must be available during the Council meeting when the final accreditation decisions are made. The unit under review is responsible for paying any additional costs involved.

When a two-person team revisits a unit with provisional status, the unit will pay for the cost of the revisit

as well as the cost of sending the revisit team chair to the annual Accrediting Committee meeting to present the revisit report.

Costs for accreditation site visits vary, depending on factors such as the location of the unit and the size of the site team. The number of site team members is based on the size of the school, its enrollment, faculty headcount, and the number of areas/sequences under review. Most site teams comprise three to four members, but some teams may have as many as seven or more.

Lastly, all accredited units pay $2,500 in annual dues, payable in September/October each year.

Principle Dates in the Accreditation Cycle

The accreditation review cycle covers a two-year academic period beginning in September when self-study templates are distributed. The second year includes submission of the self-study, the site team visit, review by the Accrediting Committee, and final decisions at the spring Council meeting.

Units Seeking Initial Accreditation: Three to five years in advance of proposed site visit, inform ACEJMC executive director of intent to seek accreditation. Arrange required pre-visit through ACEJMC executive director.

2026-2028 Accreditation Timeline

September 2026: Invoices for 2026-27 membership dues ($2,500) sent to accredited units; application fees due for academic units seeking initial accreditation ($1,000 for domestic units / $1,500 for international units); self-study report templates, supplementary documents and instructions for CEO's invitation letter sent to units at beginning of 2026-27 self-study year.

September 2026-February 2027: Site visits conducted at academic units that produced self-studies during 2025-26 academic year; site-team reports delivered to academic units and to ACEJMC; responses to team reports received from units.

October 2026: Deadline for accredited units' annual dues; deadline for member organizations' annual dues.

October/November 2026: Deadline for CEO invitation letter, credit hour information, and 2027-28 site visit date preferences for academic units conducting self-studies during 2026-27 academic year.

December 2026: Site visit dates set for 2027-28 academic year; units receive self-study due dates.

March 2027: Accrediting Committee meets to discuss programs reviewed during 2026-27 academic year.

April 2027: Optional responses to Committee's recommendations due from programs visited in 2026-27. Notification letters sent to unit heads.

April/May 2027: Accrediting Council meets and makes final accreditation decisions for programs visited in 2026-27. Notification letters sent to unit heads.

Summer 2027: Site-visit teams selected for 2027-28 site visits.

August/September 2027: First self-study reports are due from units that conducted their self-studies during 2026-27 academic year. (Self-study due dates are staggered based on site visit dates. Refer to site visit notification letter for self-study due date.)

September 2027-February 2028: Site visits conducted at academic units that produced self-studies during 2026-27 academic year; site-team reports delivered to academic units and to ACEJMC; responses to team reports received from units.

March 2028: Accrediting Committee meets to discuss programs visited during 2027-28 academic year.

April 2028: Optional responses to Committee's recommendations due from programs visited in 2027-28. Notification letters sent to unit heads.

April/May 2028: Accrediting Council meets and makes final accreditation decisions for programs visited in 2027-28. Notification letters sent to unit heads.

Part V. Accrediting Standards

Preamble

Institutional Uniqueness

The Accrediting Council does not define specific curricula, courses or methods of instruction. It recognizes that each institution has its unique situation, cultural, social or religious context, mission and resources, and that this uniqueness is an asset to be safeguarded. The Council judges programs against the objectives that units and institutions set for themselves and against the standards that the Council sets forth for preparing students for professional careers in journalism and mass communications in the United States and in other nations. ACEJMC will apply its standards and indicators in compliance with applicable laws and regulations and, where appropriate, with religious or cultural prescriptions and practices.

ACEJMC standards apply to all delivery channels including, but not limited to, traditional face-to-face instruction on the home campus or other locations, distance instruction using any technology, or a blend of distance and face-to-face instruction.

Format for Each Standard

Each begins with a statement of the basic principle of the standard.

Indicators

Units should demonstrate that they meet the expectations defined for each of the indicators; however, the site team may allow an exemption from all or part of a specific indicator if the unit provides a compelling reason for the exemption. In such cases, the team must provide justification in the site report for its decision as part of its discussion of the standard.

Units that request evaluation of professional master's program(s) are expected to demonstrate how those programs meet all appropriate indicators and how they are differentiated from undergraduate programs in the same sequence.

Site-visit teams will not specify compliance/non-compliance for each individual indicator but will state judgments of compliance/non-compliance for each standard.

Evidence

Each standard concludes with a list of various forms of documentation and evidence that the unit should include in its self-study report to demonstrate that it meets the expectations defined in each indicator. The site team will supplement this evidence by inspecting the facilities and equipment, by observing the activities of the unit, by interviewing and meeting with university administrators and faculty from inside and outside the unit, by interviewing and meeting with unit staff and students, and by calling professionals who hire the unit's students as interns and full-time employees. The list of evidence for each standard is a guide to possible forms of evidence.

1. Mission, Governance and Administration

The policies and practices of the unit ensure that it has a well-led, effective, and fairly administered working and learning environment.

Before discussion of indicators, the site team will offer an opening framing narrative on the university and unit's history, place in the university today and other salient facts. This is designed to give the Committee and Council an overall sense of the unit and what is to come throughout the report.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Evidence

A written mission statement, posted to the unit's website

A written strategic long-range plan, posted to the unit's website,
with date of adoption/revision and any timeline for achieving stated goals

A faculty policy manual, handbook or other document specifying the roles of faculty in governance and the development of educational policy

Minutes of faculty meetings, committee meetings and reports

Assessment of unit administrator by faculty and by administration outside the unit

Files on searches and hiring decisions for administrators

Files on concerns and complaints

Current data published on unit website

For Units Requesting Evaluation of a Professional Master's Program

Indicators

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

(h) The unit has designated administrative oversight of the professional graduate program as well as policies and procedures that ensure faculty oversight of educational policy and curriculum in the professional graduate program.

Evidence

A written mission statement for the professional graduate program, posted to the unit's website

A written strategic long-range plan with date of adoption/revision and any timeline for achieving stated goals, posted to the unit's website

Documents demonstrating administrative oversight for the professional master's program

A faculty policy manual, handbook or other document specifying the roles of faculty in governance and the development of educational policy for the professional master's program

Current enrollment and graduation data published on unit website

2. Curriculum and Instruction

The unit provides a curriculum and instruction, whether on-site or online, that enable students to learn the knowledge, competencies and values the Council defines for preparing students to work in a diverse domestic and global society.

Professional Values and Competencies

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications requires that graduates of accredited programs be aware of certain core values and competencies and be able to:

• apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, in a global context, and for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located;

• demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;

• demonstrate culturally proficient communication that empowers those traditionally disenfranchised in society, especially as grounded in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and ability, domestically and globally, across communication and media contexts;

• present images and information effectively and creatively, using appropriate tools and technologies;

• write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;

• demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and service to all people and communities;

• apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;

• effectively and correctly apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;

• critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;

• apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Units requesting evaluation of a professional master's program must also demonstrate how their master's graduates attain this additional core competency:

- contribute to knowledge appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.

Indicators

(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.

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

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

(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.

(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.

(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 credit hours).

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

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

Evidence

Student records and transcripts

Unit bulletins and brochures

Syllabi or course materials that demonstrate students are provided with instruction to enable them to acquire digital, technological and multimedia competencies in keeping with professional expectations

Syllabi or course materials that demonstrate students are provided with instruction that contributes to a liberal arts and social sciences perspective

Records of teaching awards and citations, curricular and course development grants, attendance at teaching workshops, and publications and papers on teaching

Class enrollment for skills courses

Records and statistics on and evaluations of internships, with and without academic credit

For Units Requesting Evaluation of a Professional Master's Program

(g) At least half of the required credit hours are in either professional skills courses or integrate theory and skills appropriate to professional communication careers.

(h) Instruction and curricular requirements for professional graduate students are more advanced and rigorous than for undergraduate students, including courses open to both undergraduate and graduate students.

Evidence

Course syllabi and other documents demonstrating the unit has a professional graduate curriculum that prepares master's degree graduates for significant professional careers that provide leadership and influence

Graduate student records and transcripts

Undergraduate student records and transcripts demonstrating student experience equivalent to liberal arts education

3. Assessment of Learning Outcomes

The unit regularly assesses student learning using direct and indirect measures that engage communication professionals and annually "closes the loop" to make tangible improvements to curriculum and instruction.

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 posts its assessment plan in a prominent, easy-to-find place 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.)

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

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

(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.

Evidence

A written assessment plan that has been implemented and posted to the unit's website

A written statement or matrix describing how the competencies map to course learning

Records from multiple years, showing information collected from direct and indirect measures, when different measures are assessed if not done annually, and the application of this information and other information gathered during the assessment process to improve curriculum and instruction

A clear articulation of what constitutes a direct and indirect measure

Annual assessment reports, analysis and curriculum/program changes resulting from assessment report findings

For Units Requesting Evaluation of a Professional Master's Program

Evidence

A separate written assessment plan, posted to its website

A separate written statement/matrix on competencies

Records of information collected from multiple direct and indirect measures and on the application of this information to course development and improvement of teaching, ensuring that the assessment findings have been systematically gathered, synthesized and applied

Evidence could include results and actions from direct and indirect measures that demonstrate a graduating cohort's mastery of the Council's professional values and competencies and of critical-thinking and analytical abilities appropriate to the professions. Measures could include exit surveys or interviews, a comprehensive examination, professionally oriented project, thesis or portfolio.

Annual graduate program assessments

4. Advancing a Culturally Proficient Workforce

The unit demonstrates it offers a program that fosters equal opportunity, respect for a range of points of view and provides participatory opportunity for all elements of society while educating culturally proficient communicators prepared for a global society. The unit ensures that all individuals are treated fairly and with dignity, emphasizing shared values of professionalism, personal responsibility, and excellence. The unit focuses on empowering all individuals through equal access to opportunities and the promotion of skills, regardless of background or identity.

Indicators

(a) The unit has a written plan, implemented and discussed annually, that promotes a standards-based and inclusive curriculum and fosters a culturally proficient faculty, staff, and student population. The program embraces differences and offers a supportive climate for learning, working, and collaborating, and it assesses progress toward the achievement of the plan. The plan includes the unit's definition of equal opportunity and standards-based success. It identifies current populations and groups with limited representation in the field of journalism and media communication and focuses on identifying opportunities to broaden intellectual and ideological diversity, ensuring all individuals are treated with fairness and dignity.

(b) The unit's curriculum develops skilled and culturally proficient communicators capable of collaborating through multicultural teams and understanding global perspectives. Curriculum instruction addresses a wide range of issues and viewpoints relevant to media communications in an interconnected world.

(c) The unit demonstrates effective efforts to strengthen all faculty members' awareness of the value of social and societal dynamics, plus fairness and accessibility in preparing students to embrace a variety of perspectives. The unit takes proactive steps to recruit and retain faculty and staff who bring professional expertise and varied perspectives, including from groups with limited representation in the fields of journalism and media communication, to enrich the educational experience.

(d) In alignment with the institution's mission, the unit demonstrates efforts to recruit, retain, and graduate students from all backgrounds, reflecting the institution's commitment to preparing individuals for professional success in a global society.

(e) The unit demonstrates it has an inclusive climate of belonging, free of harassment and all forms of discrimination, consistent with applicable laws. The unit accommodates the needs of individuals with disabilities and values the unique contributions of each member of the community, including contributions from historically underrepresented groups, promoting fairness and respect for all.

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.

Evidence

A written plan, accessible to prospective and current faculty, staff and students, and discussed at least annually by the faculty. The plan will outline goals, strategies, and measurable key performance indicators (KPIs) focused on fostering fairness and involvement, including efforts to address the groups with limited representation in the field of journalism and media communication.

Documentation of progress toward achieving KPIs, with descriptions of adjustments and new strategies implemented to address areas where progress has not been met.

An explanation of how the plan aligns with the unit's mission and professional values, highlighting its focus on preparing students for collaboration within teams that include a range of ideas and perspectives.

Course syllabi that demonstrate learning outcomes emphasizing fairness, global awareness, and collaboration across a variety of perspectives, both domestically and internationally.

A detailed grid in the self-study report indicating how the curriculum integrates communication proficiency and the ability to embrace a range of ideas and perspectives.

For units with specific missions related to gender, race, religion, or ethnicity, evidence of efforts to prepare students for professional collaboration with individuals and teams not represented within the institution.

Faculty vitae that demonstrate professional achievements and contributions to teaching and research demonstrating intellectual diversity and cultural proficiency.

Reports on faculty professional development initiatives aimed at enhancing teaching strategies that prepare students to collaborate effectively and excel in diverse professional environments.

Results of climate studies or other indicators of the unit's commitment to fostering an inclusive environment that values fairness, equal opportunity, and respect for all.

See Glossary of Diversity and Inclusiveness Terms, Pages 13-14.

5. Faculty

The unit hires, supports and evaluates a capable faculty with a balance of academic and professional credentials appropriate for the unit's mission. It supports faculty as they contribute to the advancement of scholarly and professional knowledge and engage in scholarship (research, creative and professional activity) that benefits the disciplines and society.

Indicators

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

(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.

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

(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.

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

Evidence

Faculty and staff manuals or relevant policy procedural documents

Vitae for full-time and part-time faculty

Faculty guides or manuals on tenure and promotion

Records of sabbatical and other leaves, travel funds and grant support

Records on faculty promotion, tenure and other forms of recognition

Faculty vitae and unit reports on research and creative and professional activities

For units Requesting Evaluation of a Professional Master's Program

Indicators

(f) Faculty members teaching in the graduate program meet the criteria for graduate instruction at that university.

(g) Graduate faculty oversee the curricula and course quality for professional master's courses.

Evidence

Faculty vitae that demonstrate a clearly defined graduate faculty who meet the criteria for graduate instruction at that university

Schedules of master's courses taught

6. Student Services

The unit supports students with services that promote learning and ensure timely completion of their program of study.

Indicators

(a) The unit and institution ensure that students are aware of graduation requirements.

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

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

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

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

Evidence

Advising guides, manuals, newsletters and internal communications, and faculty office hours

Statistics on enrollment, scholarships, retention and graduation

Annually updated website containing retention and graduation data that is clearly made available to the public

Examples of student media, information about student professional organizations, and guest speakers and other extracurricular activities associated with the unit's mission

For Units Requesting Evaluation of a Professional Master's Program

Indicators

(f) The unit has appropriate admissions and retention policies for the professional master's program.

Evidence

Documents and records demonstrating that the graduate program has appropriate admissions and retention policies

Statistics on graduate enrollment, scholarships, retention and graduation and a website link where the unit regularly publishes this data

7. Resources, Facilities and Equipment

The unit plans for, seeks and receives adequate resources to fulfill and sustain its mission.

Indicators

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

(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.

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

(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.

Evidence

A detailed budget

Tour of buildings and review of equipment

Details of private annual fundraising efforts

Details of unit endowments for faculty chairs and professorships, programs, scholarships and other restricted accounts

Evaluation of adequacy of resources and an assessment of their fairness in relationship to similar units on campus

8. Professional and Public Service

The unit and its faculty advance journalism and mass communication professions and fulfill obligations to their community, alumni and the public.

Indicators

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

(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 issues of public consequence and concern.

(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.

(d) The unit supports scholastic journalism.

Evidence

Faculty vitae

Unit records, brochures and publications of public service activities related to its mission and strategic plan

Alumni advisory boards, newsletters, surveys, social media initiatives, reunions and other activities

Information about courses and services available to professionals and the public

Activities such as workshops, visiting lectures and critiques of student work in support of scholastic journalism

Part VI. Accredited Programs Directories

ACEJMC currently accredits 118 programs in journalism and mass communications at colleges and universities in the United States, Puerto Rico and abroad. The following directories provide information about each of these programs, including their current accreditation status based on their most recent review. Reports from these reviews are available on ACEJMC's website at www.acejmc.org under Accredited Programs.

U.S. Schools

Programs listed in the U.S. Schools directory were accredited/reaccredited by ACEJMC in their most recent accreditation review, and all are located within the 50 U.S. states.

Units listed with a "Provisional" identifier were given provisional accreditation status in their most recent accreditation review. Provisional accreditation status indicates deficiencies were identified within the unit during the most recent accreditation review. The unit has two years to clear the deficiencies, after which the unit is reviewed again and is either fully accredited or denied accreditation.

International/U.S. Territories

All units listed in the International/U.S. Territories directory received full accreditation/reaccreditation by ACEJMC in their most recent accreditation review. All schools in this listing are located outside the 50 U.S. states. This list comprises accredited units in five countries abroad plus Puerto Rico, which is an unincorporated U.S. territory.

Organization

Directory listings are organized as follows:

Name of institution, name of accredited unit, weblink to unit website, and most recent accreditation/reaccreditation year.

In addition to the information contained here, directory listings on the ACEJMC website include ACEJMC-accredited degree programs offered at each school, links to each program's most recent student data, names of all unit heads and their contact information, most recent site-visit reports, most recent accreditation/reaccreditation decision letters, recent standards of noncompliance (if applicable), links to revisit reports and letters (if applicable), and each unit's physical address.

Please note online directory listings do not include all degree programs offered at every ACEJMC-accredited unit. ACEJMC does not accredit programs leading to the doctor of philosophy degree, for example, which is considered a non-professional, research degree. ACEJMC also does not review or accredit academic minors or certificate programs.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Accrediting Council in May 2020 implemented a one-year postponement for all accreditation reviews due that year. ACEJMC normally conducts accreditation evaluations at six-year intervals.

An asterisk appears next to schools that have been granted a one-year postponement in addition to the COVID-year postponement since their last accreditation review.

ACEJMC does not rate or rank its accredited programs.

The following directory listings reflect information known to ACEJMC's administrative staff as of September 2026. Changes occurring thereafter are reflected in the online directories at https://www.acejmc.org/accredited-programs.

Accredited programs listed in the U.S. Schools directory are grouped alphabetically by state.

U.S. SCHOOLS DIRECTORY

Alabama

Auburn University
School of Communication & Journalism
https://cla.auburn.edu/cmjn/
Reaccredited 2025

Jacksonville State University
Department of Communication
https://www.jsu.edu/communication/
Reaccredited 2020

University of Alabama
College of Communication & Information Sciences
https://cis.ua.edu/
Reaccredited 2023

University of North Alabama
Department of Communication
https://www.una.edu/communication/
Reaccredited 2022

Arizona

Arizona State University
Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication
https://cronkite.asu.edu/
Reaccredited 2024

University of Arizona (Provisional)
School of Journalism
https://journalism.arizona.edu/
Reaccredited 2025

Arkansas

Arkansas State University
School of Media and Journalism
https://www.astate.edu/colleges/liberal-arts-and-communication/media-and-journalism/
Reaccredited 2022

University of Arkansas
School of Journalism and Strategic Media
https://journalism.uark.edu/
Reaccredited 2023

California

California Polytechnic State University
Journalism Department
https://journalism.calpoly.edu/
Reaccredited 2020

California State University, Chico
Journalism and Public Relations Department
https://www.csuchico.edu/academics/college/communication-education/departments/journalism-public-relations/
Reaccredited 2023

California State University, Dominguez Hills
Journalism Program, Department of Communications
https://www.csudh.edu/communications/degrees/journalism/
Reaccredited 2022

California State University, Fullerton
Department of Communications
https://communications.fullerton.edu/comm/
Reaccredited 2022

California State University, Long Beach
Department of Journalism & Public Relations
https://www.csulb.edu/college-of-liberal-arts/journalism-public-relations
Reaccredited 2020

California State University, Northridge
Department of Journalism
https://w2.csun.edu/mike-curb-arts-media-communication/journalism
Reaccredited 2023

San Diego State University
School of Journalism and Media Studies
https://jms.sdsu.edu/
Reaccredited 2022

San Francisco State University
Department of Journalism
https://journalism.sfsu.edu/
Reaccredited 2020

San José State University
School of Journalism and Mass Communications
https://www.sjsu.edu/jmc/
Reaccredited 2022

University of Southern California
Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism
https://annenberg.usc.edu/
Reaccredited 2024

Colorado

Colorado State University
Department of Journalism & Media Communication
https://journalism.colostate.edu/
Reaccredited 2024

University of Colorado Boulder
Department of Journalism
https://www.colorado.edu/cmdi/academics/journalism
Reaccredited 2024

Connecticut

University of Connecticut
Department of Journalism
https://journalism.uconn.edu/
Reaccredited 2022

Florida

Florida A&M University
School of Journalism & Graphic Communication (Division of Journalism)
https://sjgc.famu.edu/
Reaccredited 2025

Florida International University
Lee Caplin School of Journalism & Media
https://carta.fiu.edu/journalism/
Reaccredited 2022

Florida International University
School of Communication
https://carta.fiu.edu/communication/
Reaccredited 2022

University of Florida
College of Journalism and Communications
https://www.jou.ufl.edu/
Reaccredited 2025

University of North Florida
School of Communication
https://www.unf.edu/coas/communication/
Reaccredited 2024

University of South Florida St. Petersburg
Department of Journalism and Digital Communication
https://www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/departments/journalism/
Reaccredited 2023

Georgia

Savannah State University
Department of Journalism and Mass Communications
https://savannahstate.edu/programs/journalism-mass-communications/
Reaccredited 2026

University of Georgia
Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication
https://grady.uga.edu/
Reaccredited 2025

University of West Georgia
School of Communication, Film, and Media
https://www.westga.edu/academics/scfm/
Reaccredited 2020

Idaho

University of Idaho
School of Journalism and Mass Media
https://www.uidaho.edu/letters-arts-social-sciences/academics/journalism-mass-media
Reaccredited 2020

Illinois

Eastern Illinois University
Division of Journalism, School of Communication and Journalism
https://www.eiu.edu/journalism/index.php
Reaccredited 2025

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
Department of Mass Communications
https://www.siue.edu/arts-and-sciences/mass-communications/
Reaccredited 2024

Indiana

Ball State University
School of Journalism and Strategic Communication
https://www.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/sjsc
Reaccredited 2023

Indiana University
The Media School
https://mediaschool.indiana.edu/academics/undergraduate/journalism/
Reaccredited 2022

Iowa

Drake University
School of Journalism and Mass Communication
https://www.drake.edu/sjmc
Reaccredited 2024

Iowa State University
Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication
https://greenlee.iastate.edu/
Reaccredited 2023

University of Iowa
School of Journalism and Mass Communication
https://journalism.uiowa.edu/
Reaccredited 2024

Kansas

Kansas State University
A.Q. Miller School of Media and Communication
https://www.k-state.edu/media-communication/
Reaccredited 2020

University of Kansas
William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications
https://journalism.ku.edu/
Reaccredited 2024

Kentucky

Murray State University
School of Journalism and Mass Communications
https://www.murraystate.edu/jmc
Reaccredited 2023

University of Kentucky
Department of Integrated Strategic Communication
https://ci.uky.edu/isc/academics/isc-major
School of Journalism and Media
https://ci.uky.edu/jam/academics/journalism
Reaccredited 2022

Western Kentucky University
School of Media & Communication
https://www.wku.edu/smc/index.php
Reaccredited 2023

Louisiana

Louisiana State University
Manship School of Mass Communication
https://www.lsu.edu/manship/
Reaccredited 2023

Loyola University New Orleans
School of Communication and Design
https://cmm.loyno.edu/school-communication-design
Reaccredited 2020

Nicholls State University
Department of Mass Communication
https://www.nicholls.edu/maco/
Reaccredited 2025

Southern University and A&M College
Department of Mass Communication
https://www.subr.edu/subhome/49
Reaccredited 2025

Maryland

Morgan State University
School of Global Journalism & Communication
https://www.morgan.edu/sgjc
Reaccredited 2020

University of Maryland
Philip Merrill College of Journalism
https://merrill.umd.edu/
Reaccredited 2023

Michigan

Central Michigan University
School of Communication, Journalism and Media
https://www.cmich.edu/academics/colleges/college-arts-media/departments-schools/communication-journalism-media
Reaccredited 2022

Michigan State University
School of Journalism
https://comartsci.msu.edu/departments/school-journalism
Reaccredited 2020

Minnesota

University of Minnesota
Hubbard School of Journalism and Mass Communication
https://hubbardschool.umn.edu/
Reaccredited 2026

Mississippi

Mississipp State University
Department of Communication, Media & Theatre
https://www.comm.msstate.edu/
Reaccredited 2025

University of Mississippi
School of Journalism and New Media
https://jnm.olemiss.edu/
Reaccredited 2024

University of Southern Mississippi
School of Media and Communication
https://www.usm.edu/media-communication/
Reaccredited 2024

Missouri

Southeast Missouri State University
Department of Mass Media, Art, and Design
https://semo.edu/colleges-departments/arts-media/mass-media-art-design/
Reaccredited 2024

University of Missouri
Missouri School of Journalism
https://journalism.missouri.edu/
Reaccredited 2024

Montana

University of Montana
School of Journalism
https://www.umt.edu/journalism/
Reaccredited 2025

Nebraska

University of Nebraska-Lincoln
College of Journalism and Mass Communications
https://journalism.unl.edu/
Reaccredited 2024

Nevada

University of Nevada, Reno
Reynolds School of Journalism
https://www.unr.edu/journalism
Reaccredited 2020

New York

Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism | CUNY
Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism
https://www.journalism.cuny.edu/
Reaccredited 2020

Hofstra University
Department of Journalism, Media Studies, and Public Relations
https://www.hofstra.edu/academics/colleges-and-schools/communication/journalism-media-studies-public-relations/
Reaccredited 2022

St. Bonaventure University
Jandoli School of Communication
https://www.sbu.edu/academics/schools-at-sbu/jandoli-school-of-communication
Reaccredited 2024

Stony Brook University
School of Communication and Journalism
https://www.stonybrook.edu/socj/
Reaccredited 2020

SUNY Buffalo State University
Communication Department
https://communication.buffalostate.edu/
Reaccredited 2022

Syracuse University
S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications
https://newhouse.syracuse.edu/
Reaccredited 2023

North Carolina

Elon University
School of Communications
https://www.elon.edu/u/academics/communications/
Reaccredited 2025

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University
Department of Journalism and Mass Communication
https://www.ncat.edu/cahss/departments/journalism-and-mass-communication/
Reaccredited 2023

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Hussman School of Journalism and Media
https://hussman.unc.edu/
Reaccredited 2022

Ohio

Bowling Green State University
School of Media & Communication
https://www.bgsu.edu/arts-and-sciences/media-and-communication.html
Reaccredited 2023

Kent State University
School of Media and Journalism
https://www.kent.edu/mdj
Reaccredited 2022

Ohio University
E.W. Scripps School of Journalism
https://www.ohio.edu/scripps-college/journalism
Reaccredited 2026

Oklahoma

Oklahoma State University
School of Media and Strategic Communication
https://cas.okstate.edu/media
Reaccredited 2020

University of Oklahoma
Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication
https://www.ou.edu/gaylord
Reaccredited 2022

Oregon

University of Oregon
School of Journalism and Communication
https://journalism.uoregon.edu/
Reaccredited 2025

Pennsylvania

Pennyslvania State University
Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications
https://bellisario.psu.edu/
Reaccredited 2026

Shippensburg University
Department of Communication, Journalism and Media
https://www.ship.edu/academics/cas/communication-journalism/
Reaccredited 2024

Temple University
Department of Journalism
https://www.temple.edu/academics/degree-programs/journalism-major-co-jrn-ba
Reaccredited 2020

South Carolina

University of South Carolina
School of Journalism and Mass Communications
https://sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/cic/journalism_and_mass_communications/
Reaccredited 2024

Winthrop University
Department of Mass Communication
https://www.winthrop.edu/cas/masscomm/
Reaccredited 2026

South Dakota

South Dakota State University
School of Communication and Journalism
https://www.sdstate.edu/school-communication-journalism
Reaccredited 2025

University of South Dakota
Department of Media & Journalism
https://www.usd.edu/mj
Reaccredited 2022

Tennessee

Middle Tennessee State University
School of Journalism & Strategic Media
https://journalism.mtsu.edu/
Reaccredited 2024

University of Memphis
Department of Journalism and Strategic Media
https://www.memphis.edu/jrsm/
Reaccredited 2026

University of Tennessee Chattanooga
Department of Communication
https://www.utc.edu/arts-and-sciences/communication
Reaccredited 2020

University of Tennessee, Knoxville
School of Journalism & Media
https://cci.utk.edu/jem/
Tombras School of Advertising & Public Relations
https://cci.utk.edu/adpr/
Reaccredited 2024

Texas

Abilene Christian University
Department of Journalism and Mass Communication
https://acu.edu/academics/arts-humanities-social-sciences/journalism-mass-communication/
Reaccredited 2026

Baylor University
Department of Journalism, Public Relations & New Media
https://journalism.artsandsciences.baylor.edu/
Reaccredited 2022

Texas Christian University
Department of Journalism
https://schieffercollege.tcu.edu/journalism/
Reaccredited 2023

Texas State University
School of Journalism and Mass Communication
https://sjmc.txst.edu/
Reaccredited 2022

University of North Texas
Mayborn School of Journalism
https://class.unt.edu/journalism/index.html
Reaccredited 2023

University of Texas at Austin
School of Journalism and Media
https://journalism.utexas.edu/
Reaccredited 2022

Utah

Brigham Young University
School of Communications
https://comms.byu.edu/
Reaccredited 2022

Virginia

Hampton University
Scripps Howard School of Journalism and Communications
https://home.hamptonu.edu/shsjc/
Reaccredited 2020

Norfolk State University
Department of Mass Communication and Journalism
https://www.nsu.edu/Academics/Faculty-and-Academic-Divisions/Schools-and-Colleges/College-of-Liberal-Arts/Departments/Mass-Communication-and-Journalism
Reaccredited 2024

Virginia Commonwealth University
Richard T. Robertson School of Communication
https://robertson.vcu.edu/
Reaccredited 2025

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
School of Communication
https://liberalarts.vt.edu/departments-and-schools/school-of-communication.html
Reaccredited 2024

Washington and Lee University
Journalism and Mass Communications Department
https://www.wlu.edu/journalism-and-mass-communications-department
Reaccredited 2026

Washington

University of Washington
Department of Communication
https://com.uw.edu/
Reaccredited 2022

Washington, D.C.

American University
School of Communication
https://www.american.edu/soc/info/
Reaccredited 2022

Howard University
Cathy Hughes School of Communication
https://communications.howard.edu/
Reaccredited 2023

West Virginia

Marshall University
W. Page Pitt School of Journalism and Mass Communications
https://www.marshall.edu/jmc/
Reaccredited 2022

West Virginia University
Reed School of Media and Communications
https://creativeartsandmedia.wvu.edu/reed-school-of-media-and-communications
Reaccredited 2023

Wisconsin

University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire
Communication and Journalism Department
https://www.uwec.edu/academics/college-arts-and-sciences/departments-programs/communication-and-journalism-department
Reaccredited 2022

University of Wisconsin – Oshkosh
Advertising, Multimedia Journalism and Public Relations Program
https://www.uwosh.edu/journalism/
Reaccredited 2023

U.S. TERRITORIES/INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS DIRECTORY

Chile

Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile
Facultad de Comunicaciones
https://comunicaciones.uc.cl/
Reaccredited 2023

México

Anáhuac University
School of Communication
https://www.anahuac.mx/mexico/EscuelasyFacultades/comunicacion/
Reaccredited 2022

Tecnológico de Monterrey
Department of Media and Digital Culture
https://tec.mx/en
Reaccredited 2020

New Zealand

Massey University
School of Humanities, Media and Creative Communication
https://www.massey.ac.nz/study/all-qualifications-and-degrees/bachelor-of-communication-UBCMM/journalism-UBCMM1JJRNL1/
Reaccredited 2023

Puerto Rico

Universidad Ana G. Méndez, Gurabo Campus
Communications Program
https://uagm.edu/es/artes-liberales/comunicacion/comunicacion-gurabo
Reaccredited 2025

University of Puerto Rico – Arecibo
Department of Tele-Radial Communication
https://upra.edu/comunicaciones/
Reaccredited 2020

University of Puerto Rico – Humacao
Communication Department
https://www.uprh.edu/depto-comu/
Reaccredited 2020

University of Puerto Rico – Río Piedras
College of Communication and Information
https://faci.uprrp.edu/
Reaccredited 2026

Qatar

Qatar University*
Department of Mass Communication
https://www.qu.edu.qa/en-us/colleges/artssciences/departments/mass-comm/
Reaccredited 2019

United Arab Emirates

Ajman University
College of Mass Communication
https://www.ajman.ac.ae/en/masscom
Reaccredited 2024

American University in Dubai
Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication
https://www.aud.edu/aud-school/mohammed-bin-rashid-school-for-communication/
Reaccredited 2022

American University in the Emirates
College of Media and Mass Communication
https://aue.ae/college-of-media-and-mass-communication/
Reaccredited 2025

University of Sharjah
College of Communication
https://www.sharjah.ac.ae/Academics/Communication
Reaccredited 2023

Zayed University
College of Communication & Media Sciences
https://www.zu.ac.ae/main/en/colleges/colleges/__college_of_comm_media_sciences/
Reaccredited 2022

**Granted one-year postponement since last accreditation review.*

Part VII. Member Organizations Directory

Educational Organizations

Alliance of Schools and Colleges of Communication and Journalism
Erin Norvell, Executive Director
Austin, Texas
enorvell@asccj.org
www.asccj.org

Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication
Amanda Caldwell, Executive Director
Columbia, S.C.
amanda@aejmc.org
www.aejmc.org

Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication
Amanda Caldwell (see above)
www.asjmc.org

Broadcast Education Association
Heather Birks, Executive Director
Washington, D.C.
heather@beaweb.org
www.beaweb.org

Industry Organizations

American Advertising Federation
Dawn Reeves, Executive Vice President
Member Services & Programs
Washington, D.C.
dreeves@aaf.org
www.aaf.org

Asian American Journalists Association
Naomi Tacuyan Underwood
Executive Director
naomitu@aaja.org
www.aaja.org/

Institute for Public Relations
Tina McCorkindale, President and CEO
P.O. Box 118400
Gainesville, Fla.
tina@instituteforpr.org
www.instituteforpr.org

National Association of Black Journalists
Elise Durham, Executive Director
College Park, Md.
execu@nabj.org
www.nabj.org

National Association of Hispanic Journalists
Yaneth Guillen-Diaz, Executive Director
Washington, D.C.
yaneth@nahj.org
www.nahj.org

Page Society
Rochelle Ford, CEO
New York, N.Y.
contactus@page.org
www.page.org

Public Relations Society of America Incorporated
Jeneen Garcia , (PRSSA) Senior VP of Programs
New York, N.Y.
jeneen.garcia@prsa.org
www.prsa.org

Radio-Television Digital News Association
Tara Pucker, President and Chief Executive Officer
Washington, D.C.
tara@rtnda.org
www.rtdna.org

Society of Professional Journalists
Caroline Hendrie, Executive Director
Indianapolis, Ind.
chendrie@spj.org
www.spj.org

Part VIII. Committee Members Directory

The members of the ACEJMC Accrediting Committee meet once a year in the spring to review site-visit team reports. The Committee examines the reports thoroughly and makes recommendations for accrediting actions. The recommendations are forwarded to the Accrediting Council, which makes all final accrediting decisions. The Accrediting Committee has 15 members. The Accrediting Council president serves as an ex-officio voting member of the Committee.

Rafael Lorente, Chair
Dean and Professor of the Practice
Philip Merrill College of Journalism
University of Maryland
College Park, Md.
rafael.lorente@acejmc.org
(Term expires 2028)

Diana Martinelli, Vice Chair
Widmeyer Professor
Reed School of Media and Communications
West Virginia University
Morgantown, W.Va.
diana.martinelli@acejmc.org
(Term expires 2028)

Andrew Alexander
Board Chair
Foothills Forum
Sperryville, Va.
andy.alexander@acejmc.org / andyalexander1@me.com
(Term expires 2028)

Cristina L. Azocar
Department Chair, Professor
Department of Journalism
San Francisco State University
San Francisco, Calif.
cazocar@sfsu.edu
(Term expires 2027)

Kim Baca
President/CEO
KB Consulting
Albuquerque, N.M.
kim@kbacaconsulting.com
(Term expires 2028)

Tim Bajkiewicz
Associate Professor, Journalism Sequence Coordinator
Richard T. Robertson School of Communication
Virginia Commonwealth University
tbajkiewicz@vcu.edu
(Term expires 2029)

Peter Bhatia
Professional in Residence
Bellisario College of Communications
Pennsylvania State University
peterkbhatia@gmail.com
(Term expires 2028)

Laura T. Coffey
President
Society for Features Journalism
Seattle, Wash.
laura.coffey@gmail.com
(Term expires 2027)

Vince Duffy
News Director
Michigan Public
Ann Arbor, Mich.
vduffy@umich.edu
(Term expires 2027)

Kenn Gaither
Dean
School of Communications
Elon University
Elon, N.C.
tgaither@elon.edu
(Term expires 2029)

Kristin Gilger
Professor Emerita
Walter Cronkite School of Journalism
and Mass Communication
Arizona State University
Phoenix, Ariz.
kristin.gilger@asu.edu
(Term expires 2027)

Jackie Jones
Dean
School of Global Journalism & Communication
Morgan State University
Baltimore, Md.
jacqueline.jones@morgan.edu
(Term expires 2027)

Gracie Lawson-Borders
Professor and Dean Emerita
Cathy Hughes School of Communications
Howard University
Washington, D.C.
gracie.lawsonborders@howard.edu
(Term expires 2028)

Mark Nylander
Principal
Nylander + Partners
Cleveland, Ohio
mcnylander@gmail.com
(Term expires 2028)

Cheryl Procter-Rogers
APR, Fellow PRSA, MCC
Executive Coach, President and CEO
A Step Ahead Consulting and Coaching LLC
Chicago, Ill.
cheryl@cherylprocterrogers.com
(Term expires 2029)

Part IX. Council Members Directory

The Accrediting Council comprises representatives of educational and professional organizations, and up to three public members. The Council president is a non-voting member.

The Accrediting Council usually meets twice a year. The Council discusses academic units that are up for accreditation/reaccreditation and makes final accrediting decisions at a meeting in the spring. The Council's fall meeting is devoted to policy and financial considerations.

Steve Geimann, President
Bloomberg News (Retired)
Washington, D.C.
steve.geimann@acejmc.org
(Officer term expires 2028)

Greg Pitts, Vice President
Professor
School of Journalism and Strategic Media
Middle Tennessee State University
Murfreesboro, Tenn.
greg.pitts@acejmc.org
Representing: Broadcast Education Association
(Officer term expires 2028)

Bradley Akubuiro
Partner
Bully Pulpit International
Chicago, Ill.
bradley.akubuiro@acejmc.org
Representing: Institute for Public Relations

Dorothy Bland
Professor
Mayborn School of Journalism
University of North Texas
Denton, Texas
dorothy.bland@acejmc.org
Representing: Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication

Jenny Buschhorn
AAF National Education Executive Council
Associate Professor
School of Journalism and Mass Communication
Texas State University
San Marcos, Texas
jenny.buschhorn@acejmc.org
Representing: American Advertising Federation

Joie Chen
Special Correspondent
Matter of Fact with Soledad O'Brien/HMPG (Hearst)
Washington, D.C.
joie.chen@acejmc.org
Representing: Asian American Journalists Association

Michael Cherenson
Executive Vice President Public Relations
SCG Advertising
& Public Relations
Whippany, N.J.
mike.cherenson@acejmc.org
Representing: Public Relations Society of America

Heidi de Laubenfels
Founder & CEO
Arcus Pace, Inc.
Seattle, Wash.
heidi.delaubenfels@acejmc.org
Public Member
(Term expires 2028)

Rochelle Ford
CEO
Page Society
New York, N.Y.
rochelle.ford@acejmc.org
Representing: Page Society

Louisa Ha
University Distinguished Research Professor
School of Media and Communication
Bowling Green State University
Bowling Green, Ohio
louisa.ha@acejmc.org
Representing: Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication

Michel Haigh
Professor
School of Journalism and Mass Communication
Texas State University
San Marcos, Texas
michel.haigh@acejmc.org
Representing: Broadcast Education Association

Denise Hill
PR Executive, Associate Professor (Retired)
Mooresville, N.C.
denise.hill@acejmc.org
Representing: Public Relations Society of America

Kelly P. Kissel
Associated Press (Retired)
Baton Rouge, La.
kelly.kissel@acejmc.org
Representing: Society of Professional Journalists

David Kurpius
Dean
Missouri School of Journalism
University of Missouri
Columbia, Mo.
david.kurpius@acejmc.org
Representing: Alliance of Schools and Colleges of Communication and Journalism

Jairo Alfonso Lugo-Ocando
Dean
College of Communication
University of Sharjah
jairo.lugo-ocando@acejmc.org
Representing: Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication

Jude McCartin
Former government official
Washington, D.C.
jude.mccartin@acejmc.org
Public Member
(Term expires in 2029)

Felicia McGhee
Associate Dean, Professor
School of Journalism & Graphic Communication
Florida A & M University
Tallahassee, Fla.
felicia.mcgheehilt@acejmc.org
Representing: Association of Schools of Journalism
and Mass Communication

Andrea Miller
Dean
Gaylord College
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Okla.
andrea.miller@acejmc.org
Representing: Association of Schools of Journalism
and Mass Communication

Kimberly Moffitt
Dean
Cathy Hughes School of Communications
Howard University
Washington, D.C.
socdean@howard.edu
Representing: Association of Schools of Journalism
and Mass Communication

Jessica Pucci
Senior Associate Dean
Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication
Arizona State University
Phoenix, Ariz.
jessica.pucci@acejmc.org
Representing: Association for Education in Journalism
and Mass Communication

Tara Puckey
President, Chief Executive Officer
Radio-Television Digital News Association
Washington, D.C.
tara.puckey@acejmc.org
Representing: Radio-Television Digital News Association

Johnny Sparks
Director, Associate Professor
School of Journalism and Strategic Communication
Ball State University
Muncie, Ind.
jvsparks@bsu.edu
Representing: Association of Schools of Journalism
and Mass Communication

Will Sutton
Columnist
The Times-Picayune | The Advocate | NOLA.com
Host, The Good Morning Show
WBOK 1230 AM | WBOK Media
New Orleans, La.
will.sutton@acejmc.org
Representing: National Association of Black Journalists

Alicia Ybarbo
Coordinating Producer
TODAY Show at NBC News, NBCUniversal
New York, N.Y.
alicia.ybarbo@acejmc.org
Representing: National Association of Hispanic Journalists

Part X. Administrative Staff Directory

Susan Walton, Ph.D., Fellow PRSA
Executive Director
Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications
Meridian, Idaho
susan.walton@acejmc.org

Darren Phillips
Associate Executive Director
Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications
Chicago, Ill.
darren.phillips@acejmc.org

Denise Baar
Executive Assistant
Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications
Meridian, Idaho
denise.baar@acejmc.org

ACEJMC Mailing Address:

ACEJMC
3327 N. Eagle Rd, Ste. 110-53
Meridian, Idaho 83646

acejmc

Accrediting Council on Education
in Journalism and Mass Communications

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