



Resolution on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice

WHEREAS (1): The vision of the ACEJMC articulates the belief that “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”;

WHEREAS (2): Democracy in its truest sense encompasses the full diversity of any society, such that diversity and democracy are intrinsically and symbiotically connected to each other;

WHEREAS (3): While diversity includes multiple dimensions and oppression takes multiple and intersecting forms, the pandemic of COVID-19, the BlackLivesMatter movement reignited in 2020, and the ongoing state efforts in 2021 to suppress the vote all have underscored the racial disparities that underlie the health, criminal justice, economic, and political systems of the United States;

WHEREAS (4): The learning journey toward anti-racism, diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice is less about achieving any pre-determined destination, outcome, or external benchmark of comparison, and more about sincere self-reflection and self-accountability regarding continuous growth compared to one’s own past self;

WHEREAS (5): The ACEJMC approved in 2020 revisions to the accrediting standards that included more holistic indicators for meeting Standard 4: Diversity and Inclusion, going beyond descriptions of faculty and student demographics to include considerations of curricular adjustments and faculty professional development;

WHEREAS (6): The current and future generations of our society will only become more, not less, diverse in all manner of ways, and the Council is committed to “fostering high standards for the educational preparation of journalism and mass communications professionals” who will need to co-exist respectfully, communicate competently, lead compassionately, and live fully in that increasingly diverse society;

WHEREAS (7): The stakes for democracy and for the future of journalism and mass communications as protected by the First Amendment are too high for the Council to shrink in this moment from its vision of “a democratic government and a free society” or to be derelict in its duty to the education of future journalists and communicators in defense of democracy;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT: The ACEJMC will hold itself, its Accrediting Committee, and all of its site teams accountable — rigorously and regularly — for ensuring that accredited and accreditation-seeking units meet Standard 4: Diversity and Inclusion; and thus

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: Individual Council members will model this accountability to Standard 4 by committing to: (a) read even more carefully and closely all site team reports in advance of Council meetings; (b) ask questions of site team leaders as necessary to gain an accurate and complete picture of a unit’s diversity efforts; (c) engage thoughtfully in potentially difficult conversations related to diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice; and (d) exercise intentionally their prerogative to vote for or against (re)accreditation or provisional (re)accreditation as warranted, based on the evidence provided.

*Approved by unanimous vote of the Council
August 20, 2021*