

Report of ACEJMC Evaluation

Undergraduate program
2021-2022

Name of Institution: American University in Dubai

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: David Schmidt, president

Name of Unit: Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication

Name and Title of Administrator: Ali Jaber, dean; Pedro Sellos, associate dean

Date of 2021-2022 Accrediting Visit: Jan. 23-26, 2022

Date of the previous accrediting visit: Nov. 16-19, 2014

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Re-accreditation

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Re-accreditation

Recommendation by 2021-2022 Visiting Team: **Re-accreditation**

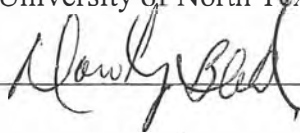
Prepared and submitted by:

Team Chair

Name and Title: Dorothy Bland, Ph.D., Professor

Organization/School: University of North Texas Mayborn School of Journalism

Signature _____

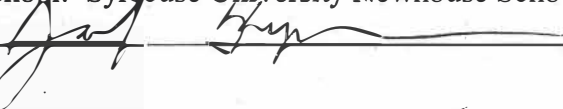


Team Member

Name and Title: Joel Kaplan, Professor and Associate Dean,

Organization/School: Syracuse University Newhouse School of Public Communications

Signature _____

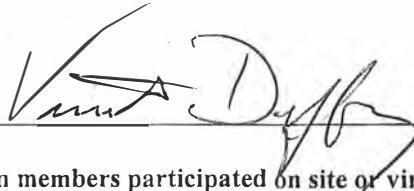


Team Member

Name and Title: Vincent Duffy,

Organization/School: Michigan Radio

Signature _____



Please indicate if team members participated on site or virtually only:

On site: Dorothy Bland, Ph.D., Joel Kaplan, Vincent Duffy

PART I: General information

Name of Institution: **American University in Dubai**

Name of Unit: **Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication**

Year of Visit: **2021-2022**

1. Check regional association by which the institution now is accredited.

- Higher Learning Commission
- Middle States Commission on Higher Education
- New England Commission on Higher Education
- Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
- Southern Association of Colleges and School Commission on Colleges
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges

If the unit seeking accreditation is located outside the United States, provide the name(s) of the appropriate recognition or accreditation entities:

**Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA)
The Ministry of Education (MoE), U.A.E.**

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

- Private
- Public
- Other (specify)

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

The American University in Dubai (AUD) is officially licensed by the Ministry of Education (MoE) of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The MoE has accredited the university's programs in International Studies, Business Administration (both undergraduate and graduate), Communication and Information Studies, Engineering, Architecture, Visual Communication and Interior Design (undergraduate), Education, Intellectual Property and Innovation Management, Leadership and Innovation in Contemporary Media, Construction Management, Urban Design and Digital Environments, and an Executive Master of Business Administration (graduate).

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

- Yes
- No

If yes, give the date of the last accrediting visit: November 16-19, 2014

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

2015

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

Program Mission

The Bachelor of Communication and Information Studies program at the American University in Dubai prepares practitioners and scholars to work in twenty-first century media. Graduates will be proficient in areas ranging from ethics and media policy to writing and production skills. They will be committed to providing the public with media content that meets local and regional needs and is global in outlook and standard.

Revisions approved by CAA, MOHESR on July 6, 2009.

Program Goals

- Possess sophisticated communication skills, in Arabic and English, including the ability to comprehend and comment upon news coverage, elements of media business, and social responsibility of media;
- Be proficient in storytelling using journalism, television, cinema and new media contexts;
- Understand the theoretical and practical elements of the broad historical, cultural, economic, and technological foundations of mass media;
- Appreciate the significance of ethical standards and behavior on the part of all institutions and individuals involved with mass media, including the public's responsibility to understand the role of media and to wisely gather and disseminate information through the media;
- Relate media theory and practice to fields such as politics, economics, law, business, information science, and the liberal arts;
- Recognize the role of media as an element of individual and global cultures, with particular emphasis on respect for diversity related to race, gender, religion, ethnicity, and other personal characteristics and orientations.

School Mission

The Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication seeks to take advantage of its location in the local and international media hub of Dubai to achieve distinction in scholarship, instruction and facilities that graduate media professionals who are proficient in the creation of media content of local, regional or global relevance. Such content, reflective of the highest ethical standards, embraces a multitude of subjects and platforms and effectively informs and/or entertains diverse consumers of media.

Approved by AUD Academic Council on June 17, 2014

School Goals

- Provide the opportunity for the creation of original content that is anchored in the students' native cultures and societies
- Graduate storytellers in various platforms whose proficiency is enhanced through a solid grounding in the art, history, culture and society of the Middle East and beyond
- Ensure that the programs offered by the school are continuously aligned with advancements in communication technologies and the employment needs of the local and global markets
- Support media-related research that contributes to the advancement of professional practice
- Enrich the experience of faculty and students by cultivating an environment that is tolerant and accepting of diverse nationalities and cultures.

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Semesters of **16** weeks

Quarters of ___ weeks

Summer sessions of **7** weeks

Intersessions of ___ weeks

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

- Bachelor's degree
 Master's degree
 Ph.D. degree

9. List the specific undergraduate degrees as well as the majors or sequences being reviewed by ACEJMC.

***Indicate online degrees.**

- Bachelor of Communication & Information Studies (BCIS), Major in Journalism (JOUR)
- Bachelor of Communication & Information Studies (BCIS), Major in Digital Production & Storytelling (DPST)

10. Credit hours required by the university for an undergraduate degree:

(Specify semester-hour or quarter-hour credit.)

125 semester-hour credits

11. Give the number of credit hours students may earn for internship experience.

(Specify semester-hour or quarter-hour credit.)

3 semester-hour credits

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

Name of Sequence or Specialty	Person in Charge
Sequence Digital Production and Storytelling	Sumaya Kubeisy
Sequence Journalism	Mousa Barhoume

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

Program Description	Fall 2021 No. of Students	Spring 2022 No. of Students
Bachelor of Architecture	142	145
Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Psychology	66	84
Bachelor of Arts in International Studies (B.A.I.S.)	98	103
Bachelor of Business Administration (B.B.A.)	512	516
Bachelor of Communication and Information Studies (B.C.I.S)	123	121
Engineering	236	258
Executive Master of Business Administration	32	31
Interior Design	72	76
Master of Arts (M.A.) in International Affairs	8	15
Master of Arts in Intellectual Property and Innovation Management	6	6
Master of Arts in Leadership and Innovation in Contemporary Media	58	60
Master of Business Administration	77	80
Master of Education (M.Ed.)	39	40
Master of Science in Construction Management (M.S.C.M.)	13	12
Visual Communication	106	105
Total No. of Students	1588	1652

14. Number of undergraduate majors in the accredited unit, by sequence and total (if the unit has pre-major students, list them as a single total):

Name of Sequence or Specialty	Undergraduate majors in
Sequence Digital Production and Storytelling, English Track	40
Sequence Digital Production and Storytelling, Arabic Track	47
Sequence Journalism, English Track	14
Sequence Journalism, Arabic Track	22
Total	123

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

COURSE CODE	SECTION	COURSE TITLE	TERM	NO. OF STUDENTS
COMM 101	A	Introduction to Global Media	Spring 2022	14
COMM 101	B	Introduction to Global Media	Spring 2022	13
COMM 103	ARB	Media, Culture and Society	Spring 2022	12
COMM 104	A	Introduction to Non-Fiction TV Formats	Spring 2022	12
COMM 105	A	Drama and Non-Fiction TV Formats Analysis	Spring 2022	7
COMM106	A	The Language of Film	Spring 2022	16
COMM202	A	Ethical and Legal Responsibilities In The Mass Media	Spring 2022	20
COMM202	B	Ethical and Legal Responsibilities In The Mass Media	Spring 2022	18
COMM222	A	Multiplatform Storytelling	Spring 2022	3
COMM222	ARB	Multiplatform Storytelling (Arabic)	Spring 2022	6
COMM232	A	Cinematography	Spring 2022	10
COMM232	B	Cinematography	Spring 2022	12
COMM241	A	Introduction to Production	Spring 2022	11
COMM241	B	Introduction to Production	Spring 2022	13
DPST302	A	Media and Public Service	Spring 2022	7
DPST302	B	Media and Public Service	Spring 2022	15
DPST323	A	Screenwriting and Producing for TV and the Web	Spring 2022	11
DPST323	ARB	Screenwriting and Producing for TV and the Web	Spring 2022	11
DPST444	A	Capstone Production	Spring 2022	5
DPST444	B	Capstone Production	Spring 2022	10
DPST461	ITA	Internship	Spring 2022	1
JOUR209	A	Selected Topics in Journalism	Spring 2022	7
JOUR302	A	Newsroom Management and Decision Making	Spring 2022	10
JOUR322	A	Advanced Reporting	Spring 2022	6
JOUR322	ARB	Advanced Reporting	Spring 2022	4
JOUR462	ARB-A	Capstone Project	Spring 2022	7
JOUR463	ITA	Internship	Spring 2022	3

COURSE CODE	SECTION	COURSE TITLE	TERM	NO. OF STUDENTS
COMM223	A	Screenwriting Fundamentals	Fall 2021	12
COMM223	ARB-A	Screenwriting Fundamentals	Fall 2021	12
COMM230	A	Video Editing and Sound Design	Fall 2021	9
COMM230	B	Video Editing and Sound Design	Fall 2021	13
DPST422	ARB	Capstone Storytelling	Fall 2021	9
DPST461	ITA	Internship	Fall 2021	5
COMM221	ARB	Media Writing Skills (Arabic)	Fall 2021	6
JOUR321	ARB	Reporting	Fall 2021	4
JOUR401	A	Current Issues in Journalism	Fall 2021	5
DPST361	A	Online Communities	Fall 2021	22*
JOUR324	ARB	Broadcast Journalism	Fall 2021	4
COMM243	A	Introduction to Production for Journalism	Fall 2021	9
DPST340	A	Intermediate Production	Fall 2021	10
DPST422	A	Capstone Storytelling	Fall 2021	7
DPST441	A	The Documentary	Fall 2021	7
DPST441	A-LAB	The Documentary	Fall 2021	7
DPST461	ITB	Internship	Fall 2021	4
DPST340	B	Intermediate Production	Fall 2021	12
DPST441	ARB-AX	The Documentary	Fall 2021	6
DPST441	ARB-BX	The Documentary	Fall 2021	3
JOUR441	ARB-A	The Documentary	Fall 2021	6
JOUR441	ARB-B	The Documentary	Fall 2021	1
COMM221	A	Media Writing Skills	Fall 2021	2
JOUR321	A	Reporting	Fall 2021	7
JOUR463	ITB	Internship	Fall 2021	1
JOUR324	A	Broadcast Journalism	Fall 2021	6
JOUR301	A	Visualizing News	Fall 2021	10

*Overloaded DPST 361-A exceptionally in Fall 2021 to accommodate two students.

COURSE CODE	SECTION*	COURSE TITLE	TERM	NO. OF STUDENTS
DPST323	A-OC	Screenwriting and Producing for TV and the Web	Spring 2021	8
DPST444	A-OC-LAB	Capstone Production	Spring 2021	8
DPST444	A-OC	Capstone Production	Spring 2021	8
DPST444	B-OC	Capstone Production	Spring 2021	8
DPST444	B-OC-LAB	Capstone Production	Spring 2021	8
COMM222	ARB-OC	Multiplatform Storytelling (Arabic)	Spring 2021	4
JOUR322	ARB-OC	Advanced Reporting	Spring 2021	7
JOUR462	ARB-A-OC	Capstone Project	Spring 2021	13

JOUR463	ITA	Internship	Spring 2021	4
COMM232	A-OC	Cinematography	Spring 2021	11
COMM232	B-OC	Cinematography	Spring 2021	12
DPST302	A-OC	Media and Public Service	Spring 2021	7
DPST302	B-OC	Media and Public Service	Spring 2021	8
DPST461	ITA	Internship	Spring 2021	3
COMM241	B-OC	Introduction to Production	Spring 2021	12
DPST461	ITB	Internship	Spring 2021	1
COMM222	A-OC	Multiplatform Storytelling	Spring 2021	6
JOUR302	A-OC	Newsroom Management and Decision Making	Spring 2021	9
JOUR463	ITB	Internship	Spring 2021	3
JOUR462	A-OC	Capstone Project	Spring 2021	5
COMM241	A-OC	Introduction to Production	Spring 2021	11
DPST323	ARB-OC	Screenwriting and Producing for TV and the Web	Spring 2021	7

*OC Sections are courses that operated in a HyFlex mode during Spring 2021. Courses were offered on-campus since they are practical/skills courses; yet students who could not attend in-person were given the option to attend remotely.

16. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2021–2022 academic year:

AED 2,973,221.64 (\$ 810,142.14)

Percentage increase or decrease in three years:

ACTUAL 2018-2019	ACTUAL 2019-2020	ACTUAL 2020-2021	ACTUAL 2021- 2022 (as of Jan 2022)
382,036 AED (104,012.83 USD)	220,132 AED* (59,932.97 USD)	102,731 AED (27,969.46 USD)	172,750.64 (47,032.64 USD)
-47 %	- 42%	- 53%	68%

*The Actual expenditures in 2019-2020 excludes the Original Narrative Film Festival and the University of Navarra International Module that were covered by external bodies (total AED 793, 245 (216,143 USD)).

Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries: AED 1,441,556.04 (\$ 392,260.15)

17. List name and rank of all full-time faculty in the accredited unit in Fall 2021. (Full-time faculty refers to those defined as such by the university.) Identify those not teaching because of leaves, sabbaticals, etc.

Name of Full-Time Faculty in Fall 2021	Rank
Elissa Ayoub	Assistant Professor
Fadi Haddad	Assistant Professor
Mousa Barhoume	Professor
Pedro Sellos	Assistant Professor
Roozeh Kafi	Assistant Professor
Sumaya Kubeisy	Assistant Professor
Sylvie Briand	Assistant Professor
Yosra Jarrar	Associate Professor

Name of Full-Time Faculty in Spring 2022	Rank
Fadi Haddad	Assistant Professor
Mousa Barhoume	Professor
Pedro Sellos	Assistant Professor
Roozeh Kafi	Assistant Professor
Sally Hammoud	Assistant Professor
Sumaya Kubeisy	Assistant Professor
Sylvie Briand	Assistant Professor
Yosra Jarrar	Associate Professor

18. List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in fall 2021. Also list names of part-time faculty teaching spring 2021. (If your school has its accreditation visit in spring 2022, also provide the spring 2022 adjunct list when the team arrives for the visit.)

Name of Part-Time Faculty in Spring 2022

Myriam Khoury

Name of Part-Time Faculty in Fall 2021

Pamela Kesrouani

Maya Hojeij

Krystal Younes

Naghham Akileh

Name of Part-Time Faculty in Spring 2021

Razan Takesh

Sara Dabbous

Salma Halawa

19. Schools on the semester system:

For each of the last two academic years, please give the number and percentage of graduates who earned 72 or more semester hours outside of journalism and mass communications.

	72 or more semester hours outside of journalism and mass communications		
Year	Total Graduates	Number in Compliance	Percent
2020-2021 academic year	<u>39</u>	<u>38*</u>	<u>97.5%</u>
2019-2020 academic year	<u>53</u>	<u>52**</u>	<u>98%</u>

*Due to COVID-19 and the student's circumstances, the interim associate dean approved one JOUR course as a general elective given the student's high academic standing.

**This is a returning student who was following the old degree audit.

PART II — Standard 1: Mission, Governance and Administration

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

a). The unit has a written mission statement and a written strategic or 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. The unit annually updates its data on the ACEJMC searchable database website (<https://lookup.acejmc.org>).

The Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication (MBRSC) is one of six schools at the American University in Dubai. The private, non-sectarian university was founded in 1995 and is licensed by the UAE Ministry of Education and accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in the United States. In 2008, the MBRSC was named in honor of Sheik Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, who is the vice president and prime minister of the United Arab Emirates as well as the ruler of the Emirate of Dubai. MBRSC is the fourth largest school in enrollment within the University. The School offers a Bachelor's degree in Communication and Information Studies (BCIS) as well as a Master's in Arts degree in Leadership and Innovation in Contemporary Media. Only the undergraduate program is up for ACEJMC review in 2022, and the BCIS program has two sequences: one major is in journalism and the other is digital/production & storytelling.

The School's mission is to "take advantage of its position in the local an international media hub of Dubai to achieve distinction in scholarship, instruction and facilities that graduate media professionals who are proficient in the creation of media content of local, regional or global relevance. Such content, reflective of the highest ethical standards, embraces a multitude of subjects and platforms and effectively informs and/or entertains diverse consumers of media." Furthermore, the BCIS mission is to prepare practitioners and scholars to work in twenty-first century media "with the expectation that graduates will be proficient in areas ranging from ethics and media policy to writing and production skills to meet evolving local, regional and global standards."

The School's most recent strategic plan was approved in 2020 and identifies six notable major priorities:

- Innovating curricula to meet rapidly evolving media landscape as well as updating faculty and facilities.
- Fostering high quality research and creative work with the launch of MBRSC Media Lab and Center for Leadership and Digital Life
- Maintaining and strengthening media industry and world-class partnerships with educational institutions.
- Work with the Mohammed Bin Rashid Foundation to sustain and recruit top Arab students to reinforce inclusion and diversity.
- Enhance AUD campus life with major events such as the Original Narrative film festival.
- Increase MBRSC's visibility.

The five-year strategic plan (2020-2025) is reviewed on annual basis to measure progress. A review of the strategic plan showed there has been some progress made in most areas, but the Covid-19 pandemic, enrollment declines and budget cuts have made the last two years extremely challenging.

AUD's total enrollment has dropped from 2,328 students to 1,588 in the fall 2021, according to the self-study or down 31.7% . Likewise, undergraduate enrollment in MBRSC has dropped from 212 in fall 2014 to 123 in fall 2021 or down 41.9%. However, it's important to note the M.A. degree in Leadership and Innovation in Contemporary Media program, which was started in 2017, now has 60 graduate

students in the spring 2022. The graduate program is not seeking ACEJMC accreditation at this time.

Despite the challenges, the school's reputation within the university is highly regarded, according to interviews with advisory board members, industry leaders and other university administrators. MBRSC is "arguably one of the best in region," and is known for its "easy going culture with professional hard workers," said a dean from another school. "It is a school we value and like to work with."

The unit has updated most of the information required for the ACEJMC database just prior to the 2022 site visit, but some data such as budgets still needs to be updated. Also, it is important to note that some metrics such as the number of students by ethnicity such as White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, etc. are not required in UAE reporting by the government and were not available. The number of in-state students also is not a relevant measure for international programs.

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

Interviews with all full-time faculty indicate the school follows AUD's "Policy on Faculty Involvement in the Governance of the University" as documented in the Faculty Handbook. During the 2020-21 academic year, a university-wide Faculty Affairs Committee was established and an assistant professor represents the school related to issues such as HR policies and classroom environment. There is also faculty participation on the Curriculum Committee and MBRSC Collaborative Research Committee meetings. Interviews with all full-time faculty show they are collegial and generally enjoy their work environment and students. The faculty met consistently in the last year, albeit via Zoom due to the pandemic.

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

The unit has seen consistent leadership overall with the same dean since 2008. The dean also serves as Director of the TV Group for the Middle East Broadcasting Center (MBC). He is often described as charismatic and oversees the school's overall direction. However, the school has experienced administrative leadership turnover several times during the seven-year study period with day-to-day operations. For example, the former interim associate dean and journalism/mass communication administrator on the self-study documents submitted her resignation letter in June amid concern about a lack of fairness and administrative help, but she stayed to complete the fall 2021 self-study and recently defended her dissertation. In October 2021 it was announced that the founding program director for the Leadership and Innovation in Contemporary Media and an assistant professor with a Ph.D., would be promoted to the associate dean and served as the unit administrator during the site visit. There was concern expressed that there has been some inconsistency in the process for appointment of administrators in the school. (See the dean's response letter as an addendum to this report.) The reporting structure documented in the self-study and verified by the site team is that the previous interim associate dean as well as the current associate dean report to the dean and the provost. While MSBRC has a strong tradition as a professional school, the administration has increased pressure to ensure administrators have the Ph.D. credential. The dean, who has more than 30 years of industry experience, is currently working to complete his Ph.D.

Conversations with advisory board members and other administrators indicate the leadership team are strong advocates for dealing with university administration.

The advisory board typically meets once a year, but the pandemic has made that more challenging in the last two years. Some alumni and faculty would like to see the external marketing of MBRSC's accomplishments improved.

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

The process for evaluating administrators is documented. The dean and associate dean are evaluated by the provost. The associate dean as well as other administrators in the unit are evaluated annually by the dean using a standardized form. The most recent evaluation of the dean and associate dean were done in 2021. However, there was concern that the resignation of the interim associate dean and then the announcement of a new associate dean highlighted the lack of standardization and transparency, according to some faculty.

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

Interviews with faculty, staff and students indicate they feel free to voice concerns and they will be heard as well as addressed. Students said faculty, staff and even the president are very approachable. Students can file complaints through an online application process: <https://complaints.aud.edu/> Per the Student Handbook, students get an update on their complaint within five working days. If the complaint isn't resolved, the student can consult with the grievance officer. The grievance officer also manages the process, and ultimately can go to the university president for resolution.

AUD also has a Faculty Grievance Council. No formal faculty or staff grievances were found from the school.

SUMMARY:

While the school's mission is clearly documented and progress on the strategic plan is updated, there has been substantial turnover in administration during the study period. The most recent strategic plan for 2020-2025 has helped guide progress in the school. Stronger documentation on the process for the appointment of administrators would increase transparency.

Overall evaluation compliance/non-compliance: **COMPLIANCE**

PART II — Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

a). The unit requires that students take a minimum of 72 semester credit hours (or 104 quarter credit hours) required for a baccalaureate degree outside of journalism and mass communications and meet the liberal arts and sciences-general education requirements of the institution. ACEJMC expects at least 95 percent of the graduating classes in the two academic years preceding an accreditation visit to meet this requirement.

It appears the school is in compliance with 97.5% and 98% of graduating students in the preceding two academic years taking a minimum of 72 semester credit hours outside of the JMC requirement.

During the spring semester 2022 site team visit there were 36 students enrolled in the journalism sequence and 87 students in digital production and storytelling sequence in the Bachelor of Communication and Information Studies (BCIS) program.

The BCIS journalism major is limited to 53 credit hours within the journalism and mass communication field, and the same applies to the digital production and storytelling major known as DPST. In both majors, students can choose between English or Arabic. Students in the English language track shared that requiring the creative writing course helps them strengthen their writing and critical analysis skills. Students in the Arabic language track also must take Arabic Proficiency 1 and Arabic Proficiency II. Both classes help strengthen critical thinking skills as well as their ability to analyze media and literature.

In either sequence, 72 credit-hour courses are required outside the school, such as 36 credit hours in the arts and science core, six credit hours in language and 30 credit hours in general elective courses. The general electives requirement includes a minimum of six credit hours in Middle Eastern Studies, a maximum of six credit hours in the Arts, a maximum of six credit hours in English, two required business courses, and a maximum of 12 credits in language.

Most of the BCIS students count five to six of their general elective courses or a minimum of 15 credit hours toward a minor area of study. Common minor areas of study for BCIS students include Marketing and Visual Communication. These students shared their interest in leveraging their journalism and digital production storytelling skills with potential strategic communication, advertising or visual arts-related careers. One student shared his work was exhibited as part of the Expo 2020, and other students have had assignments to report on the World Expo that featured exhibits and pavilions representing 190 countries.

The BCIS Program Learning Outcomes are mapped to ACEJMC Values and Competencies.

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

There is a good balance between theoretical and conceptual courses, professional skills courses and courses that integrate theory and skills. The undergraduate core for all MBRSC students requires 12 credit hours with courses covering Intro to Global Media, Media Culture and Society, Media Economics and Research, and Ethical and Legal Responsibilities.

Students in the Digital Production and Storytelling Core are required to take an additional 29 credit hours with the following courses included Drama and Non-fiction TV Format Analysis, The Language of Film, Screenwriting Fundamentals, Introduction to Production, Video Editing and Sound Design, Cinematography.

Students in the Journalism core sequence are required to take 24 credit hours including the following courses: Intro to Non-Fiction TV Format, Media Writing Skills, Multiplatform Storytelling and Introduction to Production for Journalism.

Additional options for students in the Digital Production and Storytelling major sequence can take a mix of 24 credit hours from the following courses: Media and Public Service, Screenwriting and Producing for TV and the Web, Intermediate Production, Online Communities, The Documentary, Capstone Storytelling, Capstone Production or Internship.

Additional options for students in the Journalism sequence major can take a mix of up to 27 credit hours from the following courses: Visualizing News, Newsroom Management and Decision Making, Reporting, Advanced Reporting, Broadcast Journalism, The Documentary, Media and Politics in the Middle East, Capstone Project and Internship.

The self-study provided excellent documentation in how BCIS Program Learning Outcomes are applied to ACEJMC Values and Competencies. See several examples that follow.

History and economics of media institutions are covered in the Introduction to Global Media course with case studies on “the rising number of mergers, acquisitions, buyouts and hostile takeovers” as well as discussion of economies of scale and audiences.

While there is no dedicated course in the core with diversity in the title per se, it should be noted that faculty include diversity, equity and inclusion in the Media Culture and Society course, where students tackle a variety of issues including minority groups, gender representation as well as the marginalization or empowerment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people in media.

Critical and independent thinking are promoted in a variety of classes, particularly in the school-wide core courses such as where they cover a variety of topics ranging from media literacy to evaluating sources and ownership models.

Ethics and writing are deeply embedded in the curriculum with the Media Writing Skills, Reporting and Advanced Reporting as well as the Ethical and Legal Responsibilities in the Mass Media courses. The Multimedia Storytelling course requires students to produce a photo essay, audio story, video story and a multiplatform package.

About a dozen students ranging from freshmen to seniors were extremely enthusiastic in the journalism as well as the digital and production storytelling sequences about the curriculum, hands-on learning and teaching. For example, one student said, “We ask. We write. We go beyond the school. That’s what makes MBRSC and AUD special.” For capstones, some students shared they travelled outside the

country and have support from the school to create documentaries and other projects. Students spoke of doing documentaries about topics ranging from male suicides to what it means to be a feminist.

c). Instruction, whether on-site or online, is demanding and current, and is responsive to professional expectations of digital, technological and multimedia competencies. Achievements in teaching and learning are recognized and valued.

Based on discussions with about a dozen students and observations from at least 10 class sessions, the instruction is current and students are engaged with debate, discussions and critiques. The proximity to Media City is a huge plus and inspiration.

Skills courses reflect recent changes in media technologies. Classrooms were equipped with high-flex technology and half the class was on Zoom. In one documentary class, a male student made a pitch for a short film about sexual harassment's impact on a female teen.

Due to the pandemic, many classes were forced to move online. However, the week of the site team's visit the students were delighted to be back in face-to-face classes.

d). Student-faculty classroom ratios facilitate effective teaching and learning in all courses; the ratio in skills and laboratory sections, whether on-site or online, should not exceed 20-1. (Campaigns classes are exempt from the 20-1 ratio.)

The team observed that many of the classes were well below the 20-1 ratio, and students said they valued the strong interaction and engagement with faculty. "It's a privilege to be in this school," said one student. Another student praised the faculty for breaking "barriers of strict formality. They've almost become our personal counselors."

e). 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.

Internships are required for senior students in both the journalism and digital production storytelling sequences. Students spoke of phenomenal access to internships ranging from working on sustainability issues in advertising and PR for Siemens to GQ Magazine and MBC Group. Several students also shared they've benefitted from online internships in Lebanon as well as paid freelance work for media companies in videography and content production.

SUMMARY:

The curriculum gets high marks from students with the capstone and internships being praised for getting them real-world experience whether students choose to work in Arab or English-language media. The placement rate with industry also speaks to the strong reputation of the curriculum and faculty.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: **COMPLIANCE**

PART II — Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

a). The unit has a written diversity plan for achieving an inclusive curriculum, a diverse faculty and student population, and a supportive climate for working and learning and for assessing progress toward achievement of the plan. The diversity plan should focus on domestic minority groups and, where applicable, international groups. The written plan must include the unit's definition of diversity and identify the under-represented groups.

It is important to note that American University in Dubai was ranked in the QS world university rankings as fourth worldwide for student diversity and second worldwide for faculty diversity. More than 110 countries are represented in AUD's population and flags in Building C provide a daily reminder of the 55 nations represented by students, faculty and staff in MBRSC alone.

The self-study states, "The school's faculty and administrators agreed to develop a diversity plan as part of its strategic priorities in AY 2022-2023." However, MBRSC did not provide a written diversity plan as part of its self-study.

Many conversations with students, faculty, staff, alumni and other stakeholders confirm that the MBRSC's "understanding of diversity transcends and respects differences intersecting gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation and socio-economic status" as stated in the self-study. The underrepresented in UAE society refers to "students from underprivileged socio-economic backgrounds," according to the self-study.

The largest single group of the undergraduate student population at AUD is classified as representing "Other Arab" countries, notably Algeria, Algeria, Egypt Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen. Students from those 13 countries represent 39.88% of the AUD undergraduate population, but 77.9% of the MBRSC undergraduate student population. The second largest group of undergraduate students at AUD identify their nationality as UAE, which is 25.31% of the AUD student population, but they only represent 7.63% of the students in MBRSC. When student from other GCC countries (including Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman and Saudi Arabia) are folded into the mix, nearly 68% of undergraduate students at AUD are from UAE, Arab countries and the GCC countries, but more than 90% of MBRSC students are from UAE, Arab countries and the GCC countries listed above. AUD students from Asian countries (including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Mongolia, South Korea, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan) represented 10.8% of the student population compared to only 1.53% in the MBRSC. The number of AUD undergraduate students from Europe were at 4.06% vs. 3.0% in the MBRSC. Students from "African countries" (classified as Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Zimbabwe) represented 2.83% of the AUD undergraduate student population, but there were no students from those African nations in the MBRSC. Undergraduate students from Canada, the United States and United Kingdom represented 6.6% of the AUD student population overall vs. 3.82% of the MBRSC population. Undergraduate AUD students representing "other" parts of the world including the Caribbean, South America, Russia, New Zealand, Serbia and Turkey represent 7.18% of the undergraduate student population compared to about 3.05% in the MBRSC.

b). The unit's curriculum fosters understanding of issues and perspectives that are inclusive in terms of domestic concerns about gender, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation. The unit's

curriculum includes instruction in issues and perspectives relating to mass communications across diverse cultures in a global society.

Students consistently praise the curriculum for instruction about diversity, equity and inclusion issues. Among the films they have been exposed to range from *Identity Expat*, released in 2020 and directed by Raneem Hassan) to *In Their Eyes*, a film about Arab women stereotypes released in 2016 and directed by Ola Abu Shihadi. Students also spoke of the “ultimate freedom” they have in choosing a topic or problem to focus on in their capstone projects. The students shared they’re working on telling stories about a variety of issues ranging from debunking stereotypes about mental health disorders in the Sudan to a belly dancer who is also a chief executive and mother.

c). The unit demonstrates effective efforts to recruit women and domestic minority faculty and professional staff and, where feasible, recruits international faculty and professional staff.

UAE is a very diverse nation with 87.9% of the population classified as non-national, and only 10.1% are UAE nationals with male non-nationals outnumbering female non-nationals nearly 3 to 1. It appears AUD has done a solid job recruiting diverse faculty when it comes to gender and nationalities. For example, full-time female MBRSC faculty represented about 44% of the full-time MBRSC faculty in the spring 2021, and closer to the overall university percentage at 45%. The full-time male MBRSC faculty represented 56% of the faculty, and was close to the overall university percentage at 53%.

About 67% of the MBRSC faculty (or six people) were classified as “other Arab” compared to about 26% (about 25 people) of the overall AUD faculty. It is interesting to note that 41% of the overall AUD full-time faculty (or 40 people) were classified as citizens of the United States, United Kingdom or Canada, but only one full-time faculty member in MBRSC is from North America in the spring 2021.

All six of the MBRSC adjunct faculty members were female in the spring 2021. In the spring 2022, there was only one full-time adjunct faculty member who is female. For the last three years, all full-time faculty hired have been females and there is a wide geographic diversity in the pool with applicants from at least four continents.

d). The unit demonstrates effective efforts to help recruit and retain a student population reflecting the diversity of the population eligible to enroll in institutions of higher education in the region or population it serves, with special attention to recruiting under-represented groups.

Female students outnumber male students as a percentage of students nearly 3 to 1 in MBRSC with 73% of MBRSC students being female and 27% being male in spring 2021. The overall gender mix for AUD students was 55% female vs. 45% male.

AUD and MBRSC attract students from around the globe. However, MBRSC’s UAE national students only represented about 7.63% of the population and was substantially lower than 25.31% in the overall university. Administrators explained that UAE nationals can go to public higher education institutions tuition free, and that contributes to the low enrollment rate for UAE nationals.

MBRSC draws a substantially higher percentage of students (77.9%) from “other Arab” nations such as Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, Palestine, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen vs. 39.88% for the overall university from “other Arab” nations. To address underrepresented groups,

particularly UAE nationals and others from low socio-economic groups, MBRSC has relied on the partnership with the foundation bearing the Sheik's name and about 30% of students are served by this scholarship fund.

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

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.

A faculty climate survey completed in 2019 and 2020 showed that 87% and 79% of faculty agreed or strongly agree that the “university provides a healthy and safe environment for all employees and students.”

During the site visit, students, faculty, staff and administrators often described MBRSC as a family. One student meeting included students who identified as being from UAE, Sudan, Syria and Egypt. “Diversity comes naturally to us,” said one student in the group.

SUMMARY:

Diversity is clearly celebrated among its students, faculty and staff as well as in MBRSC's curriculum and culture. However, the school lacks a written diversity plan and having a plan would be critical to measure progress on an annual basis going forward.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: **NON-COMPLIANCE**

Table 6-a: AUD and MBRSC Full-Time Faculty Population in Spring 2021

Nationality of Faculty	Total AUD Full-Time Faculty Population		Total MBRSC Full-Time Faculty Population	
	No.	%	No.	%
UAE	1	1	0	0
Other GCC ¹	2	2	0	0
Other Arab ²	25	26	6	67
US, UK, Canada	40	41	1	11
India	3	3	0	0
Others ³	26	27	2	22
Total	97	100	9	100
<i>Gender</i>				
Full-time Female	44	45	4	44
Full-time Male	53	55	5	56

¹ Other GCC countries included: Saudi Arabia

² Other Arab countries included: Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Tunisia

³ Other countries included: Austria, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Germany, Greece, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Netherlands, Pakistan, Turkey, and Spain.

Nationality of Faculty	Total AUD Part-Time Faculty Population		Total MBRSC Part-Time Faculty Population	
	No.	%	No.	%
UAE	1	3	0	0
Other GCC	0	0	0	0
Other Arab ¹	20	63	3	75
US, UK, Canada	3	9	0	0
India	2	6	0	0
Others ²	6	19	1	25
Total	32	100	4	100
<i>Gender</i>				
Part-time Female	28	87.5	6	100
Part-time Male	4	12.50	0	0

¹ Other Arab country included: Egypt, Jordan, and Lebanon

² Other countries included: Australia, France, Kenya, Iran, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Spain, and Somalia

PART II — Standard 4: Full-Time and Part-Time Faculty

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

a). The unit has written criteria for selecting and evaluating the performance of all full-time and part-time faculty and instructional staff.

At the time of the site team visit, the Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication had eight full time faculty members. (It also had eight at the beginning of the academic year, but the school's interim associate dean left in December and a new faculty member began in January.) During the self-study year, the school had 9 full-time faculty members and the previous year it had 10. Of the eight remaining, FT faculty have Ph.Ds., three have Masters (two of which are MFAs) and two are Ph.D. candidates. Technically, having a Ph.D. is a requirement by the Ministry of Education for full-time faculty, but the school has asked for and received waivers. Having at least a master's degree is a requirement for part-time faculty, and all have them. Of the eight faculty members one is a full professor, and one is an associate professor. The remaining six are assistant professors.

Full-time faculty are selected through a process that involves the associate dean notifying the provost of a need for a faculty position. The associate dean then reviews all applications and those shortlisted are then interviewed by various faculty members. The chosen candidate is then appointed by the dean and associate dean with approval of the provost.

Part-time faculty are selected with input from the dean, the advisory board, alumni and industry contacts to determine who are suitable for the courses they would teach.

The college has written criteria to annually evaluate the performance of full-time faculty members based on teaching, research and service. Part-time faculty are evaluated by the associate dean based on classroom visits, student evaluations and written assessments.

b). Full-time faculty have primary responsibility for teaching, research/creative activity and service.

Teaching is the top priority at MBRSC, and its full-time faculty play the primary role in delivering the curriculum. The regular teaching load for a full-time faculty member is 4-4-2: four courses in the fall semester; four courses in the spring semester and two courses over the summer. The result is that full-time faculty teach well over 80 percent of the courses offered. Likewise, full-time faculty have primary responsibility for research and creative activity, with each full-time faculty member required to publish one journal article or three conference papers a year. Creative faculty are required to produce important professional work like producing or writing a feature film. Full-time faculty are also evaluated based on their service activities relevant to the school, community and profession. The dean has stated that he would like to see more adjuncts teach to bring more current professional skills into the classroom.

c). Credentials of the unit's faculty represent a balance of professional and scholarly experience and expertise kept current through faculty development opportunities, relationships with professional and scholarly associations, and appropriate supplementation of part-time and visiting faculty.

Despite such a small faculty, MBRSC has a strong balance of professional and scholarly backgrounds and remain current in their fields.

On the professional side, faculty includes a former war correspondent and one who is based in experimental filmmaking. On the scholarly side, the faculty include five with terminal degrees as well as a Ph.D. candidate. At the beginning of each semester, faculty attend a faculty development workshop

that includes topics ranging from online learning to future skills and educational shifts.

d). The unit regularly evaluates instruction, whether onsite or online, using multiple measures that include student input.

Each faculty member is required to fill out an annual performance review in the fall for the preceding academic year that details their teaching accomplishments including course development. Students fill out course evaluations and faculty are also evaluated based on the results of the pre-test and post-test of selected classes. Faculty who teach the capstone classes are not evaluated by outside reviewers (i.e. industry jury members). Outside reviewers can help evaluate the students' work. The associate dean evaluates part-time faculty via class visits, syllabus analysis and course evaluation reports.

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

The faculty has tremendous respect on campus because of the quality of their teaching and the success of their students and alumni.

SUMMARY:

Teaching is a top priority at MBRSC with well-qualified faculty teaching more than 80 percent of the courses offered at the school. The faculty is well-regarded by their peers across campus and the students in the school.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: **COMPLIANCE**

PART II — Standard 5: Scholarship: Research, Creative and Professional Activity

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

a). The unit requires, supports and rewards faculty research, creative activity and/or professional activity.

While the American University in Dubai and the Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication are clearly teaching-oriented entities (as seen by the standard 4-4-2 teaching loads), an emphasis on supporting research and creative activity has recently received added attention.

The university expects faculty members to remain current in their discipline through research and creative output. Each faculty member is expected to set their own research and/or creative agenda and share that with the associate dean for review and discussion and to determine how much support is needed to accomplish those goals. That support can include course reductions, external funding and collaboration with outside entities. In 2019 the university introduced the Research Incentive Grant to support full-time faculty seeking to publish peer-reviewed papers. Nine faculty members have taken advantage of course reductions (called faculty teaching offsets) during this accreditation cycle with some receiving such reductions multiple times.

b). The unit specifies expectations for research, creative activity and/or professional activity in criteria for hiring, promotion and tenure.

Faculty are required to publish one journal article or three conference papers per year. Creative faculty must produce creative work. MBRSC does not have a tenure system, so research and creative activity is irrelevant for that, but it is a major factor when it comes to promotion and is spelled out in the criteria of promotion.

During the last accreditation visit, MBRSC was found out of compliance on this standard due to the lack of scholarly and creative output. To its credit, the school has vastly improved in this area. For example, during this accreditation cycle faculty have published 23 articles in refereed journals and 29 articles in refereed conference papers. That compares to two and two during the past cycle. Even more impressive, faculty have published 348 articles in non-refereed publications compared to only four during the last cycle.

Nevertheless, faculty point out that it is difficult to be a productive researcher when facing a 4-4-2 teaching load. Both the provost and the dean want the faculty to take better advantage of teaching offsets to do more research. The dean said there are many talented adjuncts who can teach the school's courses to allow more research productivity.

c). Evaluation criteria for promotion, tenure and merit recognition account for and acknowledge activities appropriate to faculty members' professional as well as scholarly specializations.

During this accreditation cycle four faculty members were promoted: two from associate professor to full professor and two from assistant professor to associate professor. Three outside reviewers of a higher rank determine whether the research or creative dossiers are worthy of promotion and the provost makes the final decision.

Merit raises are determined via a ratings system with teaching evaluated at 65 percent; research at 20 percent and service at 15 percent.

There is no tenure system at AUD. Faculty members are appointed initially to a three-year contract, which is followed by an open-ended contract that can be terminated by either side with six-months' notice.

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.

In 2019, the MBRSC created the Collaborative Research Committee. Its first research project examined self-censorship among students. The committee has also met with Dubai tourism officials in hopes of bidding for the annual conference for the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR). (In 2015 MBRSC hosted the 24th International Conference of the Asian Media Information and Communication Center (AMIC)).

e). The unit fosters a climate that supports intellectual curiosity, critical analysis and the expression of differing points of view.

Both faculty and students say the school consistently supports open dialogue, intellectual curiosity and respect for differing points of view. Several students said the classroom atmosphere is robust and they feel the school is a safe place. "No topic is off the table," one said.

SUMMARY:

Despite a 4-4-2 teaching load, the MBRSC has placed a major focus on scholarly and creative productivity by its full-time faculty and by all measurements they have succeeded. Research productivity has substantially increased since the last accreditation report and a culture of research is now a significant part of the school's aspirations.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: **COMPLIANCE**

**Table 1 Scholarly, Research, Creative and Professional Activities
AY 2008-2009 to AY 2013-2014 vs. AY 2014-2015 to AY 2020-2021**

Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activities	Total from Unit from AY 2008-2009 to AY 2013-2014	Total from Unit from AY 2014-2015 to AY 2020-2021
Awards and Honors	3	7
Grants Received Internal	9	-
Grants Received External	9	1
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co-authored	0	1
Textbooks, Sole- or Co-authored	0	2
Books Edited	0	-
Book Chapters	0	8
Monographs	1	3
Articles in Refereed Journals	2	23
Refereed Conference Papers	2	29
Invited Academic Papers	0	-
Encyclopedia Entries	0	-
Book Reviews	2	3
Articles in Non-refereed Publications	4	348
Juried Creative Works	2	3
Non-juried Creative Works	11	23
Other (please specify)	39	-
Total	84	451

PART II — Standard 6: Student Services

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

a). Faculty and/or professional advising staff ensure that students are aware of unit and institutional requirements for graduation and receive career and academic advising.

Formal advising for students in the school and throughout the American University in Dubai is provided by the AUD Academic Advising Division. An academic advisor from the division is assigned to Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication students and she works closely with the associate dean to make sure all MBRSC students are aware of all AUD and school graduation requirements. The academic advisor meets regularly, at the beginning and towards the end of each semester, with each student to make sure they are on track to satisfy graduation criteria, evaluate course schedules, and discuss possible minors.

Students are assigned to an academic advisor when they enroll based on their major. Students with fewer than 90 academic credit hours must have the academic advisor's approval to register for courses. In their senior year, students are also assigned a faculty advisor from the school to follow up on the status of their senior courses, internships, and degree and graduation requirements. Students also report easy access to the associate dean throughout the semester for informal advising needs.

An annual satisfaction survey taken by students indicates continuous improvement in student satisfaction with advising over the past six years. As of the 2020/21 academic year, more than 70 percent of student respondents indicated satisfaction with all areas of advising. A similar survey for faculty showed a majority of faculty members at the university were satisfied with the advising, but the support was not strong or deep among faculty.

For that reason, faculty also monitor student performance throughout the semester. The school has an "early alert" system in place that allows faculty to intervene if a student is doing poorly in a class after the fourth week of the semester.

The school's placement within Media City in Dubai enhances students' ability to find internships and career related employment in the digital and journalism fields.

The university also hosts a Career Services Office that provides both students and alumni with career related information and assistance. The office provides workshops on resume and cover letter writing, interview techniques, aptitude assessment, and general career counseling. The career services team also guides students in internship and employment search strategies. It provides a list of available internships and job openings online and also provides online appointment booking.

Students report internship opportunities are many and varied. In interviews, students spoke of having interned at both large and small media companies including CNN, GQ, Al Arabiya, Middle East Broadcasting Center, and other international companies including Siemens.

AUD also provides a university-wide career fair annually for students and employers to meet.

b). Faculty are available and accessible to students.

Faculty members commit to six hours of office hours each week and are also available to students by appointment. Faculty members have their office hours and email addresses posted on their doors. The executive director has an open “office hours” policy daily from 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

In interviews with students, they described a remarkable commitment on the part of the faculty to be available to students during student productions both on campus and in the field. Students told stories of faculty members staying on campus late into the night while students worked to finish production projects, and of faculty being available for Zoom calls while students were in the field both domestically and internationally.

c). The unit keeps students informed about the activities, requirements and policies of the unit.

The executive director keeps students informed of school activities, policies and any changes to course and graduation requirements through regular email communication and in-class announcements. The unit has a small, personalized feel and students and faculty alike describe an informal, but open and effective communication system that takes place through emails, WhatsApp, posters and Blackboard software.

The students say this system works and they feel completely informed about information within the MBRSC.

d). The unit and the institution provide students with extra-curricular activities and opportunities that are relevant to the curriculum and develop their professional as well as intellectual abilities and interests.

The MBRSC is a small school with 121 students during the spring of 2022, in a small university of roughly 1600 students. With such a small student body the opportunity for robust extra-curricular activities are fewer than at larger institutions. However, the school does provide a number of professionally related extra-curricular activities, including:

Cinematopia – a student-run film screening club featuring independent and world cinema films. Students gather to watch, analyze and critique the films.

Media Chat – a series of biweekly presentations and seminars given primarily by media professionals in the region. The media professionals discuss their career paths, current issues, job prospects in the market, and employment opportunities. BCIS students receive extra-credit points for attending.

There is a noticeable lack of student media at AUD. There is no regularly published student newspaper or regularly updated website, no student radio station, no regularly produced student podcasts, television broadcasts or student publications. Students are very active in film and video production for their classes, and many freelance. But when asked about the lack of student media on campus they were confused by the question. While some faculty members mentioned they would like to see a stronger student media presence, the lack of any did not seem to be a concern among the students.

There is an online student newspaper called the *MBRSC Post*, which publishes select articles during the year. But at the time of the site team visit, articles on the website were months old. The website is populated with occasional coursework, but not extra-curricular work.

The social media presence for the MBRSC Post was equally dated. As of January 17, 2022, the most recent tweet on its twitter account was from April of 2021, its Instagram account has been dormant since April of 2020, and the last post on its Facebook account was from September of 2018.

Faculty and staff say that one solution for strengthening student media and extra-curricular projects in general is the planned creation of a media lab, which will be designed to give students a sense of belonging to a student-team where they can work with professionals, experiment and create student generated content not related to course assignments, and have the opportunity to experiment with new technology the unit hopes to purchase, including a 360-degree camera and VR.

e). The accredited unit must gather, maintain and analyze enrollment, retention, graduation rates and other aggregate information for improving student services and reducing barriers to student success. The unit annually publishes retention and graduation information on its website.

The Registrar's Office collects information related to enrollment, retention and graduation rates. That information is shared with all deans through the Provost's Office.

In recent years the MBRSC has experienced a significant decline in student enrollment. In the Fall of 2014 there were 53 new students enrolled, that number declined each year to 20 in the Fall of 2018. Enrollment has rebounded slightly since then, and retention has improved.

The AUD blames this loss in enrollment on increased competition from other private universities opening in the UAE over the last decade, that offer similar degree programs at a lower tuition rate. In 2018 the MBRSC created a plan to address enrollment decline by creating a yearly media campaign with an agency based in Dubai. It is also in the process of renaming the "Digital Production & Storytelling" major to "Film, TV and Media Production" major for marketing and clarification purposes.

Faculty members say the unit has not done enough to promote and publicize itself among potential students, and has rested too long on the strength of its reputation alone.

Both the university and the school publish their retention and graduation information online, in easy to understand and clear language and tables.

SUMMARY:

Advising for the students is well done and has numerous entry points. Faculty go above and beyond in being accessible and helpful to students. Communication within the unit, while informal, works well. There are extra-curricular activities for the students, but no strong student media. The unit faces enrollment challenges but all required information about enrollment and retention is available.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: **COMPLIANCE**

PART II — Standard 7: Resources, Facilities and Equipment

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The unit has a detailed five-year strategic plan for 2020-2025. Among the top priorities in the plan are continuously improving existing curricula and keeping Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication faculty up-to-date with the latest teaching methods. It is not a very aggressive plan, but does state a goal to provide students with extra-curricular activities that support their personal and professional development.

The annual budget allocates resources that are in line with the strategic plan. The operating and capital budgets are prepared by the associate dean in consultation with the faculty and submitted to the president and provost for approval and revisions. The final budget is approved as part of the university budget approved by the American University of Dubai governing board.

b). The resources that the institution provides are adequate to achieve the unit's mission. The resources are fair in relation to those provided other units.

The budgets for the MBRSC indicate the university frequently allocates significantly less than what is requested by the school. For academic year 2019-20, the school received 86% of its requested budget (AED 1,900,672 allocated from a AED 2,192,490 request). That percentage has dropped significantly in the 2020-21 academic year and in the current academic year the unit received 56% of its requested budget allocation.

More significantly, both the total budget for MBRSC and the budget under its control have dropped over the last three years.

Here is the total school budget for the unit for the last 3 years:

2019-20	AED 4,364,449	US\$ 1,189,223
2020-21	AED 3,172,362	US\$ 864,404
2021-22	AED 2,973,222	US\$ 810,142

The amount of expenditures has also seen a significant decline over the last three years, but much of this is related to expenditures cut because of the Covid pandemic. Interviews with the school's leadership indicate many of the budget cuts were self-imposed due to concerns created by the Covid pandemic and a perceived need to cut expenses.

Nevertheless, MBRSC leadership and faculty say the resources provided to MBRSC are adequate to achieve the unit's mission, and that specific expenditure requests with strong supportive arguments are rarely denied.

The resources provided to the school are allocated by the university in an equitable manner. Peer programs with similar enrollment have similar budgets, faculty size and facilities.

c). The facilities of the unit enable and promote effective scholarship, teaching and learning.

The MBRSC is housed in the C-Building on the AUD campus, and has 18 classrooms available that it shares with the School of Arts and Sciences. The classrooms are grouped together on two floors of the building and are close to the faculty offices, which are all on the same floor, giving the school a welcoming, friendly and active atmosphere.

One student called the third floor of C-Building “the only living floor at AUD, because it is open 24 hours and people are always here working on their projects.”

The television studio and control room are adequately equipped. There is an impressive suite of editing booths and a large, comfortable film screening room.

The MBRSC administration believes the school needs more space. Originally there was a plan for a stand-alone building for the unit, but that plan has not materialized.

d). The institution and the unit provide faculty and students with equipment or access to equipment to support its curriculum and the research, creative and professional activities of the faculty.

MBRSC students have access to industry standard equipment and software for their classwork. These include:

- Two labs, equipped with 38 Mac computers. Half of the computers provide Adobe Creative Cloud 2020, Avid Media Composer 8, Pro Tools 11, and iMovie for video and audio production. The other half of the computers contain similar software, but with a dated, yet functional, version of Adobe.
- Six editing suites with AVID Media Composer and other video editing software.
- A three camera television studio with teleprompters, professional lighting, and green screen capabilities.
- A television studio control room with digital production equipment.
- A movie screening room that seats 36 people.

Students also have access to professional field production equipment including four Sony PSW 4K professional video cameras and related operating equipment, nine Canon 5D DSLR cameras, and seven Sony A7S II camera kits, and other assorted cameras, lights, microphones, and reflectors. For audio projects, students have access to 17 Zoom H6 recorders and 17 I pads for production purposes.

Students remarked how fortunate they feel to have access to such professional equipment, and said the technical supervisor does an excellent job assisting students with borrowing equipment and answering questions about using it. They reported that during the pandemic lockdown, the technical supervisor would still allow necessary equipment to be checked-out, meet students at the campus gate and help them load in in their cars for field production use.

The self-study notes that the computers in both Mac Labs are obsolete and in urgent need of upgrades. The school has requested the purchase of new computers for the Mac Labs and that request has been approved. The upgrades are expected at the end of the spring semester.

e). The institution and the unit provide sufficient library and information resources to support faculty and student research and professional development.

The library at the AUD provides information resources and services that support MBRSC students and faculty, and their research goals. MBRSC faculty are actively involved in developing the library's collection.

The one-floor library is centrally located on campus and open seven days a week during fall and spring semesters. Hours are extended during finals, but have been reduced during the pandemic. The facility has four study rooms for group work. The library provides 56 computers for students, as well as printers, a photocopier, and wi-fi.

The AUD Library provides access to scholarly journals including those related to film and communication. Recently published physical copies are available on the shelves. Older articles from scholarly and peer-reviewed journals are available across 49 online databases.

SUMMARY:

The MBRSC has a strategic plan and budget resources to achieve its goals. Recent budgets have seen declines, attributed to both cost-cutting because of the pandemic and a drop in enrollment. The facilities are adequate and the equipment available to the students for coursework and fieldwork is excellent. The library is adequate for student research needs.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 8: Professional and Public Service

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

a). The unit consults and communicates regularly with its alumni and is actively engaged with alumni, professionals and professional associations to keep curriculum and teaching, whether on-site or online, current and to promote the exchange of ideas.

The school works to make Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication alumni an integral part of the school, and tries to maintain a strong relationship between the alumni community and the school by including them in the school's events. Alumni are invited to participate in the annual orientation event, invited to participate on the advisory board, and the MBRSC surveys alumni for their opinions on major decisions, such as renaming the Digital Production and Storytelling major.

Most official alumni communication takes place through the American University in Dubai Alumni Association, but MBRSC works to maintain a close relationship with its own alumni through continuous informal communication and engagement.

The associate dean and executive director often meet with industry leaders to learn how MBRSC graduates are faring in the job market and to make sure the curriculum continues to match current market demands. Industry professionals are also frequent guest speakers in classes to connect what students learn in class to the professional world.

The MBRSC also makes use of an advisory board that consists of prominent professionals. The main role of this board is to advise the school's administration on matters relevant to the curriculum and assist the school in formulating its strategy. The advisory board meets for a full day once a year.

b). The unit provides leadership in the development of high standards of professional practice through such activities as offering continuing education, promoting professional ethics, evaluating professional performance, and addressing communication issues of public consequence and concern.

The MBRSC supports education beyond the unit by offering opportunities for all AUD students community members to participate in media related and continuing education opportunities.

Many of these events have not happened over the past two years due to Covid restrictions, but plans are in place to reinstitute them as soon as they are allowed.

Some of the activities available to all students at AUD include:

Cinematopia – student organized screenings of international films that are then analyzed, discussed and debated by the viewers.

Media Chats – a series of biweekly presentations and seminars given primarily by media professionals in the region to talk about their career paths and the job market.

c). The unit contributes to the improvement of journalism and mass communication as academic disciplines by supporting the faculty's involvement in academic associations and related activities.

The unit supports faculty efforts to stay connected to the industry and academic associations by providing support for travel to conferences and to participate in professional and public service activities.

Since the last accreditation visit, faculty have participated in various industry related service activities including media training workshops for professionals and government entities, moderating and participating in conference panels, and serving as consultants on film and documentary projects. Again, many in-person events have not been possible over the last two years, due to the pandemic.

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

The school is engaged with the community by offering many professional media trainings and sponsoring presentations and forums that address media-related issues in the region. The number of offerings are commendable for such a small faculty. A sample of those events include:

Media Educational Workshop – a strategic program in support of the Arab Youth Initiative. The program was designed to empower young media professionals, act as a platform to promote media best practices, and equip young media leaders with the required skills to make a positive media landscape.

The Executive Government Training – In collaboration with the Dubai Executive Council, the MBRSC faculty developed a four month long executive media program to train managers who work in communications for UAE government departments.

The MBRSC makes efforts contribute to the community through programs that involve not only students, but members of the community as well, including:

The Social Media Influencers Program offered over two semesters during AY 2019-2020. Participants completed the program for eight months. The program was developed by MBRSC faculty members in collaboration with the Dubai Press Club (DPC), which aims to graduate students who understand the advanced features of different social media platforms. Students learned how to implement the ethics and etiquette of social media successfully and develop their ability to use their conceptual knowledge and practical skills to examine news critically.

The Original Short Film Festival – this is an annual festival hosted by MBRSC that showcases international, regional and local youth films.

Most of the school's outreach efforts to the community have been on hiatus for two years due to the Covid pandemic, but plans are to continue them once they are allowed.

e). The unit supports scholastic journalism through such activities as faculty workshops, visiting lectures and critiques of student work.

The unit works with the admissions office to organize visits to high schools in the region. During these

visits the associate dean and faculty give presentations about the curriculum, extra-curricular programs and career opportunities available through the MBRSC.

The MBRSC and admissions office also jointly produce major outreach efforts, including a short video workshop for students who have an interest in studying journalism or video production.

The MBRSC also partners with the Dubai Press Club to present a yearly high school short film and interview competitions in both English and Arabic. Winners receive a full scholarship to the MBRSC program.

SUMMARY:

Many opportunities for professional and public service have been cancelled due to a global pandemic approaching its third year. Nevertheless, the MBRSC has a solid historical record of professional and public service, and plans to continue that in the future.

The MBRSC stays in close contact with many alumni, which is made easier because some of them work close by in Media City.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: **COMPLIANCE**

PART II — Standard 9: Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

The Accrediting Committee and Council seek site-team reports on assessment that are appropriately detailed for a judgment on compliance that is informed, fair and consistent from one team to another. Please respond to each of these questions in your report on indicators (a), (b) and (c):

a). The unit defines the goals for learning that students must achieve, including the “Professional Values and Competencies” of the Council.

- Who is in charge of the assessment program (e.g., administrator, sequence coordinator or faculty committee)?

The assessment program is overseen by the university’s director and assistant director of institutional effectiveness. At the Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication the assessment program is run by the associate dean.

- How has the unit verified that core and required courses cover all 12 of ACEJMC’s professional values and competencies?

The unit uses a mapping plan that specifies how each course covers the various ACEJMC’s professional values and competencies. What the unit calls Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) are directly mapped to the 12 values and competencies. This plan is updated on an annual basis.

- How has the unit ensured that the syllabuses for these courses state learning outcomes that address the values and competencies appropriate for each course?

Every course syllabus contains learning outcomes that are aligned with the specific values and competencies each course is expected to attain.

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

- What direct measures of assessment does the unit use, where in the curriculum and when?

The unit uses three direct measures:

1. Jury Evaluation of Capstone: the final capstone projects for the school’s two programs are presented to an outside jury of media professionals and academics who evaluate the students work based on their knowledge, values and competencies based on faculty member rubrics. This is the final class before graduation.

2. Internship evaluation form: all students are required to complete an internship and the intern's direct supervisor will fill out an evaluation form sent to the faculty member. This is an upper-level class.
3. Course specific pre-test and post-test assessments used to measure specific learning outcomes. The pre-test and post-test assessments are used in lecture classes and not in skills classes.

- What indirect measures does it use, where and when?

1. Faculty feedback: designed to connect the course learning outcomes to the program learning outcomes. Faculty use a one to four scale with one meaning the student has a poor understanding of a concept and four meaning complete understanding.
2. Completion Survey: given to all students online as part of their graduation process, it is used to determine students' perception of their Bachelor of Communication and Information Studies major.
3. MBRSC Advisory Board: oversee the school's entire performance and gives advice regarding curricular change, change in the industry and overall student work.
4. Annual MBRSC employment survey: designed to identify alumni employment status
5. Course effectiveness reports: student evaluations are used to map course learning outcomes and tie them to program learning outcomes.

- Are these measures effective for assessing ACEJMC's professional values and competencies?

These measures appear to be quite effective for assessing ACEJMC's professional values and competencies.

c). The unit collects and reports data from its assessment activities and applies the data to improve curriculum and instruction.

The MBRSC collects and reports data on an annual basis through an Outcome Assessment Plan. School administrators write the plan in June by identifying various weaknesses and problems with the goal of implementing the necessary changes at the beginning of the following academic year. During faculty meetings, the major items are set on the agenda for devising a teaching and learning environment based on the assessment plan.

- How does the unit collect and analyze the findings and identify unsatisfactory learning of specific values and competencies?

The MBRSC uses the data it collects from both direct and indirect methods to determine where it has fallen short.

- What specific values and competencies had graduating classes not mastered satisfactorily?

The assessment done at the end of every year comes up with a different list of values and competencies that graduating classes have failed to master. For example, following the 2018-19 academic year, graduates struggled to conduct appropriate levels of research and have struggled with storytelling and productive skills.

- How does the unit decide how to address these areas of concern and what actions did it take to do so?

After the assessment, the faculty decides together how to address these areas of concern. For example, in the above two areas of concern the school decided to help students master research by sending out a summer reading list to journalism students to help with their research skills. The school also increased

the JOUR 302 (Journalism Management And Decision Making) class from two hours per week to four hours per week.

To help with their storytelling and production skills, the school reduced the number of students in the screenwriting classes and included more sessions on sound in all production classes.

- How does the unit evaluate whether its actions overcame the weaknesses in student learning and what were the results?

Once these changes are made the school then uses their direct and indirect measures to determine whether these changes improved student learning outcomes. Where they have not, they look to alternate ways to solve the problem.

- Was the program of data analysis and action effective for identifying and overcoming unsatisfactory student learning?

Very much so, the school has a thorough and rigorous way of identifying and overcoming unsatisfactory student learning.

d). The unit maintains contact with the alumni to assess these experiences in the professions and to provide suggestions for improving curriculum and instruction.

The school has an advisory board and an alumni database, and it consistently uses its alumni for assessments of the capstone courses where alumni and professionals serve as jurors of the student work. The school also meets annually with the advisory board to come up with ideas for improving curriculum and instruction.

e). The unit includes members of journalism and mass communication professions in its assessment process.

Using professionals in the assessment process is ingrained in the school's process. The school is fortunate in that it resides in the heart of Dubai's Media City, where thousands of professional journalists and communicators work. Many of those workers are alumni of the school, which makes it easy to call on them to help in the assessment process.

SUMMARY:

Assessment is ingrained in the culture of the MBRSC. It would be hard to find another communications school that has as thorough and committed assessment process as here.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance: COMPLIANCE

PART III: Summary by site visit team

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

Strengths include the following:

- Enthusiastic students with strong internship opportunities
- Student centered faculty who excel in teaching and advising
- Top notch assessment process
- Located adjacent to Media City, which provides easy access to internships and alumni

Weaknesses include:

- No written diversity plan
- Lack of student media
- Lack of transparency in administrator appointment process (See letter from dean attached as an addendum to the team report.)

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

Standard 3 – Diversity and inclusiveness

3) Summarize the problems or deficiencies that should be addressed before the next evaluation (i.e., related to non-compliance with standards).

Measurable diversity plan needs to be created.

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

Re-accreditation.

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

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

During the last accreditation visit, MBRSC was found out of compliance on this standard due to the lack of scholarly and creative output. To its credit, the school has vastly improved in this area.

For example, during this accreditation cycle faculty have published 23 articles in refereed journals and 29 articles in refereed conference papers. Even more impressive, faculty have published 348 articles in non-refereed publications compared to only four during the last cycle.

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

The self-study was a well written narrative, but it was difficult to find crucial information for some standards. Perhaps it is due to the fact that the primary author left weeks before the site team visit.

To: Patricia Thompson,
Executive Director, ACEJMC
Re: Request to include information provided by the Dean during the ACEJMC team exit
interview

Dear Dean Thompson,

On behalf of our school faculty and staff, I would like to thank you and the ACEJMC team for such a positive report. It reflects our efforts in making our school a reference in the region. The report is also a rich source of feedback for us and provides relevant insight into our path forward.

The below paragraph was initially suggested to be included in the report as additional information that was provided by me during the exit interview, but since that is not the common practice of the council, I would like it to be used as a response to **Part II, Standard 1, item C** and to the last item in the “weakness” part, **on page 35**. The below provides more context and clarity to the school’s recent administrative appointment:

“(…) There was concern expressed that there has been some inconsistency in the process for appointment of administrators in the school.”

During the exit interview, the MBRSC Dean stated that there were no grounds for claims of unfairness and lack of clarity at the School. The appointment of one administrator, the Executive Director promotion, had been approved by the Dean and the university President and communicated to the former interim Associate Dean. Amid concerns from the former interim Associate Dean about the overlapping of her position with that of the Executive Director, the Dean emphasized that the role of the latter was built to support the former and the school, and not to overlap with it. The Dean held several meetings with the former interim Associate Dean to clarify this concern. The Dean also highlighted that MBRSC, since its inception, encourages a collaborative culture among all School members, and that there was no room nor need for any territorial approach at the administrative level. Another appointment of administrator, the current Associate Dean, took place after several discussions between the MBRSC Dean and the university senior administration. The MBRSC Dean shared the approval of the said appointment with the former interim Associate Dean months before the interim Associate Dean left the School.

Yours truly,



Ali M. Jaber
Dean of the Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication