

Report of ACEJMC Evaluation

Undergraduate program 2021-2022

Name of Institution: University of Puerto Rico at Arecibo

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Carlos Andujar, Chancellor

Name of Unit: Department of Tele Radial Communication

Name and Title of Administrator: José Luis Soto Colón

Date of 2021-2022 Accrediting Visit: October 31-November 3, 2021

Date of the previous accrediting visit: February 3-6, 2013

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Accreditation (Initial)

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Accreditation

Recommendation by 2021-2022 Visiting Team: Re-accreditation

Prepared and submitted by:

Team Chair

Name and Title: Joe Foot, Dean Emeritus

Organization/School: University of Oklahoma

Signature

Team Member

Name and Title: Brad Rawlins, Professor & Director

Organization/School: Arkansas State University

Signature

Team Member

Name and Title: David D. Kurpius, Professor & Dean

Organization/School: University of Missouri

Signature

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

On site: 3

Virtually: 0

PART I: General information

Name of Institution: University of Puerto Rico at Arecibo

Name of Unit: Department of Tele Radial Communication

Year of Visit: 2021

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

- Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools
- New England Association of Schools and Colleges
- North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
- Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges

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 University of Puerto Rico at Arecibo is part of the University of Puerto Rico's system, which is licensed by the Education Council of Puerto Rico and accredited by the MSCHE.

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

- Yes
- No

Self-Study Report for Accreditation in 2021-22

If yes, give the date of the last accrediting visit: **2013**

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

The unit was first accredited in 2013

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

The mission statement of the Department of Tele Radial Communication was revised in 2019. It states the following:

“Develop in students the capacity to understand fundamental concepts and basic principles that govern the communication industry and its professions. One of those basic principles is a firm compromise with freedom of speech, access to information and rejection to censorship”

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Semesters of 15 weeks
 Quarters of N/A weeks
 Summer sessions of 4 weeks
 Intersessions of N/A weeks

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

x Bachelor's degree
N/A Master's degree
N/A Ph.D. degree

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

Bachelor's degree in Tele Radial Communication with six areas of emphasis: News, Strategic Communication, Photography, Multimedia, Digital Cinema, and Media Production and Direction.

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

123 credit hours (semester-hour credits).

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

3 credit hours.

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
Tele Radial Communication Sequence	Prof. José Luis Soto Colón

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

3,117 students

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
Tele Radial Communication Sequence	342
Total	342

15. Number of students in each section of all skills courses (newswriting, reporting, editing, photography, advertising copy, broadcast news, public relations writing, etc.).

Enrollment for Spring 2020-21			
Course Code	Section	Course Name	Enrollment
COMU3005	L25	COMMUNIC FUNDAMENT PRINCIP	30
COMU3005	M55	COMMUNIC FUNDAMENT PRINCIP	12
COMU3007	ME5	HIST DEVELOP RADIO TELEVIS	15
COMU3016	M10	PUBLIC RELATIONS PRINCIPLE	15
COMU3019	M45	LANGUAGE AND ANAL CINEMAT	13
COMU3021	J10	DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY I	10
COMU3021	J55	DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY I	14
COMU3021	W25	DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY I	8
COMU3021	WC0	DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY I	14
COMU3022	L25	DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY II	7
COMU3022	LC0	DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY II	6
COMU3043	MB5	TV PRINCIPLES	26
COMU3043	ME5	TV PRINCIPLES	15
COMU3046	JE5	TV PRINCIPLES LAB	8
COMU3046	ME5	TV PRINCIPLES LAB	15
COMU3046	W10	TV PRINCIPLES LAB	15
COMU3106	VD0	GRAPHIC DESIGN FOR COMU	15
COMU3115	H40	GOB REGUL RADIO	25
Course Code	Section	Course Name	Enrollment
COMU3115	M10	GOB REGUL RADIO	30
COMU3117	LB5	MULTIMEDIA PRODUCTION	14
COMU3117	MB5	MULTIMEDIA PRODUCTION	6

Report of evaluation of undergraduate programs for 2021-2022 Visits

COMU3121	VC0	PHOTOGRAPHY FOR DIGITAL CINEMA	11
COMU3123	VE0	PHOTOGRAPHY FOR DIGITAL CINEMA	11
COMU3127	ME5	DESIGN/PROD MULTIMEDIA II	13
COMU3135	LE5	JOURNALISM GENRES - NEW PLATFORMS	11
COMU3201	M10	SCRIPT WRITING	16
COMU3201	VC0	SCRIPT WRITING	12
COMU3202	V00	SCRIPT WRITING LAB	15
COMU3202	WE5	SCRIPT WRITING LAB	15
COMU3211	LB0	BASIC SKILLS IN RADIO BROA	16
COMU3211	WB0	BASIC SKILLS IN RADIO BROA	12
COMU3212	L00	BAS SKILL IN RAD BROAD LAB	7
COMU3212	LD0	BAS SKILL IN RAD BROAD LAB	7
COMU3212	MB0	BAS SKILL IN RAD BROAD LAB	8
COMU3212	ME5	BAS SKILL IN RAD BROAD LAB	6
COMU4005	M55	TELEVISION ADVERTISING	6
COMU4007	M40	INTRODUCTION TO ADVERTISIN	14
COMU4025	WB5	PROD RADIO TELEV NEWS PROG	10
COMU4027	L25	AUDIO FOR MEDIA	16
COMU4027	M10	AUDIO FOR MEDIA	9
COMU4028	M70	PROD/DIRECT DOCUMENTARIES	10
COMU4031	LC0	DIGITAL FILM PRODUCTION WORKSHOP	11
COMU4035	ME5	RADIO TELEV PROGRAMMING	29
COMU4041	M25	ADVANCED TELEVISION AND RADIO PRODUCTION WORKSHOP	16
COMU4043	M35	LABORATORY OF ADVANCED TELEVISION AND RADIO PRODUCTION WORKSHOP	16
COMU4055	L25	BROADCAST JOURNALISM	15
COMU4065	M25	ADVERTISING AND PUBLIC	10

Course Code	Section	Course Name	Enrollment
COMU4075	M25	COMMUNICATION SEMINAR	15
COMU4133	LE5	LABORATORY OF DIGITAL FILMMAKING WORKSHOP	11
COMU4155	L70	ADV. EDIT. AND POST-PROD	11
COMU4155	ME5	ADV. EDIT. AND POST-PROD	12
COMU4335	SB2	PRACTICUM/SEMINAR	8
COMU4335	SB3	PRACTICUM/SEMINAR	8
COMU4335	SB4	PRACTICUM/SEMINAR	10
COMU4335	SB5	PRACTICUM/SEMINAR	10
COMU4335	SB6	PRACTICUM/SEMINAR	9
COMU4335	SB7	PRACTICUM/SEMINAR	9
COMU4335	SB8	PRACTICUM/SEMINAR	11
COMU4335	SB9	PRACTICUM/SEMINAR	9
PUCO4086	M10	ADVERTISING PHOTOGRAPHY	8

Enrollment for Fall 2021-22			
Course Code	Section	Course Name	Enrollment
COMU3005	L40	COMMUNIC FUNDAMENT PRINCIP	18
COMU3005	M10	COMMUNIC FUNDAMENT PRINCIP	19
COMU3007	LB0	HIST DEVELOP RADIO TELEVIS	25
COMU3007	M25	HIST DEVELOP RADIO TELEVIS	18
COMU3007	ME5	HIST DEVELOP RADIO TELEVIS	19
COMU3015	M10	INTERM PHOTOGRAPH I	14
COMU3016	M10	PUBLIC RELATIONS PRINCIPLE	12
COMU3017	L25	WRITING ADVERTISING TEXTS	10
COMU3019	M45	LANGUAGE AND ANAL CINEMAT	8

Report of evaluation of undergraduate programs for 2021-2022 Visits

COMU3021	J10	DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY I	15
COMU3021	LC0	DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY I	16
COMU3021	W25	DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY I	14
Course Code	Section	Course Name	Enrollment
COMU3021	WC0	DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY I	12
COMU3043	M25	TV PRINCIPLES	13
COMU3043	MB5	TV PRINCIPLES	12
COMU3046	J25	TV PRINCIPLES LAB	16
COMU3046	ME5	TV PRINCIPLES LAB	12
COMU3105	M40	MEDIA MANAGEMENT	17
COMU3106	VD0	GRAPHIC DESIGN FOR COMU	15
COMU3115	H40	GOB REGUL RADIO	19
COMU3115	M10	GOB REGUL RADIO	17
COMU3127	MA0	DESIGN/PROD MULTIMEDIA II	8
COMU3127	ME5	DESIGN/PROD MULTIMEDIA II	7
COMU3201	J10	SCRIPT WRITING	14
COMU3201	M10	SCRIPT WRITING	15
COMU3202	J40	SCRIPT WRITING LAB	10
COMU3202	M40	SCRIPT WRITING LAB	9
COMU3202	W40	SCRIPT WRITING LAB	10
COMU3211	LB0	BASIC SKILLS IN RADIO BROA	18
COMU3211	WB0	BASIC SKILLS IN RADIO BROA	19
COMU3212	L00	BAS SKILL IN RAD BROAD LAB	9
COMU3212	LD0	BAS SKILL IN RAD BROAD LAB	9
COMU3212	MB0	BAS SKILL IN RAD BROAD LAB	10
COMU3212	ME5	BAS SKILL IN RAD BROAD LAB	11

COMU4006	M25	RADIO ADVERTISING	8
COMU4007	L10	INTRODUCTION TO ADVERTISIN	18
COMU4025	WB5	PROD RADIO TELEV NEWS PROG	7
COMU4027	L25	AUDIO FOR MEDIA	10
COMU4027	M10	AUDIO FOR MEDIA	9
COMU4028	ME5	PROD/DIRECT DOCUMENTARIES	17
COMU4035	M25	RADIO TELEV PROGRAMMING	23
Course Code	Section	Course Name	Enrollment
COMU4035	MB5	RADIO TELEV PROGRAMMING	26
COMU4055	H25	BROADCAST JOURNALISM	13
COMU4055	L25	BROADCAST JOURNALISM	8
COMU4065	M25	ADVERTISING AND PUBLIC	18
COMU4075	M40	COMMUNICATION SEMINAR	10
COMU4075	V00	COMMUNICATION SEMINAR	10
COMU4155	L70	ADV. EDIT. AND POST-PROD	12
COMU4155	MB5	ADV. EDIT. AND POST-PROD	15
COMU4155	ME5	ADV. EDIT. AND POST-PROD	13
COMU4335	SB1	PRACTICUM/SEMINAR	8
COMU4335	SB2	PRACTICUM/SEMINAR	4
COMU4335	SB3	PRACTICUM/SEMINAR	8
COMU4335	SB4	PRACTICUM/SEMINAR	10

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

Projected for this year on full-time faculty salaries: \$ 750,078.00, which includes compensations. Total projected expenditures for the 2021-2022 Academic year: \$1,351,663.00*Projected Amount to be spent on full-time faculty salaries: \$ 750,078.00

Compared Budget for 2019 - 2022		
2019-20	\$1,185,632.00	/
2020-21	\$1,287,495.00	8%
2021-22	\$1,351,663.00*	5%

Data provided by the Budget Office

*Projected Amount Fiscal Year 2021-2022

In the distribution of the current budget fiscal year 2021-2022, in the department account, the compensation items, such as Christmas Bonus, Promotions in Ranks, will be found in the Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff Benefits accounts, which makes a difference that can be seen from the original budget. In summary, the Budget, as of June 30, 2022, the account of the Communications Department will include the costs of contracts, compensations, contributions to medical plan, professional improvement, and accreditation costs. * Percentages based on previous years.

17. List name and rank of all full-time faculty in the accredited unit in fall 2021.

Dr. Juan Luciano	Professor
Prof. Ingrid Garriga	Professor
Dr. Otilio González	Professor
Prof. Emmanuel Gutiérrez	Professor
Prof. José Fonseca	Professor
Prof. José Ortega	Associate Professor
Dr. Anilyn Diaz	Professor
Prof. Rosamary Berrios	Professor
Dr. Mildred Vélez	Associate Professor
Prof. José Soto Colón	Instructor

18. List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in fall 2021.

Dr. Sarah Platt
 Prof. Nitza Luna
 Prof. Carlos Figueroa
 Prof. Marisel Surillo
 Prof. Edgar Pérez
 Prof. Nestor Reyes
 Prof. José Blanco

* All Professors offered courses in spring 2020-21.

19.Schools on the semester system:

Academic Year	Total Graduates	Number in Compliance	Percent
2020-21	91	91	100%
2019-2020	81	81	100%
2018-2019	96	96	100%
2017-2018	78	78	100%

*72 or more semester hours outside of journalism and mass communications

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>).

Founded in 1967, the University of Puerto Rico at Arecibo is one of 11 campuses comprising the University of Puerto Rico system. The campus is on the north-central coast and serves both a regional and national undergraduate student population. The Department of Tele Radial Communication is the third largest in student population among the 14 departments with a little more than 10% of the campus student body. UPR Arecibo has a lean administrative structure with the department chair reporting directly to the dean of academic affairs. The main focus of the department is radio-television study, but it has expanded into five more mass communication areas during the past decade.

The department was originally scheduled for a site team visit in 2019, but a destructive earthquake that year affecting the Arecibo area following a devastating hurricane in 2017 caused a postponement of the visit. ACEJMC delayed a 2020 visit as it did with all programs because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Thus, in 2021, it had been nearly nine years since the department had been examined.

While the university, like all institutions, was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, the department, its faculty and its students adapted remarkably well. Perhaps, it was because of tragedy cascading upon tragedy, but a special sense of resilience and resolve to succeed seems endemic. Faculty adapted their classes to remote learning and different production projects. Students overcame challenges to keep their student media output at peak levels. Still, students suspect that they probably lost some academic momentum during the pandemic.

The university has an active, well-defined strategic planning process. Programs submit their plans every five years, reviewing and updating them annually. The department's most recent plan developed in 2019 runs till 2024. The unit has a particular stake in being an active participant in the university's strategic planning process because it is heavily dependent on getting a healthy amount of university technology fee money to support its student media and laboratories. The unit's plan is current as are the metrics entered in the ACEJMC database.

The site team observed an alternative planning protocol at work based on the "survival mode" that frequently eclipsed the official plan. The budget challenges have been so consistent for so long and the department has tried so hard keep itself running that action frequently deviates from the written plan. Likewise, the campus administration is beholden to the central university system and cannot always deliver on commitments to the units in rapidly changing fiscal scenarios.

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

The department is fortunate to have a veteran faculty with many years of experience in working together

and exercising faculty governance. There is a committee system that functions well and insures ample input into decision-making. Standing committees are: (1) Personnel; (2) Planning and Budget; (3) Assessment; and (4) Curriculum. Assessment and Curriculum operate as committees-of-the-whole. The faculty have also played a visible role in governance of the university, serving on a variety of committees. One faculty member is a former chancellor and another a current member of the Institutional Planning Committee. Students also play a role in governance.

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 current interim director, appointed in August 2020, also serves as Special Assistant to the Chancellor. His rank is instructor. He follows a permanent director who served for 10 years and remains on the faculty. The interim director is a graduate of the department and had been a part-time instructor. He benefits from having a veteran faculty (mostly his former teachers) who want him to succeed. The director is a personable, hard-working professional who strives to provide quality leadership and solved multiple problems during a trying Covid-19-dominated year. Yet, he has struggled during his short tenure to get on top of all of the issues involved in accreditation and administrative governance. He relies a great deal on his experienced faculty who are more than willing to help him. In an environment of strained resources, the faculty are grateful not to sacrifice a full-time tenured faculty member to administrative duties, and few, if any, are interested in the permanent position.

A benefit of having the current interim director is his close relationship with the chancellor. Likewise, it would be difficult for him to always represent the faculty well on issues where their views differed from the chancellor. The interim director is in the process of extricating himself from the assistant to the chancellor role to focus more completely on departmental matters.

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

The topic of selecting a permanent administrator is a timely one because the selection process should come fairly soon. In Tele-Radial Communication, chancellors have always asked the department for input for nominees and to have a voice in the selection of the permanent director. The university's governing document calls for an interim evaluation of the director after two years and a summative evaluation after four. The dean for academic affairs evaluates the director annually as part of the faculty evaluation system, which requires administrative, student and peer assessment.

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

The university system, campus, and department have well-defined avenues to receive and adjudicate complaints from students, faculty and staff. Student complaints usually begin within the department and are heard by the director. There is a chain of command through which complaints flow. The planning and institutional studies office has also created a webpage called *Exprésate* where any constituency can lodge a complaint or concern. Staff handle complaints through a process contained in their collective bargaining agreement.

SUMMARY:

Challenges are not new to Tele-Radial Communication having dealt with a severe recession, a destructive hurricane, a disruptive earthquake and a global pandemic all within the past fifteen years. Serious budgetary challenges have caused the department often to resort to “survival mode” planning. An interim chair, aided by a veteran faculty, is navigating the challenges of budget cuts and accreditation.

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

PART II — Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

OVERVIEW:

The department offers a Bachelor in Television and Radio Communication Technology (123 credit hours) and provides six areas of emphasis. The core of the program (27 credits) is heavily oriented to radio and television production with the following courses:

- COMU 3005 – Fundamentals of Communication (3 credits)
- COMU 3007 – History and Development of Radio and Television (3 credits)
- COMU 3021 – Digital Photography I (3 credits)
- COMU 3201/3202 – Scriptwriting/Scriptwriting Practice (2 credit course and 1 credit lab)
- COMU 3211/3212 – Principles of Radio/ Principles of Radio Lab. (2 credit course/1 credit lab)
- COMU 3043/3046 – Television Principles/Television Principles Laboratory (2 credit course/1 credit lab)
- COMU 3115 – Ethical and Legal Aspects of Television and Radio Communication (3 credits)
- COMU 4035 – Radio and Television Programming (3 credits)
- COMU 4335 – Practicum / Seminar (3 credits)

Students choose an emphasis (12 credits) from the following areas:

- Production and Direction
- Strategic Communication
- Journalism
- Digital Cinema
- Multimedia
- Photography

An additional 12 credits are allowed in electives within the program. This brings the total of the program requirements to 51 credits. The department requires students to take 72 credits outside of the program for a total of 123 credit hours.

While the unit offers six emphases, the site team determined that these should not be considered sequences. This is, in reality, a radio and television production program that requires students to specialize in a particular emphasis. But, with 12 credit hours required in the emphasis, they do not provide sufficient depth and exclusive content to qualify for sequences as defined in many other accredited programs. For example, the strategic communication emphasis only requires three courses that are unique to that area: Principles of Public Relations, Principles of Advertising and Advertising and Public Relations Campaigns. While this gives a strategic communication orientation to the audio and video production principles and skills they have learned, it is very short of recommended curriculum in this area. The faculty teaching in this area recognize this and offer additional courses in crisis communication and communication research under the Special Topics course.

The emphases that receive the best evaluations from the students are the ones more closely aligned with the core, namely Production and Direction, Digital Cinema, Multimedia and Photography and also News.

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.

The department is very prescriptive about how the students must complete the 72 credit hours outside of the program. According to the self-study, each student must complete the following:

- 27 credits in Arts and Sciences (15 credits in Humanities, 12 credits in Social Sciences);
- 24 credits in language requirements (12 credits in Spanish and 12 credits in English);
- 12 credits in Natural Sciences and Mathematics/Statistics;
- 9 credits in other general education courses (3 credits in Computer Science, 3 credits in Marketing and 3 credits from a list of general education courses, which can be any course not offered by the Department of Tele Radial Communication.

The department reports that 100% of the graduates over the last two years (91 in 2020-2021 and 81 in 2019-2020) have met the 72-credit hour requirement. This is not surprising because the program is so prescriptive in what courses students take to graduate. Graduation applications are reviewed by the director and the Office of the Registrar to ensure these requirements are met. A review of random graduation applications in the registrar's office confirmed that the requirement is being met.

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.

Courses in the core provide both theory and practice, while leaning more toward skills courses. Three of the courses address theory and principles: Fundamentals of Communication, History and Development of Radio and Television, and Ethical and Legal Aspects of Television and Radio Communication. The remaining courses focus more on professional skills. Students quite often commented on the blend of theory and practice in their courses.

The ACEJMC values and competencies are mapped out in the curriculum, including the emphases, to assure that they are met. The department has 19 learning outcomes that are also mapped out against the ACEJMC values and competencies as part of assessment.

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.

The courses in the core are identical in name to the ones offered during the last accreditation visit in 2012-2013, with the exception of the photography course having been renamed "Digital Photography." So, on first glance it looks like the curriculum has not changed and may not be up-to-date. The core places an emphasis on radio and television production while students recognize that the audio and video production skills are most likely going to be in demand with podcasting, streaming services, production studios and other contemporary outlets. Students are learning these skills in the program, but the core course names and descriptions remain tied to legacy media operations.

But, the courses themselves have been updated to address changes in technology, media channels and production values that match the changes in the industry. Students also commented that faculty are up-to-date with their instruction and are incorporating social media and digital production.

The most recent curriculum revision was converting areas of electives into emphases of study that are more formalized with more courses focused in these areas. However, this revision took place in 2013. The courses in the emphasis areas appear to be current and up-to-date with the latest practices and skills. While some of the technology may not be the most recent models, evidence of student production in audio and video is impressive and students consistently win the top media awards on the island.

The emphasis areas only require four courses, but students are taking several additional electives to meet the needs of the professions. For example, to be certified in Puerto Rico in the area of strategic communication, they are required to take Advertising Writing, Crisis Communication and Communication Research. The program also offers electives in Radio Advertising and Television Advertising.

Students are fully engaged in quality work with limited resources. Students learned during the pandemic that they have the tools to produce audio and video content outside the university, but expressed appreciation to be back in the classrooms and labs.

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.)

Out of 46 sections offered in Spring 2021, three courses exceeded 20. However, it could be argued that the courses were not skills based (one section of History of Radio and Television and two sections of Radio Television Programming). None of the courses requiring lab and/or production facilities exceeded 20 students. Out of the 60 sections offered in Fall 2021, five of the courses exceeded 20. Again, four of these courses are not skills specific, such as Fundamental Principles of Communication (an introduction into mass communication), two sections of Radio Regulations, and Radio Television Production. One course that has labs, TV Principles, had 26 students in the lecture section, but fewer than 15 in the two lab sections. They are in compliance with the spirit of this requirement as explicit skills courses are kept within the recommendation.

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.

All students are required to complete the Practicum/Seminar course in their senior year. This course requires them to gain 150 hours of work experience in a professional organization. In addition to the working experience, students attend a 1-hour seminar focused on professional development and includes workshops on writing resumés, job searching strategies, graduate school opportunities, etc. Students may also take an additional internship labeled Institutional Coop that requires 160 hours. In both courses, students are supervised by a faculty member and mentored by a professional on the site, who also evaluates the performance of their work. Students submit reports of their internship activities, and the internship sites are visited by the faculty supervisor. Students report that many who complete the Practicum are hired by the internship site.

SUMMARY:

The department provides a balanced curriculum in theory and practice that addresses all of the ACEJMC values and competencies. The strength of the curriculum is the intense training provided in audio and video production that is preparing students to work in the fields of radio and television. Students also hone their skills and knowledge in an area of emphasis that expands their options beyond legacy media. While these emphases do not rise to the level of program sequences, they are more focused than what existed during the last accreditation site visit. The number of emphases currently stretches the faculty resources and the unit is considering reducing them.

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.

The department has a written diversity plan, approved in 2010, for achieving an inclusive curriculum. It defines diversity and identifies the under-represented groups within the plan. The structure centers on the legal and policy framework of the university and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Recruitment of non-Hispanic/Latino faculty and students is difficult given the constraints of the University mission and location. The diversity plan goes to great lengths to describe other avenues for extending diversity throughout the department and curriculum in the areas of gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, religious beliefs and political points of view. The diversity plan also describes active recruitment efforts for diverse students within the region served, including high school outreach efforts. In addition, the plan calls for diverse speakers, media content in their student media operations and activities in the department and on campus.

The University of Puerto Rico at Arecibo has the mission to serve Hispanic/Latino/Latina students in the northern-central region of Puerto Rico. From 2012 to 2021, their student and faculty populations are 100 percent Hispanic/Latino (any race). The faculty and administrators explained the U.S. Census did not gather data on Afro-Puerto Ricans until recently. Faculty explained that while there is some differentiation based on skin color, it is not the same as it is in the mainland United States. While students, faculty, administrators and staff reported that this was not an issue, one person did raise the lack of people of darker skin color represented on media. Students and faculty provided examples of how these issues were raised and addressed in classes. A self-identified Afro-Puerto Rican faculty member on campus said they are seen as Puerto Rican and that it is not a big issue for that person. The self-study describes the ethnic fusion in Puerto Rico that is fostered by a multicultural heritage and traditions. This is more of the diversity teaching focus within the department. The elements of nation, race, folklore, music tradition and Caribbean ethnicity are framed within this context.

The Department of Tele-Radial Communication defines diversity as focusing on diversity and inclusiveness in the areas of gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, religious beliefs and political point of view. The translated diversity documents use the term “sexual preference” rather than “sexual orientation” in the LGBTQ+ description. Through several interviews and discussions with students, faculty and administrators, it became clear that the use of the term “preference” was an artifact of the translation process. The department, courses and media outlets adhere to the AP Stylebook, NLGJA Style Guide and other key media style guides in using “orientation” in their work.

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.

The department's curriculum and syllabi reflect a commitment to diversity and inclusion. Students and faculty reported that diversity discussions, objectives and projects are spread across the courses. A scan across a number of syllabi found significant statements and exercises on diversity, providing evidence

that matched the student and faculty statements. Instruction in the media law course spent significant time on issues of diversity. The students pointed to that course as one where good conversations about diversity occurred. The other course of note on diversity according to students and faculty was the COMU 4035 Programacion Teleradial. This course is also part of the assessment process. The diversity essay assignment is an important project for students and is reviewed for assessment. Other courses across the curriculum also had diversity element woven into the course structure.

The department sponsors activities in support of diversity. These include a group fighting homophobia and the establishment of the first LGBTQ+ Coalition organization on campus in 2019 with the help of the department's faculty and students. The department also brings in diverse speakers to address students. The radio programming includes numerous shows on LGBTQ+, gender, religion, politics, and diversity acceptance. They include gender violence as domestic abuse is reported to be a major concern on the island.

The faculty are committed to diversity and see it broadly. They are involved in campus and professional organizations focused on improving diversity. For example, one faculty member is a founder of the campus Women and Gender Office. Speakers since 2015 include numerous women and a significant focus on LGBTQ+ issues.

The work of the department on diversity follows the goals stated in the diversity plan.

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.

The department has found success in recruiting and hiring women. The gender diversity in the department for full-time faculty is equal, with five women and five men filling these positions. There is one more male part-time faculty member than female (5 vs. 4). All of the faculty are Hispanic/Latino (any race). With the focus squarely in serving Puerto Rico and with the budget challenges the University faces, it is difficult to even structure recruitment of non-Puerto Rican faculty. Campus administrators described the hiring process for fulltime faculty as one that begins at the instructor level. The instructor works on one-year contracts until a faculty line is available and funded by the central administration. This process can take years. A current instructor has worked for the department waiting on an open line for five years. Recently, her teaching load was reduced to part time due to budget cuts. She continues to teach and support the department with hopes that the line will be restored. This process, with long waits for lines, limits the recruitment process for fulltime faculty.

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.

The department has a high retention rate compared to the campus average. Since the mission of the university is to serve the region of Puerto Rico surrounding them, they do not recruit from outside of the island. This limits them to the diversity within Puerto Rico. The department has a high school outreach program and faculty report efforts to attract underrepresented students. The University of Puerto Rico system uses a system where applicants rank their preferred areas of study. UPRA's Department of Tele-Radial Communication regularly is the top ranked department among applicants. Students are then enrolled based on space in their highest ranked choice available when admitted.

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.

Students and faculty report a discrimination free environment. The openly gay faculty member says he feels respected, welcomed, and heard in the department and on campus. An Afro-Puerto Rican faculty member made a similar statement. The radio station in the department regularly programs content across a spectrum of diverse subjects, with LGBTQ+ and religious programming prominently positioned in the lineup. There are also documentaries that present diverse subjects and sources. Faculty, students and administrators quickly pointed to these examples with pride.

SUMMARY:

The last site team reported the diversity plan had not been updated and a lack of diverse faculty in terms of race and ethnicity. The diversity policy is from 2010 and the goals associated with the policy are updated. The department actively works to achieve the stated diversity goals. The department is constrained by the university mission, resources and location, limiting the opportunity to attract students and faculty from outside the island. Thus, the faculty remains 100 percent Puerto Rican. This does not limit the focus on diversity and the significant work in the courses, campus community and media content to address issues of diversity and raise awareness. Faculty and students report significant efforts to teach and build a diverse community.

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

Table 7.1 - Full-Time Faculty, Academic years 2018 – 2021

Academic Year	Group	Male	% of total faculty	Female	% of total faculty	Total
2019-20	Hispanic/Latino (any race)	5	50.0%	5	50.0%	10
2020-21	Hispanic/Latino (any race)	6	60.0%	4	40.0%	10
2021-22	Hispanic/Latino	6	60.0%	4	40.0%	10

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.

The department uses the University of Puerto Rico General Handbook of Regulations for hiring criteria and the UPR Arecibo Tenure and Rank Manual to evaluate full-time faculty. Full-time faculty with a terminal degree, such as a Ph.D., are hired in tenure-track positions while full time faculty with a Master's degree are hired as instructors. A department committee meets to determine the personnel needs of the department and ranks them accordingly. These are submitted to the Chancellor for approval. No additional positions have been approved since the last accreditation site visit.

For tenure and promotion decisions, a point system outlined in the UPR Arecibo Tenure and Rank is used. Five areas are assigned point totals: teaching, scholarship and creative works, professional development, university service and community service. The manual is very detailed about how many points each activity can earn. For example, publishing an academic book can earn up to 15 points, an article in a peer-reviewed journal can earn up to 8 points, and presenting at a conference can earn a maximum of 4 points. Creative works earn points as well, such as television and radio programs, which can earn up to 2 points. Faculty who have a doctorate can apply for tenure and rank advancement after three years and must earn at least 150 points. Additional rank advancement requires 170 points for associate professor and 200 points for professor.

Annual evaluations are conducted on faculty in the following areas:

- classroom teaching
- student advising
- scholarly and professional activities
- community and college service
- administrative activities
- special research programs and projects
- travel to off-campus locations

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

Since the fall of 2016, full-time faculty have taught the majority of the courses, ranging from 64% to 82% for each semester. The faculty have a heavy teaching load and are required to teach 12 credit hours per semester. Additionally, they are required to have six office hours and expected to spend at least four hours in university service each week. Only full-time faculty are involved in departmental service and research and creative activities.

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.

The department is made up of experienced faculty who have a mix of professional and academic experience. All of the faculty except one were present during the last accreditation visit in 2012-2013.

Faculty have professional experience, ranging from 1 year to 15 years, in areas of radio and television production, photography, public relations, advertising, journalism and film. Most of the academic experience for the faculty has been at UPR Arcibo. The interim director, an instructor, is the most recent addition to the faculty, with 5 years at the university. The others range from 14 to 37 years teaching in the department. While such stability is a benefit to the program, it raises concerns about recent professional experience.

The faculty are active in professional development for both professional and pedagogical purposes. Faculty are required by law to complete 20 hours of ethics training every two years. Several faculty members have also participated in teaching workshops sponsored by the university and attended the Faculty Resource Network seminars hosted by New York University. To keep their professional knowledge current, the department hosts a Communications Week where professionals give workshops to students and faculty.

Part-time faculty are recruited from the media industries to teach a variety of skills classes. Seven part-time faculty were teaching in the department and had a range of 5 to 37 years of professional experience. Students expressed appreciation for instruction from some of these instructors who infuse their teaching with current examples of practice.

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

Faculty instruction is evaluated every semester with a student course evaluation, syllabus review and classroom visit and evaluation.

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

Faculty and administrators from across the campus expressed great respect for the faculty and students of the Department of Tele-Radial Communication. They are known as being very student-centered and for engaging in activities that benefit the university and the community. The disposition of the department to assist other campus programs with audio and video production, public relations and advertising is very much appreciated. They were described as very active, very involved and one of the crown jewels of the Arcibo campus. Because students in this program take many courses across the other disciplines, they are valued for their initiative, hard work and strong communication skills.

SUMMARY:

The program has a stable and experienced group of faculty who have advanced in their careers at UPR Arcibo. All but two of the faculty are full professors. Their collegiality and mutual support came through during the site visit. They are also very student-centered, and students enthusiastically respond about the quality of instruction and advising they provide. Part-time faculty have current media experience that enhances the instruction, particularly in the skills classes.

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.

The department supports faculty in earning doctoral degrees with leave time and scholarships. This support increases the number of faculty with terminal degrees and provides the basis for increased scholarship. Three faculty have taken advantage of this support in the last six years. This positive effort to increase scholarship is counteracted by the university mission focused on teaching with most faculty assigned four courses per semester. UPRA follows Goal II of the Strategic Plan Faro 2025 that includes the goal of increasing faculty and student participation in research and creative activity and encouraging faculty to publish and disseminate their scholarly work in peer-reviewed journals.

Faculty produce research and creative work within this framework. The university provides small grants to support research and creative activity, typically for travel. Faculty apply for these grants each year and have had some success gaining funding. Faculty report they use these grants to go to conferences to make presentations.

Since the last site team visit nine years ago, the faculty produced four edited books, one book chapter, seven refereed journal articles, 12 peer-reviewed conference articles and 15 invited academic articles. In addition, faculty focused on creative work produced two juried and 44 non-juried professional works. Some creative projects aired on Telemundo and local media. Additionally, some of the student creative work won external awards, which was recognized by the university and used in UPRA promotional materials and videos.

The campus has very limited resources to support faculty. There is only partial support for scholarship and creative activity at the university level, in part due to mission and resource limitations, which creates an issue for the faculty staying current and actively engaged in the field beyond the work on the island.

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

The campus hiring and promotion process that prioritizes doctoral degrees and gives credit for scholarship and creative work. Terminal degrees are preferred. Individuals with a doctorate are more likely to be moved from an instructor line to a faculty line and the promotion process moves down to a three-year period for each promotion to associate professor and full professor, thus shortening the overall time to achieve full professor status.

The expectations for scholarly/creative work are built into the promotion and tenure process with requirements for some work in this area to achieve promotion. The faculty report being active in the profession, with some continuing to work for media on the island.

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

The university uses a points system covering research/creative activity, teaching, professional development, campus service and community service. Each creative work or scholarly paper earns points toward to goal of tenure and promotion. The point system document is detailed

and makes it easy for faculty to know where the stand for promotion and tenure. The dean said that for faculty to be promoted and/or tenured, they needed to have points in each of the categories, necessitating work in the scholarship/creative activity area.

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.

Faculty have participated in national and international research conferences to share their scholarship and creative work since the last accreditation visit. This activity is limited by the lack of department funds and limited access to university funding to allow for such work. Given these constraints, the faculty have actively sought opportunities to share their work and to expose themselves to workshops (e.g. IRTS, AEJMC, ICA).

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

The department's small collegial faculty supports the scholarly and creative work of their peers. Their creative work is well regarded on campus even when the topics of the creative work are controversial. Visiting speakers bring diverse insights and critical views of media into the classroom.

SUMMARY:

The scholarship and creative activity at the UPRA Department of Tele Radial Communication minimally meets the standard. The faculty do produce scholarship and creative works annually. The emphasis leans toward the creative side, which makes sense in the framework of the UPRA mission. The department gets a lot of mileage out of the creative works with the university, which helps its prestige on campus and across Puerto Rico. More could be done in this vein, particularly on the creative side. Funding and heavy teaching loads work against such expansion.

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

Scholarship Table (prepared by the department)

Overall Faculty Scholarship Productivity

Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activities	Total from Unit*	Individuals				Totals
		Full Professors (4)	Associate Professors (4)	Assistant Professors (2)	Other Faculty**	
Awards and Honors	3	1	2	0	0	3
Grants Received Internal	1	0	0	1	0	1
Grants Received External	11	5	1	5	0	11
Scholarly Books, Sole- or Co-authored	0	0	0	0	0	0
Textbooks, Sole- or Co-authored	0	0	0	0	0	0
Books Edited	4	2	0	2	0	4
Book Chapters	1	1	0	0	0	1
Investigation	5	2	2	1	0	5
Articles in Refereed Journals	7	0	4	3	0	7
Refereed Conference Papers	12	0	5	7	0	12
Invited Academic Papers	15	3	10	1	1	15
Encyclopedia Entries	0	0	0	0	0	0
Book Reviews	0	0	0	0	0	0
Articles in Non-refereed Publications	7	0	2	5	0	7
Juried Creative Works	2	0	2	0	0	2
Non-juried Creative Works	44	2	6	0	36	44

*Co-authored work should be counted as a single publication in the unit totals. However, if, for example, two members of the faculty are co-authors on the same journal article, it would be reported as a publication for both authors.

**Includes all full-time faculty who do not hold listed ranks, such as instructors and others on term appointments. Many faculties in this category may hold teaching appointments without significant scholarship, research or creative requirements.

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.

The University of Puerto Rico at Arecibo provides academic counseling for newly admitted students. This week of introductory work helps students understand resources and plan their programs of study. The department has a faculty member who serves as the academic coordinator. The coordinator reports good attendance by students each semester in the advising sessions prior to enrolling in courses. Students report this advising works and that most of them avail themselves of this resource. Students indicated that they are aware of the graduation standards, but many of them choose to stay longer and exceed the required credit hours necessary for graduation to take additional courses in the department to build a broader portfolio before graduation. They believe this extra work helps them land better jobs.

Portal UPR is an online resource for students to track their academic progress, see grades, and stay on track toward graduation. During Covid-19, the department sent academic counseling forms to students digitally. Students reported that faculty went out of their way to help students during the pandemic.

b). Faculty are available and accessible to students.

The engaged faculty help advise students informally and keep in touch with students after they finish a particular course and long after graduation. A department survey reports 81 percent of faculty participate in academic counseling work. Students are mature in their approach to course decisions and advising. A majority of students who attended the student meetings reported working while attending school for economic reasons. This appears to create a system where students take responsibility for getting good advice and planning their college careers to ensure the best use of resources and the appropriate preparation for their field. The faculty are available to students in office hours and student media areas. Students report good access to faculty and describe their efforts as supportive as they work on student radio and television. Faculty clearly know the students. Classes were active, engaged and lively in the discussions and presentations.

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

The Dean of Academic Affairs and the Registrar's Office share requirements, data and policies with the department. The department shares that information with students. The department website has links to courses, requirements, policies and student activities. Faculty reported regularly sharing information with students in classes. Students indicated that they knew the requirements and were aware of the various activities available to them through the department.

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 department has four student associations and two student media outlets. The associations include the Independent Associate Production of Communication Students at Arecibo (PAIECA), the PR Collective, the National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ) and the Ansel Adams Photography Association (AFAA). Tinta Digital and UPRA Web Radio, which include a YouTube channel (UPRA Web Tube), are the student media outlets. Students regularly mentioned NAHJ and

their student media experiences during the visit. Strategic communication students reported the PR Collective is active, producing campaigns and working with other student organizations and media. For example, the PR Collective recently worked with NAHJ on a campaign. A strength of the program is how interactive these student media and organizations are with each other. Tinta Digital actively produces web content to keep students informed. Content includes interviews, articles on current events, and opinion columns. There is evidence of diverse content on the site. UPRA Web Radio produces more than 100 hours of live programming per semester. The content ranges from diverse issues (e.g., The Queer Symposium) to local news (e.g., Notas del saco, Noticias Punto a Punto, Revista a Cuenta Gotas) to pop culture (e.g., Geek Corner). The YouTube channel contains two documentaries (e.g., Tiempo de Pensar and Historias de Maria: Mi Vida Por Ella). Students are actively involved across these opportunities.

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 department closely watches enrollment, retention and graduation rates. The Dean of Academic Affairs reports regular meetings to discuss data and retention strategies with the departments, including Tele Radial Communication. The data is managed centrally by the campus. The department data in the self-study did not include retention rates for 2018 and 2019 and campus graduation rates for comparison. In 2018, the department achieved their highest retention rate of 89 percent (UPRA 82 percent). That dropped to 78 percent (UPRA 80 percent) in 2019. The dean described this as an ongoing issue related to the aftermath of Hurricane Maria in 2017. However, she said she is working with the department on strategies to increase retention. The story on the graduation side is more positive for the campus and even better for the department. For the 2010 cohort the campus graduation rate was 48 percent and the department was 38 percent. Both showed continual growth to the current available data for the 2014 cohort where the campus reported a 50 percent graduation rate and the department a remarkable 67 percent graduation rate. A key back story for this data is that more than 80 percent of the students at UPRA are on Pell Grants.

SUMMARY:

Though the most recent yearly retention rate fell, the graduation rates have been climbing for the last five years. The department of Tele Radial Communication typically leads campus in retention and significantly outpaces campus on graduation rates. The increase in retention and graduation generally can be attributed to focused attention by campus leaders and a dedicated faculty in the department who are helping students progress and succeed. Effective academic advising and broad student engagement in student organizations and student media build close relationships between students and the department. This experience and engagement help grow retention and graduation rates. The majority of students receive Pell Grants, which allows them funding to take extra courses and leads to a higher number of credit hours and a longer time to graduation. The students describe this as helpful for them to take courses that build their portfolio and makes them more competitive for jobs.

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 university has a well-defined budget plan that gives the department an opportunity to make its case for adequate funding. The university also relates budget priorities to its strategic plan. Because of its intense technology needs, the department is especially attuned to the need for periodic upgrades and expansions. The university administration realizes this and with a few exceptions has done its best to provide support for equipment and technology.

The university has experienced four major financial shocks over the past fifteen years: (1) the 2008 recession; (2) the 2017 hurricane Maria; (3) the 2019 earthquake and the (4) Covid-19-related recession. Legislation (PC 1003) recently passed by the Puerto Rican legislature will mean more significant budget cuts to the university system on top of cuts made during the past 15 years.

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 department's budget has been up and down since the last site visit nearly nine years ago with a net gain far less than inflation. While the self-study showed a budget reduction of 1.27 percent from 2020-21 to 2021-22, requests from the site team to recalculate their budget table produced a 5 percent increase. The amount spent on faculty salaries in 2021-22 (\$644,578) is less than \$4,000 more than was spent in 2017-18 (\$641,166). The departmental travel budget was zeroed out two years ago.

The faculty, nearly all multi-decade veterans, have been locked in a stifling, static environment. With several faculty members rapidly approaching retirement, there is genuine doubt about whether these positions can be retained. Currently, the UPR administration in San Juan is not filling replacement positions. Because of the demographics of the faculty and its small size, Tele-Radial Communication stands much to lose. There is also a risk that aging equipment will not be replaced.

Tele Radial Communication has the third largest student body of 14 departments. It does not have the 3rd largest budget and has one of the highest student/faculty ratios on campus. The department's reliance on experienced adjuncts with professional experience makes their faculty numbers look more respectable compared with units like computer science and management of information technology and administrative processes that have a much lower student/faculty ratio. Despite a very challenging financial environment, programs at UPRA have learned to survive on meager, flat resources. In fact, the current budget could look formidable when the large budget cuts to higher education work their way down to the departmental level.

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

Nearly all the department's activities are concentrated in the sprawling university administration

building. Student media and labs are on the ground floor while faculty are housed on the third floor. The department has eight offices, three dedicated classrooms and seven production labs. The department also uses general classrooms in the academic building. Most of the faculty share an office. The wing where the department's administrative/faculty space is located is shared with business administration in an odd configuration where visitors to business must walk through the department's space.

Since its founding as the premier program in Puerto Rico for radio and television studies, the department has worked hard to provide ample space and facilities for experiential learning. It has two fully operational television studios, a multimedia laboratory with 15 workstations, a computer laboratory with 20 workstations, three radio production/editing studios, a digital photography laboratory with 15 workstations and a traditional photography studio and wet lab. There is also space for UPRA Web Radio. Some of the student media space has ADA challenges with a few steps entering facilities and one television control room and a separate group of video editing stations accessible only through a steep internal staircase to a mezzanine level.

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.

Because of the primacy of student media in the department's mission, the university has been largely attentive to its needs to upgrade and expand laboratories. The university's "Plan Puesta al Dia" is a blueprint for the university's technology needs, and the department figures prominently in that plan. A \$25 per course technology fee is scheduled to rise to \$50 in the 2022-23 academic year. Course fees used to go to the central university administration in San Juan before returning to individual campuses, but as of two years ago, the fees are retained locally and distributed. Administration and faculty applaud that change and believe it guarantees that funds are not withheld centrally.

Some computer labs have been upgraded recently (photography, radio) while another (multimedia) is badly out of date. One team member observed that this laboratory had three different vintages of computers with the oldest at the back of the lab running Windows 7. Students had to compensate by bringing their own laptops to run the software required in the class.

The radio-television facilities are comprehensive and adequate. Water damage to one of the control rooms during Maria resulted in impressive new switchers in both control rooms to make them compatible and interoperable. Students note that the cameras available for check-out are coming to the end of their useful lives. It's a credit to the students that the gear has lasted this long.

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

The university library facilities are more than adequate to meet the department's needs. A variety of databases are available at the library and online to aid students in information gathering. A cinema room opened in 2017 has been used consistently by some of the faculty for exhibition. A new learning commons augments many of the technological capabilities of the department. This beautiful new technology/collaboration space is just across a walkway from the departmental laboratories.

SUMMARY:

The department has operated on the margins for several years, bouncing from budget cuts to static budgets to small increases. Fortunately, the department has mostly been able to maintain the student media and laboratory activities that give Tele Radial communication its luster. A resilient faculty has adjusted to living within a precarious, demoralizing budgetary environment. Yet, there is doubt whether the department can stand another major blow. The cuts mandated by the legislature just before the site visit plus the prospect of several unfilled retirement positions place the department on the brink of fiscal crisis.

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

There is no alumni newsletter, but the department maintains an active Facebook page where it regularly posts activities and student achievement. There has been an alumni board since 2012. There is no record in the self-study of the board having met as a group within the accreditation period, but a meeting with alumni confirmed Zoom activity during the pandemic. An annual communication week serves as a prime opportunity to bring alumni speakers to campus. The experienced faculty, most of whom have been at Arecibo for more than 25 years, know large numbers of professionals throughout the island leverage these contacts to place students for its capstone practicum course and internships. The alumni board realizes that it must play a major role in supporting the department as it braces itself for severe budget cuts resulting from the central government's austerity program.

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.

Some faculty are involved in professional activities that bring them in contact with outside academics and professionals. The whole faculty seems attuned to ethics and social responsibility.

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 tight budget has constricted the faculty's involvement in professional activities. Yet, faculty members are visible in several professional associations in Puerto Rico. The campus and university system have limited funds to support faculty who want to become active in international professional associations.

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 department does not have a signature public service project. It has relied on the involvement of its individual faculty locally and the significant outreach of its student media and projects to reach external constituencies. Nearly every faculty member has been involved in a community activity. Because it is such a veteran faculty, much of this activity runs deep. Student radio and television public service campaigns have focused on depression, pollution, and animal abuse. An impressive PR initiative occurred when the campaign classes focused exclusively on hurricane relief after the devastation caused by Maria. This initiative alone brought considerable island-wide attention. Administrators and faculty on the Arecibo campus are very proud of the student output and believe it enhances the campus' reputation significantly. A weekly radio program focused on the LGBTQ+ community has also drawn

praise. The campus community values student projects, campaigns and programs with a strong community service focus and sees Tele Radial Communication as one of its most visible and most public service-oriented programs.

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

The department has had projects supporting scholastic journalism, but nothing recently although NAHJ has had an ongoing outreach. In 2013, faculty participated in its final workshop as part of a Department of Education initiative to help high school students in Puerto Rico learn the skills of photojournalism. In 2016, the faculty advisor to “Tinta Digital” conducted workshops for a local middle school. In 2017, there was a photojournalism workshop aimed at dropouts from rural schools.

SUMMARY:

The strength of the department’s public service is its multi-faceted student media, student organizations and student project initiatives. With dedicated faculty oversight, there is a steady stream of activity. The faculty are active individually in various endeavors, civic and professional. High teaching loads and constrained budgets limit the ambition of the department’s public service activities.

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 committee, which acts as a committee of the whole, is chaired by a senior faculty member who is a former Dean of Academic Affairs and Chancellor of the UPRA, and a champion of assessment in the department. All of the full-time faculty make up the assessment committee. The committee met four times in AY 2020-2021.

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

The department identifies 19 learning outcomes for all students, regardless of emphasis. These outcomes are mapped against the ACEJMC professional values and competencies and the UPRA General Education outcomes to ensure that they meet them all. Here are the department’s program outcomes:

1. Fluency in oral and written Spanish.
2. Adequate management of oral and written English.
3. Knowledge and understanding of the main social communication theories and tendencies within the study of mass media.
4. Knowledge and understanding of the history and development of mass media.
5. Understanding of the impact of new technologies in mass media.
6. Adequate knowledge of frequently used research methods in mass media.
7. Understanding and application of the elements and basic principles of image composition.
8. Understanding and application of the principles and tendencies of audiovisual design and production.
9. Knowledge of the basic legal and ethical principles that impact mass media professionals.
10. Application of writing principles, formats and techniques for different professions in mass media.
11. Skillfulness in the management of information systems, technology and programs commonly used in mass media.
12. Comprehension and ability to operate basic equipment required for the production of radio and television programs
13. Knowledge of basic marketing strategies.
14. Effective oral communication skills

15. General knowledge of humanities and fields related to natural and social sciences.
16. Capacity to analyze events and synthesize in order to process information from several mass media outlets.
17. Knowledge of roles and responsibilities of professions related to mass media and communications.
18. Capable of showing respect, acceptance and value the cultural, ethnic, religious, socio-economic, political and other differences among audiences, exceptional populations, and others.
19. Familiar with entrepreneurship and business development opportunities in communication-related fields.

These 19 outcomes are then aggregated into six main assessment areas:

- Media and Professions
- Images and Information
- Research
- Diversity
- Writing and Information Management
- Freedom of Speech and Ethics

Each assessment area is mapped against the ACEJMC values and competencies, the department learning outcomes and the General Education requirements.

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

A review of syllabi in the core and emphases courses revealed that none of these outcomes are specifically mentioned in course syllabi. Each syllabus identifies general and course specific learning outcomes. The general outcomes are intended to be articulations of the program outcomes uniquely applied to the class. However, since each syllabus articulates the outcome differently, it is not easy to identify the specific program outcome and there isn't a consistent reinforcement of the outcomes to help students understand how courses meet the program objectives.

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

The department has an assessment plan that was first created in 2010 and recently revised in 2021. The plan includes multiple direct and indirect measures.

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

The direct measures are assessment artifacts that are collected from classes that specifically address the outcome in the course. For example: student's use and understanding of visual images and composition is measured with an exercise in the Digital Photography class; understanding and application of law and ethics are gathered with an exam using hypothetical situations in the Law and Ethics class; writing is assessed from writing assignments in four different writing intensive classes; and a reflective essay on diversity is required in the Television and Radio Programming class.

Faculty in these classes use a rubric designed by the assessment committee to evaluate whether the students are meeting competency levels in the outcome. The instructor of the class evaluates the student

work and reports percentages of students who met or didn't meet the competency and reports the results to the assessment committee. By using a standardized rubric, focusing on how many students meet the competency, and sharing the results with assessment, the exercises and tests are used for program assessment as well as graded assignments for the students.

One of the most important direct measures is a portfolio that is developed in the final course of the curriculum, the Practicum/Seminar. The portfolios are evaluated by the faculty who teach the course, with a maximum of 10 per faculty member, and the aggregated results are shared with the assessment committee.

Another direct measure is the internship evaluation provided by the internship supervisor. The program uses feedback from these evaluations to identify areas of improvement of instruction and updating of equipment or software.

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

The department collects a graduating senior survey from students in the Practicum/Seminar class. A reading of the latest assessment report shows that this measure is influential for making adjustments to curriculum, instruction and technology.

The department also uses student awards as indirect measures and participates in institutional surveys of alumni.

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

The department's plan is very good at consistently gathering and evaluating direct measures that are collected from required courses. The rubrics are standardized, but the evaluation of student work is limited to the instructor of the class, rather than a blind review by a group. This limits the validity and reliability of the data to a degree, but it is still useful over time if student performance improves or declines as determined by the same evaluation process. The plan is integrated into the curriculum and collects data on several competencies each semester.

The portfolio is not used to its full potential. The portfolio evaluations provide good data and help identify strengths and areas of improvements, but they are limited to the perceptions and potential biases of faculty who have taught the students. The portfolio review is often a gold standard of assessment when it is reviewed by external experts such as alumni and media professionals.

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

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

The assessment committee chair writes a detailed assessment report each year. The report goes through each of the direct and indirect measures. In each of these measures, competencies are identified as to whether they are improving, staying the same or declining. Action items are identified at the end of the report to address any deficiencies. The report for AY 2020-2021 mentioned that some of the assessment tools, such as internship evaluations, were not completed because students were moved to remote learning.

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

Here are a few examples:

- In the area of Law and Ethics, the competency goal was for at least 70% of the students to pass each of the hypothetical exercises. This goal was met by 65% of the students and the following areas were problematic: copyright, Fairness Doctrine, and obscenity. The need to reinforce this content in the Law and Ethics course.
 - Writing is another area identified as needing improvement. The committee is reviewing the rubric and writing assignments to make sure they are effective tools for measuring this competency. The rubrics identify specific areas of improvement with written language.
 - The senior survey identified concerns with the quality of learning in Spanish and Marketing. The department met with the Languages and Business Administration departments to discuss these results. They found that each department had similar concerns and they are looking at improving instruction either with course or instructor adjustments.
 - Internship evaluations indicated that students in television production and directing were not familiar with the current versions of news management systems and run-down creators. They invested in Ross run-down creator that meets industry standards.
- *How does the unit decide how to address these areas of concern and what actions did it take to do so?*

The faculty member who collects the data and analyzes it makes recommendations about how to address areas of concern. The assessment committee, which is made up of all full-time faculty, discusses the assessment data and analysis and recommendation and then plans actions to address the deficiencies.

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

The actions are evaluated in the next collection of assessment data. In the recent assessment report, the data points are tracked over three to six years (depending on the measurement) and the trends are noted as to whether the indicators are improving or declining.

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

The department is conscientious about using the assessment data to improve student learning. While not all areas can be addressed due to limited resources (new technology needs, for example) the department is committed to moving forward on its indicators. The transparency of the learning that is happening in each course allows for open discussions for improving the program through each course.

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 advisory board met twice via Zoom in 2021 and gives feedback about how graduates and interns are performing. Many alumni are also internship supervisors and they evaluate students' competencies as part of the course grade. However, this is an area that could be improved. Getting alumni and professional feedback on student portfolios would lift the assessment plan considerably.

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

Professional feedback is provided through internship evaluations, but evaluations of student portfolios would enhance the assessment plan.

SUMMARY:

The department has an assessment plan with multiple direct and indirect measures. The program regularly gathers data on these measures and writes a detailed annual assessment report. All faculty are involved in the assessment committee and gather assessment from their classes. There is evidence that the department has acted on these recommendations. Improvements or weaknesses are tracked over time using the assessment report. The plan could be improved by inviting more outside evaluation of student work, a broader faculty examination of individual portfolios and requiring consistent learning outcomes across all syllabi.

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

PART III: Summary by site visit team

Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

Strengths

- A highly dedicated, veteran faculty that places a high priority on serving students' needs.
- An ambitious, duty-bound student body that takes great pride in the program and rose to extraordinarily lengths to keep student media initiatives operating during the pandemic.
- Diversity engagement that is embedded in the curriculum and expressed robustly in student productions and projects, especially LGBTQ+ issues.
- Active student media groups and organizations that produce award-winning content and achieved widespread external recognition after Hurricane Maria.
- Strong connection to the professional community within Puerto Rico.

Weaknesses

- An anemic resource base, including faculty salaries, that has hardly budged since the initial accreditation visit nine years ago and is perilously close to crisis with the pending retirement of key faculty.
- An ambitious curriculum of six sequences that cannot be supported adequately by the current budget or number of faculty.
- A strategic plan that drifts farther and farther from reality as severe budgetary constraints push the department towards "survival mode."
- A portfolio assessment not used to its full potential through faculty examination and external review of student work.

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

Standard 7: Resources, Facilities and Equipment

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

The university should provide adequate faculty and resources to meet the department's fiscal needs. All syllabi should include the learning outcomes the course addresses.

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

N/A

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.

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, while succinct and attractively laid out, was uneven in content with important data and evidence omitted. There was at least one important table that had significant errors. All of this caused the site team to spend an inordinate amount of time on the ground finding information that should have been contained in the self-study. Much of the content omitted from the self-study actually helped make the department's case for reaccreditation. The team commended the department for producing so much material in English. Yet, it would have been helpful to have important documents like the most recent assessment reports translated.