Report of ACEJMC Evaluation

Undergraduate program
2021–2022

Name of Institution: Zayed University

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Clayton MacKenzie, PhD, Provost and Chief Academic Officer

Name of Unit: College of Communication and Media Sciences

Name and Title of Administrator: Dwight E. Brooks, PhD, Dean

Date of 2021-2022 (rescheduled from 2020-2021) Accrediting Visit: Oct. 30- Nov. 3, 2021

Date of the previous accrediting visit: May 1, 2015

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Accreditation

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Accreditation
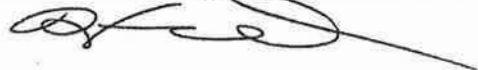
Recommendation by 2021-2022 Visiting TeamRe- Accreditation

Prepared and submitted by:

Team Chair
Name and Title: Rochelle Ford, Dean
Organization/School: Elon University, School of Communications
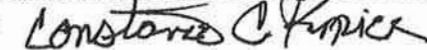*Signature*

Team Chair
Name and Title: Constance Cannon Frazier, principal
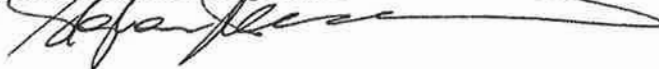Organization/School: Cardinal Change Consulting
Signature

Team Chair
Name and Title: Steve Geimann, retired executive
Organization/School: Bloomberg News
Signature

Team Chair
Name and Title: Bey-Ling Sha, dean and professor
Organization/School: California State University - Fullerton
Signature

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

On site: Rochelle Ford, Constance Frazier, Steve Geimann, and Bey-Ling Sha

Virtually: n/a

Part I: General Information

Name of Institution: Zayed University

Name of Unit: College of Communication and Media Sciences

Year of Visit: 2021–2022 (rescheduled from 2020–2021)

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

_X_ 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

If the unit seeking accreditation is located outside the United States, provide the name(s) of the appropriate recognition or accreditation entities: The Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA)

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

___ Private
_X_ 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.

A United Arab Emirates (UAE) Federal Decree (see Appendix 1 click here) established Zayed University (ZU) in 1998 as an independent corporate entity to educate national women. The university is named after the founding President of the country, His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahayan. It has two main campuses in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, and it is led by a single administration, offering similar programs on both campuses. Men were admitted to ZU in 2008; however, currently men only study on the Abu Dhabi campus pending budgetary approval for building a male campus in Dubai.

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

_X_Yes
___ No

If yes, give the date of the last accrediting visit: October 19–23, 2014.

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

May 1, 2015.

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

Mission Statement (revision adopted unanimously June 2021)

To prepare bilingual leaders in communication and digital media to serve the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the Gulf region, and the global community. The College emphasizes through teaching and learning, research and creative scholarship, and community engagement:

- the important roles of media and communication in local and global cultures
- informational and technological literacies and language competencies in Arabic and English
- ethics, truth, accuracy, fairness, and diversity in communication

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Semesters of _16_ weeks
Quarters of _____ weeks
Summer sessions of __5_ weeks (and 8 weeks for summer internships).
Intersessions of _____ weeks

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

_X_ Bachelor's degree
_X_ Master's degree
___ PhD degree

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

Bachelor of Science in Communication and Media Sciences
Concentrations in:
- Media Production and Storytelling
- Integrated Strategic Communications
- Tourism and Cultural Communications

10. Credit hours required by the university for an undergraduate degree: (Specify semester-hour or quarter-hour credit.):   120 semester credit hours

11. Give the number of credit hours' students may earn for internship experience. (Specify semester-hour or quarter-hour credit.) 3 semester 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 (Concentration)	Person in Charge
Media Production and Storytelling	Gaelle Duthler (Chair) Nadia Rahman (Assistant Chair)
Integrated Strategic Communications	Gaelle Duthler (Chair) Nadia Rahman (Assistant Chair)
Tourism and Cultural Communications	Gaelle Duthler (Chair) Nadia Rahman (Assistant Chair)

13. Number of full-time students enrolled in the institution: 10,906 (undergraduates)

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): 961

Name of Sequence or Specialty (Concentration)	Undergraduate majors in
Media Production and Storytelling	178
Integrated Strategic Communications	482
Tourism and Cultural Communications	301
Total	961

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. 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.)

Enrollment in Skills (Practica) Courses (Fall 2021)

		Section	Instructor	No. of Students
COM209	Foundations of Media Writing	001	James Lewelling	16
		002	James Lewelling	16
		003	James Lewelling	16
		501	Peter Davidson	14
		502	Michael Bowles	13
		503	Michael Bowles	14
COM210	Introduction to Media Storytelling	002	Mutaz Matar	20
		003	Mutaz Matar	20
		008	Mutaz Matar	20
		501	William McCarthy	10
		502	Kyung Sun Lee	16

Course	Title	Section	Instructor	Enrollment
		503	Kyung Sun Lee	13
		505	Kyung Sun Lee	17
COM212	Digital Storytelling	001	Danica Piper	20
		003	Danica Piper	20
		004	Russell Williams	20
		005	Danica Piper	20
		501	Zelal Wattar	20
		502	Zelal Wattar	20
		503	Zelal Wattar	12
		504	Zelal Wattar	18
		505	Zelal Wattar	19
COM230	Public Speaking and Persuasion	001	Ajlina Karamehic-Muratovic	20
		002	Hessah AlFalahi	20
		003	Hessah AlFalahi	20
		004	Rochelle Williams	20
		005	Hessah AlFalahi	20
		006	Ajlina Karamehic-Muratovic	20
		501	Valerie Goby	20
		502	Valerie Goby	19
		503	James Piecowye	20
		504	James Piecowye	20
COM490	Internship	001	Inka Stever	35
		002	Inka Stever	20
		501	Mian Asim	17
		502	Mian Asim	13
		901	Inka Stever	01
		902	Inka Stever	01
ISC353	Writing for Public Relations	002	Kang Li	20
		003	Kang Li	18
		501	Yulia Medvedeva	13
		502	Yulia Medvedeva	09
		503	Hilke Steenkamp	15

Course	Title	Section	Instructor	Enrollment
ISC357	Creative Advertising	001	Kang Li	20
		002	Narae Kim	20
		003	Narae Kim	20
		004	Kang Li	20
		501	Mian Asim	20
		502	Hilke Steenkamp	20
		503	Hilke Steenkamp	14
ISC451	Integrated Strategic Communication Campaigns (Capstone)	001	Azmat Rasul	20
		501	Badran Badran	20
MPS220	Visual Storytelling	001	Stefan Sonvilla-Weiss	20
		005	Stefan Sonvilla-Weiss	20
		502	Richard Cawood	15
		504	Richard Cawood	14

Course	Title	Section	Instructor	Enrollment
MPS241	Audio Production	001	Mutaz Matar	20
MPS321	Video and Audio Production I	001	William Smith	20
		002	William Smith	20

		501	Fokiya Akhtar	20
		502	Fokiya Akhtar	20
		901	William Smith	05
MPS380	Web Production	006	Danica Piper	17
		502	Richard Cawood	19
MPS382	Multimedia Production	001	Stefan Sonvilla-Weiss	09
		501	Richard Cawood	14
MPS421	Advanced Media Production	001	Timothy Wilkerson	02
		001	Nadia Rahman	02
		901	Timothy Wilkerson	05
MPS457	Capstone Project	501	Fokiya Akhtar	05
		901	Timothy Wilkerson	08
MPS481	Zajel Student Media Production	001	Timothy Wilkerson	20
		501	William McCarthy	08
TCC471	Applied Tourism Project (Capstone)	001	Paolo Mura	20
		501	Filareti Kotsi	05

Enrollment in Skills (Practica) Courses (Spring 2021)

Course Number	Course Title	Section	Instructor	No. of Students
COM209	Foundations of Media Writing	001	James Lewelling	20
		002	James Lewelling	18
		003	Steven Strasen	19
		501	Michael Bowles	20
		502	Michael Bowles	20
		503	Michael Bowles	13
COM210	Introduction to Media Storytelling	004	Azmat Rasul	18
		005	Mutaz Matar	20
		006	Mutaz Matar	20
		008	Danica Piper	08
		009	Azmat Rasul	19
		901	Danica Piper	11
		501	Kyung Sun Lee	19
		503	Kyung Sun Lee	19
		504	Kyung Sun Lee	19
		506	Kyung Sun Lee	19
COM212	Digital Storytelling	901	Stefan Sonvilla-Weiss	05
		001	Paul Lowman	20
		002	Paul Lowman	20
		003	Zelal Wattar	20
		501	Zelal Wattar	20
		502	Zelal Wattar	20
		503	Zelal Wattar	20
		504	Zelal Wattar	20
COM230	Public Speaking and Persuasion	501	James Piecowye	20
		502	Valerie Goby	20
		503	Valerie Goby	20
		005	Rochelle Williams	20
		006	Suhaila Hassouneh	20
		007	Suhaila Hassouneh	19
		008	Hessah AlFalahi	20

		009	Effrosyni Georgiadou Hessah	20
		901	AlFalahi	12
COM490	Internship	501	Mian Asim	22
		502	Mian Asim	20
		503	Mian Asim	07
		001	Inka Stever	55
		016	Inka Stever	26
		902	Ika Stever	04
ISC353	Writing for Public Relations	501	Yulia Medvedeva	20
		502	Yulia Medvedeva	11
		001	Kang Li	12
		002	Kang Li	18
		003	Kang Li	08
ISC357	Creative Advertising	001	Claire Sherman	20
		002	Claire Sherman	20
		003	Russell Williams	20
		004	Russell Williams	20
		005	Park Beede	19
		006	Russell Williams	01
		501	Mian Asim	19
		502	Hilke Steenkamp	20
		503	Mian Asim	20
ISC451	Integrated Strategic Communication Campaigns (Capstone)	501	Badran Badran	09
		001	Russell Williams	20
		002	Claire Sherman	17
		003	Claire Sherman	11
MPS220	Visual Storytelling	501	Richard Cawood	20
		502	Richard Cawood	20
		901	Stefan Sonvilla-Weiss	08
		001	Timothy Wilkerson	20

MPS321	Video Production	001	Mutaz Matar	20
		501	Fokiya Akhtar	19
MPS341	Audio Production	001	Paul Lowman	20
		501	Paul Lowman	17
		901	Paul Lowman	07
MPS380	Web Production	501	Richard Cawood	19
		001	Paul Lowman	18
MPS382	Multimedia Production	001	Stefan Sonvilla-Weiss	03
		501	Richard Cawood	08
MPS421	Advanced Media Production	501	Nadia Rahman	11
		001	Timothy Wilkerson	08
		901	Timothy Willkerson	05
MPS457	Capstone Project	001	Mutaz Matar	07
		901	Timothy Wilkerson	06
MPS481	Zajel Student Media Production	501	Fokiya Akhtar	08
		001	Rochelle Williams	25
TCC471	Applied Tourism Project (Capstone)	501	Filareti Kotsi	15
		001	Paolo Mura	19

16.   Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2021 calendar year:

The college has a budget this year of AED 24,201,253.12 which includes everything (including chapter 1 expenses, which are salaries and all benefits). Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, not all the approved budget may be utilized this year in the areas of Professional Development, Conferences, Hotels and Hospitality, etc.

Give percentage increase or decrease in three years:
Between 2018 to 2019, the budget increased by 3%.
Between 2019 to 2020, the budget decreased by 4.7% (a large part of the decrease was in professional development funds. With the Covid-19 pandemic most conferences were moved from in-person to online participation and hence no need for travel funds).
Between 2020-2021 the budget decreased by 1%.

Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries:
Permanent positions: AED 12,676,051.92. This is just salaries – it does not include housing allowances, etc.

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.

First Name	Last Name	Rank
1. Dwight E.	Brooks	Professor (Dean)*
2. Lena	Jayyusi	Professor Emeritus**
3. Badran	Badran	Professor
4. Donghee	Shin	Professor (Undergraduate Program Coordinator)
5. Elsayed	Darwish	Professor
6. Azza	Ahmed	Professor (Coordinator of Arabic Media Program)
7. Filareti	Kotsi	Professor (Graduate Program Coordinator)
8. Valerie	Goby	Professor
9. Inka	Stever	Professor of Practice (Internship Coordinator)
10. Gaelle	Duthler	Associate Professor and Acting Dean, Office of Graduate Studies (Department Chair)

11.	James	Piecowye	Associate Professor
12.	Nadia	Rahman	Associate Professor (Assistant Department Chair)
13.	Nagwa	Fahmy	Associate Professor
14.	Russell	Williams	Associate Professor (Assistant Dean for Student Affairs)
15.	Paolo	Mura	Associate Professor (Assistant Dean for Research and Outreach)
16.	Hamza	Saad	Associate Professor
17.	Ganga	Dhanesh	Associate Professor (Associate Dean)
18.	Khaled	Gaweesh	Associate Professor
19.	Stefan	Sonvilla-Weiss	Associate Professor
20.	Ajlina	Karamehic-Muratovic	Associate Professor
21.	William	Smith	Associate Professor
22.	Mohammad	Alazaizeh	Associate Professor
23.	Noela	Michael	Assistant Professor
24.	Mian	Asim	Assistant Professor (Internship Coordinator)
25.	Hossam	Hassan	Assistant Professor
26.	Timothy	Wilkerson	Assistant Professor
27.	Fokiya	Akhtar	Assistant Professor
28.	Ridwan	Raji	Assistant Professor
29.	Yulia	Medvedeva	Assistant Professor

30.	Katia	Vianou	Assistant Professor
31.	Azmat	Rasul	Assistant Professor
32.	Vlada	Botoric	Assistant Professor
33.	Kang	Li	Assistant Professor
34.	Mutaz	Matar	Assistant Professor
35.	Hilke	Steenkamp	Assistant Professor
36.	Kyung Sun	Lee	Assistant Professor
37.	Zoe	Hurley	Assistant Professor (Assistant Dean for Student Affairs)
38.	Danica	Cigoja-Piper	Assistant Professor
39.	William	McCarthy	Assistant Professor
40.	Kund	Florian	Assistant Professor
41.	Narae	Kim	Assistant Professor
42.	Aamena	Bulhoon	Assistant Professor
43.	Suhaila	Hassouneh	Instructor
44.	Richard	Cawood	Instructor
45.	Hessah	AlFalahi	Instructor
46.	Zelal	Wattar	Instructor
47.	Rochelle	Williams	Instructor***

*No teaching requirement for the Dean
** No teaching requirement for Professor Emeritus
***Appointed from adjunct to full-time faculty in Fall 2021

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 Fall 2021, please provide the Fall 2021 adjunct list in the updated information.)

Fall 2021
1. James Lewelling (on loan from College of Humanities and Social Sciences)
2. Peter Davidson (on loan from College of Humanities and Social Sciences)
3. Michael Bowles (on loan from College of Humanities and Social Sciences)

Spring 2021
1. Rochelle Williams
2. James Lewelling (on loan from College of Humanities and Social Sciences)
3. Steven Strasen (on loan from University College)
4. Michael Bowles (on loan from University College)

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.

Year	Total	Number Graduates in Compliance	Percent
2020-2021* Academic year	129	21	16%
2019-2020* academic year	149	89	60%

*only Fall graduates currently included

There are three primary reasons for this dramatic drop in graduate compliance with the 72-hour rule. First, there is the moving of the Arabic Media faculty into the college. Previously, all Arabic courses were under one roof in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. Beginning in the Fall of 2018, the university decided to break them into three separate groups and one of those groups with their four classes became a part of CCMS. From that point they would also be considered as classes taken within the college. This means that 12 additional hours were now within the college. Accounting for this difference, compliance in Fall 2019 becomes 99%. The second reason is that in Fall 2017 the university decided that all baccalaureate degree programs would require a minimum of 120 total credit hours. The CCMS degree was previously 126 hours. Those six hours came out of General Education and reduced the number of opportunities for outside credit hours built into the system. Third, in Fall 2017 the university became more restrictive in terms of time to graduation and major changes. There were fewer opportunities for students to explore all of the possibilities outside of CCMS.

CCMS looks forward to the outcome of the ACEJMC standards review process mentioned in Ascent's February 2020 edition, particularly relaxing the 72-hour rule, which we strongly support.

20. Schools on the quarter system: N/A

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).

Despite multiple attempts and conversations with the ACEJMC office prior to submission of the self-study and the site-team visit, technical issues with the login prevented Zayed University from updating its information in the database. The ACEJMC office requested this not be held against the unit. (Note: Since the visit, ACEJMC has resolved the issue, and the unit's information has been updated in the ACEJMC searchable database.)

The unit revised its mission statement in June 2021 to make it more concise; the 2021-22 university catalog, which was released on November 1 two months after the start of classes, published this new mission.

The unit's new mission is "To prepare bilingual leaders in communication and digital media to serve the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the Gulf region, and the global community. The college emphasizes through teaching and learning, research and creative scholarship, and community engagement:
- the important roles of media and communication in local and global cultures
- informational and technological literacies and language competencies in Arabic and English
- ethics, truth, accuracy, fairness, and diversity in communication"

The previous unit mission was to "graduate students who:
- understand the role of mass communication in Islamic and global cultures;
- master written, oral and visual skills in English and Arabic;
- use digital media technologies thoughtfully and appropriately;
- value truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- think critically, are innovative and engage in dialogue;
- contribute to the body of knowledge in mass communication from this region;
- assist in the future development of the UAE and the global community."

The previous mission was included in all catalogues, assessment plans and reports before Fall 2021.

The unit's strategic plan that was included in the self-study began in 2018 and will end in 2022. A progress report on the long-range plan was included in the self-study as an appendix. The plan listed the vision of the unit as, "The College of Communication and Media Sciences at Zayed University shall be nationally recognized as a premier provider of bilingual education, scholarship and outreach in the discipline of communication and its professional fields of study." The six pillars of the 2018-2022 plan were to:
1. Maintain accreditations from the Emirates' Commission on Academic Accreditation, the International Accrediting Authority, and the ACEJMC.
2. Develop and implement a credentialing plan that is in line with the disciplines of communication and media that fulfills the CAA standard on credentialing.
3. Ensure direct and indirect assessment measures to improve the CCMS curriculum.

4. Enhance Emirati leadership in national communication institutions (federal and private) by preparing students for contemporary UAE industries, communication agencies, and media organizations.
5. Improve student learning and enhance student motivation.
6. Recruit, hire and retain creative faculty with a commitment to scholarly engagement.

In June 2020, the university began a campus-wide deep dive into strategic planning, as it typically does every five or so years. While the unit stated after the site team's visit that the dean, faculty and other university administrators were involved in this university strategic planning process, the site team's interviews with administrators, faculty and staff revealed that the unit didn't feel its input was incorporated into the university's transformation plan that was released in May 2021, and therefore, this university plan was not a reflection of campus sentiment.

In October 2020, the unit developed an operational plan linked to the university's strategic objectives to inform its 2021 budget cycle. Then at the request of the acting provost, the unit's faculty collaboratively developed a long-term sustainability plan for the college that included creation of new courses and new degree programs, and submitted it to the provost's office in November 2020. However, most of the staff, unit administrators, faculty, national advisory board members, and administrators/staff outside the unit reported to the site team that they doubted that this new long-term sustainability plan will materialize, as it still has not been approved by the president after being submitted in 2020. In Spring 2021, the provost instructed the unit to hold off on implementing its faculty-driven sustainability plan, which many interviewed during the site-team visit attributed to the May 2021 major shift in the university's strategic direction, called Zayed University Transformation.

On May 9, 2021, in the *Zayed University Transformation Update*, the university announced a new partnership with the Minerva Project, a for-profit U.S. company (https://zuxminerva.com). This announcement created the greatest disruption that stakeholders of the unit have ever experienced in this 23-year-old university's existence, according to comments to the site team from faculty, staff and administrators.

The Minerva Project is a venture-backed Silicon Valley for-profit educational company with the aim of revolutionizing higher education. Very few details regarding the University's partnership with Minerva have been shared with the faculty. Overwhelmingly, the students, alumni, employers, faculty and administrators who met with the site team all worry that the reputation of the unit and the university as a whole will be tarnished and that the unit will cease to exist.

In addition to the announcement of the Minerva X ZU Partnership, other draconian changes were outlined in the May 2021 Zayed University Transformation update's roadmap, which indicated that 100 percent of the university's academic undergraduate programs would transform into new interdisciplinary degrees by 2026. The update also included a launch of a new College of Interdisciplinary Studies (CIS).

According to the 2021-22 academic catalog, the CIS admissions standards are substantially higher on the UAE high school curriculum or equivalent and on EmSAT scores in English and Math. CIS requires an interview and does not require an ability to write or speak in Arabic. The CIS also has its own interdisciplinary general education courses in which the rest of the university does not participate.

A new Transformation Office was established to coordinate and implement this long-term strategy of 10

critical strategic initiatives, including:
- Detailing university strategy (organizational design and governance)
- Restructuring of academia (college consolidation)
- Strategy cascade to colleges, centers and departments (including HR, IT, career services/alumni)
- Financial transformation (colleges as P&L, strategic enrollment, cost optimization)
- Human capital and culture turnaround (culture definition, performance management, leadership assessment, hiring, training, etc.)
- Interdisciplinary education and student experience (interdisciplinary degree, enhanced student journey, analytics and outcomes)
- Data-driven management
- Excellence in research (Launch of two research centers and PhD programs in selected fields)
- Partnerships for the future and resource diversification (academic/industry partnerships, alumni, endowment/fundraising)
- Re-engineering of user journeys (process redesign and digitization).

Administrators call the new Transformation Office a "parallel governance office" for the university. The bottom line is that all college-level strategic planning campus-wide has halted until the ZU X Minerva can be more fully implemented through the Transformation Office, which had not released any additional formal communication through the president, provost, or deans.

Also in 2020-2021, the "Realignment of Academic Disciplines and Faculty" plan was implemented, resulting in some faculty being transferred from the unit and new faculty being assigned to the unit, without consideration of their professional, industry experience. The credentialing realignment effort created angst among faculty, including some long-time, well-respected, and high-performing faculty. Some interviewed by the site team perceived that the realignment of credentials resulted in faculty dismissals.

Additionally, a new provost was appointed, and the vice president responsible for finance left the university. In short, the transformation office, credentialing realignments, and administrative turn-over have intensified the unit's culture of lack of trust in shared governance, as well as its ability to implement strategic, operational and sustainability plans.

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

The unit has policies and procedures for substantive faculty governance using a vast structure of 18 committees. But stakeholders report that faculty governance and efforts to improve the program have been severely hampered by the central administration in the 2020 and 2021 budget years because of the Zayed Transformation Project (a.k.a. ZU X Minerva).

Despite these circumstances, faculty continue to fulfill their responsibilities. Faculty reported feeling positive about shared governance prior to 2021. Faculty told the site team that they know the purpose of these committees at the unit level and that they were effective methods of governance. However, with extreme turnover in the office of the provost and the vice president (which is similar to a CFO/COO), coupled with the Transformation Office being responsible for "restructuring academia," "college consolidation," and "interdisciplinary education and student experience: interdisciplinary degree,

enhanced student journey, analytics and outcomes," most of the unit's most-senior faculty believe their voices are not being heard or respected.

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.

Dwight E. Brooks has served as dean since 2018, after serving in multiple administrative roles in the United States. He is supported by an associate dean, an assistant dean for research and outreach, an assistant dean for student affairs, one department chair, and one assistant chair. Despite the unit's efforts to create three department chairs, each responsible for one of the concentrations, the request was consistently rejected by the central administration.

Faculty say that the dean is transparent, more so than any other dean on campus, and that he is an advocate for unit faculty and the college. His peer administrators say that he always speaks up in meetings, which some faculty say can be perceived as counter to the very hierarchical culture of the UAE and Zayed University in particular. The provost described the dean as a relaxed leader that people like, who is personable, deadline-oriented, a clear and concise writer, and knowledgeable about the communications industry. Some faculty however said these outgoing, talkative, "New York" traits that make him likeable can also be offensive to some Emiratis and more conservative Muslims.

The chair is helped by an assistant chair and by three coordinators for internships, graduate studies, and Arabic-language media. Faculty say this administrative structure can work, but for those who have served in the unit for many years, additional chairs and staff, especially academic advisors, would be helpful.

Outside of the college, the faculty are represented on multiple university-level committees. The dean participates on the deans' council, the academic council, the standing committee on accreditation, and the general education task force. Other faculty participate on university standing committees, including faculty affairs, student affairs, and international education. Unit faculty have participated on at least 10 other university-level committees. Staff, administrators and faculty outside the unit say that the unit is well respected, and when dignitaries come to campus, the unit and its students are often showcased.

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

The university has clear processes for selecting its administrators. The search and selection of the current dean was led by the then-provost with participation of a search committee that included the chief administration and finance officer, one dean, and two senior college faculty representing the unit faculty on both campuses. The Office of the Provost and Office of Institutional Research manages the evaluation of the college's academic administrators, including the dean, associate and assistant deans, following a process outlined in Zayed's Procedures and Policy guide. The evaluation includes a self-assessment, a survey of direct faculty and staff reports, and an evaluation by the supervisor of the administrator, using the survey and self-assessment as a basis.

Unfortunately, the university did not provide the dean with sufficient on-boarding orientation to the culture of the country or sufficient time to transition academic, administrative, and operational

information to the dean when he started. The dean had to learn quickly before faculty and students reported for the first week of classes and meetings. The turnover in the provost's office has limited the constructive, formal feedback the dean has received. Three different provosts in three and a half years have supervised the dean. When the dean started work in Fall 2018, no one was serving in the provost role.

Acting deans/directors, associate deans, assistant deans or academic supervisors are considered faculty members on administrative assignment designated as a faculty administrator. The selection of these individuals is typically an internal process, unless a candidate cannot be secured, then the dean may proceed with an external search.

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

Depending on the issue, faculty, staff and students each have offices with staff and administrators to assist. When issues come directly to the dean before going to a specific office that could resolve the issue, the dean may refer the issue to that office first, resolve it or escalate it to another office on campus. Faculty may also raise concerns to the college's Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) or to the University Standing Committee on Faculty Affairs (USCFA). When this happens, the FAC preserves strict anonymity of the faculty concerned, if and when this is requested. The FAC also regularly surveys faculty to be aware of their concerns and complaints, at times at the request of the Provost or the USCFA.

Staff should report concerns to their immediate supervisor, but Emirati culture encourages staff to take concerns to a high-level official; therefore, the dean at times must hear and resolve conflict with staff without going to their immediate supervisor first.

Students can also report concerns anonymously or through their faculty members, academic advisors, or assistant deans. All meetings and contact with assistant deans are documented, and the assistant deans work collaboratively to address student concerns. Students explained to the site team that this process works for them.

To help improve the campus climate, Zayed University in 2013 instituted Sahim, an internet-based electronic response system for students, faculty and staff to make enquiries and to offer suggestions, compliments or complaints to any office. The provost has received complaints about the Transformation Office and ZU X Minerva. The new Transformation Office that the President established is responsible for the implementation of the ZU X Minerva, and no evidence shown to the site team demonstrate that complaints can be addressed by the Provost.

If a faculty or staff member violates a university rule, the infraction would be referred to the university-level Irregularities Committee. Only one violation from the unit occurred during the years under review. The processes were followed, which resulted in the dismissal of the employee.

Note that there is an additional level of fear among faculty that, by speaking out against the Transformation Office or ZU X Minerva, they will face termination. Despite this climate of fear, the dean, multiple unit administrators, and the unit's advisory board members told the site team that the unit has always approached the education of students in an interdisciplinary way, using both engaged learning that is project based and industry partnerships to provide real-world scenarios — including case studies, projects, presentations and collaborative assignments — to help move students from concepts and theory to applied experience in the workplace. While developed independently of the Zayed University Transformation plan, the unit's sustainability plan, "College of Communication and Media Sciences Strategy for Sustainability and

Leadership" submitted in November 2020, speaks to the pillars of the Zayed University Transformation plan.

The unit states its vision in the plan as "The College of Communication and Media Sciences will be an internationally renowned center of excellence for media research and education, preparing the next generation of media leaders for the nation. We will also leverage UAE's positioning as a global hub to strengthen Emirati perspectives in communication studies and practices globally." The relevant niches that the college can claim are also articulated as the intersection of new media and culture-centered communication. In these areas, research by unit faculty could focus on cutting-edge new media and communication technologies to craft powerful stories that communicate local yet global perspectives on areas of national priority such as Science, Sustainability, Health, Tourism, Diversity and Tolerance.

The unit in its sustainability plan proposes majors that reflect the strategic pillars, new minors, strengthened graduate programs, and targeted student and faculty recruitment strategies. Furthermore, the unit has submitted examples of how it has collaborated with other colleges and how it could be more formally aligned structurally if called upon to do so. Indeed, national advisory board members and alumni argue that the college's graduates are prepared with transferable and evergreen skills that can meet national priorities. The unit's administration, faculty, and stakeholders perceive that communication is truly interdisciplinary and that the focus on engaged learning methods together reduce the traditional reliance on lecturing and therefore already meet and will continue to advance the ideas of the Zayed University Transformation Office. Furthermore, advisory board members, faculty, employers and students stated that concerns raised in this accreditation report will gain the direct attention of the president of the university and will be addressed for the betterment of the students, program, and the country.

SUMMARY:

While the unit has a strong history of shared governance, strategic planning and a culture of inclusion and progress toward activating its mission and shared values, the Zayed University Transformation Office and the Zayed University by Minerva Project have become disruptive forces stifling the unit's ability to plan, implement strategic curricular changes, and improve operations. The current climate of uncertainty and ambiguity is morphing into a climate of fear that is beginning to disrupt what has been a program with a stellar reputation for producing excellent talent.

Faculty, staff and administrators across the university who have worked at Zayed for more than five years say that this change (even with COVID-19 taken into consideration) has disrupted curriculum, budget, and faculty and staff contracts. Even students and alumni say that the poor communication about the Minerva Project has lessened their desire to recommend others to study at the unit, although they love their faculty and recognize the achievement of outcomes of the program in terms of transferable skills and employment. The shifting governance structure has demoralized too many faculty and created a climate that makes efficient operations difficult and frustrating for those who are working hard to deliver a quality education. Nevertheless, the unit and its stakeholders state that if given the opportunity to remain whole as a college, they can withstand the disruptive transformation it is currently facing.

Overall evaluation compliance/non-compliance:
NON-COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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.

This requirement was not met for the past two years, because the university moved Arabic-language courses into the unit in 2018; the content of the relocated Arabic-language courses did not change.

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.

Students take 39 credit hours of general education courses that cover STEM, language and literature, humanities and social sciences, and business and economics, with 21 hours of university elective courses. The curriculum includes tenets of the 12 professional values and competencies, known as the Pearls of Wisdom. A poster listing each competency hangs on the wall in the Abu Dhabi campus. The university added a 13th competency: "Work effectively in groups and interpersonal contexts; demonstrate the capacity to attain goals; exhibit professionalism in the workplace." The self-study showed each of the competencies was addressed in multiple courses, in some cases as many as seven or eight for each course.

During the first three semesters, the students complete courses in general education plus Communication, Media, and Society. During these early years, students take four skills courses and four theory courses. The general education courses include courses on public speaking, with eight courses required for all majors in the unit:
- English Composition III
- Communications Media and Society
- Introduction of Media Storytelling
- Digital Storytelling
- Professional and Public Speaking
- Media Law and Ethics
- Applied Media Research and Analysis
- Internship

Students then concentrate on courses in the unit in one of three areas:

Integrated Strategic Communications (ISC)
Enrollment in the ISC concentration represents almost 50% of the unit's student population. The ISC concentration consists of seven core classes (21 hours):
- Introduction to Integrated Strategic Communication
- Writing for Public Relations
- Media Planning and Management
- Creative Advertising

- Integrated Strategic Communication Management and Planning
- Introduction to Social Media
- Integrated Strategic Communication Campaign

The ISC course syllabi indicate that, in addition to lectures, classroom time consists of in-class activities, such as writing news releases and pitch letters, engaging in topical debates, brainstorming, and developing creative briefs, storyboards, radio scripts, and company communication profiles.

Students also work in teams to produce media kits, media plans and integrated communication campaigns. During the site visit, student teams were observed brainstorming to determine the elements of a creative brief, as well as discussing the stages of campaign planning. Students complete an eight-week internship with an organization that provides them the opportunity to utilize ISC skills developed in classes in an actual workplace environment.

The ISC students expressed satisfaction with the program and their belief that they are being adequately prepared to work within the industry. When asked, they overwhelmingly agreed they would recommend the program to other potential students.

The students also realize the importance of practical experience and have taken the initiative to gain experience in addition to the required internship.

Tourism and Cultural Communications (TCC)
This concentration consists of seven core classes (21 hours):
- Tourism Principles
- Communicating Tourism: Destinations and Heritage
- Interpersonal & Intercultural Communication
- Introduction to Integrated Strategic Communication
- Creative Advertising
- Planning and Promotion for Events and Festivals
- Applied Tourism Project

Students indicated the tourism and cultural communication concentration was their primary reason for selecting Zayed University. They said their interest in the courses stemmed from their recognition of the importance of tourism to the national economy, their belief that the UAE is a dynamic and diverse crossroads of myriad cultures, their pride in their culture and history, and their desire to represent the UAE in a positive manner to visitors.

TCC students had very high levels of satisfaction with their courses, their instructors, their learning gains, and the opportunity to apply their coursework to hands-on volunteer activities, internships, and future jobs. The students repeatedly said the interpersonal and intercultural communication course and the public speaking courses were the most impactful in raising their confidence and enhancing their abilities.

The unit and the university offered students multiple opportunities for engagement in student clubs, as well as in community and industry events. Students expressed post-graduation ambitions ranging from attending graduate school, working in the travel and tourism industry, starting their own tourism or special-events businesses, traveling to build up their cultural knowledge, and nurturing their families or

starting a family. They also expressed a desire for more hands-on courses and more TCC-dedicated courses, noting that two of their required courses are from the ISC concentration.

Media Production and Storytelling (MPS)
This concentration consists of seven core classes (21 hours):
- Media History
- Media and Cultural Criticism
- Visual Storytelling
- Video Production
- Audio Production
- Advanced Media Production
- Capstone project

Students offered upbeat assessments of their courses, their professors, and their access to the equipment needed for their education, with the exception of male students' concerns about access to facilities located on the women's side of the campus. A few wanted more opportunities for hands-on experiences, while affirming that the theories and non-skills classes were useful and informative. Several faculty members at the time of the visit were working on modifications to the curriculum, but no action has been taken or is now likely during the university's transformation.

Before the late October site visit, the self-study noted no updates to the curriculum for 2021-22. The University's 2021-22 course catalog was approved at 6 p.m. local time on the first day of the site team's visit; hard copies were provided in the workroom on the following morning.

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.

Teaching has been the hallmark of the unit's history, and current students highly praised the work of the faculty in the classroom. Many students said the instructors will repeat concepts or ideas often to assure understanding by the end of the class period.

While the unit's mission is to "prepare bilingual leaders in communication and digital media," the word "leadership" does not appear to be a central topic for the core courses for students in the program, or required courses in any of the three concentrations. "Leadership" also does not appear in the titles of university electives offered to the unit's students. For their part, students expressed their understanding of leadership as "taking responsibility," "reflecting the leadership qualities of Sheik Zayed," and "being the best version of yourself."

One of the newest faculty members, who was moved to the unit from another department on campus as part of the university's credentialing re-alignment, won the nation's top teaching award before joining the unit faculty and displays the award in her office.

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.)

All skills classes listed in the self-study had 20 or fewer students.

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.

The college has a well-organized and closely monitored internship program that is overseen by a faculty member on each campus. Students are eligible to take the internship in the senior year, although many students told the site team the experience would be more beneficial earlier in their academic career. Students are required to take four workshop courses, which help them prepare their resumes and get ready for the workplace experience. Weekly reports are filed online and checked by a faculty member assigned to follow the student's progress. The internship and faculty coordinators also visit the students at the work site during the internship. At the end of the internship, students are required to produce a poster that describes their internship experience and to attend a poster fair.

SUMMARY:
The curriculum remains strong and has a healthy balance of theory and skills courses. The faculty bring in real-world examples and enable students to think critically and creatively, integrating their learning from previous semesters and current courses through projects, presentations, case studies, and other non-testing-oriented demonstrations of learning. The students feel inspired, gain practical experiences through internships, and feel prepared to enter the workforce upon graduating.

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 unit's diversity plan defines diversity as individual differences (e.g., personality, learning styles, and life experiences) and group/social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, country of origin, ability and also cultural, political, religious or other affiliations) that can be engaged in the service of learning and working together.

The primary goal of the plan is to sustain the college's culture of diversity and inclusion whereby all faculty, staff and students are valued and have opportunities to succeed academically and professionally.

Underrepresented groups are not specifically identified. The United Arab Emirates is a diverse country where nationals live and work alongside expats from 200 different countries and diverse ethnic backgrounds. Emiratis (referred to as locals) only represent 10% of the UAE's population, and Zayed University was created to serve this population.

The majority of students in the unit are Emirati, which is consistent with the University's mission. Even though it initially appears that the student population is homogeneous, there are various differences among the students related to culture, family lineage and responsibilities, socio-economics, geographic origin, and learning ability.

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.

All course syllabi are required to include learning outcomes related to global awareness. The syllabi are designed to provide students with an understanding of gender and race/ethnicity. Sexual orientation has been replaced with cultural appropriateness to align with UAE values, laws and cultural sensitivity.

Two of the college's 13 learning outcomes focus on diversity:
- Pearl of Wisdom #3: CCMS graduates will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society
- Pearl of Wisdom #4: CCMS graduates will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society.

In the university-administered Graduating Senior Survey (GSS) in 2019, unit seniors were asked

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"During the last 2 semesters, how often have you encountered diverse perspectives (other cultures, races, religion, etc.) in class assignments or discussion." Of the fifty-two students who responded, almost 60% said very often, (21.1%) or often (38.4%), and 32.7% responded sometimes. Only four students (7.69%) responded seldom, and zero responded never.

Professors are intentional in their efforts to incorporate diverse perspectives into classroom discussions. Students are aware of diversity issues and incidents that have occurred in other countries, and they compare and contrast those issues to diversity issues within their own country. For instance, students shared how they discussed the United States' Black Lives Matter activities as well as the child-protection Wadeema's Law, which resulted from an UAE incident involving a tortured child.

Students also noted that the Media and Ethics course is another opportunity for them to analyze and discuss diversity issues from a moral perspective. The students also are exposed to a multitude of diverse guest speakers to expand their exposure to diversity of thought.

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.

An objective of the diversity plan is related to achieving and maintaining a diverse and inclusive faculty and staff with supporting strategic actions. The unit is also making a concerted effort to increase the number of Emirati faculty members.

At the time of the site visit, 25 of 47 full-time faculty in the unit were women. Disaggregated by rank, women were four of the five instructors, 11 of 20 assistant professors, five of 13 associate professors, and three of seven full professors (including the dean). The only professor of practice in the college is a woman, and the only emeritus professor is a woman.

There were 342 females in the hiring pool from 2015-16 to 2019-20. Thirty-six were considered as finalists, 12 offers were made and nine accepted.

There were 703 males in the hiring pool from 2015-16 to 2019-20. Forty-six were considered as finalists, 18 offers were made and13 accepted.

There were 44 Emiratis in the hiring pool from 2015-16 to 2019-20. One was considered as a finalist, who was offered and accepted the position.

There were 613 non-Emiratis in the hiring pool from 2015-16 to 2019-20. Eighty-one were considered as finalists, 29 offers were made and 20 accepted.

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 UAE population consists of seven emirates, with the UAE population unevenly distributed across them: Abu Dhabi (39%), Ajman (4%), Dubai (25%), Fujairah (6%), Ras Al Khaimah (10%), Sharjah (15%), Umm Al Quwain (1%).

Each of the seven Emirates is represented within the unit's student population: Abu Dhabi (60%), Ajman (4%), Dubai (27%), Fujairah (1%), Ras Al Khaimah (1%), Sharjah (6%), Umm Al Quwain (1%). The Abu Dhabi student population within the unit over-indexes the UAE population by 21 percentage points, while the Ajman and Dubai student populations are consistent with that of the nation. The student population from the UAE states of Fujairah, Ras Al Khaimah, Sharjah, and Umm Al Quwain are under-indexed in comparison to total country population. (Wikipedia - UAE Population Stats)

There are 17 students enrolled in the unit who hail from the Gulf Cooperation Council region and three international students.

The university registrar is responsible for all recruitment, and the unit is not involved in such activities. The registrar indicated that tools such as high school orientation days, school counselor coaching, recruiting exhibitions, campus tours, etc., are utilized to recruit students to the university. The unit plans to implement targeted student recruitment strategies for each major, according to its 2021 sustainability plan.

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.

Although the faculty handbook does not specifically address discrimination, in 2015 there was a federal decree on Combating Discrimination and Hatred, aimed at protecting everyone in the UAE. The law aims to fight discrimination against individuals or groups based on religion, caste, doctrine, race, color or ethnic origin.

Many of the faculty indicated they have a sense of belonging and feel respected regardless of gender, culture, nationality or color. It was also stated that the climate within the unit's work environment is collegial and friendly. Several new faculty noted the efforts to welcome them, which included being matched with a faculty mentor in the unit and orientation workshops.

In addition, the nation, the university and the unit all are focused and committed to students of determination, which is the term used for students with disabilities. The university recently created an Office of Student Accessibility Services to address the need of students of determination in accordance with the nation's 2016 UAE Disability Act.

SUMMARY:

The unit has a diversity strategic plan and is working to achieve the stated diversity objectives. The faculty represents 21 countries and five Gulf Cooperation Council nations in addition to the UAE. The student population represents each of the seven emirates in the region; however, the percentage of students from the northern states is under-indexed. There is a conscientious effort to hire more female faculty, and the students and faculty are aware of and open to embracing people from various cultures,

nations, and ethnicities. However, it should be noted that diversity, equity, and inclusion is an on-going, evolving process.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:
COMPLIANCE

Table 6a: Faculty Populations as of Site Visit
Faculty populations: Full-time and Part-time

Show numbers of female and male faculty from the United Arab Emirates, GCC countries and non-GCC countries. Academic year: 2020–2021

Full-time faculty

Group	Female	% of Total faculty	Male	% of Total faculty
GCC				
UAE	2	4.26%		
Saudi Arabia				
Oman				
Kuwait				
Bahrain				
Qatar				
Non-GCC				
Australia	1			
Austria			1	
Canada	1		1	
China	1			
Egypt	2		5	
France	1			
Germany	1			
Greece	1			
Hungary			1	
India	1			
Italy			1	
Jordan			3	
Nigeria			1	
Pakistan			1	
Russia	1			
Serbia	1		1	
Singapore	1			
South Africa	1			
South Korea	2		1	
UK	3		1	
US	4		6	
	22	46.81%	23	48.94%

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

During the review period, the CCMS faculty composition on the whole was in flux, and the total figures reported across the self-study were inconsistent. At the time of the site visit, the unit had 47 full-time faculty members (including the dean). The distribution of full-time faculty was heaviest in the assistant professor rank (n=19), and lightest in the full professor rank (n=8, including the dean and 1 emerita), with 13 associate professors, 1 professor of practice, and 5 instructors.

Reasons for the fluctuations in faculty members were several and can be summarized as university-level structural changes, university-level credentialing requirements, and faculty separations and new hires.

First, the campus's University College was closed, resulting in the termination of the contracts of those adjunct faculty, some of whom also taught in the unit.

Second, the campus updated its credentialing rules to require all instructors to have academic qualifications in the specific areas they taught, to the extent that the area of study denoted in the name of the terminal degree has become a limiting factor in both assignment of faculty's home academic unit and assignment of faculty to courses taught.

This has resulted in some unit faculty members with non-communication-area degrees being moved to other colleges at ZU, even though they may have had external professional work and/or prior teaching experience in communication, media, journalism, or strategic communication. On the other hand, the unit gained several new faculty members from other colleges, including colleagues with expertise in Arabic-language media, who previously belonged to the Department of Arabic Language & Literature, located in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS).

Third, during the 2014-21 period, the unit saw the departures of 28 full-time faculty members, across all ranks, not including individuals reassigned to other colleges in the university as a result of the credentialing alignment. The unit was able to hire five new faculty colleagues who started in 2020-2021. An additional seven full-time faculty joined the CCMS in Fall 2021, and one adjunct faculty was hired as a full-time instructor.

In addition to the 47 full-time faculty, courses in the unit were taught by three part-time adjuncts and one full-time faculty member "on loan." The "on loan" faculty member had been relocated from the unit to another department on campus as a result of the credentialing alignment and thus technically did not belong to CCMS, but her entire full-time teaching load was assigned to the unit.

Administrative service roles are distributed across faculty of all ranks, including an assistant professor serving as an internship coordinator, as well as associate professors serving as associate dean, assistant dean for student affairs, department chair and assistant department chair. This service workload on a few key individuals is discussed in the self-study as a structural weakness of a college that functions as a large department.

The unit's requests in 2019 and in 2020 to create several departments were denied because the unit has only one-degree program with three concentrations, rather than three separate degrees. The self-study also noted that: "The practice of appointing junior assistant and associate professors as academic administrators, while justified in terms of qualifications and competence, adversely affects these faculty

members' scholarship and promotion chances."

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 unit follows university criteria for selecting full-time and part-time instructors and for evaluating their performance.

Hiring. The university's hiring policies and procedures saw three iterations during the self-study period: 2015-2018; amendments in 2019 that added steps in the hiring process between the college and the university human resources department; and revisions to university-level hiring processes, effective August 2019.

The multi-step hiring processes include vetting of candidates' academic and professional credentials; confirmation of candidate respect for UAE culture and traditions; verification of academic credentials and past employment; consultations and determinations of hiring rank and salary; federal government approvals of candidate documents and security clearance; and specific deadlines by which candidates must acknowledge the initial job offer and accept (or not accept) the final agreed-upon contract.

While the unit has committees for faculty recruitment, actual faculty input on hiring is limited, as the ultimate authority rests with the provost's office, with support from the university's human resources department for faculty contracts, visas, and onboarding processes.

Evaluation. The university evaluates faculty on their teaching and academic advising; their research, scholarship, and creative activities; and their service both within and outside the university. According to faculty interviews, faculty research activities are expected to enhance their primary role as teachers, while the university is increasing attention to research productivity. Service activities are expected to draw on faculty expertise as related to their academic disciplines, in addition to their general participation in shared governance on the campus.

Promotion. While the university does not offer tenure (i.e., all faculty are contracted for specific terms), promotions in rank are possible based on a combination of considerations, including time in current rank, proven teaching excellence, professional growth in research/scholarly/creative activity, and – for promotion to full professor – "outstanding proficiency in their professional discipline" and "exemplary" "contributions in advancing the mission of the university."

Promotion guidelines are set at the college/unit level with criteria specific to the college, while remaining in alignment with university promotion policy and procedures. The annual performance evaluation of faculty members serves as a key element in their promotion review. The University Faculty Promotions Advisory Committee receives an independent recommendation from the dean and from the College Promotions Committee based on their own reviews of faculty promotion applications. The chair of the college committee for faculty promotions represents the unit on the university-level committee, which makes a recommendation to the provost, after ensuring that college and campus promotion criteria are met.

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

Per the self-study, the unit's full-time faculty taught 84% to 91% of courses between 2017 and 2020. In the Fall 2021 semester, 18 of the 336 course credit units offered by the college were taught by the three part-time adjuncts; thus, 94.5% of courses in the unit were taught by full-time faculty, including the full-time faculty member "on loan." Full-time faculty at the ranks of assistant, associate, and full professor also have primary responsibility for research/creative activity, as well as for service. The unit and the university do not expect instructors to engage in research/creative activity, but full-time instructors do engage in service, such as committee work and student advising.

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.

With the exception of the professor of practice, all faculty at the assistant, associate, and full ranks hold the terminal degree, either a Ph.D. or the MFA. Full professors' years of college teaching experience range from 16 to 36, and full-time and part-time instructors for the most part also have more than a decade of teaching experience each. With respect to full-time faculty's experience in professional industry, approximately half the faculty have fewer than five years, while approximately one-third have more than a decade.

The self-study notes that the university and the country have a "very narrow definition of work experience," which makes it difficult to hire instructors – even on a part-time basis – who lack the terminal degree. Perhaps for this reason, the unit's part-time faculty are not reported to have any full-time professional experience in journalism or other media fields. The number of unit faculty who have both the terminal degree and full-time professional experience increases greatly at the associate and assistant ranks, compared with in the full professor rank.

As the university was founded to be primarily teaching-focused, faculty development opportunities center on effective teaching and are supported on campus by the Centre for Educational Innovation (CEI), which focuses on the scholarship of teaching and learning; pedagogical innovations; and educational technologies. The CEI offers grants from the Teaching Innovation Research Fund to support research on teaching and learning, and its Innovative Teaching Program (ITP) supports research-based teaching innovations. At the unit level, the college supports faculty development through funding to attend research conferences and participate in workshops on teaching enhancement. During the review period, three faculty members earned the Blackboard Academy designation of Certificated Practitioner in Digital Teaching and Learning. Professional expertise of the faculty is kept current by their regular and robust participation in and leadership of professional associations, as detailed in Standard 8.

The site team saw a glaring lack of faculty awareness and understanding about what Minerva is and how to begin preparing themselves to pivot their teaching to the "Minerva way," which is likely to be hybrid, gender-integrated, project-focused, and interdisciplinary. While not required by the unit, this lack of information and university-level professional development of the faculty related to Minerva likely has increased the unease about Minerva and the ZU Transformation Project.

Supplementation of instruction by part-time and visiting faculty is rendered difficult by the university

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requirement that instructors hold academic credentials specifically in their teaching areas (no matter their professional experience or expertise), as well as the campus's special credentialing required for instructors to teach their specific courses. Despite this, students do get exposure to other information via guest speakers in their courses, as well as frequent opportunities to attend myriad events offered by the government, industry organizations, and professional associations.

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

During 2015-2017, instruction was evaluated by students and by class visits conducted by the dean, associate deans, or assistant deans. Effective in 2017-2018, evaluation of instruction evolved to include faculty self-ratings and self-reflections, supported by submitted documentations of awards and achievements, publications and other research/creative activities, service activities, and compliance with requirements for course syllabi, gradebooks, etc.

Students participate in faculty evaluations via the Student Evaluation of the Learning Environment (SELE), which is an online form. Student feedback is anonymized by the university and shared with faculty to improve their teaching in future courses.

Faculty are also evaluated by their peers of equal or higher rank, who upload written observations of classroom teaching to the online platform that now is the centrally managed system of faculty evaluation portfolios.

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

Fourteen CCMS faculty members, the dean, and the senior administrative officer served on university-level committees during the period covered by the self-study. The campus reputation of the unit and its faculty is sound, with appreciation expressed for the unit faculty's collaboration with colleagues in other colleges, their engagement with opportunities to develop their teaching, their participation in campus and local events, their research productivity, and their successful pursuit of internal research grants. The dean is recognized for his prior administrative record and his willingness to offer input based on perspectives shaped by those experiences. The unit is highly regarded by industry professionals, alumni, and current students.

The self-study notes that the unit is seeking to overcome the perceptions of some faculty and students on campus as being the "easy college." The self-study reported that the unit's students do not score as high on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and other standardized metrics of student academic preparation, and analysis of student migration patterns at the university indicate that "weak" students flow to the unit from other academic colleges.

To overcome these perceptions, unit faculty now make course syllabi "more detailed and demanding," and they have increased their own awareness of how their grading patterns and course grade distributions may influence student perceptions of course rigor. Students themselves were vociferous in assuring site team members that their classes were rigorous and challenging. Students also explained that their levels of English-language proficiency varied greatly depending on their secondary educational experiences.

SUMMARY: Full-time faculty at the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks all hold the terminal degree (Ph.D. or MFA), and most have professional as well as teaching experience. Full-time faculty teach the preponderance of courses offered, and have primary responsibility for teaching and academic advising, research and creative/professional activity, and service to the campus and the community. Criteria for the hiring and evaluation of faculty are clearly written, although the university's hiring criteria have evolved during this review period to require terminal degrees, strict alignment between degree area and teaching area, and campus credentialing for teaching specific courses. The unit's evaluation criteria have expanded during this review period beyond administrative and student evaluations to include self-evaluations and self-reflections, as well as peer evaluations. The University does not offer tenure. The unit is respected both on campus and in the professional community.

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 unit requires, supports and rewards faculty research and creative activity, with the faculty time dedicated to research ranging from 10% (no course releases) to 30% (2 course releases). Per university policy, no more than 10% of faculty time may be reassigned from teaching to research or creative activity, or from teaching to administrative service. Despite this restriction on workload allocation, the self-study indicates that there are "high expectations for scholarship," as well as expectations for active participation in service and other activities outside the university in service to national and/or local government goals.

The unit's research council advises on matters pertaining to faculty professional development; opportunities for research, scholarly and creative activity; faculty recruitment and retention; and other policies and procedures pertaining to research in relation to faculty affairs. The research affairs committees of the university and the unit also review and make recommendations regarding policies and procedures related to research.

Requirements. The unit mission includes "research and creative scholarship" as one means by which it emphasizes "the important roles of media and communication in local and global culture; informational and technological literacies and language competencies in Arabic and English; and ethics, truth, accuracy, fairness, and diversity in communication the role of media in culture." Unit faculty and campus administrators all recognize that increased research productivity is highly desired by university leadership as a means to enhance institutional prestige.

Support / Course Releases. Faculty with terminal degrees have a 4-4 teaching load, while full-time instructors typically teach 5-5. Reductions in teaching loads of 1 to 3 courses are possible for faculty with administrative duties, and those with active portfolios of research/creative activities may be released for 1 to 2 course per year on that basis. Since 2019, the unit has been developing written, detailed college-specific guidelines to reward faculty who have active research/creative portfolios, as well as to specify the expectations of outcomes to be produced using the time released from teaching.

The criteria for determining course releases are: research/creative productivity, new faculty hires, administrative roles, and receipt of some grants. To calculate research/creative productivity, detailed charts in the unit's Faculty Research Release Guidelines indicate point-allocation ranges for specific outputs, which include traditional refereed publications as well as professional outputs (e.g., newspaper column, radio show production, vodcast, informational campaign) and various creative activities (e.g., feature-length film, photography exhibition).

At the time of the site visit, these guidelines remained in iterative discussions and revisions by the faculty, and these processes are noted in the document. Despite the guidelines clearly assigning points for creative works, some unit faculty expressed strong concern that the current institutional emphasis on traditional academic research encourages faculty pursuit of peer-reviewed scholarly publications to the detriment of creative activities. Other unit faculty (including the chairs of the Faculty Affairs Committee and the Faculty Promotions Committee), as well as campus administrators (including the dean of the

College of Arts and Creative Enterprises), affirmed that creative activities are respected and considered on an equal basis in determining course releases and faculty promotions.

The self-study indicates that, for 2019-20, 45% of faculty members received course releases based on research productivity and/or research plans, with 66% of faculty having produced research sufficient to qualify in 2020-21 for teaching load reductions. However, not all faculty who qualify for course lifts on the basis of college standards will receive them, because university policy permits only 10% of a college's total course credit units offered in a semester to be released. Thus, as the college offers 336 course credit units each semester, only 11 course lifts will be possible (10% of 336 units = 33.6 units / 3 units per course = 11 courses).

Rewards and Incentives. Unit faculty are budgeted to receive AED 15,000 (approximately $4,100) each year in professional development incentives, which most typically use for conference travel to present their research/creative work. Additional support may be possible in the latter half of the year, if the college budget permits.

Research incentives offered by the university on a competitive basis, including research incentive funds and cluster grants (ranging from AED 300,000 to AED 500,000; $81,000 to $135,000), as well as start-up grants of up to AED 25,000 ($6,750) for newly hired faculty. The campus Office of Research also offers research assistants upon faculty request, depending on availability and matching interests. There is a new university policy on sabbatical leaves, but these are only for UAE Nationals, of which the unit has only one.

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

The expectation that full-time faculty will both teach and conduct research/creative activities is articulated in the unit's announcements of position vacancies: "New [concentration name] faculty members will teach and conduct research or creative activities within the scope of the concentration." Also, the unit's Guidelines for Faculty Promotions specify "activity points" for research and creative/professional activities. Without exception, every faculty member interviewed by the site team indicated their crystal-clear understanding that promotion in rank is not possible without research and/or creative activity.

Tenure is not offered at Zayed University, and full-time faculty are hired on four-year contracts. Contract renewal typically has been offered in May of the third year, after review of annual faculty evaluations. During the site team visit in October-November 2021, faculty in their fourth year still had not been informed as to whether their contracts would be renewed. The lack of information contributed to much faculty speculation, uncertainty, and stress, particularly for those faculty whose personal situations would require much time for making logistical arrangements, should their contracts not be renewed.

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 unit's Guidelines for Faculty Promotions and its Faculty Research Release Guidelines both specify "activity points" for research and creative/professional activities. The very-detailed Guidelines allocate

points not only based on output type (e.g., journal article, books, documentaries, podcasts), but also taking into consideration the selectivity of the output (e.g., academic journals in the 1st quartile of "impact," juried creative activities, invited lectures, etc.). The assistant dean for research and outreach, who chairs the unit's Research Council, calculates every faculty member's "research points" on an annual basis, sends the draft calculations to all faculty for transparency, receives faculty input on their individual calculated points, and adjusts as needed, before sharing out the final calculations to all unit faculty.

Course releases from teaching for the purpose of research/creative activity are granted on the basis of actual research/creative output and thus may be considered a form of "merit recognition." The criteria for promotion and for merit recognition both are very detailed and offer points for myriad activities appropriate to a wide range of faculty scholarly, creative, and professional specializations.

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.

The highly productive faculty share their research/creative activities via such outputs as refereed publications and conference paper presentations, presentations of juried and non-juried creative work, books and book chapters, etc. Also, in typical years, unit faculty organize one to two research symposia, which bring international scholars and speakers to the campus for audiences composed of college and university faculty, as well as UAE communication scholars and practitioners. These activities are appropriate to the unit's mission to "serve the UAE, the Gulf region, and the global community."

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

Unit faculty indicated that the international composition of the college faculty was a major reason for their desire to join the university. The diverse backgrounds of the unit's faculty, students, and staff contribute to the expression of differing points of view, as well as to opportunities for the critical analysis of those views in a spirit of intellectual curiosity and collegial support. Faculty and students alike indicated that, once they have developed rapport and built teacher-student relationships, conversations about typically difficult and sometimes taboo topics become possible, either during class discussions or in one-on-one conversations. The unit demonstrates a climate of support for the open expression of ideas, although human rights groups and press freedom advocates note the UAE has no formal democratically elected institutions and no formal commitment to free speech.

SUMMARY: Unit faculty are highly productive, averaging as a collective more than 4 refereed journal articles per year per full-time faculty member, among other measures of research/creative output. This level of research/creative productivity is particularly noteworthy given the university's assigned teaching load of 4-4 for faculty with terminal degrees and 5-5 for instructors, as well as the campus policy limiting release from teaching to 10% of a college's total course credit units offered in a semester. There is currently a dynamic tension between the university's founding mission of instruction and its prevailing desire to become more productive in research and scholarly outputs. The unit faculty have received support from the university for research (e.g., incentive funds, cluster grants, start-up grants, provost's research fellowship awards). From Spring 2015 through Spring 2021, unit faculty received more than AED 2,936,000 in internal grant funding. Despite the financial support, there is concern

among some unit faculty that equivalent support at the university level is not offered for creative activities. Unfortunately, both teaching and research/creative activities are hampered by a prevailing sense of uncertainty among unit faculty as to their futures, given campus-level changes suggesting a university-wide restructuring of academic offerings.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:
COMPLIANCE

Calendar Year 2015 – 2019

Scholarship, Research, Creative and Professional Activities	Total from Unit*	Individuals				Totals
		Full Professors (7)	Associate Professors (9)	Assistant Professors (19)	Other Faculty ** (8)	(43)
Awards and honors	32	8	17	4	2	32
Grants received: internal	36	13	11	16	1	41
Grants received: external	5	1	2	4	0	7
Scholarly books: sole- or co-authored	2	0	0	0	2	2
Textbooks: sole- or co-authored	2	1	0	1	0	2
Books edited	1	1	0	0	0	1
Book chapters	33	16	12	5	3	36
Monographs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Articles in refereed journals	107	51	42	22	4	119
Refereed conference papers	122	46	52	25	7	130
Invited academic papers	0	0	0	0	0	0
Encyclopedia entries	0	0	0	0	0	0
Book reviews	5	3	0	1	1	5
Articles in non-refereed publications	1	1	0	0	0	1
Juried creative works	2	1	0	1	1	3
Non-juried creative works	4	0	2	1	1	4
Other (blogposts, films, radio shows)	7	4	4	0	1	7
Other (special issue editorials, research reports, policy reports)	9	3	9	3	1	16

*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, emeritus professor and professor of practice. Many faculty 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-based success office provides advice for students until they have earned 30 credit hours. After that milestone, students are required to set up advising appointments within the college. The college until spring 2021 had one professional academic advisor on each campus for technical advising, for example, to provide guidance on course selection, fulfillment of graduation requirements, and academic and personal mentoring, along with reviews of students' study plans and other matters. While the Office of Student Academic Success conducts graduation audits to ensure requirements are met, technical advising of students now is being done by faculty members, each of whom is assigned a roster of about two dozen students for whom they serve as academic advisors.

The self-study reports that unit's faculty and staff have the appropriate education, experience and talent to help meet the needs and goals of students. The assistant dean for student affairs helps to keep faculty updated about technical advising aspects, and academic advising is now considered alongside teaching in annual evaluations of faculty.

Students said to the site team that the academic advising is solid and that the college's assistant dean for student affairs is additionally helpful in academic advising.

Career advising is done mainly through the Zayed University's Alumni and Student Careers Office, which is accredited by the International Matrix Standard organization. The office helps students locate, prepare for, and obtain internships, part-time positions and full-time employment. Students must complete a career education course before declaring a major. Students may also complete career assessments, career coaching and other individualized programs to help with career development. The office has a scaffolding approach with specific programs for first year through their fourth year at the university. Once a major is declared, students are assigned a faculty advisor in the unit to help with career counseling.

b). Faculty are available and accessible to students.

Unit faculty are assigned as academic advisors to students based on the student's concentration. Faculty serve as mentors, offer technical advising, and give advice on academics, careers, and personal matters. Each full-time faculty member, as well as the associate and assistant deans, advises between 20 and 30 students.

Faculty are required to have at least six hours of office time each week during the semester. These hours are noted in course syllabi and are posted on office doors. If faculty members cannot keep their set hours, they are to notify the main college office to make alternative arrangements. Faculty also are accessible to students via emails and phone calls.

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

The college regularly emails students about requirements, events and deadlines. Several students noted that their faculty advisers are always available and, in addition to helping them to meet academic goals, encourage them to be creative, to lose their shyness and to gain confidence. Many students reported that their faculty care about the whole student and expressed appreciation for faculty members' personalized attention.

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

The unit annually organizes and hosts the Zayed University Middle East Film Festival, which evolved from a small-scale festival into an event involving 16 countries and higher education institutions. Students from the college not only compete, but also help to organize, promote and host the event.

The unit offers a student chapter of the Middle East Public Relations Association and also hosts a CCMS Honor Society, which accepts members with a grade-point average of 3.2 or higher. Membership has declined from 38 on both campuses in 2017-18 to 28 in 2019-20.

The college has maintained an online site, Zajel, that lets students publish their work on the recommendation of a faculty member. The site was unavailable during 2019-20 as the college resolved issues over the domain name and an international internet server. At the time of the late October visit, most stories posted on the site were from January and May 2021. The Student Editorial Board director said some stories lost during 2019-20 have been recovered and are slowly being restored to the site.

The self-study suggested both campuses had radio clubs, but interviews with students in the Media Production and Storytelling concentration found none who were members or aware of the activities. Links to podcasts produced by the students ended in early March 2020, just before the pandemic upended life on the campus. Several student-based activities listed in the previous self-study have sun-setted, including the Society of Professional Journalists and the Hala Student Ambassadors. Others have begun, including the Honors Society.

The male students interviewed during the site visit reported that they did not have as many campus professional organizations to join as the women, although they do have a media club that produces video content. According to a faculty member, one of the male students produced a film that will be included in the Zayed University Middle East Film Festival. However, this male media club was not mentioned in the self-study. The dean proposed in August 2021 for male students to be more integrated into the college, but the provost's office informed the unit that only Minerva programs can be integrated.

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 retention and graduation information is published on the college's website.

SUMMARY:

Students were effusive in their praise for the academic and personal advising they received from the faculty. They appreciated their instructors' accessibility and readiness to help with course selections and graduation requirements, as well as to provide motivation and encouragement. Several women said the faculty helped them to overcome their shyness and become more creative.

Faculty noted that, by eliminating professional academic advisors in all the colleges, the university was requiring faculty to pick up more responsibilities, including the registration of students into classes. The assistant dean for student affairs also noted that the eliminated professional academic advisors had both been Emerati women; their departure was thus a loss of role models for the unit's students. Despite the increased workload on unit faculty, all seemed willing to handle the additional responsibilities, with several faculty members indicating that they would not permit students to suffer as a result of administrative decisions.

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 budget is aligned with the calendar year. The unit maintains a detailed budget, with allocations to support its strategic plan. To aid with the unit's strategic plan, the budget was increased by 3% in 2019. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the unit experienced budget decreases by 4.7% and 1% in 2020 and 2021, respectively. Nevertheless, the budget cuts have not had a negative impact on the unit's operations. However, administrators reported the traumatic impact of the Zayed University Transformation, or ZU X Minerva, has disrupted the campus's ability to use its 2021 budget. Examples shared with the site team include severe delays in the approvals of budget requests, partially due to upheaval in the position of the vice president responsible for finance, but also due to the fiscal allocations to undertake ZU X Minerva.

Additionally, with no vice president who would begin the budget process working with the provost, even the timeline for 2022 budget requests has been delayed. In most recent years, the budget process began in October, when units received base budgets, with the final budget being released in December. However, during other transitional times, the budget process began later with release of the new budget in February, despite the fiscal calendar beginning in January.

According to the university update on May 9, 2021, the Transformation Office is leading the budgeting processes per the Transformation plan initiative "Financial Transformation: colleges as P&L, strategic enrollment, cost optimization." The provost said the budgeting process will normalize over time. Unfortunately, the deans do not know specifically what is expected of them in this new "colleges as P&L" model. The provost explained that the Minerva Project aims to make the university highly efficient, with increased cost-effectiveness measures.

Furthermore, the ZU strategic direction calls for a transition from being 100% tuition-based to a financial model that is 10% research, 10% community engagement, 10% long-term income and 70% tuition-based.

Note that all Emiratis attend Zayed University tuition free, subsidized by the federal government, and international students can obtain scholarships to help pay their costs. Also, the transition plan outlines a move from traditional on-campus course offerings to a hybrid model that also will cut costs. Administrators have been told that enrollment will be reduced from approximately 11,000 in 2021-22 to 6,000 within four or five years. Administrators inside and outside the unit told the site team there is a strong association between this reduction plan and the lack of timely contract renewals for faculty whose agreements are to end in 2022.

Minerva's approach to learning is hybrid with primary interactions online, often led by U.S.-based faculty. Having faculty outside of the UAE would save on housing allowances and other expenses associated with international teachers in the UAE. This understanding partially triggered a Twitter storm using the hashtag #Save_Zayed_University two weeks before the site team's arrival, with posts from alumni such as "Faculty who have spent decades of their life improving the educational system in the UAE are asked to pack up and leave" and "How are you promising to keep the same colleges and the

Minerva program simultaneously when we're already seeing our current colleges taking a hit due to a lack of funding?"

Currently, low male-student enrollment makes it difficult to justify expenditures for "separate but equal" access to equipment and facilities. This weakness was identified in the previous site team report and the problem continues. The provost said the hybrid approach to instruction will reduce expenditures, and making the institution fully co-ed within two years would reduce the costs of maintaining gender-segregated facilities.

As of the site visit, no university expenditures have been made to help train the unit's faculty in the non-lecture modes of learning that Minerva promotes.

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

Essentially, the unit has the necessary funds to achieve the unit's mission. In conversation with the provost and other academic leaders outside of the unit, the unit's budget is fair and in alignment with others of similar size. The unit will need funds to build multimedia lab facilities on the male campus comparable to the female campus as male enrollment increases.

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

The unit has three primary multimedia laboratory classrooms in Dubai and six in Abu Dhabi. Each lab contains 20 iMac desktop computers loaded with software used by employers, such as Final Cut Pro, Adobe Creative and other Apple software. The twofour54 newsroom in Abu Dhabi contains nine iMac desktops.

At the time of the site visit, male students on the Abu Dhabi campus had limited access to the laboratories on the female side of the gender-segregated campus building. The unit is contemplating adding facilities for the men, including a production studio. Men are allowed into the women's facilities at night and on weekends (when female students are not on site), which they perceive puts them at a disadvantage. Expansion plans in Dubai to build a male campus have already considered the need to replicate TV studio, multimedia and broadcast facilities for the male students.

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.

Every full-time faculty member on both campuses has a private office. Space allocations for their workspace is managed centrally, by a university space-allocation committee and centrally controlled classroom management software.

In the past, corporate sponsors supported the building of multimedia production laboratories by donating more than AED 8 million ($2.22 million). The Dubai campus has a multimedia laboratory, a small TV studio, live-audience area, audio facilities, and a photography studio. Abu Dhabi has a multimedia laboratory, a bigger TV studio, a live-audience area, and audio facilities. In addition, the Abu Dhabi campus has a Zajel room for the student online site and a multimedia newsroom. The radio facilities on both campuses are being upgraded to provide future campus-wide radio broadcasts.

During the pandemic, all students were provided equipment and software for remote learning, and the library made all collection material available electronically.

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

The libraries on both campuses are centrally located. In Dubai, the library is directly across an open courtyard, which is used by students for midday gatherings, while in Abu Dhabi the facility is between the male and female sides of the campus building. Students access the library mostly on line, and many reported the library staff was very helpful. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the library helped to source e-textbooks and created physically safe modes for returning hard-copy volumes.

SUMMARY:

The two campuses (i.e., buildings) are impressive in their size and in the space provided for instruction and production. The multimedia laboratories are equipped with the latest software and hardware, and students are enthusiastic about their classes and lab sessions. Budget constrictions tied to the transformation process under ZU X Minerva has stalled the unit's efforts to further expand and serve male students on the Abu Dhabi campus.

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 Alumni Affairs Office is the official campus unit in charge of communicating with alumni. It does so via its website; an online community that uses social media such as Facebook, Twitter and Wikipage; and a monthly e-newsletter that includes events, job tips, job postings and campus news. The unit also communicates with its alumni via its official newsletter.

Alumni continue to engage with their professors and seek their counsel as they move throughout their careers.

Nearly two-thirds of the faculty cite memberships or affiliations with several dozen professional and academic organizations within each of the unit's three concentrations, which include media production and storytelling, integrated strategic communications, and tourism and cultural communication.

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.

A review of faculty CVs indicates that the unit's faculty have reviewed or edited more than 100 journals, books, publications and conference papers in addition to being jurors and external examiners for creative activities.

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 faculty have access to travel stipends and reduced teaching loads to assist and encourage their participation in academic associations and related activities. Several new faculty noted that upon joining the faculty they received a grant to assist with continuing existing research endeavors or commencing new efforts. Faculty regularly travel to present their research at academic conferences, and they also regularly organize on-campus symposia that bring together academics and professionals, both from the region and from around the world.

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.

Noteworthy accomplishments in professional and public service include organizing, hosting and funding important academic and creative/professional conferences including:

Annual
Zayed University Middle East Film Festival (ZUMEFF) — An international film festival that serves as a platform for young students from the Middle East to showcase their work and get feedback from peers, faculty and professional filmmakers. The event celebrated its 10th year in April 2019.

On-going
CreativeMornings — A themed, breakfast lecture series that is community based and brings together local creatives to share, inspire and provide a shoulder to lean on. There are more than 3,000 members of the community, and over 60 lectures have been hosted.

2016
GlobCom — An international student project/competition run by 15 universities on five continents. The unit has competed since 2008 and has hosted for 3 years, most recently in 2016, when the event was attended by 153 international students, 40 Emirati students, and 14 lecturers from 14 different universities.

2018
- *Latest Trends in Public Relations, Education, Practice and Research in the Middle East and North Africa* — Institute of Public Relations (IPR) research symposium in the Middle East brought together academics and practitioners in public relations. Sessions included keynote presentations by invited guests and research presentations selected competitively.
- *Media Ethics in the Digital World Conference* — One day conference for students on media ethics in the digital world. The event was hosted with the Abu Dhabi Music and Arts Foundation.
- *Reputation 3.0 and the Communication Organization Research Symposium* — Two keynote speakers from Sweden and Norway addressed what defines a communication organization and shared the findings from one of the largest applied research projects in strategic communication.
- *Film and Visual Media in the Gulf Images, Infrastructures and Institutions Connecting Africa, the Middle East, South Asia and the World* — Addressed the marginalization of the Gulf within film studies, film, and visual media, including television and on-demand programming. The conference was co-hosted with the New York University Abu Dhabi.
- *Whirlpool #Ageless Technology Event* — Workshop on the use of social media applications, conducted by ISC students in collaboration with the public relations agency GolinMENA.

2019
- *Cultural Identity and Diversity as Assets to Global Understanding* — A conference on the broad scope of research in East-West cross-cultural communication adaptation and intercultural communication challenges. The conference hosted over 30 international scholars from the Middle East, Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia and was co-sponsored with by Chulalongkorn University (Thailand), Bournemouth University (UK), Emerson College (USA), Curtin University (Australia), and Blanquerna School of Communications (Spain).
- *Bridging the Gap Between the Tourism Industry and Academia* — This symposium included workshops focused on tourism and the hospitality issues as well as contemporary issues and trends that impact the future of tourism in the region.

<u>2020</u>

- *GCF 2020: Building the Future Public Relations Professional Panel* — Part of a global multi-country study on the capabilities required for communication management practitioners, which drew an audience of more than 40 communication practitioners and academics in the UAE.

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

Scholastic journalism is not widely practiced in the UAE. However, several of the college's faculty have reached out to local schools and organizations to enhance the awareness of scholastic journalism.

One such effort is the Media Literacy project with King's School in the Nad Al Sheba area of Dubai. Students under the supervision of their professor planned and executed a media literacy program with students from King's School. The program involved raising awareness among young middle school students of their media consumption patterns and the role of psychology in media messages. The primary focus was on social media due to its popularity with young users. Participating students were diverse, representing both genders and different nationalities and ethnicities.

Another example of the college's involvement in scholastic journalism occurred in 2018. As a capstone project, a group of students planned and executed an environmental awareness project called "Clean Up UAE," an effort to increase awareness and change attitudes about the widespread use of plastic materials in their community. In collaboration with community partners, the Al Bohra Islamic Community and Al Meseera public school in Dubai, students from the unit worked with high school students to produce sign boards, flyers, advertisements, branded t-shirts, a Facebook page, stickers, and news stories in Arabic.

Faculty have also served as members of the jury for the Elocution Competition at Our Own English High School in Dubai in 2016 and the Documentary Film Competition at Our Own Indian High School in Al Warqa in 2017.

SUMMARY:

The Alumni Affairs Office is the official campus unit in charge of communicating with alumni. The unit produces a newsletter, which is their primary formal method of communication with alumni. Faculty have a robust record of editing and reviewing journals, publications and books, and conference papers; they have hosted numerous symposia, workshops and conferences that have added to the academy and industry's body of knowledge. There have been some efforts to advance scholastic journalism, despite scholastic journalism not being widely practiced in the UAE.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:
COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 9: Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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)?
Until 2019, the unit had a quality assurance officer, who also chaired the committee responsible for assessment, but the university eliminated the role. The long-time, well-respected faculty member served in that role and as the chair of the new Learning Outcomes Assessment/Quality Assurance Committee until his contract ended in fall 2021. This unit committee chair also served on the university's Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee. This unit committee functions now as the leader of assessment for the unit. It is comprised of five faculty members, and the unit's associate dean serves as an ex-officio member. The dean ensures that the committee meets the deadlines set forth by the provost's office, reviews assessment reports before they are submitted to the university, and supports the committee as it makes recommendations to the department chair, the concentration leaders and the course leaders for curricular improvements.

The Learning Outcomes Assessment/Quality Assurance Committee works closely with the Institutional Teaching and Learning Committee and a College Teaching and Learning Committee that "promote and recommend a range and variety of teaching and assessment methods and strategies."

• How has the unit verified that core and required courses cover all 12 of ACEJMC's professional values and competencies?
The unit has created a curriculum map that shows which courses cover the 12 ACEJMC professional values and competencies. These learning values and competencies are aligned with the unit's "Pearls of Wisdom." The self-study outlined specifically which required courses for all majors and specific majors cover the 12 ACEJMC professional values and competencies and summarized examples of that approach in each major. All syllabi reflect the ACEJMC professional values and competencies in a syllabus chart called "Alignment to Program Learning Outcomes." Syllabi for all courses must be approved by the Learning Outcomes Assessment/Quality Assurance Committee and by the university provost's office. Faculty may not deviate from the approved alignment information.

• How has the unit ensured that the syllabuses for these courses state learning outcomes that address the values and competencies appropriate for each course?
The unit has a standard syllabus used for sections of the same course. The university requires adherence to the standardization regardless of the instructor. A review of the syllabi confirmed this standardization, and faculty agreed that standardization helps to ensure learning outcomes are covered in different sections of the same courses.

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

The unit has a written assessment plan with 13 student learning outcomes called "Pearls of Wisdom," which align with the 12 ACEJMC professional values and competencies. This plan, with a three-year timetable, is reported on and updated annually, and it has two direct and two indirect measures of assessment. The plan also includes the unit's mission statement. The written plan is part of the university's Office of Educational Effectiveness.

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• What direct measures of assessment does the unit use, where in the curriculum and when?
The unit has two direct measures that are course-embedded. The plan offers (1) a description of the embedded assessment, for example, an analysis of a news story assignment using a rubric, (2) a course learning outcome mapped to the ACEJMC outcome, (3) a target score to show proficiency, (4) the time frame for collecting the data, and (5) a description of the participants in the course-embedded assessment. The Office of Educational Effectiveness maintains a database for the course-embedded assessments and reporting.

• What indirect measures does it use, where and when?
There are two indirect measures being used: a student survey called Student Evaluation of the Learning Environment (SELE) and a faculty survey called Faculty Evaluation of the Learning Environment (FELE). These are both administered at the end of each semester, and there is a map linking survey questions to the "Pearls of Wisdom."

In the annual assessment report, at least one Pearl of Wisdom/ACEJMC competency is measured by a five-point Likert-scaled item that begins with "The course enhanced my ability to" followed by a statement related to the learning outcome. But, some of the indicators do not seem to be valid measures. For example, to measure the competency "Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world," is operationalized by four statements in the student survey:

- "The course enhanced my ability to evaluate the credibility of various sources of information."
- "The course provided opportunity for me to enhance my leadership skills."
- "The course instructor spoke clearly and could be easily understood," and
- "Overall, the quality of instruction provided by the instructor was …"

The chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee agreed that the SELE is more of an operational assessment of the quality of teaching than a measurement of learning outcomes.

• Are these measures effective for assessing ACEJMC's professional values and competencies?
The direct measures are stronger tools for measuring ACEJMC's professional values and competencies. The indirect measures are not as strong, but seem to be effective in measuring the effectiveness or receptivity of the pedagogy being used. Both pedagogy and learning outcomes are important to measure. The unit's Learning Assessment Committee and its College Council review the data to make improvements to the curriculum and to teaching and learning approaches.

While the unit does not include the survey-data collected from internship supervisors as an official assessment measure, this survey does provide a more-clear reflection of student learning on 10 of the 13 Pearls of Wisdom (12 ACEJMC values and competencies). The department chair, dean, and internship course coordinators review this data and share it with the department and internship office. The unit reported making curricular changes based on employer internship survey data. This survey is a strong indicator 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.

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

The unit collects assessment data through direct course-embedded measures and through indirect surveys completed by faculty and students at the end of courses. This data is entered into the university assessment system and a written report is published. The unit's Learning Outcomes Assessment/Quality Assurance Committee (formerly the Learning Assessment Committee), the Curriculum Review Committee, the concentration coordinators, the department chair, the unit's College Council, and the dean review the data and assessment report, and they make recommendations on how to make curricular improvements based on unsatisfactory outcomes.

The assessment report identifies which learning outcomes (values and competencies) have been met, which have exceeded expectations, and which have not been achieved. When outcomes have not been achieved, the committees make recommendations on how to make improvements, then the various affected faculty implement the changes using the curricular process. In 2020-21, all of the measures reported either meeting or exceeding expectations. However, recommendations for improvement were still included in the assessment reports. Some of those recommendations included making the assessments more difficult or raising the achievement-expectation bar for measures of learning.

In the last year, administrators reported that the university had not approved many of the substantial curricular changes, outlined in the long-term sustainability plan, because the provost told the unit to do business as usual, and the president has not officially appointed (decreed) multiple university committees responsible for approving curricular changes. Even some unsubstantial changes may have not been approved because of the delay in officially appointing university committees. Some faculty and administrators attribute this to a preoccupation with the Zayed University Transformation (ZU X Minerva). Since 2016-2017, the unit has not made any other substantial curricular revisions that would have required approval from the university or the national accreditation body.

• What specific values and competencies had graduating classes not mastered satisfactorily?
English writing skills continue to be a challenge for graduating classes based on assessments in 2016, so the unit created a course that was team-taught by an effective English-language teacher at the university, and subsequently scores increased on student writing assessments in 2018 and beyond. Expectations were met in 2020-21.

Digital literacy, which is a measure of students' ability to use technology, was weak based on employer internship survey data and advisory board input. Therefore, two new courses were developed: Digital Storytelling and Introduction to Social Media.

• How does the unit decide how to address these areas of concern and what actions did it take to do so?
Beyond the data from assessment, the unit has held ad hoc focus groups with students and faculty to understand where weaknesses are specifically. This additional data is used to make curricular changes. This approach was used specifically to address weaknesses found in law and ethics competencies, which were once taught in a combined course and are now separated into two courses.

• How does the unit evaluate whether its actions overcame the weaknesses in student learning and what were the results?
Data is collected annually and reviewed annually by the dean and by the university's and unit's Learning Outcomes Assessment/Quality Assurance Committees.

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

Yes, the data analysis and actions appear to be effective for identifying and overcoming unsatisfactory student learning. The improvements at times may be slow, but they are improving, as can be attested by all outcomes being met or exceeded in 2020-21.

One weakness is that the data is not disaggregated by gender. Faculty and administrators reported to the site team that the male students perform more poorly than female students, especially in oral and written communication in both English and Arabic, and the site team had more difficulty understanding the male students during an interview. No specific information was offered to the site team as to how to improve upon these perceived differences. Some faculty, two administrators, and a few female students and male students said that co-educational courses like mixed-gender online courses during the pandemic and those being offered by the ZU X Minerva interdisciplinary college might close the perceived gender gap. No formal data has been collected on this anecdotal observation and feedback.

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

Some alumni are employers of student interns and therefore complete internship evaluations of the unit's students. Zayed University's Alumni and Student Careers Office contacts recent graduates to track their employment. For the class of 2016, for which the unit was required to report its placements in the self-study, the majority of the students contacted work in their Emirate/city of residence, and one was pursuing an advanced degree.

In terms of learning outcomes and using the information to make improvements, the self-study and the dean reported on some changes related to this feedback. Internship coordinators on both campuses participated in the site team meetings and reported that students are closely monitored during their experience and that worksite managers offer feedback at the conclusion of the semester.

The university sends a graduate destination survey annually to the graduating class nine to 10 months after graduation. The university told the unit it could not do a separate survey as that would be duplicative. The unit's alumni affairs committee has discussed ways to keep in touch with graduates, including working with the Alumni Affairs Office, but the resignation of the chair and the COVID-19 pandemic prevented the committee from completing its work.

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

The unit includes journalism and mass communication professionals in its assessment processes. An employer internship survey is completed for each intern. The unit calls this a benchmark measure to compare their students' performance. However, the survey measures 10 values and competencies, and the data from it has been used to make curricular changes. Also, the unit has an advisory board that has evaluated e-portfolios previously. But, the e-portfolio measure is no longer used because of the departure of the e-portfolio technology officer and a change to the Blackboard Analytics system for assessment data.

SUMMARY:
The university and the unit have a strong culture of assessment, and the faculty comply within the highly formalized, standardized syllabi and curriculum. The course-embedded direct measures offer longitudinal insights into student progress in learning and provide opportunity to dive even more deeply into nuanced differences by gender and campus, should the unit choose to do so. Similarly, the internship data provide additional insights into student performance and are possibly a stronger

assessment tool than the indirect measures of the Faculty Evaluation of Learning Environment (FELE) and Student Evaluation of Learning Environment (SELE). With the Zayed University Transformation at hand, the unit has an opportunity to lean into its assessment data and that of other units to create innovative approaches to learning.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:
COMPLIANCE

PART III: Summary by site visit team

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

<u>Strengths</u>

- Collegial, collaborative, mutually helpful faculty
- A strong, highly effective, knowledgeable senior administrative assistant who has been with the unit since it became a college
- Inherent and articulated interdisciplinarity of the unit faculty and the curriculum
- Healthy balance of engaged learning, project-based and practical experience classes that enable communications and interdisciplinary theories to be applied to the workplace, the community and the family
- Diversity of the faculty in terms of gender, countries of origin, and academic and creative/professional experiences
- High productivity of the faculty in research and creative/professional activities
- Energetic, enthusiastic, ambitious students who exhibit a spirit of entrepreneurship and global-mindedness
- Architecturally impressive campus buildings and appropriate multimedia facilities and equipment
- Appropriate adaptations to maintain instruction during the pandemic

<u>Weaknesses</u>

- Campus-wide initiatives designed to make transformational changes in the university's structure and curricular offerings have generated uncertainty and concern among unit faculty, staff, students and leadership.
- A disconnect between unit policy that clearly assigns point values to creative work and some faculty's feelings that their creative activity remains unvalued or undervalued in the unit and by the university.
- Gender-segregated campus in Abu Dhabi prevents male students from having ready access to multimedia facilities and equipment, which are located on the women's side of the campus building.

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

- Standard 1

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

- The campus leadership's failure to approve or provide a timeline for the approval of the unit's sustainability and operational plans, particularly since its current strategic plan ends in 2022.
- The unit's faculty and leadership did not articulate to the site team a vision for the unit or how its current strategic plan and proposed sustainability plan could be aligned with the publicly distributed information about the campus transformation initiative.
- The unit has a climate of fear and apprehension regarding anticipated changes at the campus level.

- The site team observed and heard numerous reports that the dean has demonstrated a lack of appropriate acculturation within the diverse Zayed University academic community, as well as a lack of sensitivity to local cultures and customs.

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.

- Students speak better than they write. — The unit introduced in 2016 a new course, Foundations in Media Writing, for students whose IELTS scores are below 5.5 points and who are below 1275 points in the official government EMSAT test. Faculty refer their weak students to English-language faculty for support with language, grammar, formatting and referencing for their written work.
- A great deal of administrative turnover above the college level. — Turnover continues, and the unit provided data showing the UAE has a higher rate of turnover than the global average.
- A heavy teaching load, given a vision of increasing published scholarly productivity. — The unit aims to give the majority of faculty with an active portfolio of research and/or creative endeavors, or those who are interested in being active in research/creative work, a minimum of one course release per year (3/4 or 4/3) if teaching needs are adequately covered. But, a constraining factor in this goal is the university policy limiting course releases for teaching to 10% of the total academic course units taught.
- Devaluation of professional experience. — The current university credentialing system works against faculty who bring significant positive professional experience to the unit by essentially locking them out of teaching classes that they are qualified to teach on the basis of professional, industry experience.
- Only two faculty in Dubai teach Arabic-language courses, and students sometimes cannot get into those courses. — Arabic-language media courses and their instructing faculty moved to the unit from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences in 2018. One new assistant professor who teaches Arabic-language media courses joined the college in fall 2020.

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 poorly written, with contradictory information and statistics throughout. The self-study process included most faculty currently on roster in the unit. Their participation included contributing to portions of the self-study draft and attending an all-faculty retreat held to explain each standard and discuss unit activities in that area. The final self-study submitted lacked cohesion, most likely because the lead writer on the 2020 document was the former associate dean, and the new associate dean led the writing of the 2021 addendum.