

# Accrediting Council

On Education in Journalism and Mass Communications

Susanne Shaw  
*Executive Director*

May 8, 2018

Ray Belton  
President  
Southern University and A&M College  
Baton Rouge, LA 70813

Dear President Belton:

At its April 27-28 meeting in Chicago, the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications voted 20-0, with two members abstaining, to provisionally reaccredit the Department of Mass Communication at Southern University and A&M College. The vote followed a failed motion to reaccredit the Department of Mass Communication, in a 1-19 vote, with two members abstaining.

Okoye Ahmose, chair of the Department of Mass Communication, attended the meeting.

The Council discussed the recommendations by the site team and Committee for reaccreditation. The Council also discussed the department's non-compliance with Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness. It was the opinion of the Council that the department had not met the expectations of Standard 5: Scholarship: Research, Creative and Professional Activity.

The Council also discussed other weaknesses cited in the team's report:

- Outdated and poorly maintained physical facilities.
- Inadequately funded program that restricts the unit's ability to improve through hiring faculty, offering specialized courses, providing opportunities for research and promotion to faculty.

The Council's procedures say: "A unit may receive provisional accreditation or reaccreditation when the Council has found weaknesses that can be corrected within two years." Schools have the option to schedule a revisit in one or two years.

University of Kansas School of Journalism • Stauffer-Flint Hall • 1435 Jayhawk Blvd. • Lawrence, Kansas 66045-7575

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If you wish to have a revisit in the 2018-19 academic year, you must submit a request no later than July 1, 2018, and the revisit must occur no later than Feb. 1, 2019. For a revisit during the 2019-20 academic year, a request must be made no later than July 1, 2019, and the revisit must occur no later than Feb. 1, 2020.

Please send your formal request before the stated deadline along with sufficient documentation that all identified weaknesses have been corrected. The letter and accompanying material should be sent to Susanne Shaw, executive director. Two people will revisit the Department of Mass Communication. The revisit will focus on Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness and Standard 5: Scholarship: Research, Creative and Professional Activity.

The team chair will make a recommendation to the Accrediting Committee and the Committee's recommendation will be forwarded to the Accrediting Council.

The expenses of the revisit to Southern University and A&M College and the team chair's expenses to the Committee meeting to present the revisit report must be paid by the Department of Mass Communication before the Council meeting. If you or Prof. Ahmose have questions about what should be addressed before the revisit, please contact Susanne Shaw.

Council procedures require that I tell you of your right to appeal this decision. I have enclosed a copy of the appeals procedures, which specifies that you must notify me within 30 days of receipt of this letter if you wish to make an appeal.

Grounds for appeal of a decision to award provisional accreditation must be based on one or more of the following: 1) evidence that the Council failed to adhere to applicable adopted procedures; 2) evidence that, based upon the record before the Council, the decision was arbitrary and capricious or not supported by substantial evidence. Appeals must be made in writing and must be based on concrete evidence that was in the record before the Council at the time of the original decision.

If the Department of Mass Communication chooses to appeal this decision, the Council will consider that appeal at its Aug. 24 meeting in Chicago. While an appeal is pending and before a decision on the appeal is made by the Council, there will be no change in the accredited status of the Department of Mass Communication.

All expenses of the appeal, including travel, shall be paid by the institution initiating the appeal. Eighty percent of the  
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estimated costs of the appeal hearing must be sent to the ACEJMC office two weeks before the date of the scheduled Appeals Board meeting.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate with your faculty and administration in the assessment of your program. The goal of the Accrediting Council is to improve the quality of education offered to students served by a program through that assessment.

Sincerely,



Peter Bhatia  
President

cc: Okoye Ahmose, chair, Department of Mass Communication  
Barbara Hines, team chair  
Marie Hardin, vice chair, Accrediting Committee  
Chris Callahan, chair, Accrediting Committee  
Susanne Shaw, executive director, ACEJMC