

Accrediting Council

On Education in Journalism and Mass Communications

Patricia Thompson
Executive Director

Kenneth D. Kitts, President
University of North Alabama

May 9, 2022

Dear President Kitts:

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications met April 29 and voted 13-1 that the Department of Communication at the University of North Alabama receive provisional reaccreditation. There was one abstention, and two Council members recused themselves because of a conflict of interest. The Council concurred with the site team and Committee recommendations for provisional reaccreditation. Department Chair Patricia Sanders attended the Council meeting.

The Council discussed the program's noncompliance with Standard 9 (Assessment of Learning Outcomes). The site team, Committee and Council expressed concerns about the lack of a department assessment plan. The department must develop and execute an assessment plan that includes the input of industry professionals, measures program-wide student learning of the ACJEMC values and competencies, and provides evidence that assessment results are used to improve curriculum.

Our policies state that a unit may receive provisional accreditation when the Council has found weaknesses that can be corrected within two years. We will be in touch with the department chair to schedule a two-person revisit team. Revisits usually take place one or two years after the initial visit.

Council procedures require that I tell you of your right to appeal this decision. You must notify the ACEJMC office 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. All expenses of the appeal, including travel, shall be paid by the institution initiating the appeal.

If an appeal is filed, while it 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 School of Media and Journalism. The status will remain the same as currently listed following the 2015 vote (reaccredited).

Thank you for the opportunity to participate with your faculty and administrators 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. Please accept my best wishes for success for the Department of Communication, its students, faculty and the professional media constituencies it serves.

Sincerely,



Peter Bhatia
ACEJMC President

cc: Patricia Sanders, chair, Department of Communication
Dale Cressman, chair, site team
Marie Hardin, chair, Accrediting Committee
Patricia Thompson, executive director, ACEJMC