1. Mission, Governance and Administration

The policies and practices of the unit ensure that it has a well-led, effective, and fairly administered working and learning environment.

Before discussion of indicators, the site team will offer an opening framing narrative on the university and unit's history, place in the university today and other salient facts. This is designed to give the Committee and Council an overall sense of the unit and what is to come throughout the report.

Indicators:

(a) The unit has a written mission statement and a written strategic long-range plan that provides vision and direction for its future, meaningful short-term measurements, identifies needs and resources for its mission and goals and is supported by university administration outside the unit.

The unit posts its mission statement and strategic plan in a prominent, easy-to-find place on its website.

Describe in detail how the mission statement/strategic plan is implemented, plays into the daily life of the unit and its effectiveness in driving progress. Who has responsibility for keeping the plan updated? Is it revised regularly to deal with rapidly changing issues of instruction and technology.

(b) 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.

Characterize in depth the leadership of the unit as an agent for progress, advocate for the unit's fields of study within the university and aggressive connector with alumni. What significant achievements can be attributed to the leader? Has the leader built partnerships within the university? Is the leader seen as a strong advocate on matters of diversity, inclusion and equity? Is faculty and student diversity improving? Do scholars and professionals work collaboratively? Is creativity in curriculum, teaching and research sought and rewarded? Is the leader driving forward the curriculum (while respecting faculty governance and required process) to keep up with a rapidly changing media world?

(c) The unit annually updates its data on the ACEJMC searchable database website (https://lookup.acejmc.org).

(d) The unit gathers, maintains and analyzes enrollment, retention and graduation data and posts them annually in a prominent, easy-to-find place on its website.

On indicators (e), (f) and (g) the site team should make sure that the unit operates within accepted academic norms and need only report in detail on extraordinary situations, cases or variances from policy.

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

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

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

Evidence:

A written mission statement, posted to the unit's website
A written strategic long-range plan, posted to the unit's website, with date of
    adoption/revision and any timeline for achieving stated goals
A faculty policy manual, handbook or other document specifying the roles of faculty in
    governance and the development of educational policy
Minutes of faculty meetings, committee meetings and reports
Assessment of unit administrator by faculty and by administration outside the unit
Files on searches and hiring decisions for administrators
Files on concerns and complaints
Current data published on unit website and at https://lookup.acejmc.org

For units requesting evaluation of a professional master's program:

Indicators:

(h) The unit has a separate written mission statement and a written strategic 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.

(i) The unit has designated administrative oversight of the professional graduate program as well as policies and procedures that ensure faculty oversight of educational policy and curriculum in the professional graduate program.

Evidence:

A written mission statement for the professional graduate program, posted to the unit's website

A written strategic long-range plan with date of adoption/revision and any timeline for achieving stated goals, posted to the unit's website

Documents demonstrating administrative oversight for the professional master's program

A faculty policy manual, handbook or other document specifying the roles of faculty in governance and the development of educational policy for the professional master's program

Current enrollment and graduation data published on unit website

2. Curriculum and Instruction

The unit provides a curriculum and instruction, whether on-site or online, that enable students to learn the knowledge, competencies and values the Council defines for preparing students to work in a diverse domestic and global society.

Professional Values and Competencies:

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications requires that graduates of accredited programs be aware of certain core values and competencies and be able to:

• apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, in a global context, and for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located;

• demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;

• demonstrate culturally proficient communication that empowers those traditionally disenfranchised in society, especially as grounded in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and ability, domestically and globally, across communication and media contexts;

• present images and information effectively and creatively, using appropriate tools and technologies;

• write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;

• demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;

• apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;

• effectively and correctly apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;

• critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;

• apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Units requesting evaluation of a professional master's program must also demonstrate how their master's graduates attain this additional core competency:

• contribute to knowledge appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.

Indicators:

(a) Students in the unit complete academic requirements for a baccalaureate degree that meet the liberal arts and sciences/general education requirements of the institution. Programs may identify classes within the unit that contribute to a liberal arts and social sciences perspective for graduates from the unit.

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

(c) Instruction, whether on-site or online, synchronous or asynchronous, is demanding and current, and is responsive to professional expectations of contemporary digital and technological media competencies.

(d) The unit demonstrates efforts to connect faculty and administrators to the professions they represent, with a specific understanding of the changing skills needed to be successful in the workplace.

(e) Student-faculty classroom ratios facilitate effective teaching and learning in all courses. Except for campaigns courses, the ratio in skills and laboratory sections, whether on-site or online, should not exceed 20-1.

(f) 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. Units may award academic credit for internships in fields related to journalism and mass communications, but credit should not exceed six semester credits (or nine quarter credit hours).

Evidence:

Student records and transcripts

Unit bulletins and brochures

Syllabi or course materials that demonstrate students are provided with instruction to enable them to acquire digital, technological and multimedia competencies in keeping with professional expectations

Syllabi or course materials that demonstrate students are provided with instruction that contributes to a liberal arts and social sciences perspective

Records of teaching awards and citations, curricular and course development grants, attendance at teaching workshops, and publications and papers on teaching

Class enrollment for skills courses

Records and statistics on and evaluations of internships, with and without academic credit

For units requesting evaluation of a professional master's program:

Indicators:

(g) At least half of the required credit hours are in either professional skills courses or integrate theory and skills appropriate to professional communication careers.

(h) Instruction and curricular requirements for professional graduate students are more advanced and rigorous than for undergraduate students, including courses open to both undergraduate and graduate students.

Evidence:

Course syllabi and other documents demonstrating the unit has a professional graduate curriculum that prepares master's degree graduates for significant professional careers that provide leadership and influence

Graduate student records and transcripts

Undergraduate student records and transcripts demonstrating student experience equivalent to liberal arts education

3. Assessment of Learning Outcomes

The unit regularly assesses student learning using direct and indirect measures that engage communication professionals and annually "closes the loop" to make tangible improvements to curriculum and instruction.

Indicators:

(a) The unit has a written assessment plan that has been implemented, is up to date and addresses contemporary curricular issues, including instruction related to the rapidly changing digital media world.

The unit posts its assessment plan in a prominent, easy-to-find place on its website.

b) The unit defines the goals for learning that students must achieve, including the professional Values and Competencies of the Council. (See Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction)

(c) The unit assessment plan uses multiple direct and indirect measures to assess student learning.

(d) At least one direct and/or indirect measure should include journalism and mass communication professionals engaged in assessment data collection.

(e) The unit collects and reports data from its assessment activities and applies the data to improve curriculum and instruction. There is substantial, concrete evidence of "closing the loop," generally and specifically. Multiple examples of "closing the loop" are evident.

Evidence:

A written assessment plan that has been implemented and posted to the unit's website
A written statement or matrix describing how the competencies map to course learning
Records from multiple years, showing information collected from direct and indirect measures, when different measures are assessed if not done annually, and the application of this information and other information gathered during the assessment process to improve curriculum and instruction
A clear articulation of what constitutes a direct and indirect measure
Annual assessment reports, analysis and curriculum/program changes resulting from assessment report findings

For units requesting evaluation of a professional master's program:

Evidence:

A separate written assessment plan, posted to its website

A separate written statement/matrix on competencies

Records of information collected from multiple direct and indirect measures and on the application of this information to course development and improvement of teaching, ensuring that the assessment findings have been systematically gathered, synthesized and applied

Evidence could include results and actions from direct and indirect measures that demonstrate a graduating cohort's mastery of the Council's professional values and competencies and of critical-thinking and analytical abilities appropriate to the professions. Measures could include exit surveys or interviews, a comprehensive examination, professionally oriented project, thesis or portfolio.

Annual graduate program assessments

4. Diversity and Inclusiveness

The unit demonstrates it has a diverse and inclusive
program that embodies domestic and global diversity and
that empowers those traditionally disenfranchised in society, especially as
grounded in race, ethnicity, gender, ability and sexual orientation.

Indicators:

(a) The unit has a written diversity plan that has been implemented and discussed annually, for achieving an inclusive curriculum, a diverse, culturally proficient faculty, staff 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, identify under-represented groups and articulate key performance indicators upon which the unit intends to focus and improve.

The unit posts its diversity plan in a prominent, easy-to-find place on its website.

(b) The unit's curriculum creates culturally proficient communicators capable of learning with, working on and advancing the value of diverse teams. The unit's curriculum includes instruction on issues and perspectives relating to mass communications across diverse cultures in a global society.

(c) The unit demonstrates effective efforts to enhance all faculty members' understanding of diversity, equity, inclusion and ability to develop culturally proficient communicators capable of learning with, working on and advancing the value of diverse teams. The unit also demonstrates intentional efforts to recruit and retain faculty and professional staff who are from demographics that are historically, domestically marginalized.

(d) In alignment with the institution's mission, the unit demonstrates effective efforts to help recruit, retain and graduate a student population reflecting the diversity of the population the institution aims to serve.

(e) The unit demonstrates that it has an inclusive climate, 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.

Evidence:

A written diversity plan, posted to the unit's website, which includes key performance indicators (KPIs)

The unit provides evidence of progress on achieving KPIs. Where there has not been progress, the unit describes adjustments and new techniques it is using to achieve it

A description of how the plan ties directly to the professional values and competencies related to diversity

Course syllabi reflect learning outcomes related to diversity, equity and inclusion, both domestically and internationally

A grid in the self-study report that outlines where cultural communications proficiency is taught in the curriculum

Assessment reports that outline culture communication proficiency

For U.S. units, create three tables to describe demographics of faculty with categories used by their institutions for collecting and reporting data, to reflect the six years under review. (Citizenship is not necessary to present.)

Data on enrollment, retention and graduation rates of under-represented groups within the population; data on faculty/staff hiring; data on promotion and tenure decisions

For units within institutions with missions to serve specific genders, races, religions or ethnicities, an explanation of how they retain and graduate under-represented groups and enable their students to be prepared to work on diverse teams not represented at their university

Faculty vitae

Reports showing impact of faculty professional development aimed at enhancing ability to teach courses that develop culturally proficient communicators able to work on and advocate for diverse teams

Evidence of climate studies or other indicators of the unit's level of inclusion

5. Faculty

The unit hires, supports and evaluates a capable faculty with a balance of academic and professional credentials appropriate for the unit's mission. It supports faculty as they contribute to the advancement of scholarly and professional knowledge and engage in scholarship (research, creative and professional activity) that benefits the disciplines and society.

Indicators:

(a) Full-time faculty have primary responsibility for curricula, oversight of courses, research/creative activity and service.
(b) The unit's faculty (full- and part-time) are highly qualified and keep their expertise current through professional development opportunities and maintain relationships with professional and scholarly associations.
(c) The unit requires, supports and rewards faculty research, creative activity and/or professional activity. Expectations for promotion and tenure are clear.
(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.
(e) The faculty has respect on campus for its university citizenship, the quality of education and the scholarly contributions the unit provides.

Evidence:

Faculty and staff manuals or relevant policy procedural documents
Vitae for full-time and part-time faculty
Faculty guides or manuals on tenure and promotion
Records of sabbatical and other leaves, travel funds and grant support
Records on faculty promotion, tenure and other forms of recognition
Faculty vitae and unit reports on research and creative and professional activities

For units requesting evaluation of a professional master's program:

Indicators:
(f) Faculty members teaching in the graduate program meet the criteria for graduate instruction at that university.
(g) Graduate faculty oversee the curricula and course quality for professional master's courses.

Evidence:

Faculty vitae that demonstrate a clearly defined graduate faculty who meet the criteria for graduate instruction at that university.

Schedules of master's courses taught

6. Student Services

The unit supports students with services that promote learning and ensure timely completion of their program of study.

Indicators:

(a) The unit and institution ensure that students are aware of graduation requirements.
(b) Professional advisers, and faculty where appropriate, provide students with academic and career advice.
(c) The unit keeps students informed about its policies, activities and requirements.
(d) The unit and institution provide extra-curricular activities and opportunities relevant to the curriculum and that help develop students' professional and intellectual abilities and interests.
(e) The unit uses retention and graduation data to improve student services, such as advising, and to reduce barriers to student success.

Evidence:

Advising guides, manuals, newsletters and internal communications, and faculty office hours
Statistics on enrollment, scholarships, retention and graduation
Annually updated website containing retention and graduation data that is clearly made available to the public
Examples of student media, information about student professional organizations, and guest speakers and other extracurricular activities associated with the unit's mission

For units requesting evaluation of a professional master's program:

(f) The unit has appropriate admissions and retention policies for the professional master's program

Evidence:

Documents and records demonstrating that the graduate program has appropriate admissions and retention policies
Statistics on graduate enrollment, scholarships, retention and graduation and a website link where the unit regularly publishes this data

7. Resources, Facilities and Equipment

The unit plans for, seeks and receives adequate resources to fulfill and sustain its mission.

Indicators:

(a) The unit has a detailed annual budget for the allocation of its resources that is related to its long-range, strategic plan.
(b) Resources provided by the institution are adequate to achieve the unit's mission and are fair in relation to those provided to other units.
(c) The unit's facilities and information resources enable and promote effective scholarship, teaching and learning.
(d) The institution and the unit provide faculty and students with equipment, or access to equipment, and technical assistance needed to support student learning, curriculum and the research, creative and professional activities of the faculty.

Evidence:

A detailed budget
Tour of buildings and review of equipment
Details of private annual fund-raising efforts
Details of unit endowments for faculty chairs and professorships, programs, scholarships and other restricted accounts
Evaluation of adequacy of resources and an assessment of their fairness in relationship to similar units on campus

8. Professional and Public Service

The unit and its faculty advance journalism and mass communication professions and fulfill obligations to its community, alumni and the public.

Indicators:

(a) The unit consults and communicates regularly with its alumni, and actively engages with them, other professionals and professional associations to keep curriculum and teaching current and to promote the exchange of ideas.

(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 issues of public consequence and concern.

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

(d) The unit supports scholastic journalism.

Evidence:

Faculty vitae

Unit records, brochures and publications of public service activities related to its mission and strategic plan

Alumni advisory boards, newsletters, surveys, social media initiatives, reunions and other activities

Information about courses and services available to professionals and the public

Activities such as workshops, visiting lectures and critiques of student work in support of scholastic journalism