

## Report of On-Site Evaluation

ACEJMC

Undergraduate program

2012– 2013

Name of Institution: Qatar University \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: Sheikha Abdulla Al-Misnad \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Unit: Department of Mass Communication \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Title of Administrator: Mahmoud Galander \_\_\_\_\_

Date of 2012 - 2013 Accrediting Visit: Feb. 9-13, 2013 \_\_\_\_\_

If the unit is currently accredited, please provide the following information:

Date of the previous accrediting visit \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation of the previous accrediting team \_\_\_\_\_

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation by 2012 - 2013 Visiting Team: Accreditation \_\_\_\_\_

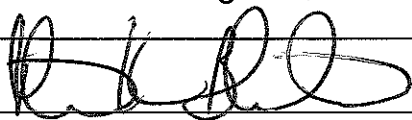
*Prepared and submitted by:*

### Team Chair

Name and Title: Peter Bhatia, Editor and Vice President \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/School: The Oregonian, Portland

Signature \_\_\_\_\_



### Team Members

Name and Title: Joe Foote, Dean \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/School: Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Oklahoma

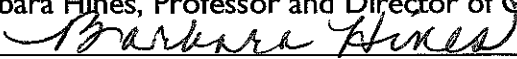
Signature \_\_\_\_\_



Name and Title: Barbara Hines, Professor and Director of Graduate Program in Communication and Media Studies \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/School: Howard University \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_



## PART I: General information

Name of Institution: Qatar University

Name of Unit: Mass Communication

Year of Visit: 2012-2013

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

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

Qatar University is not currently accredited, but is in the process of applying for SACS accreditation.

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

- Private
- Public
- Other (specify)

3. Provide assurance that the institution has legal authorization to provide education beyond the secondary level in your state. **It is not necessary to include entire authorizing documents.** Public institutions may cite legislative acts; private institutions may cite charters or other authorizing documents.

The following is a brief summary of the content of the Emiri decree restructuring and reorganizing the University (originally in Arabic): The decree is Law No 34 for the year 2004. It consists of 19 articles and amendments to Law No 2 for the year 1977, which originally established the University. Qatar University's reorganization law stipulates that QU is a scientific institution that has a legal entity of its own. It also states that a Board of Regents and the University President will oversee the administrative responsibilities of the University.

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

- Yes
  - No
- If yes, give the date of the last accrediting visit: \_\_\_\_\_

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

The department is seeking accreditation for the first time.

6. Attach a copy of the unit's mission statement. The statement should give the date of adoption and/or the most recent revision.

In spring 2009, the department committed to upgrading and improving the program and to pursue ACEJMC accreditation. At that time, we adopted the following mission statement:

### **2009 Mission Statement**

The Mass Communication Program strives to create a student-centered learning environment that enables students to gain a foundation in the theoretical frameworks and professional practices of the fields of Public Relations/Advertising, Broadcast Journalism, and Print/Online Journalism. The program aims at incorporating theory into practice by engaging students in interactive learning processes, research, and media production activities that are necessary in coping with the demands of modern communication technology. Students are expected to develop communication competence, acquire journalistic techniques, and gain critical thinking skills that allow them to act professionally and ethically in the various mass communication fields.

In 2011, we revised the mission statement to better align it with strategic plans at the College and University levels:

### **New Mission Statement**

The Mass Communication program strives to respond to the aspirations of the state of Qatar as a vibrant global media hub by providing an up-to-date curriculum that reflects the pace of advances in the field of mass media. The program creates a student-centered learning environment that merges the practical with the theoretical. Students develop their critical thinking abilities and acquire professional competencies by engaging in a hands-on, technologically attuned learning environment which addresses the needs of the mass media industries in the region. The department educates and trains students from the Middle East and beyond in the areas of print and online journalism, broadcast and online journalism, and strategic communication. The faculty and students engage in research, professional development, creative and service activities for the benefit of the multicultural societies in the region. (*Revision adopted 2011*)

7. *What are the type and length of terms?*

Semesters of 16 weeks  
Summer sessions of 8 weeks

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

*Four-year program leading to Bachelor's degree*  
 *Graduate work leading to Master's degree*  
 *Graduate work leading to Ph.D. degree*

9. *Give the number of credit hours required for graduation. Specify semester-hour or quarter-hour credit.*

126 semester credit hours

10. *Give the number of credit hours students may earn for internship experience. Specify semester-hour or quarter-hour credit.*

3 semester credit hours

11. *List each professional journalism or mass communications sequence or specialty offered and give the name of the person in charge.*

<b>Name of Sequence or Specialty</b>	<b>Person in Charge*</b>
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Strategic Communication  
 Print/Online Journalism  
 Broadcast/Online Journalism

\* The department does not use sequence coordinators; the department head is in charge of all sequences.

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

9,066 students in spring 2012 enrolled at Qatar University (1,683 Foundation program, 7,096 undergraduates and 287 graduate students).

Source:

[http://www.qu.edu.qa/offices/oipd/institutional\\_research/documents/student\\_profile/Students\\_Profile\\_Spring\\_2012.pdf](http://www.qu.edu.qa/offices/oipd/institutional_research/documents/student_profile/Students_Profile_Spring_2012.pdf) (Table 1.1)

422 students in fall 2012 enrolled in the Department of Mass Communication

*13. Number of undergraduate majors in the unit, by sequence and total (if the unit has pre-major students, list them as a single total):*

<b>Name of Sequence or Specialty</b>	<b>Undergraduate majors (fall 2012)</b>
Strategic Communication	65
Print/Online Journalism	32
Broadcast/Online Journalism	62
<u>Undeclared (Pre-majors)</u>	<u>263</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>422</b>

*14. Number of students in each section of all skills courses (newswriting, reporting, editing, photography, advertising copy, broadcast news, etc.). List enrollment by section for the term during which the visit will occur and the preceding term. Attach separate pages if necessary.*

**Fall 2012, Number of Students Enrolled in Sections of Skill Courses**

Course Number	Course Name	Number of Students
MCOM 212, sec. 1	Visual Communication	21
MCOM 212, sec. 2	Visual Communication	19
MCOM 212, sec. 3	Visual Communication	11
MCOM 212, sec. 4	Visual Communication	21
MCOM 341, sec. 1	News Reporting, Writing and Editing Arabic	22
MCOM 341, sec. 2	News Reporting, Writing and Editing Arabic	20
MCOM 341, sec. 3	News Reporting, Writing and Editing Arabic	2
MCOM 342, sec. 3	News Reporting, Writing and Editing Engl.	20
MCOM 350, sec. 1	Multimedia Reporting & Writing II	14
MCOM 350, sec. 2	Multimedia Reporting & Writing II	20
MCOM 350, sec. 3	Multimedia Reporting & Writing II	9
MCOM 363, sec. 1	Announcing	20
MCOM 363, sec. 2	Announcing	20
MCOM 363, sec. 3	Announcing	11
MCOM 383, sec. 1	Principles of Advertising	12
MCOM 383, sec. 2	Principles of Advertising	17
MCOM 383, sec. 3	Principles of Advertising	2
MCOM 386, sec. 1	Public Relations and New Media	20
MCOM 386, sec. 2	Public Relations and New Media	7
MCOM 452, sec. 1	Magazine Writing	8
MCOM 465, sec. 1	Web Content for Radio	15
MCOM 469, sec. 1	TV Documentary Production	10
MCOM 469, sec. 2	TV Documentary Production	18

**Spring 2013, Number of Students Enrolled in Sections of Skill Courses**

Course Number	Course Name	Number of Students
MCOM 215, sec. 1	Multimedia Reporting & Writing	11
MCOM 215, sec. 2	Multimedia Reporting & Writing	20
MCOM 215, sec. 3	Multimedia Reporting & Writing	20
MCOM 215, sec. 4	Multimedia Reporting & Writing	20
MCOM 343, sec. 1	Online Journalism	11
MCOM 343, sec. 2	Online Journalism	11
MCOM 343, sec. 3	Online Journalism	2
MCOM 341, sec. 2	News Reporting, Writing and Editing Arabic	20
MCOM 348, sec. 1	Investigative Journalism	8
MCOM 361, sec. 1	Broadcast News Reporting & Writing	16
MCOM 361, sec. 2	Broadcast News Reporting & Writing	5
MCOM 364, sec. 1	Broadcast Production	20
MCOM 364, sec. 2	Broadcast Production	7
MCOM 365, sec. 1	Script Writing	20
MCOM 365, sec. 2	Script Writing	5
MCOM 384, sec. 1	Advertising Copywriting & Design	9
MCOM 384, sec. 1	Advertising Copywriting & Design	14
MCOM 384, sec. 4	Advertising Copywriting & Design	2
MCOM 388, sec. 1	Public Relations Writing & Presentations	10
MCOM 388, sec. 1	Public Relations Writing & Presentations	14
MCOM 492, sec. 1	Social Marketing	12
MCOM 492, sec. 2	Social Marketing	4

The tables above show that three of the courses in fall 2012 exceeded the 20:1 ratio by one or two students. The ceilings for these sections were raised to ensure that the students would be able to graduate according to their study plan. The Department had to add them to the existing sections because University regulations do not allow adding new sections with fewer than 10 students per section. The only exceptions to that policy are for male student sections, which typically have low enrollment.

No skills courses in spring 2013 exceeded 20 students.

15. *Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2012 – 2013 academic year:*

3,309,000 Qatari Riyals (908,198 USD), excluding the salaries of the full-time faculty

*Percentage increase or decrease in three years:*

10% increase in three years

*Amount spent this year on full-time faculty salaries:*

Not available. The unit does not handle faculty salaries as part of its budget. The first chapter of the budget is centralized at the institutional level.

16. *List name and rank of all full-time faculty. Identify those not teaching because of leaves, sabbaticals, etc. (Full-time faculty refers to those defined as such by the unit.)*

The Department of Mass Communication consists of eight full-time faculty members and two visiting professors for the 2012-2013 academic year:

Mahmoud Galander, Associate Professor and Head of the Department

Mohamed Kirat, Professor

Nishan Havandjian, Associate Professor

Robert Meeds, Associate Professor

Noureddine Miladi, Associate Professor

Saadia Malik, Assistant Professor

Chaker Ayadi, Lecturer

Rana Hassan, Lecturer

Visiting Professors for 2012-13:

Nagwa El Gazzar, Associate Professor

Yasser Abdelrahim, Assistant Professor

17. *List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in fall 2012. Also list part-time faculty teaching in Spring 2013 (If your school has its accreditation visit in 2013, please provide an updated list at the time of the visit.)*

**Fall 2012**

Abdel Moteleb Sedeek

Leqa'a Mekki

**Spring 2013**

Abdel Moteleb Sedeek

Leqa'a Mekki

Mohammed Salim  
 Mohammed Hazim  
 Mohamed Weld AlShaikh

Saib Ghazi

18. *Schools on the semester system:*

*For each of the last two academic years, please give the number and percentage of graduates who earned 80 or more semester hours outside the major and 65 or more semester hours in liberal arts and sciences.*

	Total Graduates	80 or more semester hours outside the major		65 or more semester hours in liberal arts and sciences	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
2011-2012 academic year*	30	29	97%	29	97%
2010-2011 academic year*	18	18	100%	18	100%

\* Graduates from these academic years were under the previous curriculum plan that was not based on the 80/65 criterion.

19. *Schools on the quarter system:*

*For each of the last two academic years, please give the number and percentage of graduates who earned 116 or more quarter hours outside the major and 94 or more quarter hours in liberal arts and sciences.*

Not applicable.



## **PART II — Standard 1: Mission, Governance and Administration**

Qatar University is the national university of the Persian Gulf nation. It has grown from modest roots since being founded by a decree of the Emir of Qatar in 1973 creating a College of Education with about 150 students. The university with its current name was founded in 1977 with four colleges. Today, the university has roughly 9,000 students in seven colleges including Arts and Sciences, which houses the Department of Mass Communication and six other units. The university is bilingual, with classes conducted in Arabic and English, though a recent decree by the country's Supreme Education Council requires that instruction in certain departments, including Mass Communication, be conducted in Arabic. This began to phase in this academic year, allowing non-Arabic speakers to complete their studies. The decision, though not unexpected, creates some competitive disadvantage for the department going forward as it competes with Medill's Doha program (taught in English) and as it seeks to establish a master's program.

The university student population is heavily female – 70 percent. It honors the tradition of separate but adjacent female and male facilities for students. In Mass Communication that means the same curriculum taught in separate classrooms, lecture halls, and news and strategic communication labs. Corridors with separate female and male entrances separate the two campuses. Male and female faculty members in Mass Communication teach both genders. Female students report the system works well, that they are very pleased with the quality of their education, and that male and female students are known to collaborate at times, especially on capstone projects.

The program's history, as described in the self-study:

“The Mass Communication program (MCP) began in 1980 as a minor in the Department of Arabic Language, College of Humanities (now the College of Arts and Sciences), which comprised 27 credit hours. In 1990-91, the Mass Communication Program developed into a double major (male students only) within the same department and comprised 45 credit hours. In 1996-97 a fully fledged MCP began, with 90 credit hours for both male and female students.

“In 2004-05, two programs, Mass Communication and Information Science, were combined to form the Department of Mass Communication and Information Science. The Mass Communication Program during that academic year launched a new academic plan comprising 120 credit hours with a minor in Arabic Language. In fall 2011, after a three-year phase out of the Information Science Program, the Department of Mass Communication and Information Science changed to the Department of Mass Communication.”

In 2006-07, the department implemented its “2007 Study Plan” to comply with ACEJMC's 80/65 rule. In 2010-11, a new study plan was put in place to meet changing media conditions and today offers three tracks: Broadcast/Online Journalism, Print/Online Journalism and Strategic Communication.

**Unit performance with regard to indicators:**

**(a) The unit has a mission statement and engages in strategic or long-range planning 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.**

Both mission statement and strategic plan are in place. The strategic plan is very much pegged to this accreditation process. Central administration is solidly behind the program, its aspirations and its needs, and notes its support of creation of additional labs and the likely coming of a master's program.

The mission statement as revised in 2011:

The Mass Communication program strives to respond to the aspirations of the state of Qatar as a vibrant global media hub by providing an up-to-date curriculum that reflects the pace of advances in the field of mass media. The program creates a student-centered learning environment that merges the practical with the theoretical. Students develop their critical thinking abilities and acquire professional competencies by engaging in a hands-on, technologically attuned learning environment which addresses the needs of the mass media industries in the region. The department educates and trains students from the Middle East and beyond in the areas of print and online journalism, broadcast and online journalism, and strategic communication. The faculty and students engage in research, professional development, creative and service activities for the benefit of the multicultural societies in the region.

The department's strategic plan follows ACEJMC's nine standards:

1. Achieve accreditation by meeting ACEJMC's accrediting standards.
2. Create an environment to support research, creative, and professional activities by faculty members and students.
3. Consolidate the department's governance by incorporating faculty members in decision-making, and by establishing an independent but collaborative role for the department with other decision-makers in Qatar University.
4. Foster multicultural initiatives and maintain diversity in students and faculty and in curriculum.
5. Build a strong faculty within the department. The department will continue to attract full-time faculty members with excellent academic and professional experience and continue to hire professionals from media institutions as adjunct professors.
6. Introduce direct and indirect assessment measurements to the Mass Communication Program to improve curriculum.
7. Establish outreach and continuing education services to promote the educational and professional practices of the fields of public relations and journalism (that includes faculty members' contribution in teaching and organizing workshops outside Qatar University).
8. Maintain and foster professional relations with local and regional media and public relations organizations and connect the department's academic program with the needs of the market.
9. Remodel the MCP lab/studio facilities and update library resources.
10. Enhance student services to ensure quality education and professional experience.

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

The department has a robust committee structure with seven standing committees and ad hoc committees as called for. The standing committees include Accreditation and Curriculum; Academic; Assessment of Learning Outcomes; Students, Alumni and Community Outreach; Seminar, Research and Creative Development; Social; and Capstone and Internship. Academic and educational issues go through the committee structure. Faculty has a contributory role in curriculum decisions and on budget and technology decisions as they pertain to teaching and research. The faculty met six times in academic year 2011-12.

**(c) The unit's administration provides effective leadership within the unit and effectively represents it in dealings with university administration outside the unit and constituencies external to the university.**

The current department head is an interim and does not wish to become the permanent head. A search is under way for his successor and is progressing, according to the dean of Arts and Sciences. The interim department head gets strong marks from faculty for his collegial style, good works handling the administrative side of leadership and commitment to students. He is the senior member of the department faculty with six years of service at the university.

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

The department head is appointed by the vice president and chief academic officer on recommendation from the Arts and Sciences dean. A search is under way for a new department head as of this writing.

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

Procedures exist for resolving disputes. Grade issues are usually handled at the instructor level with appeal possible to the department head and ultimately to the college. There are similar formal procedures for faculty complaints including appeals on promotion and evaluation.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Mass Communication is part of a dynamic, aspirational university that is destined to grow and improve its enviable position in the Arab world of higher education and higher education in general. It has embraced ACEJMC's guidelines as a way of governance and it shows in a high-functioning faculty and dedicated students. "When you wake up happy to study, that says a lot about the department," one student said.

**COMPLIANCE**

## PART II — Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

**(a) The unit requires that students take a minimum of 80 semester credit hours or 116 quarter credit hours outside of the unit and a minimum of 65 semester credit hours or 94 quarter credit hours in the liberal arts and sciences (as defined by the institution) outside of the unit.**

The department has done an excellent job of transitioning its curriculum to meet ACEJMC standards. This required significant changes beginning in 2006 to comply with the requirement for hours outside the major. One-hundred-twenty four credit hours are required for graduation. Students take 43 hours in Mass Communication and 81 hours outside the major. During the last two years, compliance with the 80/65 rule has been 97 percent (2011-2012) and 100 percent (2010-2011). The department has also been highly successful in opening a variety of minors and “concentration supporting courses” for students to take within the university. Student minors are English, Arabic and International Affairs. Because of the “concentration supporting course” plan, Mass Communication students now have more opportunity to take more courses in more subjects than any other students on campus. For example, journalism students can take course packages chosen from sociology, political science, psychology, and history while strategic communication students can focus on management, business, psychology and sociology.

**(b) The unit provides a balance between theoretical and conceptual courses and professional skills courses to achieve the range of student competencies listed by the Council. (If the unit has more than one sequence, evaluate each sequence.)**

The team observed a good balance between theoretical/conceptual and skills courses. Students are required to take five core courses: Media and Society; Visual Communication; Multimedia Reporting and Writing; Theories of Mass Communication; Media Ethics and Law. Each of these has been pegged to ACEJMC competencies. Beyond the core courses, students specialize in one of three concentrations: Print/Online Journalism; Broadcast/Online Journalism; Strategic Communication. Before 2007, there were no concentrations. In 2011, the department refined the concentrations to fit better in a multimedia environment.

Just as the department was evolving into its new curriculum, it faced a new mandate from the higher education governing board to switch its mode of instruction from English to Arabic in fall 2012 (Mass Communication had switched from Arabic to English just five years earlier). The unit will accommodate all current students who wish to finish the English-language curriculum. Even as the department transitions to Arabic, two required English courses outside the major guarantee that only students with a certain degree of English fluency will be admitted to the program.

While the balance between conceptual and practical is good, many students wish that skills courses could be introduced earlier in the curriculum and that they could include more “real world” outlets for their work beyond the professor grading the assignment. Students also say that some of the Western notions of press freedom aren’t always relevant to the workplace they will be entering in Gulf countries.

### Print/Online Journalism

Print students get a strong background in fundamental news reporting, writing and editing for traditional print, online and multimedia. Electives include newspaper design, investigative reporting and magazine writing. The annual student newspaper is produced out of the investigative class. The required capstone class presentation is in multimedia reporting.

Students express great satisfaction with their professors, the learning and how they fare in internships. The most common complaint was the need for more outlets for classroom work to be published.

### Broadcast/Online Journalism

The curriculum has its center of gravity in electronic media production more than journalism. Students learn the rudiments of single and multi-camera production and post-production. Journalism is grafted onto the curriculum. Other than core courses, there are no editorial courses in common between print and broadcast journalism.

Students are enthusiastic about the “hands-on” nature of the curriculum and the variety of skills that they acquire. They are particularly pleased to have a good acquaintance with non-linear editing when they graduate. When this substantive curriculum is complemented by a solid internship experience, students are well prepared to compete for work at a local or international channel. At some point, the production of a university-sponsored news broadcast would prove to be a valuable supplement to the curriculum.

### Strategic Communication

As part of the most recent curriculum change, courses in advertising and public relations were merged into the Strategic Communication track, to cover a broader spectrum of professional and persuasive messaging with a multimedia element. In addition to the identified minors of Arabic, English and International Affairs, students who specialize in Strategic Communication can select a minor in a secondary area that focuses on marketing and management, or sociology and psychology.

**(c) Instruction is demanding and current; achievements in teaching and learning are recognized and valued. (If the unit has more than one sequence, address the quality of instruction by sequence.)**

The site team was particularly impressed with the standard of teaching in the department. Syllabi clearly listed course objectives and the competencies to be obtained at the end of the course. Many contained detailed grading rubrics for particular assignments. The curriculum is current and meets an international standard. Students demonstrate confidence in their ability to enter the workforce prepared. They particularly appreciate the demanding hands-on skills courses and yearn for more “real world” experiential learning opportunities. For most, classroom projects represent their first practical experience, and they are grateful that the curriculum provides them with opportunities to demonstrate their abilities and creativity.

### Print/Online Journalism

Classroom observation was limited during the visit but a very nice rapport between professors and students in the classroom was evident. Classes felt more like a conversation than a lecture.

Syllabi show a strong attachment to the fundamentals of journalism (how to write a lede, etc.) but coursework is up to date with attention to writing for online and the full range of digital techniques (blogs, social media, etc.) in multimedia courses, as well as the capstone class.

### Broadcast/Online Journalism

At the time of the site visit, there was only one full-time faculty member teaching in broadcast and online journalism, the fastest growing concentration. Students were certainly aware of the implications of this deficiency, but were highly pleased with the exceptional work of the lone faculty member. Adjuncts from the industry and two highly regarded broadcast technicians mask what is a glaring shortage of faculty.

The syllabi in broadcast production, electronic news production and the video capstone guarantee a broad exposure to the field with abundant opportunity for project-based experience along with the capstone opportunity to produce a major project.

### Strategic Communication

When the team was visiting, classes were just beginning for the spring semester. Students were actively engaged in discussing how what they learned in courses from the previous semester served as the foundation for their advanced work. Syllabi documented professional level expectations, with learning outcomes that tied to the department's assessment plan. Students expressed gratitude for the level of instruction in their classes, mentioning that faculty members were up-to date.

**(d) Student-faculty classroom ratios facilitate effective teaching and learning in all courses; a student-teacher ratio of 15-1 in skills and laboratory sections is strongly recommended and the ratio in each section should not exceed 20-1.**

Nearly all courses meet the enrollment caps for skills courses. During the fall 2012 semester, three courses were slightly over the 20-person limit. The department hopes to keep the numbers in check in the future. Extra students have been admitted to select required classes to allow them to graduate on time. Gender separation can make balancing class enrollments challenging. There might be a section with 21 students offered simultaneously with a section of five students, but the department cannot correct the imbalance without creating a third. All three classes with overloads in fall 2012 were courses for women where the greatest enrollment pressure exists.

**(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. (If the unit has more than one sequence, address the opportunities by sequence.)**

The department has a well-developed internship process. Internships are required in all three concentrations. Academic supervisors follow-up regularly with internship supervisors. Students must complete a logbook and a final report. Supervisors complete evaluations that are used in the evaluation of the student. The department has an MOU with the Aljazeera network. It regularly places students in newspapers, broadcast organizations, public relations agencies, NGOs and government ministries. Aljazeera notwithstanding, the range of internships is somewhat narrow, but the opportunities are growing as Qatar's base of media and strategic communication industries grow.

#### Print/Online Journalism

Students were full of praise for all their intern experiences and characterized those as an essential part of their learning. Print partners include Al-Sharq, a Doha Arabic-language newspaper, and the Qatar News Agency.

#### Broadcast/Online Journalism

Students are enthusiastic about the opportunity to intern at venues like Aljazeera or the Doha Film Institute. In a technical area like broadcast journalism, additional fieldwork is critical to professional success. Most report a positive experience that helps to launch them into the marketplace.

#### Strategic Communication

Opportunities for internships are available and encouraged. Traditional internships at Hill and Knowlton, Qatar Cultural Center for Childhood, Katara Cultural Village, Aljazeera Children's Channel and the Ministry of Interior give up-to-date work experience. The International Public Relations Association – Gulf Chapter also offers training sessions for seniors, along with the Doha Film Institute.

**SUMMARY:** In a short period of time, the department has developed a strong curriculum that conforms to the ACEJMC requirements, presents a current multimedia view of the field, and provides multiple opportunities for skills enhancement. The department's co-curricular opportunities are still underdeveloped. Given that the department must operate a dual class schedule for men and women and must now change its language of instruction from English to Arabic, it has formulated and managed its curriculum exceedingly well.

## **COMPLIANCE**

## **PART II — Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness**

### **Unit performance with regard to indicators:**

**(a) The unit has a written 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 department developed a Diversity Plan in 2009 and continues to refine it, with the most recent changes in 2011-12. Qatar University is the national university of Qatar, one of the smallest countries in the region, with Qataris less than 13 percent of the population. Women are 24.5 percent of the population. A diversity coordinator continues to oversee the plan, which focuses on race, culture and ethnicity with six measurable objectives, goals and action steps to insure a supportive and diverse environment. Faculty members have revised syllabi to ensure that diversity-related topics are included and have two tools to assess students' levels of understanding and application of diversity in the graduation capstone products they generate.

**(b) The unit's curriculum fosters understanding of issues and perspectives that are inclusive in terms of gender, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation.**

Diversity is a hallmark of this department. Class lectures reflect a healthy appreciation for gender, race, ethnicity, religion, culture and sexual orientation. Steeped in culture, the department melds Arab and Qatari press laws and Islamic ethics with American journalism and Western-centered media philosophies.

A global communication class was taught in partnership with the University of Louisiana Lafayette and challenged students to think outside of their cultural box, particularly with non-Muslim and non-Arab perspectives. Current courses provide the historical development of Western journalism and public relations and advertising, highlight minority groups, industries, ethics and marginalization.

Through its core courses, the department is able to track its diversity efforts and has established a student resource center focusing on diversity. A new course, created in 2011, looks at women internationally and regionally. Because of the large number of women in the department, there are multiple sections of this popular course. The department annually tracks courses that have specific diversity-related topics. For 2011-12, the courses were MCOM 317 (Media Ethics and Law), MCOM 103 (Media and Society), MCOM 313 (Women in Media), MCOM 215 (Multimedia Reporting and Writing), MCOM 212 (Visual Communication) and MCOM 490 (Strategic Communication Plans).

**(c) The unit demonstrates effective efforts to recruit women and minority faculty and professional staff and supports their retention, progress and success.**

Women have played an important role in the department as faculty members and administrators. The department has followed university regulations to recruit faculty of academic merit and works closely with Qatari media and working professionals to obtain the best possible talent. The local media market is not diverse, which limits the recruiting pool. Currently, three of eight faculty members are female. Women have served as department head twice and hold the major positions through the university (notably the president, vice president, various deans and head of departments, among others).



**(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.**

In Qatar, nationality is the primary demographic marker, with Qataris and non-Qataris being the two categories. Complicating this is the fact that Qataris are a minority in their country, with expatriates constituting the majority. With the social, cultural and political changes in recent years, many more women are going to college and entering the work force. The majority of students are female (76.5 percent), in contrast with the overall country demographic (75.6 percent male, 24.4 percent female). Many male students attend universities in other countries. Admission is based on academic qualifiers: grade point average, test scores and an interview. Students are accepted regardless of their country of origin. In fall 2012, there were 45 Qatari and 43 non-Qatari new students in the department.

**(e) The unit has a climate that is free of harassment and discrimination, accommodates the needs of those with disabilities, and values the contributions of all forms of diversity.**

Faculty members work with various university offices to assist students who have disabilities. They identify resources and work to accommodate those needs. They have developed course material, exercises, tests and exams for vision-impaired and other physically challenged students. Students have focused on understanding diversity and disabilities in class assignments and capstone projects and have worked to maintain a respectful campus.

Qatar University policy mandates gender segregation, consistent with Islamic tradition. There are places on campus open to both males and females; however, courses are segregated. Faculty members are not segregated in this way and are able to teach both on the “male” and “female” campus.

**SUMMARY:** This is a department that celebrates diversity in its everyday life: in curriculum, in personnel and values.

## **COMPLIANCE**

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

### **Unit performance with regard to indicators:**

#### **(a) The unit has written criteria for selecting and evaluating the performance of all full-time and part-time faculty and instructional staff.**

*The Qatar University Faculty Handbook* (Spring 2012) provides academic bylaws, Faculty Senate bylaws, and the QU academic policies and procedures. Section 3, Faculty Affairs, provides classification of positions, faculty recruitment, hiring, retention and promotion, performance appraisal, faculty duties, financial compensation, vacations and leaves, disciplinary actions and grievance policies.

There are three types of faculty contracts. The regular three-year contract is renewable. Regular faculty can apply for a rolling four-year contract after serving two, three-year contracts. The third contract is for Qataris: it is indefinite. The dean told the site team that the possibility of longer-term contracts is being considered. There is no tenure as we know it on American campuses.

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

There are eight full-time faculty members (six with doctoral degrees and two with master's degrees). There is one full professor, four associate professors, one assistant professor and two lecturers. There are two visiting professors: one in Strategic Communication, the other in Print/Online Journalism.

While Qatar University has primarily been a teaching institution focusing on undergraduate education, that is changing. Research has been incorporated into its mission; it is now a second category in faculty evaluation; contribution to community service is the third. There is a promotion process that incorporates teaching, research/creative activity and service. Full-time faculty members maintain heavy teaching loads (seven courses per year) and taught an average of 94 percent of the courses during the previous three-year period. The rest have been taught by part-time faculty/adjuncts. Course release may be negotiated for administrative duties, faculty research, or heavy advising loads.

High turnover and recruitment challenges have been ongoing problems for the department. Seven faculty have left during the past six years, including all three Qatari faculty. Of the current eight faculty, four have arrived within the past two years. The longest serving faculty member is the acting chair who has been there six years. With all current faculty being on three-year contracts, there is an aura of insecurity even though the university is committed to renewing faculty and building stability. The switch to Arabic instruction could impact future recruitment. The department expects to fill three positions for the 2013-14 academic year and another two for the following year. The requirement that faculty be fluent in both Arabic and English and have a degree from a Western university is a high bar to meet for recruitment (the latter was instituted in response to weaker faculty performance in different times). The dean said the university is open to bringing in more professionals to join the faculty and noted that academic turnover was common in the region, in part because of the lack of tenure. In addition, the difficult process of gaining citizenship in Qatar is also a factor in recruitment.

**(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.**

Faculty members have studied across the globe earning doctoral degrees, master's degrees and other certification from universities in Europe, the United States, the Middle East, and Africa. All are active in professional organizations that offer conferences and workshops for professional development. They have attended noteworthy programs at the Poynter Institute, UNESCO, Aljazeera, the International Public Relations Association and the Arab-U.S. Association of Communication Educators and also have been active in grant-writing opportunities. With the campus location in Doha, a vibrant media city, part-time faculty help to keep students and faculty abreast of industry change.

**(d) The unit regularly evaluates instruction, using multiple measures that include student input.**

The review process for department faculty involves several measurement tools. Students evaluate faculty performance in each class every semester using an online instrument. All full-time faculty and lecturers submit a portfolio summarizing their activities and accomplishments. The portfolio reflects the pre-determined workload of teaching (50-60 percent), research (20-40 percent) and service (10-30 percent). A rubric developed by the College of Arts and Sciences is applied to assess exceptional, above expectations, expected, or below expectations. A separate evaluation form is used for lecturers, who are not evaluated on research. The department head also visits classes. Part-time faculty are not evaluated annually.

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

Mass Communication faculty members are valued citizens of the Qatar University community. They serve important roles on committees in the College of Arts and Sciences including Academics, Curriculum, Program Learning Outcomes, Program Review and Enhancement, Student Affairs and Scheduling. The department provides direct impact to the Office of the President with a faculty representative on the President's Strategic Committee Task Force.

**SUMMARY:** The department has a well-trained and knowledgeable faculty who serve important roles on the QU campus. While they do an excellent job in the classroom, their workload is excessive, which makes it harder for them to produce the kind of scholarship and creative activity the university is seeking as it increases its research footprint. High turnover and lagging recruitment remain as ongoing challenges.

## **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.**

Qatar University is in the early stages of transitioning to a research university. With a seven-course teaching load per academic year, it is currently anchored to a teaching-intensive structure. Greater weight in the future will be given to research and creative activity. The administration is planning to reduce basic teaching loads to 3-3 with the opportunity for additional reduction for research-intensive faculty.

One course release from the 4-3 load can currently be granted for faculty who submit research plans to the department chair. No one has been able to take advantage of this option because of the faculty shortage and growing enrollments. The dean has indicated a willingness to approve course releases if the department requests them. At the time of the site visit, no faculty had applied.

Faculty who are on rolling appointments are eligible for sabbatical. As of now, no faculty are on these contracts so none has applied for a sabbatical leave during the past six years. Currently, only one faculty member has the seniority to apply. When the department is at full strength, the department head will need to think strategically about how to maneuver particular faculty into contracts where they can utilize resources to enhance research productivity.

The university has an infrastructure in place to support faculty research projects. Generous internal grants from the university and external grants from the government provide ample resources. During the past three years, faculty have received approximately \$50,000 in internal grants. The national government research scheme has provided more than \$800,000 in research funding. Two current faculty have received grants of \$270,000 and \$523,000. The Qatar National Research Fund awards more than \$150 million in research funds annually.

The college also supports travel generously. It spent \$100,000 for faculty travel during the past three years. Faculty who travel to the United States, for example, are eligible for grants of up to \$5,750 per trip.

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

The university does not have a tenure system, but it credits faculty who do research in its promotion structure. The department uses the university's guidelines for research to set standards for promotion. For promotion to full professor, the candidate must show excellence in scholarly endeavor and publication of articles in refereed journals. For associate professor, the candidate must demonstrate continuous productivity in scholarly research and creative work, publication of articles in refereed journals and must have established him or herself as an authority in the field.

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

The university recognizes all types of scholarly and creative work. There is a perception among some faculty that creative work does not merit the same support and recognition as scholarly research. Lecturers without terminal degrees who have a strong desire to express themselves creatively through specific projects would like an opportunity for class-load reductions.

(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 mission of the unit and the institution.

The self-study research table lists 15 different faculty who had research output during the past six years even though the regular faculty component is eight. Seven of those faculty are no longer with the unit. Meanwhile, three of the listed faculty members have been at QU two years or less. Thus, the reality of research output depends on when the snapshot is taken.

In its productivity table, the department lists the following for the previous six years for both current and former faculty: four scholarly books; six edited books, nine book chapters; one monograph; 18 refereed journal articles; 40 conference papers and several non-refereed works. All of the current faculty members have some research and/or creative activity. More than half have significant productivity.

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

There is free and open dialogue within the department and a collegial atmosphere fostered by the department head. However, in an environment where all faculty are foreigners in the country on three-year contracts, some faculty feel inhibited about speaking their mind freely. There is a certain built-in insecurity that permeates the landscape.

**SUMMARY:** Considering the heavy teaching and advising load borne by the faculty, there is a healthy amount of research and creative activity being produced. As the university transitions to a more research-intensive environment, teaching loads should decline and research expectations increase. The faculty is represented in a variety of publications and conferences globally. Abundant resources create a climate where intellectually curious faculty can obtain financial support for their projects.

**COMPLIANCE**

## **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.**

Academic advising is handled by the faculty. But the shortage of faculty has resulted in unrealistic numbers of advisees – one cited more than 70 -- coupled with heavy teaching loads. Some students felt they received inadequate or bad advice that delayed their graduation. A professor with another department that has many minors from Mass Communication complained that he ended up as de facto adviser to those students. It is at best an uneven process that the dean and department head vow to address quickly with a dedicated adviser in some form. Part of the issue is changing study plans around campus. That is, that one department may not know about course changes in other departments. This problem was the subject of a story in the most recent student newspaper. The university has taken steps to resolve this specific problem and instituted a college-level advising program this year. The latter seems not to have had much impact in the department.

Because of the strong commitment to students by the faculty this system does work well for many students. More than a few were effusive in their thanks for faculty advisers' good works in helping them complete their studies on time and in their commitment to them beyond graduation. Others, as at any school, prefer to self-advise or peer-advise and get through just fine.

#### **(b) Faculty are available and accessible to students.**

Faculty get rave reviews for their accessibility and care for the students. Over and over, students told the visiting team that their professors were there for them whenever they needed and continued to keep track of them even after they had finished the professors' classes. Students cited a "family atmosphere" within the department, one they said was uncommon within the university. Most faculty have cubicles, not offices, which doesn't contribute to private conversations with students. One faculty member says he often walks with students to a quiet area so they can speak privately.

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

The department has had two curricular overhauls in recent years and now is coping with the Arabic teaching mandate. The department cites aggressive communication efforts with students, by email and using Facebook and Twitter. The latest curricular changes in 2011 were sent to all students and orientation sessions were held. There are bulletin boards in high-traffic areas of the department as well as in men's and women's areas. Students and faculty worry about all the necessary communication reaching everyone, more so on a university level rather than departmentally.

#### **(d) The unit and the institution provide students with extra-curricular activities and opportunities that are relevant to the curriculum and develop their professional as well as intellectual abilities and interests.**

A Student Media Club organizes events such as a Capstone Projects Presentation Day. Efforts are under way to form an International Public Relations Association student chapter. It would be the first in the region. A student-edited newspaper is produced from a class once a year. It is printed in Arabic and

English and on glossy, coated paper typical of newspapers in Qatar, something an American student paper could only dream of. The issue published during the team's visit featured a rare Q-and-A with the university's president. It was good journalism. The infrequent publication of the paper and lack of outlets for other professional work by students is cited by some as a frustration. The department is developing educational opportunities for students outside of the country. In 2011, for example, eight students attended multimedia workshops at the University of Utrecht in Holland. Six students also attended a leadership and multicultural training program in the U.K.

**(e) The unit gathers, maintains and analyzes enrollment, retention, graduation rates and other aggregate information for improving student services and reducing barriers to student success.**

It does. The university has unique situations it deals with given its location in Qatar and the separate male-female method of education. As is common in American schools of journalism and mass communication, women far outnumber men in the university and department. Qataris typically make up the majority of graduates each year, but non-Qatari numbers are high.

Enrollment and graduation numbers have fluctuated as the mandate of the department has evolved. The department is currently on the cusp of an enrollment surge. Mass Communication has become the most popular major among male applicants for the 2013-14 academic year and the second most popular for women. The department is preparing to double its intake of women from 60 to 120 next year and its male intake from 25 to 50. Administrators cite three reasons for these massive increases: (1) structural changes in university requirements that allow direct entrance into the College of Arts and Sciences; (2) the introduction of Arabic as the medium for instruction; and (3) the growing reputation of the department and the high satisfaction among its students. The enrollment surge will test the human resources of the department at a time when it is already short-handed.

**SUMMARY:** While advising remains an issue for the department, it is a problem with universal awareness and fixes are needed and expected in the near future. Nonetheless, this is a department with a strongly prevailing student focus, one shared universally by the faculty. One would be hard-pressed to find a department with as much mutual regard as exists here between students and faculty, and vice versa.

**NON-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.**

Qatar University has a very well-developed budget process. An annual rubric exists through which the unit assesses its needs and moves the request to the dean and beyond. The budget for the department has been adequate to meet its needs over the years. The latest non-salary budget was just under \$100,000. During the past four years as the unit moved toward accreditation the university provided much needed funding for facilities improvement and equipment purchase. Over the past three years, the departmental budget has increased by 10 percent. Amounts in individual budget categories have fluctuated widely during the past few years, but the overall amounts except for equipment have remained stable. For example, hospitality varied from \$6,649 to \$19,339 in one year and books changed from \$135,835 to \$34,247.

Textbooks for students are included in the budget. Students pay a maximum of \$27 for a textbook with the difference being subsidized. Qatari students do not pay tuition. Non-Qatari students pay tuition, but are eligible for scholarships.

There is no culture of fundraising within the university. The central administration tries to fund special projects and events that the department wants to initiate.

**(b) The resources that the institution provides are fair in relation to those provided other units.**

The unit's leadership is satisfied that it has been treated equitably within the university structure. The central administration understands the department's need for additional space, specialized laboratory equipment and high-end equipment. The dean confirmed that virtually every departmental request for equipment and other support has been granted saying, "They get what they ask for. I've never had to say no to a need."

The department has been especially receptive to helping the university with its video needs. It provides video capture and video editing to units that request it. The rising visibility of the department within the university helps to justify the investments the university has made in it.

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

Facilities generally are a strength of the department. Each classroom is equipped with screens, multimedia tools, a wireless network, laptop connections and white boards.

Laboratories support all three of the areas of emphasis. There are two computer labs —one for strategic communication and the other for print/online journalism. More are about to come online. The university supplies specialized software free of charge for students who have laptops. Getting the proper software to students for classes sometimes has been a problem, but it appears isolated to particular courses.

The department has a well-equipped television studio, a radio studio and an impressive post-production laboratory featuring 10 networked high-end video editing stations. It also has two experienced



technicians who keep the technology in excellent shape, oversee all equipment checkout and help students learn non-linear editing software. In 2013, the department hopes to open two other post-production labs to meet surging demand. These two new laboratories, one in the women's area and one in the men's area, can also be used as general laboratories for students to work on their projects. The department hopes to network all three editing laboratories through video servers so that students can move their files freely across the network. There is also a proposal for a play-to-air server that would allow student content to be seamlessly integrated into a television production.

The necessity to have laboratory times for both men and women has created overload for some facilities because women outnumber men by such a large number. For example, a lab dedicated to men on a particular day might be half empty while the same laboratory on a women's day might be oversubscribed. One woman described the lab as working in a "sardine can." The two new editing facilities should mitigate that problem. Also, the growing number of students with laptop computers equipped with specialized software helps offset equipment shortages.

(d) The institution and the unit provide faculty and students with equipment to support its curriculum and the research, creative and professional activities of the faculty.

The equipment upgrades and expansion over the past five years have placed the department in a strong position. The main frustration in the department is not the lack of equipment, but its distribution around campus. While the department offices are unified in one building, the department's classroom and laboratory facilities are scattered across campus. Some of this is necessary because of gender separation, but, some is not. The department would have a greater sense of cohesion and present a more impressive face to the outside world if there could be a separate Mass Communication facility. Students note the lack of centrality as well and long for their own building and geographical identity.

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

Qatar University is still developing its collection in the journalism and mass communication area. It currently has 2,541 volumes dedicated to journalism and mass communication along with 334 periodicals and 10 databases. While these numbers might seem low compared to some academic libraries in the United States, Qatar University's library has only 271,000 volumes for the entire university. Fortunately, the university has inter-library loan agreements with several well-equipped institutions including the library for the Qatar branch of the Northwestern University's Medill school. The collection is adequate, especially since the department does not offer a graduate degree, and is expected to grow with the program and the university. A new senior professor, noting the gaps in resources, submitted a lengthy list of materials to the library, which is likely to be filled. Once the department moves towards a master's degree called for in its strategic plan, it will require additional library and information sources to offer that degree.

**SUMMARY:** During a period of global recession, few accredited programs can claim the benefits that the department enjoys. It offers a lucrative pay scale and perquisites to attract faculty from around the region and the world. It enjoys a steady flow of resources to meet its ongoing needs. It finds a sympathetic hearing for ambitious proposals for improvement.

The department aspires to have its own building where its faculty, administration, classrooms and laboratories are unified geographically and can promote a more collective spirit. With a rapidly growing enrollment and demand on facilities, that may become a necessity within a decade. The dean told the visiting team that plans call for Mass Communication to get a portion of the neighboring Education school building, for which a move is planned in the next few years. That would be a huge help.

## **COMPLIANCE**

## PART II — Standard 8: Professional and Public Service

### Unit performance with regard to indicators:

**(a) The unit is actively engaged with alumni, professionals and professional associations to keep curriculum and teaching current and to promote the exchange of ideas.**

The department has an active advisory board made up of professionals from print and online journalism and strategic communication. The board meets with the dean and department head each semester and was instrumental in the curricular change recently adopted. The board's input resulted in a writing course being added to the curriculum. The department also uses local media (Qatar News Network, Aljazeera, PR and advertising firms) to critique capstone projects.

**(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.**

Examples are plentiful: Last year, the department joined with the Doha Center for Media Freedom to work together on projects related to media literacy and press freedom. In 2011, the department picked the best research papers by young people worldwide for an Aljazeera Center for Research competition. The department hosted an "International Conference on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Trends of Mass Communication: Challenges and Prospects" in 2011.

**(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.**

Faculty members serve on numerous local, regional and international boards, editorial boards, as trainers, instructors and coordinators. Work ranges from familiar bodies such as AEJMC, to editorial board service on *Journalism and Mass Communication* and *International Journal of Advertising* to regional journals such as the *Journal of Arab and Muslim Media* (of which a faculty member serves as editor).

**(d) The unit contributes to its communities through service projects, internship and job placements, and faculty involvement in civic activities related to journalism and mass communication.**

Students have played a prominent public-service role through their capstone projects. An excellent example was a reading awareness campaign done by strategic communication students for 6-12 year olds. A book was produced. Other projects have raised disease awareness and promoted healthy family relations. Three print students created an oral history capstone that won a major research award from the Qatar National Research Foundation.

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

The department has hosted secondary school students for visits to both promote the program and to teach about journalism. It has also teamed with a local newspaper for a workshop to advocate journalism education in area high schools.

**SUMMARY:** Service is part of the culture of the department, both internally at the university, and externally.

## **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 this Council.**

The department has a well-crafted set of 12 learning outcomes that define each and mirror them to the ACEJMC values and competencies. They seem appropriate for a professional program in the Gulf region. Learning outcome #1 (media law) honors Qatar’s professional practice of journalism, rather than measuring Qatari versus U.S. culture/law.

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

QU’s assessment plan was first developed in 2009. There were minor revisions to the plan prior to its implementation during the 2011-2012 academic year to align with changes in the curriculum. There are four direct measures of student learning and two indirect measures. The four direct measures are: a pre-post knowledge test given to students in their first mass communication course (Mass Media and Society) and administered a second time during the capstone course; students’ capstone projects; internship supervisors’ evaluations; and specific assignments from a range of courses throughout the mass communication curriculum.

The knowledge test provides evidence of student learning for four of the 12 program learning outcomes, while the capstone projects provide evidence for 11 outcomes and the assignments provide evidence for seven outcomes. Eleven of the 12 learning outcomes have at least two direct measures, except for the history outcome, which has one.

The two indirect measures are senior exit surveys and an alumni survey. QU’s Office of Institutional Research conducts an online survey of graduating seniors each semester. The survey, as part of the assessment plan, has been given in two semesters to 734 graduating students with a response rate of 78 percent. The Mass Communication seniors’ answers were compared to the College of Arts and Sciences seniors and the seniors in other QU programs.

The department also conducts its own survey of graduating students. In the same two semesters, 13 students completed surveys in which they were asked questions about their perceptions of their abilities and training they had received, and other questions specific to their accomplishments in the program. The results were consistent with the survey of graduating seniors administered by the Office of Institutional Research.

The Office of Institutional Research also conducts a bi-annual phone survey of alumni, and the department mirrors that with an email survey. The department has reviewed the data from these surveys and has taken steps to strengthen areas that were deemed weak (e.g. increasing contact points between students and professional journalists, increasing the enrollment caps for male students wanting to study journalism and enforcing tighter caps on enrollment in Strategic Communication, and revising assessment rubrics so that they will be clearer and more rigorous). It’s an ambitious but workable plan with assistance provided by the Office of Institutional Research.

**(c) The unit maintains contact with its alumni to assess their experiences in the professions and to gain feedback for improving curriculum and instruction.**

Initial contact is provided through the Office of Institutional Research surveys (see above). The Alumni Office has only recently begun to systematically track alumni. The department began an alumni publication, *Alum Spotlight*, in spring 2012. It also sponsors Media Day, and brings alumni to campus to mentor students. Members of the site team met enthusiastic alumni of the program who shared stories of their “giveback” to the program.

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

Professionals provide direct assessment feedback in supervising and evaluating student interns and in participating in almost all of the student capstone projects. Additionally, professionals serve on the Mass Communication Advisery Board and meet with students, faculty, department and university administrators.

**(e) The unit collects and reports data from its assessment activities and uses the data to improve curriculum and instruction.**

While the department is just four years into its assessment plan, it has gathered a respectable amount of data to provide early benchmarks to student learning (see indicator b). It is creating a gateway to alumni and media professionals. While it has focused on assessing student learning at the senior or near-senior level from fall 2011 to spring 2014, it may focus more specifically on formative assessment of learning outcomes in lower level courses.

**SUMMARY:** The department has a respectable assessment plan that is already providing data to strengthen student learning and the Mass Communication program. It combines the human and fiscal resources of the university’s research and alumni affairs with faculty expertise developing curricular learning outcomes.

## **COMPLIANCE**

### **PART III: Summary by site visit team**

#### **1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.**

##### **STRENGTHS:**

Department is part of a dynamic, growing university where resources are plentiful.

Students are extraordinarily enthusiastic, smart and driven to do well.

Faculty brings worldwide experience and education to the classroom on a daily basis.

Diverse faculty and student body drawing from Qatar and across the Arab world.

Curriculum updated to reflect changing digital media realities.

##### **WEAKNESSES:**

Continuing faculty turnover (and shortage of broadcast faculty) threatens goals and aspirations for program over time.

Growing program will need expanded facilities, even as university has provided new space for labs.

Faculty office space inadequate for program's aspirations and student needs.

Student work needs more published and professional outlets.

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

Standard 6, Student Services

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

The advising system needs to be overhauled to reduce the burden on faculty and to make sure students are consistently getting the guidance they need to enroll in the classes required to graduate on time.

#### **4) In the case of a recommendation for provisional accreditation, list the deficiencies that must be corrected 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 that 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. N/A**

**7) The self-study is the heart of the accrediting process, and often the quality of that document determines the degree of success of the accrediting visit. Summarize the team members' judgment of the self-study.**

The self-study was notable for its clarity and efficiency, especially given this was a unit going forward with accreditation for the first time. It could serve as a model for others.