

Report of On-Site Evaluation

ACEJMC

Undergraduate program

2014–2015

Name of Institution: **American University in Dubai**

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: **Lance de Masi, Chief Executive Officer**

Name of Unit: **Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication**

Name and Title of Administrator: **Ali Jaber, Dean; Carol Melhem-Moufarrej, Associate Dean**

Date of 2014 - 2015 Accrediting Visit: **November 16-19, 2014**

Recommendation by 2014 - 2015 Visiting Team: **Accreditation**

Prepared and submitted by:

Team Chair

Name and Title: **Peter Bhatia**

Organization/School: **Gaylord Visiting Professor of Ethics, Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Arizona State University**

Signature

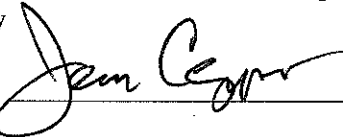


Team Members

Name and Title: **Jerry Ceppos**

Organization/School: **Dean, Manship School of Mass Communication, Louisiana State University**

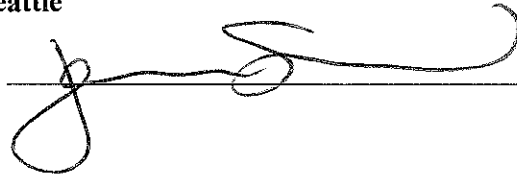
Signature



Name and Title: **Jennifer Sizemore**

Organization/School: **Vice President of Communication, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Seattle**

Signature



PART I: General information

Name of Institution : **American University in Dubai**

Name of Unit : **Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication**

Year of Visit : **2014-15**

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

If the unit seeking accreditation is located outside the United States, provide the name(s) of the appropriate recognition or accreditation entities:

Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA)
Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research (MOHESR), U.A.E.

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 American University in Dubai (AUD) is officially licensed by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research of the United Arab Emirates. The Ministry has accredited the university's programs in International Studies, Business Administration (both undergraduate and graduate), Communication and

Information Studies, Engineering, Architecture, Visual Communication and Interior Design, Education (graduate) and Construction Management (graduate), in addition to a Certificate program in Middle Eastern Studies.

UAE Ministry: PO Box 45133, Abu Dhabi, UAE; tel: +971-2-642-7772

The American University in Dubai (AUD) is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award Bachelor's and Master's degrees (see www.sacscoc.org). Contact the COC at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia, 30033 or call +1-404-679-4500 exclusively for matters specific to the accreditation of AUD.

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

Yes

No

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

N/A

6. Attach a copy of the unit's mission statement. Give date of adoption and/or last revision.

Program Mission

The Bachelor of Communication and Information Studies program at the American University in Dubai prepares practitioners and scholars to work in twenty-first century media. Graduates will be proficient in areas ranging from ethics and media policy to writing and production skills. They will be committed to providing the public with media content that meets local and regional needs and is global in outlook and standard.

Revisions approved by CAA, MOHESR on July 6, 2009.

Program Goals

- Possess sophisticated communication skills, in Arabic and English, including the ability to comprehend and comment upon news coverage, elements of media business, and social responsibility of media;
- Be proficient in storytelling using journalism, television, cinema and new media contexts;
- Understand the theoretical and practical elements of the broad historical, cultural, economic, and technological foundations of mass media;
- Appreciate the significance of ethical standards and behavior on the part of all institutions and individuals involved with mass media, including the public's responsibility to understand the role of

media and to wisely gather and disseminate information through the media;

- Relate media theory and practice to fields such as politics, economics, law, business, information science, and the liberal arts;
- Recognize the role of media as an element of individual and global cultures, with particular emphasis on respect for diversity related to race, gender, religion, ethnicity, and other personal characteristics and orientations.

School Mission

Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication seeks to take advantage of its location in the local and international media hub of Dubai to achieve distinction in scholarship, instruction and facilities that graduate media professionals who are proficient in the creation of media content of local, regional or global relevance. Such content, reflective of the highest ethical standards, embraces a multitude of subjects and platforms and effectively informs and/or entertains diverse consumers of media.

Approved by AUD Academic Council on June 17, 2014

SCHOOL GOALS

- Provide the opportunity for the creation of original content that is anchored in the students' native cultures and societies
- Graduate storytellers in various platforms whose proficiency is enhanced through a solid grounding in the art, history, culture and society of the Middle East and beyond
- Ensure that the programs offered by the School are continuously aligned with advancements in communication technologies and the employment needs of the local and global markets
- Support media-related research that contributes to the advancement of professional practice
- Enrich the experience of faculty and students by cultivating an environment that is tolerant and accepting of diverse nationalities and cultures.

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Semesters of 16 weeks

Quarters of _____ weeks

Summer sessions of 7 weeks

Intersessions of _____ 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. List the specific degrees being reviewed by ACEJMC. *Indicate online degrees.

Bachelor of Communication & Information Studies (BCIS), Major in Journalism (JOUR)
Bachelor of Communication & Information Studies (BCIS), Major in Digital Production & Storytelling (DPST)

10. Give the number of credit hours required by the university for graduation. Specify semester-hour or quarter-hour credit.

125 semester-hour credits

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

Three semester-hour credits

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

<u>Name of Sequence or Specialty</u>	<u>Person in Charge</u>
Sequence Digital Production & Storytelling	Nadia Eliewat
Sequence Journalism	Yasmine Bahrani

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

SCHOOL	FULL TIME UNDERGRADUATE FALL 2014	FULL TIME GRADUATE FALL 2014
School of Business Administration	888	57
School of Architecture, Art and Design	521	-
School of Arts and Sciences	96	-
Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication	212	-
School of Education		19
School of Engineering	361	9
Center for English Proficiency	165	-
Grand Total	2,243	85

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

<u>Name of Sequence or Specialty</u>	<u>Undergraduate majors</u>
Sequence Digital Production & Storytelling, English track	89
Sequence Digital Production & Storytelling, Arabic track	49
Sequence Journalism, English track	52
Sequence Journalism, Arabic track	51
Total	241

15. 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. Include a separate list for online courses.

CODE	SECTION	CLASS DESCRIPTION	Term	NO. OF STUDENTS
COMM221	A	Media Writing Skills	Fall 2014	10
COMM221	ARB	Media Writing Skills (Arabic)	Fall 2014	9
COMM223	A	Writing Fundamentals	Fall 2014	13
COMM223	ARB-A	Writing Fundamentals	Fall 2014	11
COMM223	B	Writing Fundamentals	Fall 2014	6
COMM231	A	Studio	Fall 2014	13
COMM231	B	Studio	Fall 2014	15
COMM231	D	Studio	Fall 2014	15
DPST209	C	Selected Topics: Studio II	Fall 2014	18
DPST340	A	Producing & Directing the Scene	Fall 2014	11
DPST340	ARB	Producing & Directing the Scene	Fall 2014	12
DPST340	B	Producing & Directing the Scene	Fall 2014	12
DPST422	A	Writing Drama	Fall 2014	13
DPST422	ARB	Writing Drama	Fall 2014	11
DPST441/ JOUR441	A/XA	The Documentary	Fall 2014	8
DPST441/ JOUR 441	ARB- AX/ARB-A	The Documentary	Fall 2014	9
DPST441/ JOUR 441	ARB- BX/ARB-B	The Documentary	Fall 2014	13
DPST441/ JOUR441	B/XB	The Documentary	Fall 2014	13
DPST461	ITA	Internship	Fall 2014	3
JOUR301	A	Visualizing News	Fall 2014	15
JOUR301	B	Visualizing News	Fall 2014	15
JOUR321	A	Reporting	Fall 2014	18
JOUR321	ARB	Reporting	Fall 2014	12
JOUR463	ITB	Internship	Fall 2014	4
TOTAL			Fall 2014	279

COMM102	A	Research Fundamentals	Spring 2014	21*
COMM102	B	Research Fundamentals	Spring 2014	20
COMM102	C	Research Fundamentals	Spring 2014	22*
COMM222	A	Multiplatform Storytelling	Spring 2014	15
COMM222	ARB	Multiplatform Storytelling (Arabic)	Spring 2014	12
COMM241	A	Introduction to Production	Spring 2014	8
COMM102	A	Research Fundamentals	Spring 2014	21*
COMM102	B	Research Fundamentals	Spring 2014	20
COMM102	C	Research Fundamentals	Spring 2014	22*
COMM222	A	Multiplatform Storytelling	Spring 2014	15
COMM222	ARB	Multiplatform Storytelling (Arabic)	Spring 2014	12
COMM241	A	Introduction to Production	Spring 2014	8
COMM241	ARB-A	Introduction to Production	Spring 2014	6
COMM241	ARB-B	Introduction to Production	Spring 2014	5
COMM241	B	Introduction to Production	Spring 2014	12
DPST302	A	Media and Public Service	Spring 2014	14
DPST302	B	Media and Public Service	Spring 2014	17
DPST342	A	Producing and Directing Comedy	Spring 2014	14
DPST342	ARB	Producing and Directing Comedy	Spring 2014	10
DPST444	A	Producing and Directing Drama	Spring 2014	14
DPST444	ARB	Producing and Directing Drama	Spring 2014	12
DPST444	B	Producing and Directing Drama	Spring 2014	9
DPST461	ITA	Internship	Spring 2014	2
DPST461	ITB	Internship	Spring 2014	4
DPST461	ITC	Internship	Spring 2014	2
JOUR302	A	Newsroom Management And Decision Making	Spring 2014	20
JOUR322	A	Advanced Reporting	Spring 2014	10
JOUR322	ARB	Advanced Reporting	Spring 2014	12
JOUR462	A	Capstone Project	Spring 2014	14
JOUR462	ARB-A	Capstone Project	Spring 2014	7
JOUR462	ARB-B	Capstone Project	Spring 2014	11
JOUR463	ITA	Internship	Spring 2014	5
JOUR463	ITB	Internship	Spring 2014	1
TOTAL			Spring 2014	299

* Overloaded two sections exceptionally in Spring 2014 to accommodate for the three extra students

16. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2014 – 2015 academic year:

US \$1,103,229* (AED 4,048,847)

This includes Approved budget plus faculty and staff expenditures, plus vacation tickets, dependents school fees, accrued gratuity, and medical insurance. Not included is the overhead which is 9% of total AUD expenditures which comes to US \$4,087,194 (AED 15,000,000).

Percentage increase or decrease in three years:

ACTUAL 2011-2012	ACTUAL 2012-2013	ACTUAL 2013-2014	BUDGET 2014-2015
US \$110,408 (AED 405,195)	US \$134,712 (AED 494,393)	US \$219,296 (AED 804,813)	US \$329,481 (AED 1,209,193)
	22%	63%	50%

US \$1= AED 3.67

Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries: US \$401,096 (AED 1,472,022)
(not including faculty expenditures which is estimated to be US \$92,643 (AED 340,000))

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

<u>Name of FT faculty</u>	<u>Rank</u>
Nadia Eliewat	Associate Professor
Bradley Freeman	Associate Professor
Fadi Haddad	Assistant Professor
Sumaya Kubeisy	Assistant Professor
Yasmine Bahrani	Assistant Professor
Roosbeh Kafi	Assistant Professor
Carol Melhem-Moufarrej	Assistant Professor

18. **List names of part-time/adjunct faculty teaching at least one course in fall 2014. Also list names of part-time faculty teaching spring 2014. (If your school has its accreditation visit in spring 2015, please provide the updated list of faculty at time of visit.)**

Name of PT faculty	Spring 20114	Fall 2014
Hafidh Al Thani	X	
Sylvie Briand	X	X
Maya Hojeij	X	X
Dima Khatib	X	
Sumaya Kubeisy	X	
Mohammad Al Odadi	X	
Rania Balatagi		X
Rakesh Kumar		X

19. **Schools on the semester system:**

For each of the last two academic years, please give the number and percentage of graduates who earned 72 or more semester hours outside of journalism and mass communications.

72 or more semester hours outside of journalism and mass communications

Year	Graduates	Total Number *	Percent
2013-2014 academic year	59	2	3%
2012-2013 academic year	46	1	2%

* Students in this category enrolled prior to change of curriculum in 2009.

PART II — Standard 1: Mission, Governance and Administration

The policies and practices of the unit ensure that it has an effectively and fairly administered working and learning environment.

The American University in Dubai is a young university, founded in 1995. It is a private, non-sectarian institution and relies on tuition to fund its operations. AUD's enrollment in 2013-14 was at about 2,700 students. More than a hundred nationalities are represented in its student body. A bachelor's degree in Communication and Information Studies was first offered in 2007. The program was originally the Communication and Information Studies Program and offered two concentrations: one in Radio, Television, and Cinema, and one in Journalism.

Today, there are 241 students enrolled in the School (full- and part-time) and the two majors are Journalism, and Digital Production and Storytelling. The latter remains focused on film and broadcast creation and production. Enrollment in the School has grown steadily through the years but has leveled in the last two. This is welcome because there is a small faculty (six, and the Associate Dean, who teaches two courses a year, with one new faculty member on the way). There are plans for an executive master's program.

In 2008, the academic unit was renamed the Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication (after Dubai's ruler) with his support and Ali Jaber was appointed Dean of the School. The School has twice revised its curriculum to bring it in line with ACEJMC standards. A revision in 2009 was done with the collaboration of the Annenberg School and School of Cinematic Arts at the University of Southern California and received the endorsement of the Commission for Academic Accreditation of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, which is the national accrediting body of the United Arab Emirates.. Two USC faculty members serve on the School's advisory board. A revision this fall brought the curriculum into line with ACEJMC's 72-hours-outside-the major guideline and increased the number of hours in the major to 53. Parts of the revision are still to be approved by the University.

The University offers a Western-style education. The School offers tracks in English and Arabic with a strong focus on the evolving media world and the Middle East. The foundation named for the ruler provides significant scholarship support to the University and School for students pursuing the Arabic track, designed to create opportunities for good students from the UAE and around the Middle East to be able to afford AUD. The goal is to create more accomplished Arab journalists, badly needed as Arab media grow and thrive. In fact, this is the School's primary effort around diversity – it is creating socioeconomic and cultural diversity as compared to the ethnic diversity more commonly sought in the U.S.

The School is committed to graduating media professionals who are trained to work ethically in the Arab region and beyond. The School teaches the American First Amendment and sensitizes its students to the fact that freedom of expression may not be similar to what it is in the United States. Students are taught how to strike a balance between the principles and laws of the country (as stated in ACEJMC's core competencies) and balanced, accurate and fair coverage. Students praise the School and the faculty for the teaching they receive. As one put it: Students have the opportunity to be "living their dream" at the School.

The University is located proximate to Dubai's bustling Media City, a tax-advantaged center of hundreds of global and regional media companies, creating close-by job opportunities for its graduates.

The University is accredited by SACS.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

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

The University has an extensive strategic planning process with which the School is actively involved. The University plan is on a five-year cycle, with annual evaluations that result in updated strategic priorities for the University. The School reviews its achievements each February and issues a report. When the University updates its strategic priorities, the Associate Dean does the same for the School. Its goals are always aligned with the University's and take into account suggestions from the School's advisory board.

Here are the School's current program and overall mission and goals:

Program mission

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- Ensure that the programs offered by the School are continuously aligned with advancement in communication technologies and the employment needs of the local and global markets
- Support media-related research that contributes to the advancement of professional practice
- Enrich the experience of faculty and students by cultivating an environment that is tolerant and accepting of diverse nationalities and cultures

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

Faculty members are actively involved in the academic programs of the School as it pertains to curriculum, admissions policies, assessment and academic policies. Faculty lead three standing committees, for curriculum, the School's annual Short Film Festival and the task force that worked on the self-study for this accreditation process. Program changes (new courses, course changes, course retirements, prerequisite changes, catalog description changes, etc.) are reviewed by the Curriculum Committee before they go through the University process.

Faculty meetings and department meetings (including staff) occur regularly. Six faculty meetings and five departmental meetings took place during the 2013-14 academic year.

(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 School has a unique leadership structure. The Dean is also Group TV director for the Middle East Broadcasting Network, the Arab world's largest satellite broadcaster. He is widely known and a charismatic media figure in the Middle East, and is widely credited with the Dubai ruler's willingness to lend his name to the School, providing it with instant credibility in the region. He is involved with setting the School's direction and is a regular representative of the School at public events. He was instrumental in creating the School's Global Classroom, which uses Cisco technology to create superior learning opportunities for students with teachers from the U.S.

The day-to-day operations of the School are run by the much-revered Associate Dean. Students and faculty alike give her credit for her hard work, fairness and dedication to the School. She develops the School's strategic goals and shepherds the annual budget process. She oversees faculty performance and evaluation and develops curricular updates. She chairs faculty and departmental meetings and is the School's representative on the University's decision-making Academic Council and any other bodies that require the heads of academic units. She handles any student or faculty appeals, requests and complaints. While she reports to the Dean, she and the Dean also report to the Provost and Chief Academic Officer. She is the primary contact with the University's central administration.

By all accounts, this unusual arrangement has worked to the School's advantage. You could say the Dean is focused on the outside, concerned with building the School in the wider landscape of Dubai and the Middle East. The Associate Dean is focused on the inside, working to create the best experience for the students, faculty and staff of the School and moving it forward academically.

As one faculty member put it, the Associate Dean "is very attentive, always available. (The Dean's) role is useful in many ways. He gives the school credibility. He always has something to add (in discussions about the school). His contributions are not frequent, but "his input is always very useful and eye-opening."

The Provost is supportive of the School and sees a "much brighter future because of (its) enthusiasm and dynamism." The School, because of its unique set-up and relative youth, has been allowed more leeway than other University schools. For example, faculty hiring and curriculum change are often off-cycle from the University, and senior administration has been accommodating. Nonetheless, the Provost expressed some frustration that the School could not more closely follow University process. The Provost has also asked the School to seek more balance in hiring between Ph.D.s and professionals. This was requested by the UAE accrediting body, which the University said it would heed.

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

Performance reviews take place every November for all faculty and staff.

For the Dean and Associate Dean, the process involves first completing a "Part I" document detailing the objectives, managerial and academic services work they have accomplished in the past year. "Part

It is then completed by the person to whom the administrator reports. The Provost evaluates the Dean; the Dean evaluates the Associate Dean. Both received the best possible reviews in the last cycle.

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

Grievance procedures are outlined in the University's faculty and student handbooks. Nonetheless, most student complaints (usually about grades) go through the Associate Dean and are handled informally to keep the process out of writing.

Faculty concerns related to academic issues often find their way into the assessment process and lead to budget for additional resources or course changes that require working through University process. Some issues are resolved in faculty meetings. One such led to staggering of due dates on projects for different classes to better balance the equipment load (although students feel more could be done).

On issues related to learning in the classroom, the Associate Dean likely will meet with the faculty member involved and may document agreed-to corrective action via e-mail.

SUMMARY: While its governance system may seem unusual, it appears to be working quite successfully for the advancement of the School and the quality of the faculty and student experience.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:

COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

The unit provides 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 global and domestic society.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(a) The unit requires that students take a minimum of 72 semester credit hours (or 104 quarter credit hours) required for a baccalaureate degree outside of journalism and mass communications and meet the liberal arts and sciences-general education requirements of the institution.

The Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication emphasizes “the art of storytelling, the importance of digitization and globalization and the importance of audience.” Its majors are Journalism and Digital Production and Storytelling, both of which offer tracks in English and Arabic and both of which culminate in a Bachelor of Communication and Information Studies degree. Digital Production and Storytelling seems to attract students who are interested in film and TV production. The Arab-language track appears to draw students who want to give more of a sense of place to news and other information in the Arab world and to those who think that the Arab-language job market is about to boom. English is the language of instruction at the University. The team was struck by the number of times that students and faculty members mentioned that the classroom is a safe haven to discuss controversial issues.

Until Fall 2014, the School required that 81 of the required 125 credit hours be taken outside of the school. Beginning in Fall 2014, the requirement, in line with ACEJMC changes, is that 72 hours be taken outside of the School.

(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.

A number of courses provide a balance between theoretical and conceptual issues, professional skills and courses that integrate theory and skills. Probably most interesting is Ethical and Legal Responsibilities in the Mass Media, in which students are taught about freedom of speech under the UAE constitution and the much broader guarantees of the U.S. First Amendment. Other required courses fulfilling the balance between theoretical and conceptual issues are Introduction to Global Media, Media Culture and Society, Media Economics and Research, and Media and Politics in the Middle East.

Upper-division courses stress production aesthetics, which several alumni said were weak when the school began. The courses stress “aesthetics” such as directing actors, producing, filming, recording sound, production design and editing.

Students are encouraged to take a minor outside of the School; they may choose from 10 electives. One popular choice is the multi-disciplinary Middle Eastern Studies (which also is offered as a certificate). Students may take a minor within the School -- such as a Journalism student minoring in Digital Production and Storytelling -- only if they take more than the required 125 credits; such a minor obviously cannot count in the 72 credits required outside of the School.

(c) Instruction, whether onsite or online, is demanding and current; and is responsive to professional expectations of digital, technological and multimedia competencies. Achievements in teaching and learning are recognized and valued. (If the unit has more than one sequence, address the quality of instruction by sequence.)

The School stresses digital production in several ways, notably the Digital Production and Storytelling sequence. In all, the School covers digital issues in at least eight courses in its Core Communication program, in Journalism and in Digital Production and Storytelling. The School offers numerous student awards during a dinner every year. There are no online courses offered.

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

Student-faculty ratios in lab sections average far below 20 students.

(e) The unit advocates and encourages opportunities for internship and other professional experiences outside the classroom and supervises and evaluates them when it awards academic credit. Schools 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).

The School requires an internship, supervised by a faculty member. Students earn three credit hours for their internship, which must be approved by a faculty member. During the internship, the student is required to regularly update the faculty member on progress, keep a daily journal, write weekly reports and submit a final report. The journal lists all assignments and tasks the interns performed each day. The weekly reports specify what students have learned during the week and any issues and challenges, including ethical issues, they faced. The final report details major assignments and provides a brief evaluation of the experience. The faculty member issues a pass or fail grade.

SUMMARY: The School offers an up-to-date curriculum with the huge added advantage of English- and Arabic-language tracks in both programs, Journalism and Digital Production and Storytelling. Students seem attracted to the Arab-language track so that they can give more of a sense of place to Arab media that have become westernized -- and so that they can be in the rare minority of professional communicators who speak Arabic.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:

COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 3: Diversity and Inclusiveness

The unit has an inclusive program that values domestic and global diversity, and serves and reflects society.

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 diversity plan should focus on domestic minority groups and, where applicable, international groups. The written plan must include the unit's definition of diversity and identify the under-represented groups.

The Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication does not have a written diversity plan.

It also explicitly diverges from ACEJMC's definition of diversity as including racial diversity. The School views the concept of minority as based on differences in socio-economic status, nationality and cultural background, and not race. It says:

“Defining diversity to include race is a Northern American centric concept. The MBRSC strives for an inclusive communal environment. Diversity at the MBRSC means students and faculty from different nationalities, genders, religions, ethnic backgrounds, and socio-economic status freely share their points of view and fostering tolerance and equity among community members. The MBRSC strives to foster a Middle Eastern Arabic focus in addition to a Western perspective in understanding media and storytelling. The diversity that the MBRSC seeks is in its student body and in fostering various perspectives in understanding media. The School's goal for achieving such diversity is reflected in the curriculum, faculty, and student body.”

While this is a different definition than what most American universities understand as diversity, it is entirely appropriate for this University and permeates its student population. In short, diversity of culture, religion, nationality and socio-economic status is at the School's core. As one female student wearing full head covering, bejeweled glasses and a Mick Jagger T-shirt put it, “They are teaching us not to just think from one point of view. ... Though we might be from Morocco, Lebanon and Egypt, that makes it really rich. We have different ideas but we all speak the same language -- humanity.” Though the school doesn't have a written plan, it does have an end-to-end commitment to diversity as part of its core operating principles. This is exhibited through:

A student body that is more diverse than its community: The School's students appear to have a larger concentration of Arab, non-Gulf Coast Countries nationals than that in the overall AUD undergraduate population. This may be because the School is the only school at AUD that offers the Arabic track option. The variety of nations represented is impressive and instructive: Nations that aren't the best of friends in the region have representatives in this student body who have integrated with each other to learn together, collaborate and even live together. The students are also from a broad spectrum of cultural backgrounds; completely covered women mix in class with women in shorts and tank tops, and men. A faculty member went so far as to describe the diversity as “nearly schizophrenic,” suggesting that the variety of perspectives in a classroom freed students from previous cultural constraints to have “safe” debates and create projects, together, on previously taboo subjects. A student said, “We have a platform of freedom. We can talk about anything we want. Don't insult people, but you

can criticize in a sophisticated and professional way. We're learning how to protest – without our freedom of expression taken away.” *The efforts that foster this student community are outlined in Indicator D.*

A faculty that is more diverse than its community: For similar reasons, the proportion of the School's full-time faculty members who are Arab non-GCC nationals (67 percent) is higher than that found among the UAE faculty population (31 percent) and AUD (24 percent). Iranian, Jordanian and Lebanese professors team-teach a documentary course. *The efforts that foster this faculty makeup are outlined in Indicator C.*

A curriculum focused on injecting the Middle Eastern sensibilities and sensitivities into the foundational courses: The degree's sixth program goal is to prepare its graduates to value differences among race, gender, religion, ethnicity, or personal characteristics. The faculty have endless tales of class projects that bridge divides and change opinions among the students. Class visits revealed a willingness to discuss, among other things, changing societal perceptions of homosexuality. Students easily challenged and questioned each other, unconstrained by gender norms. All of the degree's core courses dedicate class time to highlighting the Middle Eastern dimension of the subject that is being taught. The syllabi of many Core Communication courses support the School's plan to incorporate the Middle Eastern focus. During their four years of study, students are also required to take at least three courses (nine credit hours) in Middle Eastern Studies. *This is further detailed in Indicator B.*

(b) The unit's curriculum fosters understanding of issues and perspectives that are inclusive in terms of gender, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation. The unit's curriculum includes instruction in issues and perspectives relating to mass communications across diverse cultures in a global society.

The curriculum is steeped in global issues and perspectives as they pertain to social justice, society and communication.

All of the School's students are required to take two World Culture courses, which provide exposure to the culture, art, religions and literary works in the context of the period in which they existed.

In addition to the required Middle Eastern Studies courses, the School's students can choose to take six courses (18 credit hours) from a wide array of subjects in the humanities, arts, history, and social sciences offered by the School of Arts and Sciences. These courses address issues that pertain to gender, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.

In the School, students are encouraged to work on any story of interest to them without limitation. Many short films or documentary projects wrestle with issues of gender, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. The self-study reports that some of the most recent projects include subjects such as arranged marriages, prayer, veiling, and racism. One faculty member talked about two documentary projects that were recently explored in her production class: arranged marriage and the need for sex education. She cited these as an example for how the School and the classroom are “safe places” for students to explore issues they haven't been allowed to even speak of before. Another professor talked about how one of her most conservative female students produced a capstone video about how a conservative woman went to college determined to not make friends – or assimilate in any way – and ended up with a good friend from a very different background. The faculty as a group agreed that this production was one of the best of the group.

“Introduction to Global Media” covers the history and operations of the media creating the social, cultural, and economic context that defined the period in which media emerged and spread. “Media, Culture, and Society” covers the theories and controversies surrounding media as well as its complex and multifaceted relationships with cultures and societies.

“Ethical & Legal Responsibilities of the Mass Media” highlights case studies that evaluate ethical and legal issues from local, cultural and religious perspectives. This is the forum for discussing the power of dominant cultural and religious beliefs in the region in imposing self-regulation and censorship. The students are taught the boundaries that will keep them safe even as they learn about the power of the First Amendment and what that means to journalism and free speech elsewhere.

Writing and video storytelling courses focus on both fiction and non-fiction techniques. Fiction work isn’t all that common in a communications/journalism program, but the deans and faculty talk about how exploring sensitive issues in a fictionalized format allows students to learn and stretch and understand others’ points of view and unspoken topics in a safe way. The faculty and students say they often choose to work on topics that relate to cultural and social conflicts, issues of injustice, cultural diversity, and religious differences. As the self-study states, “Through scrutiny and having to retell the stories, students learn about the cultural, religious, and gender prejudices ingrained in the environments in which they live.”

In a variety of other courses, students learn that people view the world differently depending on where they come from – nationality, ethnicity, religion, gender, education, etc. They are taught to understand perspective and tailor messages to target audiences. An online communities course focuses on mindfulness of others’ belief systems and world views. Student projects on socio-cultural topics called out in the self-study include prayer, child abuse, racism, bystander effect, autism, divorce, sexually transmitted diseases, and smoking shisha.

(c) The unit demonstrates effective efforts to recruit women and domestic minority faculty and professional staff and, where feasible, recruits international faculty and professional staff.

The faculty is 50-50 male to female. Most are Arab nationals because they cover the Arabic track options for both majors. The Associate Dean in charge of hiring is a woman who works hard to ensure an inclusive environment. In Dubai, Emirati are the minority of the workforce; the School doesn’t have faculty who are Dubai native. In academic year 2013-2014 the School had only six full-time instructors, not counting the Associate Dean, who teaches; they come from a variety of universities and backgrounds. Half have degrees from U.S. institutions; half from other countries.

The Associate Dean gets high marks from faculty for being fair and respectful, listening well, approaching challenges in a methodical and structured way and being amazingly supportive of faculty. She gets credit for diverse recruitment, retention and faculty satisfaction.

For adjunct instructors, the School has more Emirati, more GCC national, and more Arab national adjunct instructors in comparison to the makeup of the full- and part-time faculty population in the UAE. The proportion of female adjunct instructors is comparable to the UAE faculty population.

In addition to hiring female adjunct faculty, the School exposes students to female and Emirati professionals as guest speakers and presenters at a biweekly event called Media Chat, which the students both attend and cover as an assignment.

(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.

AUD's mission is to serve a student population diverse in gender, nationality, and culture. Dubai is a highly international and diverse city; approximately 88 percent of the population is from foreign nationalities. AUD is appealing to the needs of a student population as diverse as the pool from which it is drawn. The University student body reflects this diversity with more than 100 nationalities represented; 34 nationalities were in the School's population in spring 2014.

The School believes that it is equally important to offer access to education to students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. The Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication Scholarship Program, funded fully by the government (the only government funding the School receives), provides full tuition waivers to students who couldn't afford it, from all over the Middle East (Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE, and Yemen). North Africa and West Asia. The School has secured on average AED 8 million (roughly \$2.25 million) to cover approximately 100 students every year. Students keep their scholarships until they graduate if they maintain requisite minimums. Other expenses like visa renewal and housing can also be provided. The scholarship program, in place since 2009, means approximately 40 percent of the School's student body is on scholarship.

The Admissions Office makes a special effort to increase recruitment from high schools in the region, based on diversity goals. The office:

- Goes on site visits in the UAE to meet with administrators and counselors
- Holds an on-campus day for high school students annually; the School's offering and facilities are included in the program
- Holds annual workshops for high school counselors

The School is majority female and in its efforts to boost its male population, gives special attention to all-male high schools to boost male enrollment in the School.

(e) The unit has a climate that is free of harassment and 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.

The self-study reports that the School has students who are dyslexic, autistic, or suffer from Attention Deficit Disorder. Measures to accommodate special learning needs including splitting tests into two parts. The AUD faculty handbook codifies that the AUD fosters an environment where students with disabilities are welcomed and integrated. The AUD campus is fully accessible to students in wheelchairs.

The completion survey results of 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 BCIS graduates indicate that they perceive that cultural diversity is AUD's greatest strength.

SUMMARY:

The self-study states:

“The School has to continue its efforts to retain faculty members who prove to be valuable to the program. It remains committed to investing time and effort to attract additional male students and additional Emirati candidates by working closely with the Admission Office.” It would be advisable to codify in a documented plan some of the goals and results of the current work in order to track the progress in the coming years, as well as to comply with the ACEJMC standard.

But while such challenges exist, both the commitment to and the reality of diversity at the School is nothing short of impressive. While as one faculty member said, “In a nutshell, that’s Dubai. People, in general, coexist. That applies here as well.” The inclusive atmosphere, outreach efforts, supportive mentoring and general openness of the School nurture that ongoing coexistence.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:

COMPLIANCE

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

The unit hires, supports and evaluates a capable faculty with a balance of academic and professional credentials appropriate for the unit's mission.

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 Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication is professionally oriented; two of seven full-time faculty members at the time of the self-study (including the Associate Dean, who teaches two courses each spring) held Ph.D.s, three have MFAs and two have a master's degree. Technically, the UAE ministry that accredits private universities requires faculty to hold Ph.D.s. But exemptions can be granted with evidence of significant professional experience and the two Master's-holding faculty have received them. Hiring of adjunct professional faculty is permitted if a faculty member holding a terminal degree serves as instructor of record and provides oversight. Senior administration has supported these hiring practices, although the Provost expressed some frustration with the frequency and timing of the requests. (The School also is accredited by SACS, which has its own emphasis toward terminal degrees but also permits considerable flexibility in credentialing of faculty.)

Interestingly, like many other Middle Eastern institutions, the University does not grant tenure because of residency restrictions. This is likely to result in some turnover. (Three of the School's seven full-time faculty members – again counting the Associate Dean as one of the seven -- were new in the 2014-15 school year.) The School has hired an eighth full-time faculty member for the 2015-16 year. Teaching contracts generally are for three years at first, then are open.

Hiring is not easy because most faculty members need experience in the Middle East “because most textbooks discuss only media in the West,” according to a hiring summary. In addition, the popularity of the School's Arab-language track -- and the need for Arab-language writers -- makes a compelling case for hiring bilingual faculty members. The provost interviews every full-time teaching candidate for the entire University.

Full-time and part-time faculty members are evaluated annually on teaching, research and service. Raises are based on the evaluation. The criteria are in writing.

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

Full-time faculty members do have primary responsibility for teaching, research and service, though their teaching load is high by U.S. standards – 12 credit hours each in fall and spring and six credit hours during the summer (or 4/4/2).

(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.

Professional knowledge appears current, particularly given that one sequence is called Digital Production and Story Telling. The Dean remains Group TV director of the Middle East Broadcasting Corp, the Arab world's largest satellite TV producer. The Associate Dean is working on a breast-cancer

awareness project among youth. A faculty member edited a feature film, “The Curve,” in 2013 and wrote, directed and edited a romantic comedy, “When Monaliza Smiled,” in 2012. Another faculty member was its producer. The film premiered at the Dubai International Film festival and was shown at various other film festivals around the world. The two faculty members were honored with the AUD Provost’s Annual Award for Creativity in Design and Visual Arts in 2013.

Three faculty members produced a promotional video for the School. Another had an opinion piece posted in August 2014 by the Washington Post.

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

As mentioned above, the School does evaluate teaching; promotion and raises depend very much on teaching evaluations. One interesting element is that most teaching is weighted at 80 percent, with scholarly contribution and community service weighted at 10 percent each.

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

Other units on campus appear to appreciate the intelligence of the School’s students. In addition, the fact that the School is named for the ruler of Dubai carries great weight in many circles.

SUMMARY: The hard-working faculty at AUD carries a heavy load compared to American colleagues, but still has the strong support of its students. Residency rules in Dubai make faculty turnover a recurring reality.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:

COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 5: Scholarship: Research, Creative and Professional Activity

With unit support, faculty members contribute to the advancement of scholarly and professional knowledge and engage in scholarship (research, creative and professional activity) that contributes to their development.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(a) The unit requires, supports and rewards faculty research, creative activity and/or professional activity.

While teaching is the primary goal of the University -- with 80 percent of most faculty evaluations based on teaching -- the University's governing board has committed to supporting research and creative and professional activity since 2013. In the case of the Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication, most of that is "professional and creative work such as film, fiction and writing about news rather than academic research," which is in accordance with the School's mission. Faculty members may apply for release time to produce such work; if it is awarded, the portion of their evaluation devoted to teaching drops to 60 percent and the portion devoted to research climbs to 30 percent from 10 percent.

The School counts 84 scholarly or creative works from the creation of the School in fall 2007 to the completion of the report. Two were in refereed journals. Two were in refereed conference papers. None were in invited academic papers. The vast majority came from work generated by grants to faculty to give presentations, train workshop participants, be panelists or jury members, attend workshops, write for online newspapers, etc.

The School's faculty is very active in professional and creative work. One faculty member recently wrote a 15-episode TV series telling the story of five siblings and their families dealing with the sudden coma of the siblings' mother. Another faculty member is in the midst of co-writing and producing a feature film to be shot next summer. She and her co-writer/director have secured funding for the project.

From June 13 to 15, 2015, the School will host the 24th international conference of the Asian Media Information and Communication Centre with a meeting about "communicating in e-Asia: values, technologies and challenges."

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

Faculty promotion takes into account research or creative activity. The School specifies that it hopes to have at least one research, creative or professional project completed by each faculty member per academic year.

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

As mentioned, 60 to 80 percent of the weight of evaluations is based on teaching; 10 to 30 percent is based on research or creative activity and 10 percent is based on service.

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.

Faculty members will discuss conferences and other research opportunities at faculty meetings, distribute e-mails about them or talk to colleagues individually.

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

Almost every student and faculty member agreed that the classroom is a safe haven for discussing controversial subjects. Likewise, research has taken on complicated or geocentric subjects such as the difficulty of distributing films in the Arab world, Arab women and freedom of media, breast-cancer awareness among youth, and the ethics of health advertising in the Arab world.

SUMMARY: Although teaching is the primary purpose of the University, accrediting standards require some degree of scholarship. With only two of 84 works in refereed journals, two refereed conference papers and no invited academic papers, the School does not meet those standards.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:

NON-COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 6: Student Services

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

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.

All enrolled Bachelor of Communication and Information Studies students who have not completed 60 credits cannot register until they meet with their academic adviser. An admission coordinator registers students for their first semester. Undergraduate students with fewer than 60 hours receive advising from the School's trained program-dedicated academic adviser in the University's Academic Advising Center, which opened in early 2009 to address student and faculty concerns about the academic advising in academic units. Advising sessions consist of course selection, information about University policies and program-specific degree requirements. Students are assisted in developing individual education plans, and professional goals are discussed. Academic advisers keep records of the courses that they advise the students to take every semester. This information is available to faculty upon request.

After a student earns 60 credit hours, the Registrar assigns a Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication faculty adviser to each student. Any modification that the School's junior and senior students want to make to their updated study plan requires the approval of the faculty adviser or the Associate Dean. Students are encouraged to maintain close contact with their faculty adviser for help in choosing electives, a minor, and an internship.

Students were extremely positive about the support they get from both the Advising Center and the faculty advisers. They said the advising function is exceptionally helpful in getting them timely information and is vital to helping them find and register for the right classes: "They are always there for us."

The University also has a personal counselor who is a resource to any student who needs that service. She is in the College of Arts & Sciences and is on the same floor as the School. She is not only available for counseling; she also often appears as an expert source in student video stories. Some students have brought their families in for counseling sessions after meeting with her one-on-one.

(b) Faculty are available and accessible to students.

The Associate Dean and all School faculty are required to hold 10 office hours per week, which are updated every semester based on their teaching schedules; they are also available to students by appointment or on a walk-in basis. The office hours as well as the faculty member's email address and office phone number are included in the course syllabus that is distributed to students on the first day of class.

As one faculty member put it, "[Students] don't know office hours." The students said it this way: "They are always there for us. They will help with equipment, with anything. And we can always talk one-to-one ... That's how they know us: The faculty know us one-by-one." Across the board, students said faculty are also responsive by email, and the adjuncts give out their phone numbers -- and actually answer the phone when they call, the students marveled -- since they're not around campus as reliably.

Several students mentioned how much they appreciate the Associate Dean taking the time to send emails alerting the students to classes outside the School that will help them in their major -- classes they wouldn't have known about without her advice and that turned out to be helpful.

“The faculty look after our needs and they listen,” summed up one student.

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

Communications of note and announcements for the School's students are usually done via email. The AUD website links to the School's social media, where activities are also communicated. For major policy changes, the School calls for a meeting with all students to brief them about the changes and the reasons behind them, and to address their concerns.

Details about events or important policies or procedures are posted on the announcement board next to the administrative assistant's office or on the doors of the faculty offices and that of Associate Dean.

(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.

The University Career Services Office is part of the Office of Student Services. Enrolled students are encouraged to register with the office as soon as they join the University. The Career Services Office arranges talks by representatives from prominent companies who inform students about career opportunities in their firms. It also organizes regular workshops preparing juniors and seniors for the job-application process. The AUD Career Fair, “ACT Now: AUD Careers Today,” is an annual event organized by the Career Services Office in March: Employers set up information booths, advertise vacancies, collect CVs and interview potential candidates. Key personnel from participating companies also offer workshops on a range of career-related topics for students. Seventy companies participated in the most recent Career Fair.

Students said that Student Services “does a really good job at telling us about internships and being helpful.”

The MBRSC Post, the Student Short Film festival, and the Media Chat are major platforms administered and supervised by the School and provide opportunities for the School's students to develop their skills and competencies at a professional level. The online newspaper is run by students and supervised by a full-time Journalism faculty member.

(e) The accredited unit must gather, maintain and analyze enrollment, retention, graduation rates and other aggregate information for improving student services and reducing barriers to student success. The unit regularly publishes retention and graduation information on its website

The Registrar's Office provides enrollment data at the end of every semester. The data does not distinguish between transfer and non-transfer students. The Associate Dean analyzes the data and updates the enrollment and retention statistics on the University website.

The low percentage of returning sophomores is explained as a result of the fact that many first-year students take more than one academic year to achieve sophomore status because they take developmental courses. Many of these students make up for the initial slow progress by enrolling in

several summer terms. By year four of their studies, the discrepancy in achieving senior status disappears. Therefore, the percentage of seniors who graduate is above 100 percent because the number of students who graduate in a specific year is always higher than the number of students with junior status in the preceding year.

The retention rate appears to fluctuate and is not fully understood. Increasing enrollment and tracking data based on total numbers rather than individuals hamper that understanding.

Throughout their studies at AUD, students must maintain a CGPA of 2.0. If the CGPA drops below 2.0, the student is placed on Academic Warning at the end of the term and given one term to get the CGPA back to 2.0 or higher. If the student fails to do so, he or she will be put on Academic Probation for one term. If at the end of the term, the student's CGPA continues to be below 2.0, the student is put on Academic Suspension for one term. Reduced course loads are the first step back to good standing but if upon attempting a full load, the CGPA is back below 2.0, the student is dismissed.

A Student Support Manager works with those on probation to establish a plan and assist in registering for classes. A useful service from the Student Support Manager is the connecting of peer tutors and advisers with academically struggling students. The practical knowledge the peers can share is meant to help struggling students understand and better exploit campus resources.

SUMMARY: Services available to students range from required academic advising to career and internship support. The official offices for these services are lauded by students, as are the availability and support of the faculty. There seems to be no dearth of internal communication within the School, and the faculty, led by the example of the Associate Dean, are accessible, friendly and supportive. Retention is a bit difficult to evaluate in such a young program, but all the data is being tracked and analyzed and University-wide programs to aid academically challenged students are in place. Alumni programs are a mere two years old but alumni report staying connected with the School and with the Associate Dean, personally; alumni events are announced by email.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:

COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 7: Resources, Facilities and Equipment

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

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(a) The unit has a detailed annual budget for the allocation of its resources that is related to its long-range, strategic plan.

The School's annual budget is based on its five-year Strategic Plan. The budget is detailed and as one would expect, is dominated by personnel expenses. The budget has remained essentially flat for the past couple of years, which is commensurate with its enrollment numbers trend.

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

The Mohammed Bin Rashid School for Communication has sufficient office space, classrooms, computer labs, and equipment to meet the needs of students, faculty and staff. The building is only about five years old and the facilities are pristine (if kept Artic-cold by an excess of air conditioning).

Differences in mission, history, program design and instructional needs make it difficult to directly compare the School's resources with other units. However, other professionally oriented units that require technological facilities and equipment have similar enrollment, faculty size and operating budgets.

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

The School is currently housed in the five-year-old C-building; the classrooms have "daylight" lighting, and the building meets the highest standards of construction, according to the self-study.

Each faculty member has a large private office, with up-to-date office furniture and accessories. Each office has access to the Internet, and a workstation, either Mac or PC.

In 2014-15, the School reports that it has adequate equipment for student use, provided check-out is administered correctly. Given that high demand for equipment is sometimes a problem during peak periods, mainly over the spring semester, the School is working on a more robust checkout system. Senior capstone projects will be required to be produced in groups whenever possible. *(More on this in Indicator D)*

As the School's enrollment rates indicate, the School is growing and will require one additional faculty office in the near future. Some reshuffling of staff should make this possible in the short term. In the long term, the School has plans to have its own building. Those plans are still on the books and land has been secured; at the moment there is no start date for design and construction.

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

The School has the industry-standard equipment that prepares Bachelor of Communication and Information Studies students to operate technology they will encounter in the professional field:

1. Professional camera kits that include light and sound equipment
2. Two labs, with a total of 38 Mac computers equipped with Final Cut Pro and Avid Media Composer
3. Six individual editing suites with Final Cut Pro
4. TV production Control Room equipped with a vision mixer, a sound mixer, a lighting console, a character generator station, a prompter station, digital recorders, and a multi-frame monitor
5. Studio equipped with 3 cameras, a prompter, state-of-the-art lighting system, in addition to a cyclorama, and blue and a green screen.
6. Cisco TelePresence 3210 technology: Named by the School as the Global Classroom.
7. Screening room that seats 36 people

The studio and the adjoining office space with control room are a jumble of equipment and boxes yet-to-be-unpacked. While a less than organized display isn't atypical in a university equipment room, it can hamper best practices for taking care of equipment, tracking checkout and return, etc.

The on-site team was told that new cameras had been delivered and were still waiting to be unpacked in the boxes stacked in the studio. Making this equipment available would seem like it would be a priority; students at every level complain that there is not enough equipment and tell frustrated stories of not being able to access the camera, editing suite, and so forth, that they need, when they need it. Students also suggest that the equipment isn't of the highest possible quality and is hurting their training.

Faculty are adamant on both points: They say there is enough equipment and that new procedures like staggering syllabi/projects will help with the checkout bottleneck. They also suggest that it's not necessarily bad for students to work with some constraints – this resembles what they are likely to face in the “real world.” Faculty are even more clear on the quality of the technology: They say the cameras, while not the most expensive available, are very good and are what is being used in the marketplace. And the two editing suites available are industry-standard.

Classrooms are “smart,” with computer-connected projectors and screens. While the School's only “hangout” space isn't large and is a bit spare, the C-building is home to plenty of common space for students to interact. The “telepresence” classroom is a top-of-the-line facility. Cisco's technology creates a virtual boardroom in which the participants on the other end of the line, on the other side of the world, wherever, appear to be sitting directly across the table. They have used this facility for one class taught by a University of Southern California professor and a few other high-profile speaking engagements; the challenge is that both callers need to have the technology for it to work properly, and that is rare.

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

The AUD's library is in the administration building, across the courtyard from the School.

SUMMARY: The School's resources are sufficient and are comparable with other programs' budgets. The facilities are only five years old and are still pristine. Offices, hallways and classrooms are bright

and airy; classrooms are “smart” and well-equipped; the student common areas for the building in which the School is housed are comfortable and friendly. There is enough space for the current enrollment but if there is to be much further growth, plans for new space will have to commence. The School has appropriately advanced technology in its labs, studio, control room and camera kits, and while there are occasional checkout bottlenecks, there is a plan in place to alleviate that. And the “telepresence” room is the bling in the package: Any program would love to have this kind of facility to extend the reach of their educational opportunities.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:

COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 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 greater public.

Unit performance with regard to indicators:

(a) The unit consults and communicates regularly with its alumni and is actively engaged with its alumni, professionals and professional associations to keep curriculum and teaching, whether on site or online, current and to promote the exchange of ideas.

The School has the advantage of many alumni working literally next door in Dubai's expansive Media City. This facilitates meetings and easy interaction. In addition, alumni are in touch via the School's online newspaper and annual short film festival. The latter has been used to solicit advice from former students on how they could be better prepared for the workplace. The School also maintains a close relationship with its advisory board, made up of academics, CEOs and media leaders. At its annual meeting (some fly in from the U.S.), board members aggressively critique student work and make recommendations for curricular improvements. The School also gives alumni credit for pushing it to keep curriculum current.

(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.

Faculty members are active in a variety of ways, from holding workshops on script writing and film production to jurying final projects at other schools to participating in forums and workshops such as one titled *Women in the Arab World*. The School recently hosted an Arabic Tweet Forum as well as a panel discussion entitled *Cultural Identity Challenges between Arabization and Westernizations*. The Dean is in demand, literally, around the world for his expertise on television in the Middle East, to the benefit of the School.

(c) The unit contributes to the improvement of journalism and mass communication as academic disciplines by supporting the faculty's involvement in academic associations and related activities.

The faculty is supported in travel for academic purposes.

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

The School since its founding has maintained a commitment to service and engagement with communities local and regional. This is manifested through the launching of a cinema club, its online newspaper, Media Chat with media professionals from the region and the short film festival. Cinematopia, the film club, brings together a network of young film professionals to critique, discuss and network. Similarly, the Student Short Film Festival was launched this year, drawing 130 submissions primarily from Arab countries, but with some from Europe and the United States.

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

The School sponsors outreach at the high school level and is regularly visiting high schools in efforts to connect with students about opportunities at AUD.

SUMMARY: There is a commitment to service that runs throughout the School. It doesn't displace the fact this is primarily a teaching-driven School.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:

COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 9: Assessment of Learning Outcomes

The unit regularly assesses student learning and applies results to improve curriculum and instruction.

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 School maps its degree program learning outcomes to ACEJMC’s values and competencies using an extensive multi-page matrix system that includes University learning outcomes as well.

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

AUD has an extensive and multi-level assessment plan in which the School is a committed partner. It is driven in large part by a University Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

Here’s how the process works:

The annual cycle begins with the faculty and School administration developing what is called an Academic Program Assessment Plan. This is done in consultation with IE. It includes outcomes to be assessed and measurements. Data is collected through the cycle using the measures identified, analyzed and reported (including use of results for improvement) in an Academic Program Assessment Report. Faculty look at the data as it comes in throughout the year. At cycle end, an IE liaison (designated by the School) reports how the results can be used for improvement and how previous results have had an impact on current results.

The annual Assessment Report (due in June) by the School must include:

- Program mission and goals
- Program learning outcomes
- Course learning outcomes
- Courses aligned to program outcomes
- Identified measurement instruments appropriate for program assessment
- Identified assessment benchmarks (criteria for success)
- Collected data
- Analysis of results
- Recommendations for improvement

The results of the report are constantly fed back to improve the School’s work inside and outside the classroom.

(c) The unit collects and reports data from its assessment activities and applies the data to improve curriculum and instruction.

Course-level assessment is a constant. At the beginning of the semester faculty develop course assessment plans that include outcomes, assessment instruments and benchmarks. Faculty then complete Course Level Assessments at the end of the term that feed into the Assessment Report which is prepared by the Associate Dean.

Assessment measures include evaluation of capstone projects (direct), employer feedback on internships (direct), Advisory Board recommendations (indirect) and faculty feedback (indirect).

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

This is a young school, but many of its alumni are literally around the corner in Media City. Alumni are readily available for advice and counsel.

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

Since 2010-11 the School has used jury panels to evaluate capstone projects in both its majors. Rubrics have evolved over time to reflect ACEJMC competencies. It also has a strong, opinionated advisory board that meets annually and expects its advice to be taken by the School (which it does). Here are recommendations from a recent Advisory Board meeting:

- The faculty should be more critical of the quality of work that is demanded; part of what sets the standard of excellence is setting the ethos of excellence.
- Students need to be aware of journalistic ethics in undercover reports.
- Outside faculty need to be brought in as guest speakers and attend classes to assess the level and quality of instruction.
- Bring in visiting faculty for a week or more.
- Regularly update the Advisory Board members on structural and curriculum changes.
- Decrease the current teaching load of faculty because instruction in this field is labor intensive and involves coaching; no other faculty in a reputable film or journalism school teaches such a load.
- Make admission to the School more exclusive.
- Improve the pay scale of faculty.

SUMMARY: One would be hard-pressed to find an assessment system more constant, rigorous and institutionalized than that at AUD. The School actively participates in and uses the system and its Advisory Board to assess, evaluate and improve its work.

Overall evaluation, compliance/non-compliance:

COMPLIANCE

PART III: Summary by site visit team

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

STRENGTHS

- A non-traditional leadership team that works to the School's benefit inside and outside of the University.
- Strong teaching and committed faculty; impressive and motivated students.
- Curriculum that is up to date.
- A commitment to a diverse student body from within the socioeconomic strata of the Arab world, fueled by Arabic track scholarships.
- The classroom is a safe place to discuss controversial issues, and may be an incubator for ongoing social change in the region.
- Excellent location in the heart of Dubai's Media City, which creates employment opportunities post-graduation.

WEAKNESSES

- Faculty needs to grow if enrollment is to grow.
- More space will be needed as well for program to grow. Money needs to be raised to re-start plans for a new building (though current space does the job).
- Marked difference in enthusiasm for the program between Journalism and DPST students with whom the team met.

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

Standard 5, Scholarship: Research, Creative and Professional Activity

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

While we recognize the School's focus is on teaching – and that it is succeeding in that focus – a modest amount of traditional scholarship (refereed papers, etc.) is needed.

4) In the case of a recommendation for provisional accreditation, list the deficiencies that must be addressed before the provisional status can be removed.

N/A

5) In the case of a recommendation for denial of accreditation, clearly and fully explain the reasons that led to the recommendation.

N/A

6) If the unit was previously accredited, summarize the significant deficiencies noted in the previous report and the actions taken to correct them. If the unit was in noncompliance in the same standard(s) on the previous two visits, identify the standard(s) and the problems noted. Explain actions taken to correct the problems.

N/A

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

The self-study was meticulous and detailed and thus made the job of the site team much easier. A technique other self-studies might copy: The School opened each section with a bulleted executive summary of key points in each standard. It made for better, more targeted reading by the site team.