

Report of On-Site Evaluation

ACEJMC

Undergraduate program

2014-2015

Name of Institution: University of South Dakota

Name and Title of Chief Executive Officer: James Abbott

Name of Unit: Department of Media & Journalism

Name and Title of Administrator: Dr. Michelle Van Maanen

Date of 2014 - 2015 Accrediting Visit: October 19-22, 2014

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

Date of the previous accrediting visit: November 2-5, 2008

Recommendation of the previous site visit team: Re-accreditation

Previous decision of the Accrediting Council: Re-accreditation

Recommendation by 2014 - 2015 Visiting Team: Re-accreditation

Prepared and submitted by:

Team Chair

Name and Title: Ford Risley, Interim Associate Dean

Organization/School: Penn State University

Signature _____

Team Members

Name and Title: Jan Quarles, Professor

Organization/School: Middle Tennessee State University

Signature _____

Name and Title: _____

Organization/School: _____

Signature _____

Name and Title: _____

Organization/School: _____

Signature _____

Name and Title: _____

Organization/School: _____

Signature _____

PART I: General Information

Name of Institution: University of South Dakota

Name of Unit: Department of Media & Journalism

Year of Visit: 2014

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

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.

As provided in SDCL # 13-57-1, the University of South Dakota is South Dakota's liberal arts university and meets the needs of the State and region by providing undergraduate and graduate programs in the liberal arts and sciences, business, education, fine arts, law, and medicine.

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: November 2-5, 2008

5. When was the unit or sequences within the unit first accredited by ACEJMC? 1997

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

The mission of the Department of Media & Journalism is to serve students pursuing careers in journalism and strategic communication by providing a learning environment, promoting personal enrichment, developing students' professional potential, and encouraging the pursuit of excellence. The department actively contributes to scholarly knowledge in mass communication, and enthusiastically serves the university community and the general public.
(Adopted, August 2012; minor revision, August 2014)

7. What are the type and length of terms?

Semesters of 16 weeks Summer sessions of 4-12 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.

Media & Journalism, B.A., B.S

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

120 Semester Hours

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

1 or 2 semester credit hours

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>
Specialization: Strategic Communication	Charles Lubbers
Specialization: Journalism	Michelle Van Maanen

*Beginning with AY 2012-2013, the Media & Journalism Department consolidated from four sequences to two. Advertising and Public Relations were combined into the Strategic Communication specialization. Electronic Media and Journalism were combined into the Journalism specialization.

13. Number of full-time students enrolled in the institution: 10,235 in Fall, 2013

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):

Specialization	Undergraduate majors
Advertising*	12
Electronic Media*	8
Journalism	41
Public Relations*	13
Strategic Communications	45
Contemporary Media & Journalism** (undeclared specialization)	50
Total	169

*Specialization phased out beginning with the AY 2012-2013 Catalog.

**Department name changed to Media & Journalism, June 2014.

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.

Spring 2014 Classes	Description	Enrollment
MCOM 161 U015	Fundamentals of Desktop Publishing	18
MCOM 161 U025	Fundamentals of Desktop Publishing	19
MCOM 210 U015	Basic Newswriting	10
MCOM 210 U025	Basic Newswriting	7
MCOM 221 U015	Audio Production	11
MCOM 262 U015	Digital Imaging	20
MCOM 330 U015	Writing for Digital Media	13
MCOM 331 U015	Video Production	13
MCOM 331 U025	Video Production	19
MCOM 334 U015	Broadcast News Writing and Reporting	20
MCOM 338 U015	Publications Editing & Design	12
MCOM 341 U015	Public Relations Writing	12
MCOM 371 U015	Advertising Copy and Layout	9
MCOM 436 U015	Directing for Video & Films	4
MCOM 462 U015	Advanced Digital Imaging	5

Fall 2014 Classes	Description	Enrollment
MCOM 161 U025	Fundamentals of Desktop Publishing	15
MCOM 161 U035	Fundamentals of Desktop Publishing	12
MCOM 210 U035	Basic Newswriting	14
MCOM 262 U015	Digital Imaging	17
MCOM 311 U015	News Editing	14
MCOM 325 U015	Introduction to Multiplatform Storytelling	17
MCOM 330 U025	Writing for Digital Media	12
MCOM 331 U015	Video Production	20
MCOM 331 U025	Video Production	20
MCOM 371 U015	Advertising Copy and Layout	9
MCOM 374 U015	Advanced Field Production	13
MCOM 456 U015	Multimedia Design/Development	7

16. Total expenditures planned by the unit for the 2014 – 2015 academic year: \$721,259.99

Percentage increase or decrease in three years: 5.8% increase

Amount expected to be spent this year on full-time faculty salaries: \$563,777.62

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.

Dr. Michelle Van Maanen	Chair, Assistant Professor
Dr. Charles Lubbers	Full Professor
Dr. Miglena Sternadori	Associate Professor (Sabbatical, Fall 2014)
Dr. Teddi Joyce	Assistant Professor
Dr. Brandon Nutting	Assistant Professor
Charles Baldwin	Journalist-in-Residence
Dr. Janet Davison	Lecturer
Gary Larson	Lecturer
Todd Mechling	Instructor

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.)

Larry Rohrer, Adjunct, Spring, 2014 (1 course; Online MCOM 151 Introduction to Mass Communication)
 Randell Beck, Adjunct, Fall 2014 (1 course; MCOM 311 News Editing)

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.

Year	72 or more semester hours outside of journalism and mass communications		
	Total Graduates	Number	Percent
2013-2014 academic year	__54__	__54__	__100%__
2012-2013 academic year	__37__	__37__	__100%__

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.

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 of South Dakota is the oldest university in the state and the only public liberal arts university in South Dakota. The university offers 205 undergraduate programs and 66 graduate programs. The university's current enrollment is 10,061.

The Department of Journalism was founded in 1915. Radio courses were first offered in the 1940s; television courses were first offered in the 1950s. In 1982, the Department of Mass Communication was reorganized under the College of Fine Arts. In 2001, the name was changed to the Department of Contemporary Media and Journalism. Two years later, the department was moved from the College of Fine Arts to the College of Arts & Sciences. This year the name was changed to the Department of Media & Journalism.

The department received its initial accreditation in 1997. Following the 2003 site visit, the department received provisional reaccreditation; that was removed the next year after it was revisited. The department was reaccredited in 2004 and 2009.

The mission of the department is to “provide an environment that promotes personal enrichment, develops professional potential and capability, encourages the pursuit of academic excellence and contributes to the scholarly knowledge in mass communication arts and sciences disciplines and professions in a global society.”

The department does not have a long-range plan that identifies needs and resources for its mission. The College of Arts & Sciences no longer requires each department to submit strategic plans. However, every year the Media & Journalism faculty members adopt departmental objectives.

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

The college and department do not have their own Faculty Handbook. Specific policy questions are addressed by the university's faculty handbook. As part of the university's collective bargaining arrangement, the Council on Higher Education has a negotiated contract with the South Dakota Board of Regents.

During the preceding academic year, the department held five faculty meetings. Faculty members are invited to submit items for the meetings agenda. Some faculty expressed concern that many meetings were simply informational and little discussion about department issues took place.

Within the framework of its six standing committees (Admissions / Recruitment, Alumni / Professional Relations, Assessment, Laboratory, General Activities Fund, and Sports Media & Marketing), faculty members make major decisions for the department. Seven ad hoc committees deal with such issues as the internship fair, senior portfolios, and tenure & promotion.

(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 department chair, a longtime member of the faculty, has served in the position since 2011. She provides effective leadership and has the support of the administration. Faculty and alumni praise her as a tireless advocate for the students and department. However, some faculty believe she does not always consult with them regarding important issues.

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

The department chair is selected by the dean of the College of Arts & Sciences and serves at his discretion. The college has 16 departments, divided into three academic divisions: Humanities, Social Sciences, and Science and Mathematics. The department is one of six in the Social Sciences division.

The dean evaluates the chair annually based on an annual performance report. The annual reports have been positive.

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

The department chair has an "open-door" policy for faculty, staff and students to express concerns or questions. Most faculty say she is accessible and listens to their issues.

Students with complaints about specific courses or teachers are asked to first speak with the teacher of the course. If the matter is not resolved, the issue goes to the department chair. If the matter is still not resolved, students may make a formal complaint to the dean of the College of Arts & Sciences. No formal complaints have been made in the last three years.

SUMMARY:

The department and its faculty have the support of the college and university. Department policies and procedures provide for and encourage faculty governance. The department chair provides strong leadership. However, the department lacks a long-range plan that identifies needs and resources for its mission.

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.

Overview

In fall 2012, specializations offered by the department were reduced from four to two. The four programs of Advertising, Electronic Media, Journalism, and Public Relations were consolidated into two programs, Journalism and Strategic Communications. The changes took effect for students entering in the fall of 2012 or later.

Students in the department take a common core of 14 credits (six courses). Those courses are:

MCOM 151 Introduction to Mass Communication (3)

MCOM 210 Basic News Writing (3)

MCOM 331 Video Production (3)

MCOM 402 Media Law & Ethics (3)

All students must complete a minimum of two credits from the courses below.

MCOM 494 Internship (1-2) Credit Hours (Repeatable, 5 credit maximum)

MCOM 495 Practicum (1) Credit Hour (Repeatable, 5 credit maximum)

Students must choose at least one of the following two areas of specialization and complete all required courses in that specialization area. Journalism requires a minimum of 12 elective hours. Strategic Communication requires a minimum of 9 elective hours. Students must participate in mandatory advising every semester and achieve and maintain a 2.0 or higher GPA. The areas are described below:

Journalism

MCOM 325 Introduction to Multiplatform Storytelling (3)

MCOM 330 Writing for Digital Media (3)

MCOM 334 Broadcast News Writing & Reporting (3)

MCOM 338 Publication Editing & Design (3)

Strategic Communication

MCOM 161 Fundamentals of Desktop Publishing (3)

MCOM 342 Strategic Communication (3)

MCOM 400 Research Methods (3)

MCOM 442 Integrated Marketing Communication (3)

Students in the Strategic Communication specialization also must take one of the following:

MCOM 341 Public Relations Writing (3)

MCOM 371 Ad Copy and Layout (3)

In addition to the required courses in their specialization, students in the major can select from a liberal number of electives to customize their program from courses such as:

- Event Marketing & Management
- Internet Marketing Communication.
- Audio Production,
- News Editing
- Advanced Field Production,
- Advanced Reporting
- International Media
- Gender and Media
- Digital Imaging
- Advanced Digital Imaging
- Multimedia Design & Development.
- Writing for Digital Media
- Social Media Marketing
- Directing for Video & Film
- Advertising Principles

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. ACEJMC expects at least 95 percent of the graduating classes in the two academic years preceding an accreditation visit to meet these requirements.

Media & Journalism students take a minimum of 80 semester credit hours outside of the department and a minimum of 65 semester credit hours in the liberal arts and sciences outside the department as a university requirement for graduation. All members of the graduating classes in the three years preceding fall 2014 met the requirement. Student records were examined and found to be in order.

With the ACEJMC requirements revised, the department has submitted a program modification to reduce the number of credits outside the major to 72 hours and this modification is awaiting approval from the South Dakota Board of Regents at the time of the site visit.

(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.)

Students take a common core of 14 credits. In the core, eight hours are professional skills courses (includes two hours of practicum or internship) and six are conceptual (Introduction to Mass Media and Media Law and Ethics).

Journalism

The 12 hours of credit required of Journalism students are professional skills courses, but all courses bring some conceptual material into the classroom and students reported that they do talk about theory, law and ethics in most of their classes in addition to the law and ethics in the core. Students

also take electives focusing on their area of interest and some of the courses, such as International Media or Gender and Media, are theoretical in nature.

Strategic Communication

Students in this area must take 14 hours of credit. As seen in the course sequence outlined above, most of those areas are professional/skills courses but with conceptual material included. Strategic Communication students said they talked extensively about theory, law and ethics in their classes. They choose a number of electives and those electives include such conceptual courses as International Media or Gender and Media.

(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.)

In 2012, the department consolidated four departments (Advertising, Electronic Media, Journalism and Public Relations) into two (Journalism and Strategic Communications) to provide for more individualized career goal options and to allow students to take more courses in multimedia development. New elective courses were added in 2013-2014, including Multimedia Design and Development, Internet Marketing Communication and Social Media Marketing.

Achievements in teaching are recognized by the department and university with several named awards. Two faculty members received university awards in 2010 and 2011 with others being nominated as recently as 2014. Student evaluations of faculty are above the average for the College of Arts and Sciences.

On observation, faculty members in Journalism are responsive to changes in the industry, as the curriculum has changed to include an emphasis on digital technologies. The departmental restricting of sequences allowed for several new courses in multimedia storytelling, multimedia design and social media. Instruction is current and energetic. Students, for the most part, were pleased with the access and challenge in the program, but several students noted that their classes could use more cutting edge software and newer equipment.

In Strategic Communication, teaching is also current and focused on digital technologies where applicable. Faculty members are highly engaged with student projects and emphasize professionalism. Students said their classes were both conceptual and hands-on and they felt they were being prepared well for the industry. They called for more classes in social media and more sections of multimedia design.

The university supports teaching with faculty development activities and all unit faculty members have attended workshops in the university's Center for Teaching and Learning. The center has a series of technical classes designed to help faculty meet new digital and technological challenges and it also provides two Tech Fellows to the department each semester to help students in the school's media outlets use best practices in multimedia activities. Also, many of the faculty members have attended multimedia boot camps. Faculty members engage in professional development on a national level as the university supports attendance and the self-study noted extensive presentations about teaching and learning on the local, regional and national levels.

The department supports and acknowledges student success with numerous scholarship awards and recognition of students who win national and regional competitions. Student successes are communicated via social media, listserv, newsletters, on media outlets and by the university's Office of Media Relations. Faculty and students will gather in person to surprise a student winner whenever possible, as they did for the 2014 Jack Shelly Award winner for promise in broadcasting (from a six-state area). The report noted a large number of finalists and winners in regional and national student media competitions.

(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.*

The student-faculty ratio was not more than 20-1 for all classes in the department. Several classes, including a Broadcast Writing class and two Video Production classes, were at the ceiling of 20.

(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). Students may take up to two semester courses (or their quarter equivalent) at an appropriate professional organization where the unit can show ongoing and extensive dual supervision by the unit's faculty and professionals. Students may take up to three semester courses (or their quarter equivalent) at a professional media outlet owned and operated by the institution where full-time faculty are in charge and where the primary function of the media outlet is to instruct students.

Majors in the department must complete a minimum of two course credits of MCOM 494 Internship and/or MCOM 495 Practicum. They also are encouraged to seek out non-credit internships to gain additional experience in the profession. The department's Internship Coordinator and department adviser help the students find placements. The department maintains a binder of internship and employment notices as many professional organizations seeking interns contact the university. A new department-specific internship and career fair now complements the larger university-wide internship fair. The internship coordinator must approve all placements.

Students must work 100 hours per internship hour per semester. A maximum of two credits can be earned. Students sign a contract and receive a letter of acceptance. Almost all of the students interviewed by the site team completed at least one internship, most often in the summer because the university is not close to most internship placements. They spoke highly of their experience and the help they received from faculty advisers.

Students can take a practicum instead of the internship and receive one credit hour for full semester of work at a student media outlet including KYOT-TV (Coyote News TV), KAOR-FM (Coyote Radio or Coyote News Radio), *The Volante* campus newspaper, Coyote Creative (USD's student in-house advertising agency) and South Dakota Public Broadcasting.

During 2014, students worked in a range of professional organizations from television and radio stations and newspapers to advertising and marketing agencies, hospitals and other businesses. One student completed an internship in China. Interns are rated on ten factors by their internship

supervisor and they must keep a daily log, turn in a portfolio and write a summary letter of their experience to obtain their university grade.

Summary

The department has made a smooth transition from four curricular areas to two since the last accreditation visit. Teaching is current with a noticeable shift to new digital and multimedia courses. Teaching is demanding. Faculty members have above-average teaching evaluations in the university, and students speak highly of their interactions with them inside and outside the classroom.

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 department adopted a diversity plan in 2009 but has not updated it in recent years. The self-study said that rather than update its own plan, the department in 2012 integrated its goals and activities with that of the university as it began a major initiative on diversity and inclusiveness. The university's vision statement embraced the concept of "Inclusive Excellence," broadening the definition of diversity to include not only race and ethnicity, but also gender, sexual preference, disability, religion and other factors.

- (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.**

Since the last accreditation review, the department has added two courses that focus on aspects of diversity: Gender and Media, and International Media (both offered every other year). The self-study also says that issues of race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation are addressed in the core courses and electives. For example, in Advanced Field Production students engage in storytelling that reflects the whole campus and report on campus groups such as Spectrum: Gender and Sexuality Alliance. A review of syllabi shows that topics of race and ethnicity are discussed in class case studies, examples and assignments. Students in Strategic Communication said the topics were discussed on a regular basis because of the sequence's emphasis on knowing stakeholders, while Journalism students said the topics were discussed but not as much. About half of the syllabi contained diversity statements. The chair said faculty members refer to ACEJMC competencies in creating courses and actively discuss diversity issues in faculty meetings.

The self-study also said that understanding of diverse cultures in a global society is incorporated into all of the core courses for majors, as well as in electives. However, most of the examples offered actually relate to diversity issues in the United States, such as depiction of various religious groups in media. The department has applied for approval of the International Media class as an official globalization course to meet the university increased emphasis in that area. Across campus, increased diversity has been identified as a main focus for the next strategic plan.

The department brings in speakers to supplement class discussions and to counter its lack of diversity. During the self-study year, speakers included a political communication consultant, a Hispanic video producer, a Native American writer and producer, a South Korean student and several international guest speakers.

(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.

For more than a decade, the department has had success in recruiting women to the faculty. During the last review period, the representation of women—five of eight full-time faculty positions—was a major strength in terms of diversity. Since that review, the percentage has slipped a bit — today there are four women and five men—but it is still strong, and a woman has become chair of the unit. Two of the last three faculty hires were women, and one of two tenured professors is a woman. The department still has no faculty of color. The department says in the self-study that recruiting minority candidates is a top priority, but no progress has been made during the review period, despite having five openings in the last three years.

The self-study provides little detail on efforts made to recruit minority candidates, but explains that an offer made to a minority candidate was turned down and two other minority candidates took themselves out of contention. Taking the longer view, the department believes it should “grow its own” faculty of color by admitting minority students to the new Master’s program. The department’s 2009 diversity plan set a goal of increasing the number of people of color or international origin to two.

The university’s 2013 overarching “Inclusive Excellence” strategy does not set numerical goals but says a diversity recruitment plan that includes new methods of attracting faculty, staff and students will be developed. The goals are modest, but they were not achieved in the study period.

(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.

The department places its emphasis on diversity recruitment of Native Americans, who are by far the largest minority group in the state at 9 percent. Yet despite years of effort, it has found it difficult to move the needle. According to the self-study, the department officially had only one Native American major, representing just 0.6 percent of its students, compared with 1.65 percent for the University. The department chair says the figure is actually higher because not all Native Americans report their family background. Other minorities make up 15.4 percent of the department, with stronger representation of most minority groups than the university or the state. For example, there are 4 males and 1 female students who are of two or more races, representing 2.96 percent of department undergraduates, higher than the institution’s 2.53 percent. Additionally, 3.55 percent of the department’s students are African American, compared to 1.9 percent in the South Dakota population and 2.2 percent at the university. Overall the department students are 84 percent white, compared with 83 percent for the state and 86 percent for the university. The department’s goal has been modest: to have percentages of minority students equal to or higher than the university as a whole, rather than the statewide population that it serves. That goal was met.

The 2009 diversity plan puts emphasis on increasing the numbers of Native Americans and so does the university’s Inclusive Excellence strategy. Yet in 2013 the department had the misfortune of seeing two signature programs, directed toward Native Americans, defunded when the Newseum Institute (formerly the Freedom Forum), was reorganized. The two programs, the Crazy Horse Journalism Workshop for high school students and the American Indian Journalism Institute for

college students, were centerpieces of the diversity strategy. Faculty members are working with professional associations in the state to resurrect the high school workshop and seeking partnerships to revive the college-level institute. The chair is also talks about partnering with Sinte Gleska University on the Rosebud Sioux reservation to create media courses that will encourage students to transfer to the department.

Retention and graduation rates (six-year rates) in the Department are substantially lower for students of color than for white students. First-year retention rates for whites are higher than for students of color, with the gap widening in more recent years. For example, the gap between whites and minorities was 18 percentage points in 2011 and 35 points in 2012, though earlier years were better. American Indians have the lowest first-year retention in the university.

- (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 university prohibits all forms of discrimination and harassment. Most syllabi include a required section on civility and freedom in learning. Students are expected to help maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning in the classroom. The department makes every attempt to accommodate the physical, academic and psychological needs students with disabilities. The Al Neuharth Media Center's recent renovations were designed to accommodate those with disabilities.

Summary

The department can count some achievements, but it has struggled with diversity on several fronts. Although the department has done well in attracting talented female faculty members, it has not been able to add racial diversity to its faculty and students, despite good intentions and sincere efforts. The department has added two diversity courses in recent years, and the issues of race, ethnicity and gender are discussed in many classes. The department's diversity plan has not been updated since 2009.

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 Media & Journalism Department follows university and college policy for the selection and evaluation of the performance of all full-time and part-time faculty. University policy requires a Search and Screening Committee for all faculty positions. Each search committee includes a Human Resources Representative who will ensure EEO and procedural compliance and each strives for gender and other diverse representation. Members may be faculty, staff, or students.

Instruction is evaluated at the end of each course through a university questionnaire administered in the classroom or via online survey. The Dean (for the chair) and the department chair (for faculty) use these results in addition to qualitative student input in annual evaluations. Faculty members complete a standard online form and the chair uses that form and teaching evaluations. Faculty members are evaluated on up to three elements -- teaching, service and scholarly/creative activity -- depending on rank with a numerical scale, a narrative explanation for each of these rankings, an overall assessment narrative, a statement on the candidate's progress toward tenure (as applicable) and a recommendation of merit pay. Faculty members are allowed to respond to the evaluation. The evaluations then are used to determine salary increases for the following year.

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

During the self-study year, full-time faculty taught all courses. In previous years, full-time faculty taught more than 80 percent of the courses.

(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.

The department has nine faculty members, five males and four females. Seven have terminal degrees (Ph.D., Ed.D. and Ed.S.), one faculty member has a M.A. and one instructor has a B.A. and extensive professional experience. A Professor and an Associate Professor are tenured. Three members are Assistant Professors. The department has a full-time Journalist-in-Residence, two faculty members at the Lecturer rank and one faculty member at the Instructor rank. Most have professional experience. A normal teaching load is three courses per semester, and the department endeavors to support tenure track professors with some released time (which must be approved on the college level.) Some faculty members have received university and other grants. Most are active in professional or scholarly organizations given their individual career paths. A part-time faculty

member is on the Pulitzer Prize jury. In 2012 the department established a media effects research laboratory to help faculty members, and students to conduct research and the laboratory also serves the profession.

Faculty turnover continues to be an issue for the department. Three faculty members left the department in summer 2011. (One of the three failed to earn tenure.) Two new assistant professors were hired in 2012 into the Strategic Communication area and a Journalism position was filled in 2013. A new faculty position was added in fall 2013.

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

Students evaluate faculty members using Idea Center forms on site and the chair also evaluates faculty teaching as part of the annual evaluation.

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

Administrators and colleagues alike describe the department's faculty members as good university citizens. One faculty member chairs the university's curriculum committee after serving for many years in the Faculty Senate, another coordinates the Gender and Women's Studies program and has served on the Senate, and another heads a university task force to look at understanding and recruiting digital natives.

Summary

The department is small, but active. Faculty members have different career paths but most have come together in transforming the curriculum into one that will better educate students for the evolving digital media professions. They stay actively engaged in faculty development and their student evaluations are above the campus average. The university has clear policies for hiring, evaluation and promotion and tenure. Faculty members are active in the university and local communities.

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.

Faculty members in the department are evaluated based on the university's tripartite mission of teaching, research and service. Research is considered to be increasingly important by the university. Tenured and tenure-track faculty generally teach a 3/3 course load. Lecturers and instructors generally teach a 4/4 course load. Tenure-track faculty are eligible to receive a course reduction in order to complete substantive research projects. Teaching loads are determined during annual evaluations with the department chair.

Tenured and tenure-track faculty in the department each receive \$1,000 annually for travel. Faculty members also are eligible to apply for additional funding from the dean's office. For example, two faculty members received an additional \$1,000 for travel during the 2013-2014 academic year. The university's Center for Teaching and Learning has a grant program that provides funding for faculty travel that enhances undergraduate teaching and learning. The department's Journalist-in-Residence has dedicated funding for travel.

In 2012, the department and college dedicated funding for the creation of a media effects lab in the Neuharth Media Center. The psychophysiology lab provides faculty and students opportunities to pursue various research activities. To date, faculty members have secured two grants for lab-related research projects.

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

The department's expectation for research, publication and creative activities are detailed in its Criteria for Evaluation of Faculty. The language that defines what research, publication and creative activities mean in terms of department expectations comports with that of the university as published in its "Expectation of Faculty at the University of South Dakota."

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

Both department and university documents include evaluation criteria that acknowledge professional activity consistent with an academic unit that has a professional orientation. In its document of expectations, the department allows for consideration of a wide range of scholarly activities in tenure and promotion decisions.

- (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 in the department have a good record of research. They have published articles in a variety of respected scholarly journals, including *Mass Community and Society*, *Newspaper Research Journal*, *Public Relations Review*, *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, *International Journal of Integrated Marketing Communications*, and *Feminist Media Studies*. It should be noted, however, that most of the articles were published by just two members of the faculty.

Faculty members have made numerous research presentations at national conventions of the major academic organizations in the field, including the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, the International Communication Association, and the Society of Psychophysiological Research. Faculty members also have made presentations at numerous national, regional and state professional organizations, including the American Academy of Advertising, Public Relations Society of America, International Association of Business Disciplines, Broadcast Education Association, National College Media Advisers, Northwest Broadcast News Association, and Dakota Writer's Workshop.

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

Faculty members in the department are respectful of one another. They appreciate the differing points of view they may hold and the various approaches each brings to the creation and dissemination of knowledge.

Summary

The department requires faculty to engage in scholarly research or creative activity, and to the extent it can, supports the faculty through travel funding and course releases. Funding for research is limited and more is needed. Still, faculty members have a good record of publishing their work and presenting it at academic and professional meetings. The department also fosters a climate that supports intellectual curiosity and respect for differing points of view.

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 students are required to meet an adviser every semester before registering. Each faculty member advises approximately 15-18 students, offering guidance on courses and requirements for graduation. The advisers also act as professional mentors, assisting with career advice, resumes and references.

New faculty members receive training before they are assigned students to advise. They also meet with the department chair to ensure that they understand advising issues within the department. Faculty are assisted in their advising responsibility by the University's online information system that allows advisers to access advisees' records and check on students' progress in meeting requirements for graduation.

(b) Faculty are available and accessible to students.

Students have ample opportunity for access to faculty members. Although the department requires at least two office hours a week, in effect the department practices an open-door policy. Access to faculty is enhanced by the layout of the Neuharth Center, where classrooms and offices are in the same areas of the building. The relatively modest size of the department also fosters ongoing communication between students and faculty.

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

Much of this work goes on in the advising and mentoring process between students and faculty, but the bulletin boards in the Neuharth Center also are filled with news, events and opportunities. Additionally, faculty use e-mail, the university's web portal and Twitter to keep students informed. The university's website also includes information about department policies and requirements, internships, academic programs, student organizations and scholarships.

(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 offers a rich menu of extra-curricular opportunities through student media, some run by the department as part of its academic program and some independent. These include Coyote Creative, the in-house advertising agency; Coyote Communication, the department's chapter of the

American Advertising Federation and the Public Relations Student Society of America; Coyote News TV & Radio, the student-produced newscasts; *The Volante*, the independent student newspaper and news website; KYOT-TV, the university's cable television station; and the Cross Media Council, the leadership of all student media groups.

- (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 department gathers retention data reflecting first-, second- and third-year retention rates and four-, five-, and six-year graduation rates. In a strong statement of transparency, the charts are on the College of Arts & Sciences web page. The charts had not been updated with the 2013-14 academic year numbers, and there was only one year's worth of six-year graduation rates, so trends were difficult to assess. More importantly, there was no evidence on the web page, or in the self-study, of any analysis of the information by the department.

Summary

The department fosters a student-centered culture. The faculty is committed to teaching, advising and mentoring. They care about their students' academic and professional development. The advising system is strong, the faculty highly accessible, and the student activity offerings robust. Still, the unit could undertake more analysis and efforts devoted to improving retention and graduation rates.

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 department's funds are part of the College of Arts and Sciences budget and, as such, college administrators determine allocations. The department only has control over three development funds. But the dean is responsive to requests from the department and it has provided support. In addition, the department receives support from the student "General Activities Fund" for student broadcast needs and levies a lab fee for the computer labs.

Annual university budget decisions depend on state appropriations, student fees and tuition dollars. Therefore the department's base budget varies from year to year. During the self-study year the budget was \$715, 272 (the figure does not include faculty and staff benefits or equipment funds that the college may provide when need is demonstrated.) For example, the department received \$100,000 in 2013 to update its television facilities. The college has also supported the reinstatement of the graduate program, the creation of a media effects research laboratory, an additional faculty position to support graphic courses and the beginning of a new inter-disciplinary major and minor.

(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 university operates under a Responsibility Center Management plan where all colleges are responsible for managing their direct revenue and expenses, including an allocated share of all administrative costs. The department receives more than a fair share of college resources, based on enrollment and specific needs.

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

The Al Neuharth Media Center houses all most all to the facilities and equipment of the department. The renovated building is impressive, with an airy concourse and media-ready conference room. All faculty, graduate student and staff offices are in the building as well as:

- Two classrooms
- Two computer labs
- Two equipment checkout rooms,
- A television studio and control room
- A radio station and staff offices
- Four audio/video editing suites
- Broadcast radio station, KAOR 91.1FM
- Cable television station, KYOT-TV, cable channel 21
- The independent campus newspaper, *The Volante*
- Media effects lab

(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.

Students have access to up-to-date equipment and facilities, with four edit suites for audio, visual and graphic work. However students and faculty alike noted that the computers in the two labs needed replacing as soon as possible. The department purchased new software and students report that the computers are very slow. Plans are in place to purchase new computers, one lab at a time. Students also said many of the cameras available for checkout are outdated.

Of note is the media effects lab, which has been in place for two years. It provides several faculty members, graduate students and interested undergraduate students with the hardware and software needed to study psychophysiological responses to media messages.

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

The university has a central library with fast interlibrary loan access. Students say they do most of their work online and they take one or more university courses that teach them how to access and use information.

Summary

The Al Neuharth Media Center houses all faculty and almost all classes. With two exceptions, the equipment is up to date. Lab computers need to be replaced and students want lighter cameras for fieldwork, but overall the facility is modern and impressive and the equipment is current. Staff members support equipment use and maintenance. The department does not have a budget separate from the college, but the dean has been responsive to requests for improved equipment and faculty lines when need has been demonstrated.

COMPLIANCE

PART II — Standard 8: Professional and Public Service

The unit and its faculty advance journalism and mass communication professions and fulfills 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 department is engaged with its alumni in several ways: through a twice-yearly alumni newsletter (revived in 2012 after a hiatus of some years), through personal contact between faculty members and alumni, and through frequent appearances of alumni as guests in classes. Three alumni serve on the Student Media Board. They also serve as judges for on-air auditions for Coyote News TV.

The department's faculty members are active in a wide variety of professional organizations, including the Sioux Falls chapter of the American Advertising Federation, the state and regional broadcasters associations, the South Dakota Newspaper Association and Midwest Journalism Conference, as well as national professional associations and organizations.

The department also benefits from the experience and expertise of the Al Neuharth Advisory Board, comprised of professionals in both journalism and strategic communications. The board offers critiques of the curriculum and of student media that faculty find valuable.

- (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.**

The department does not offer continuing education for professionals in the state or region on a regular basis.

Several faculty members have served as frequent reviewers on scholarly or artistic endeavors in the field, while others have assisted local media in enhancing the quality of their work. For example, one faculty member reviewed stories produced by South Dakota Public Broadcasting. Another is active in the Northwest Broadcast News Association, consisting primarily of television, radio and online news directors, and the South Dakota Broadcasters Association, which advises state lawmakers on legislation affecting the industry. The Journalist-in Residence-maintains strong professional ties to the South Dakota Newspaper Association and South Dakotans for Open Government.

(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 are active in a wide range of organizations and pursuits that improve pedagogy through research and innovation. These include the Association for Education in Mass Communication and Journalism, American Academy of Advertising, Broadcast Education Association, Society of Professional Journalists and the Public Relations Society of America.

The department makes available limited travel funds for faculty to attend regional and national meetings, where faculty members often make presentations or take leadership roles. The university also offers supplemental travel grants to foster scholarship and creative activity, and many faculty members have received the grants.

(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.

One of the major contributions to campus life and the Vermillion community is the department's direct oversight of most of student media, including KYOT-TV and KAOR-FM radio, Coyote Creative advertising and public relations group, and Coyote News, a local news report serving audiences on television, radio and online. A faculty member also acts as an adviser to *The Volante*, the independent student newspaper.

Various courses in the department perform community service as class projects. For example, the Integrated Marketing Campaigns class created an advertising campaign for the Vermillion Chamber of Commerce. The Advertising Principles class wrote advertising pitches for the university's Admissions Office.

During much of the review period, the department contributed support and the time of three or four faculty members to the Crazy Horse Journalism Workshop, a college and career preparatory course at the Indian University of North America at Crazy Horse, in the Black Hills. The Newseum stopped funding the workshop in 2013 and it has not been held the last two years.

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

During the review period, the department's most significant support of scholastic journalism was the Crazy Horse Journalism Workshop, discontinued in 2013 because of loss of funding. The program is working with the South Dakota Newspaper Association and other state universities to design a similar workshop for underserved high school students.

Faculty members are in frequent contact with high school journalism teachers, and the department regularly hosts high school journalists thinking about attending the university. Two faculty members have made presentations to the Sioux Falls Center for Career and Technical Education.

Summary

The department and its faculty are actively engaged in service to the university, Vermillion, the broader academic community and the profession. Faculty members are supported in their involvement in regional and national professional organizations. The department is making a stronger effort to stay connected to alumni through the revival of its newsletter. The demise of the Crazy Horse Workshop left a big gap in the department's service to Native American high school students.

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 Department has generally aligned its goals for student learning with the Accrediting Council’s “Professional Values and Competencies.” However, the department has done a mixed job of sharing the values and competencies with students. They appear on some course syllabi. They do not appear on the department’s website or in classrooms nor was an analysis of the values and competencies provided by course in the self-study report.

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

The department lacks a written, systematic assessment plan. As a result, assessment during the review period has been haphazard and generally of little value to the department. Moreover, there is a lack of data and so it is unclear if all the professional value and competencies have been assessed. The self-study provided a rudimentary assessment report for 2012-13. However, the department could not provide data for any other years during the review period.

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

According to the self-study, analysis of their assessment has led to some changes in the department’s curriculum and instruction. A revised course, Media Law and Ethics, was added and two other courses underwent substantial changes, making them writing intensive courses. However, the improvements to the curriculum have only been made in the last two years.

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

The department maintains regular, although generally informal, contact with its alumni. Graduates are regularly asked to return to campus and speak to classes. The department revived its newsletter two years ago and mails it to more than 1,950 alumni, friends and professionals. Individual faculty members maintain contact with alumni via e-mail and social media, but the department does not have any formal e-mail or social media program. Feedback from alumni has been used to improve the curriculum.

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

Feedback about the relevance of the department's curriculum from journalism and mass communication professionals is primarily limited to the internship evaluation reports from site supervisors overseeing student interns. However, there is a need to increase opportunities for formal evaluation and feedback of student work from media professionals for the purpose of assessment.

Summary

The department aligns its goals with the Professional Values and Competencies of the Accrediting Council. However, it lacks a written, systematic assessment plan and no assessment timetable. Assessment during the review period has been haphazard and has generated little data. As a result, few improvements have been made to curriculum and instruction that can be traced to formal assessment. The department maintains regular contact with alumni and professionals. However, they are not used extensively in the assessment process.

NON-COMPLIANCE

PART III: Summary by site visit team

1) Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

Strengths:

- Dedicated faculty members who genuinely care about helping students learn
- Bright, thoughtful and passionate students who are enthusiastic about the program
- Up-to-date curriculum that reflects changing media industries
- Outstanding internship program
- Excellent student-run media organizations
- Impressive building and facilities

Weaknesses:

- No long-range plan for the department
- Diversity plan has not been updated
- Lack of diverse faculty in terms of race and ethnicity
- No written and systematic assessment plan

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

Standard 9: Assessment of Learning Outcomes

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

A written plan to assess student learning that gathers, analyzes and applies data over a multi-year period.

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

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

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.

Faculty turnover continues to be an issue. Three assistant professors left the department in 2011. Two of the positions were filled in 2012 with new assistant professors. The third position was filled with a lecturer. On the positive side, one assistant professor earned tenure and was promoted in 2014. The department also has made strides in faculty stability with support for research through reduced teaching loads, as warranted for tenure-track faculty, and a modest increase in travel support.

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 generally was forthright and provided a solid basis for understanding the department. However, some important information was difficult to find or missing. The department chair provided the information.



January 19, 2015

Susanne Shaw
Executive Director, ACEJMC
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Dear Dr. Shaw,

Thank you for sharing the On-Site Evaluation Final Report of the University of South Dakota Media & Journalism Department's undergraduate program. We greatly appreciate the time and consideration given by the site team members, the ACEJMC staff and the Accrediting Committee members.

As the committee members review the report, there are a few additional points to consider. In the self-study some information should have been elaborated upon, but was not. For instance, an advisory board consisting of journalism and mass communication professionals, as well as media and journalism colleagues from other institutions, regularly reviews the department's curriculum and student media activities. The Neuharth Advisory Board meets in person annually in Vermillion, and members communicate frequently throughout the year with the department chair as well as other faculty members. The advisory board members were an integral part of the 2012 curriculum revision process. For instance, the board members urged the department to adopt a strategic communication approach that combined the formerly separate specializations of Advertising and Public Relations, in keeping with industry practice.

The site team evaluation noted that communication with alumni was informal, but that the department does not have an email or social media program. The department faculty members make frequent use of social media (especially Twitter) to stay in touch with alumni, as well as current students. In accordance with the University's social media integration plans, the department website and Facebook page are the primary social media outlets used to inform the public about department activities and student accomplishments.

Finally, as indicated in Standard #9, the University's assessment procedure, in keeping with the department's mission, identifies three student learning outcomes/objectives/goals that prepare students for their chosen professions. Each

outcome has multiple measures. The program current measures include senior portfolios, internship evaluations, student learning outcomes from program-wide courses, and exit exams. However, the loop has not been closed, ensuring that the assessment information gathered is consistently and continually used to determine if outcomes have been attained and what improvements may be needed. Based upon the self-study process, the department is currently revising its assessment procedure timeline, ensuring that in the future the loop will be closed.

Again, thank you for your commitment to this process and for your consideration. The department recognizes the value of the ACEJMC accrediting process, and its positive impact on USD's Media & Journalism program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michelle Van Maanen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michelle" being the most prominent part.

Dr. Michelle Van Maanen, Chair
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