

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS IN THE GREENLEE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION ACCREDITATION REPORT AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Action Requested: Receive the accreditation report for the undergraduate programs in the Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Iowa State University.

Executive Summary: There are two accredited undergraduate programs – Bachelor of Arts in Advertising and Bachelor of Science in Journalism and Mass Communication - in the Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication. The undergraduate programs (1) underwent a self-study that addressed the standards and criteria defined by the accrediting body; and (2) had an on-site visit by peer evaluators. The programs were accredited for the maximum six-year period through 2015. This accreditation report addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan priority to provide “educational excellence and impact.”

Background:

- ◇ **Description of Programs.** The Bachelor of Arts Program in Advertising provides courses in copywriting, media planning, design, strategic communication, and multimedia production. The Bachelor of Science Program in Journalism and Mass Communication provides courses in reporting and writing, design editing, public relations, photojournalism, science communication, multimedia production, and magazine publishing.
- ◇ **Purpose of Accreditation.** An accredited educational program is recognized by its peers as having met state and national standards for its development and evaluation.
- ◇ **Accrediting Agency.** The accrediting body is the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications.
- ◇ **Review Process.** The self-study prepared by the undergraduate programs in the Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication contained the responses to the standards required by the accrediting body – mission, governance, and administration; curriculum and instruction; diversity and inclusiveness; full-time and part-time faculty; scholarship; research, creative, and professional activity; student services; resources, facilities, and equipment; professional and public service; and assessment of learning outcomes.
- ◇ **On-Site Team Report.** In October 2009, the visiting team determined that the undergraduate programs in the Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication met the requirements for accredited status although Standard 9 – Assessment of Learning Outcomes – was not in compliance.
- ◇ **Strengths Identified by the Visiting Team.** The Visiting Team identified the following strengths:
 - ⇒ “Energetic and enthusiastic students who value the Greenlee School faculty and staff.
 - ⇒ Bullish leadership of the school that has raised its profile on campus and nationally in the discipline.

- ⇒ A substantive increase in faculty scholarship appropriate for a Research I university.
 - ⇒ Quality advising by faculty and staff to support an unusually flexible curriculum.
 - ⇒ High level of student participation in student media and organizations.”
- ◇ Weaknesses Identified by the Visiting Team. The Visiting Team identified the following weaknesses:
- ⇒ “An assessment of student learning process that falls far short of Accrediting Council standards.
 - ⇒ Students unable to articulately discuss the role of diversity in communications.
 - ⇒ Lack of faculty consensus and consistency on teaching multiple sections of required courses.”
- ◇ Standards Not in Compliance. Standard 9 – Assessment of Learning Outcomes
- ⇒ The unit defines the goals for learning that students must achieve, including the ‘Professional Values and Competencies’ of this Council. The unit has a written assessment plan that uses multiple direct and indirect measures to assess student learning. The unit maintains contact with its alumni to assess their experiences in the professions and to gain feedback for improving curriculum and instruction. The unit includes members of journalism and mass communication professions in its assessment process. The unit collects and reports data from its assessment activities and uses the data to improve curriculum and instruction.

“The Greenlee School deserves high praise for its assessment of a rigorous student internship requirement. The problem is that an assessment plan requires more. While the self-study listed some other appropriate assessment measures (student awards, professional critique), the self-study often listed approaches that do not meet the criteria for program assessment (course grades, program-of-study audits with an academic adviser, research articles by graduate students), leading the team to believe that program assessment is not clearly understood at the Greenlee School. The school’s more-flexible curriculum especially in the converged Journalism and Mass Communication major provides the unit with special challenges to ensure that courses in each major cover all of the Accrediting Council’s values and competencies. This may require a fresh-start approach.”
- ◇ Accreditation Status. In May 2010, the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications awarded accreditation to the Bachelor of Arts Program in Advertising and the Bachelor of Science Program in Journalism and Mass Communication in the Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication with the following stipulation regarding the non-compliance of Standard 9.
- “The school needs to implement an assessment plan featuring multiple direct and indirect measures, procedures for gathering and analyzing information from these measures, a timeline for executing its assessment program, and a process for applying findings to improve curriculum, instruction, and student learning.”
- No response to this requirement was included.