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HIGHER EDUCATION
ADMINISTRATION

AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE ACCREDITING COUNCIL ON
EDUCATION IN JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATIONS FROM 1986-
2003: EXAMINATION OF THE IMPACT ON CURRICULUM (298 pp.)

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This study provides an historical perspective of the accrediting practices and policies of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications from 1986 to 2003 and the impact on the curriculum. The picture that emerges is one of a methodical organization which adapted policies to meet the needs of various constituents. The historical perspective used a research strategy of data triangulation to corroborate interviews from participants associated with the Council and primary and secondary documents. Internal and external factors led the Council to revise its diversity and curriculum policies. The accountability movement that swept the country in the late 1980s and 1990s resulted in a shift of the ACEJMC accrediting focus from a quantitative review of a program's human and physical resources, to qualitative evaluations promoting student learning. The study found that the organization's policies resulted in more liberal arts courses within the journalism and mass communication major. However, the impact of the Council's accrediting policies on diversity in the curriculum met limited success. The researcher concluded that ACEJMC is an organization responsive to the needs of its constituents because of an ability to adapt to the changing public and academic environments in which it operates. The research, however, also

suggests that the organization's focus on specific policies meant that it failed to acknowledge the importance of at least one major issue facing the profession. The results of ACEJMC accrediting decisions on curriculum Standard 3 and diversity Standard 12 are presented, along with recommendations for future study.