

COLLEGE ACCREDITATION OVERSIGHT PANEL TO DECIDE ON MISCONDUCT COMPLAINT AFTER PRESIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE ORDER

East Tennessee Public Relations Industry Whistleblower Lodged DEI / Political Bias Complaint

Complaint to be Adjudicated July 28 by Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)

July 9, 2025, Maryville, Tennessee – A formal complaint lodged against the **Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC)** – based on significant documentation that ACEJMC leaders could not mask their partisan political bias and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) dogma from their academic accreditation duties – will be examined at the upcoming meeting of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation’s ([CHEA](#)) [Committee on Recognition](#) on **Monday, July 28, 2025**.

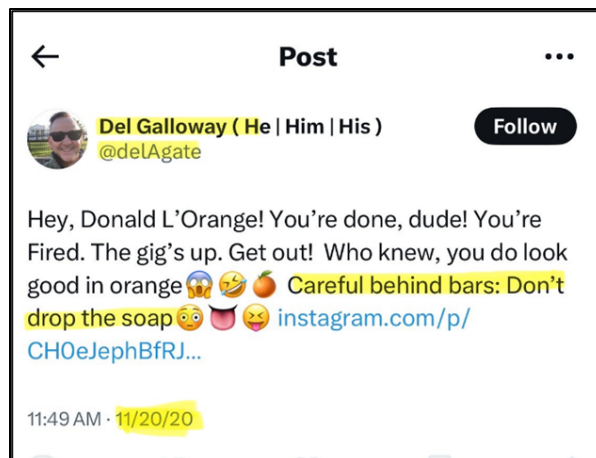
CHEA and its associated accrediting bodies have [long insisted](#) they are “nonpartisan,” yet this challenge to one of CHEA’s own affiliated higher education accreditors proves otherwise, in vividly detailed documentation.

The 149-page complaint with nearly as many evidentiary exhibits was filed on March 8, 2025, by Tennessean [Mary Beth West](#), a one-time national board member (2002-03) of the previously apolitical Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), which appoints numerous ACEJMC Council members. A New York-based trade association, PRSA began veering into far-left partisan advocacy upon President Trump’s first inauguration in January 2017. Most recently, PRSA announced in February 2025 [a policy to “double down on DEI.”](#) despite PRSA’s thousands of members working as [military](#) and other [government-employed communicators](#) at local, state, and federal levels, including taxpayer-funded [higher education](#) faculty and administrators, who are obligated to comply with President Trump’s Executive Order 14151 of January 20, 2025, “[Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing](#).”

Since PRSA’s leftist turn in 2017, West has been [a PR industry whistleblower](#). She has documented the blatantly public and often inappropriate manner in which the [current ACEJMC President Del Galloway](#) (a PRSA appointee) has promoted divisive concepts such as racial scapegoating and stereotyping, as well as partisan political animus on social media, in ACEJMC intra-Council memoranda, and in publicly discoverable emails.

West’s expansive complaint to CHEA sheds light on [Galloway’s](#) unvarnished animosities and [tasteless humor](#) at President Donald Trump’s and [Republicans’ expense](#), documented in [multiple social media posts](#) (subject to deletion by Galloway but screenshot by West), ever since Galloway joined the ACEJMC in 2018. West’s complaint delves into ACEJMC abuses of power in 2021-22 to downgrade the accreditation of the [University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill’s](#) renowned, [multi-Hearst National Championship](#) award-winning [Hussman School of Journalism and Media](#), based solely on so-called DEI “noncompliance.” West chronicled in her complaint how ACEJMC inflicted [serious reputational damage to UNC’s brand](#) with the unmerited downgrade, stoking fears among [other high-performing universities](#) that their programs might be targeted next.

“Were it not for President Donald Trump’s strong leadership in issuing his Executive Orders, including “[Reforming Accreditation to Strengthen Higher Education](#)” as was issued on April 23, there’s not a question in my mind that my complaint to CHEA would have ended up in their ‘circular file’ without a witness,” West said.



Complaint Excerpt: *ACEJMC President Del Galloway ridiculed via X UNC-Chapel Hill administrators' choice in 2021 not to grant tenure to New York Times "1619 Project" creator Nikole Hannah-Jones.*

On May 21, 2021, Galloway posted on X, "Wrong. Wrong. Wrong.", along with a link to a Washington Post story on the UNC tenure decision involving Hannah-Jones, even though it was already documented on ACEJMC's calendar that UNC-Chapel Hill was due for reaccreditation review that year, requiring all accreditors like Galloway to maintain objectivity and to avoid obvious appearances of bias.

Two months after [Galloway's post on X](#) openly chastising UNC-Chapel Hill and exposing DEI-related animus against the university, Galloway himself purposely volunteered on July 19, 2021, to serve on the site-review team slated to evaluate UNC's Hussman School for reaccreditation. Publicly discoverable e-mails reveal that, upon his being invited to join the UNC site review team, Galloway did not self-disclose his own recent anti-UNC tweet from two months prior or recuse himself, as required by ACEJMC and CHEA "conflict of interest" policy and bias-prevention rules.



“E.O. No. 14279 and Secretary McMahon give me such renewed hope that the accreditation racket – with the kinds of mafia-like tactics as I’ve copiously documented by ACEJMC officials in my complaint to CHEA – may end,” West said. “Going forward, I can now hope that my own daughters’ generation may experience a renewed focus on a top-notch higher education outcome, in an environment welcoming ideological diversity and freedoms of robust, open inquiry, without fear or favor. I wish the same for those in my industry and for America’s future journalism, public relations, advertising, and digital media workforce.”

West applauds the U.S. House Committee on Education & Workforce legislative effort to codify the Accreditation Presidential Executive Order and looks forward to a similar leadership initiative led by **Senator Tommy Tuberville** (R-AL), Chairman of the Education and the American Family Subcommittee of the Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee.

Before the Independence Day recess **H.R. 2516**, Accreditation for College Excellence (ACE) Act of 2025 (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/2516/text>) introduced by Chairman of the Higher Education and Workforce Development Subcommittee **Congressman Burgess Owens** (R-UT), passed out of committee. The ACE Act stops accreditors from using partisan political biases such as those driving DEI as a quality standard for institutions. The legislation aims to re-focus accreditors on producing workforce-ready, critically thinking graduates – not force-feeding prescriptive, partisan ideology into societal institutions.

H.R. 4054, Accreditation Choice and Innovation Act: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/4054/text> -- sponsored by **Rep. Randy Fine** (R-FL) – requires accreditors to use measurable student-success outcomes, provides an on-ramp for capable new accreditors, and streamlines the accreditation process. Both bills await scheduling for full House floor consideration.

*A moderate conservative, **Mary Beth West**, APR, [FPRCA](#) is a prior “Public Relations Student of the Year” (1994) and “Public Relations Alumna of the Year” (2013) of the University of Tennessee-Knoxville College of Communication and Information. A mother of three daughters, West speaks internationally as a [global expert on PR ethics](#). Her insights have been included in [The Wall Street Journal](#) and in numerous national and international business and public relations media over the past 25 years. Her blog posts are publicly viewable: “[Awash in Bias, ACEJMC Uni Accreditors Fail ‘Nonpartisan’ Fact-Check](#)” and “[Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Public Relations DEI Chat](#).” A complete copy of West’s CHEA complaint can be obtained by e-mailing mb@marybethwest.com.*