

STRATEGIC PLAN

2023-2028

School of Journalism and Media

Goal 1:

The School will provide leadership to educate students committed to the continuity, prosperity, and understanding of a complex, challenging, and increasingly global society, whenever and wherever they seek to learn.

Objective 1. Foster and promote classroom and lifelong learning, in line with the university's land-grant mission.

Actions:

1. Boost enrollment, retention and graduation rates at each level as evidence of student success.
2. Improve marketing of the School's curriculum with more engagement at area high schools and by promoting the flexibility of journalism/media degrees on the School website and through social media channels.
3. Provide opportunities for students to work individually and in teams cooperatively and collaboratively.
4. Actively undertake faculty mentorship to prepare students for academic, professional, and personal growth.
5. Identify, promote, and facilitate opportunities for student service and leadership.
6. Incorporate inclusive pedagogical practices throughout the curriculum.

Objective 2. Prepare students for careers across media industries through experiential learning, service learning, and the Volunteer Experience.

Actions:

1. Provide opportunities for community-engaged content creation to increase the amount of student-produced work in local media outlets.
2. Monitor curriculum to embody the integrated approach of teaching and experiential learning through student media and professional media outlets.
3. Emphasize internships, practica, and study abroad experiences, leveraging our alumni network to expand and diversify relationships with media companies.

4. Provide significant and frequent opportunities to interact with media professionals on campus, in the community, and beyond.
5. Maintain areas of emphasis that help students build an area of expertise within the broader field of journalism and media.
6. Prompt students to utilize the resources of the CCI Career Development Center.

Objective 3. Manage curriculum to foster transferable life skills and to continually meet changing needs and practices of the journalism and media industries.

Actions:

1. Seek opportunities to connect students and faculty with journalism and media practitioners and their professional organizations to learn current transferable skills and industry practices.
2. Monitor the media industry to devise and to support evolving, innovative curricular offerings that align with workforce needs.
3. Regularly upgrade and maintain high-quality equipment, software, and facilities to support teaching needs and to provide the tools for students to create quality work.

Objective 4. Establish a culture that recognizes, respects, and supports high-quality teaching that is inclusive, accessible, and responsive to the needs of all learners.

Actions:

1. Promote JEM faculty members' participation in pedagogical workshops to enhance the quality of their teaching.
2. Support faculty members' participation in professional seminars and workshops on journalism and media to refresh their knowledge/skills and retool their courses.
3. Nominate deserving faculty for teaching awards.

Goal 2:

Produce research, creative activities, and public scholarship that have visibility and impact locally, nationally, and internationally.

Objective 1. Support research, creative activity, and public scholarship that advances UT's mission as a land-grant university and creates a more just, prosperous, and sustainable future.

Actions:

1. Foster local promotion, accessibility, and exhibition of research, creative activity, and public scholarship.
2. Encourage inter- and cross-disciplinary collaborative research projects that engage and benefit Tennessee communities.

3. Share research projects with local community-based and professional associations.
4. Commit to creating apprentice-style relationships between faculty and doctoral students who serve as research assistants.
5. Pursue funding and sponsorship for additional public lecture series that reflect the School's creative activity, research, and public scholarship.

Objective 2. Encourage faculty to seek support for research, creative endeavors, and public scholarship.

Actions:

1. Work to form internal faculty research and/or creative work teams.
2. Develop research partnerships with other units at UT and externally.
3. Encourage faculty to apply for internal and external research funds while ensuring that opportunities are internally announced to all faculty.
4. Promote faculty attendance at workshops to facilitate grant writing and securing external research support.
5. Support faculty travel to present research, creative works, or public scholarship.

Objective 3. Share research, creative work, and public scholarship with relevant national and international scholarly and professional associations, as well as media outlets.

Actions:

1. Track research, creative, and public scholarship outputs of faculty and doctoral students.
2. Publicize the School's research, creative work, and public scholarship through media coverage and social media channels.
3. Nominate deserving faculty for research, creative works, and public scholarship awards.

Goal 3:

Develop and sustain a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community for faculty, staff, students, and alumni.

Objective 1. Develop and sustain a welcoming, supportive, and inclusive climate within the School.

Actions:

1. Implement College- and School-level administrative actions, including Diversity Action Plans, to champion, direct, and evaluate the School's diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.
2. Demonstrate the School's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusive excellence in internal and external communications.
3. Promote faculty, staff, and administrators' participation in professional development events and workshops for enhanced understanding of DEI issues.
4. Create a feedback loop to allow for feedback and to facilitate continued dialogue about school climate and culture.
5. Host regular social events and programming designed to bring together students, staff, faculty, and administrators to build community.

Objective 2. Attract, develop, and retain greater numbers of individuals from other countries and historically underrepresented populations in faculty, staff, and administrative positions.

Actions:

1. Communicate the School's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusive excellence to job seekers and related networks.
2. Ensure current faculty, staff, and administrators are prepared, committed, and engaged with inclusive recruitment and retention efforts.

Objective 3. Foster a welcoming, inclusive environment with the purpose of attracting, retaining, and graduating increasing numbers of international students and students from historically underrepresented populations.

Actions:

1. Incorporate inclusive teaching practices and materials across the curriculum.
2. Monitor the state of the School's DEI climate and representation among our students and recent graduates.
3. Build partnerships with flagship high schools and historically Black colleges and universities.

Goal 4:

Engage graduate students in professional, experience-oriented projects, and offer opportunities for theoretically-driven scholarly research through adaptable and nimble collaboration with faculty.

Objective 1. Ensure student success throughout the graduate program.

Actions:

1. Orient students into the graduate school experience at the beginning of their program.
2. Arrange faculty mentorships with graduate students based on shared professional and scholarly interests.
3. Seek opportunities to enhance course offerings available at the graduate level.
4. Provide significant opportunities to interact with journalism and media professionals and scholars on campus, in the community, and beyond.
5. Prompt masters students to utilize the opportunities afforded by the CCI Career Development Center and study abroad programs.

Goal 5:

Grow and enhance opportunities for the School's faculty, staff, and students to serve, lead, and partner in journalism and media endeavors at the local, regional, state, national, and global levels.

Objective 1. Increase engagement with community organizations that serve diverse populations in the Knoxville area and across the state in furtherance of UT's land-grant mission.

Actions:

1. Find ways to create, expand, and adapt partnerships with relevant community organizations through curricular and co-curricular activities.
2. Provide programming to share expertise with the campus, local community, and beyond.
3. Develop and strengthen partnerships with area high schools that serve diverse communities to promote media literacy and understanding of our disciplines.