

BYLAWS OF THE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND MEDIA

(Adopted September 17, 2004; Revision: January 2012; Revision: November 2012; Revision: February 2018; Revision: November 2018; Revision: December 2022; Revision: February 1, 2023; March 1, 2023)

These bylaws conform to the policies and procedures of the UTK Faculty Handbook and bylaws of the College of Communication and Information in all known points.

I. Vision and Mission Statements of the School

I.A. Vision Statement

The School of Journalism and Media at the University of Tennessee is committed to providing superior undergraduate and graduate academic programs, research, and service, thereby enhancing its national reputation. The School will continue as the leader in Tennessee in providing a comprehensive education in journalism and telecommunications, with a growing emphasis on international perspectives and on new technologies and emerging media. Through interdisciplinary research and teaching as well as service courses, the School will remain central to the missions of the College and the University.

I.B. Mission Statement

The mission of the School of Journalism and Media is to contribute to the evolving world of media and journalism, to instill in students an appreciation of journalistic ethics and professionalism, one that enhances the quality of newsgathering and dissemination. Writing, editing, graphic design and production skills, along with critical thinking, ethics and research skills are given both interdisciplinary and media-specific emphases. The School is dedicated to continuously ascertaining and serving the needs of its students and of media organizations with print, broadcasting, online and mobile communication platforms.

The School recognizes that teaching is the core of the University's mission of education. In our teaching, we provide majors with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in their careers and to become responsible media professionals. This includes both hands-on professional skills as well as a well-rounded academic background. This background features critical thinking skills, information, and expression skills needed for success in life as well as in a career. In an era when careers evolve and change on a regular basis, we provide not only basic skills, but also the knowledge and abilities to adapt to whatever opportunities arise throughout a career.

The School's goal is to hire and retain faculty members who are active in the profession through scholarship, creative activity, and service. In doing so, we not only contribute to society at large and stay active and involved with the field as instructors, but we demonstrate to our students the value of continued learning and inquiry. As our field changes and evolves, we not only recognize and integrate these changes into the curriculum, but also we strive – through leadership and excellence in research, creative activities, and service – to influence and to shape that evolution.

The School is a diverse and inclusive community that affects change by inspiring our students and pursuing scholarship and engagement that makes a difference. We shape socially conscious, ethical leaders who tell stories, solve problems, and serve as the foundation of an informed and responsible media industry in the U.S. and globally.

II. Faculty

The faculty of the School shall consist of all professors, associate professors, assistant professors, and lecturers who hold an appointment in the School of Journalism and Media. The voting faculty includes all current full-time members. Graduate teaching assistants, graduate assistants, and part-time faculty and adjuncts may attend faculty meetings and serve on some committees, but may not vote.

III. Director of the School

The chief executive and academic officer of the School shall be the Director. The Director is appointed for a renewable five-year term and serves at the will of the Dean and the Chancellor.

III.1. The Dean of the College of Communication and Information shall appoint the Director. In preparation for such an appointment, each full-time faculty member in the School shall be surveyed anonymously for comment.

III.1.A. Any new Director should hold at least the rank of associate professor, an earned doctoral degree or equivalent, and significant professional experience in journalism or related fields.

III.1.B. In the event that the position of the School Director becomes vacant, the School will follow the policy for the Selection of Department Heads outlined in the Faculty Handbook (1.4.4) to search for a new Director. The Dean of the College of Communication and Information appoints the Chair of the search committee from outside the department.

III.1.C. If the Dean of the College deems it necessary, they may appoint a temporary acting Director after consultation with the School faculty.

III.2. The Dean evaluates the Director annually following the review process following the procedures in the Faculty Handbook. School faculty participate in the review process following the procedures in the Faculty Handbook.

III.3. The Director shall appoint committees to provide advice regarding the operation of the School when they believe a committee of the whole would be inefficient.

III.4. The Director shall appoint part-time instructors and lecturers, graduate teaching assistants, and graduate assistants. In all searches and appointments, the Director shall seek to develop a well-qualified, diverse faculty.

III.5. The Director shall appoint the secretarial and clerical staff to accomplish the goals of the School.

III.6. The Director will implement policy as developed within the School, College, and University.

III.7. The Director will prepare and approve budgetary requests of the School and will submit and support them before the proper University authorities.

III.8. The Director will serve as an ex-officio, nonvoting member of all school committees, except the committee of the whole within which they are a full voting member.

III.9. Based on input from all faculty members, the Director will make recommendations to the Dean for employment renewals, non-renewals, salaries, promotion, and tenure of the faculty of the School.

III.10. The Director will provide leadership in the process of building, encouraging, and maintaining a high standard of excellence in the School. Among these leadership duties are:

III.10.A. Maintaining effective communication by timely circulation of memoranda and reports both to the faculty members and to students.

III.10.B. Building instructional excellence by:

III.10.B.1. Encouraging and rewarding excellence in teaching.

III.10.B.2. Maintaining high-quality, pertinent materials within the educational offerings of the School.

III.10.B.3. Actively recruiting competent students, and providing an environment conducive to teaching and learning.

III.10.B.4. Stimulating faculty participation in School affairs.

III.10.B.5. Maintaining active communication with the student body to obtain a wide representative view of student concerns.

III.10.C. Encouraging research by:

III.10.C.1. Rewarding and encouraging excellence in research.

III.10.C.2. Providing guidance and assistance in developing research activities specific to the capabilities and interests of School faculty members and students.

III.10.C.3. Actively assisting in obtaining funds to support research activities.

III.10.D. Encouraging service activities and professional improvement of the faculty by:

III.10.D.1. Arranging workloads that encourage service and professional improvement activities.

III.10.D.2. Facilitating such activities through the acquisition of funds and other resources and their equitable distribution to encourage participation.

III.10.D.3. Attracting and retaining faculty members who build and strengthen professional excellence within the School.

III.10.D.4. Encouraging faculty to belong to and work with constituent professional organizations and rewarding such service and participation.

III.11. Ordinarily, the decisions of the Director shall reflect the judgment of the faculty as expressed by majority vote in School faculty meetings. Where a decision of the Director differs from the expressed judgment of the faculty, the Director shall explain that decision and provide an opportunity for the faculty to respond.

III.11.A. Decisions of substantial import to the work of the faculty, including allocation of operating funds and appointment of academic year or part-time or limited-term faculty, shall be made, whenever possible, in consultation with the faculty.

IV. Faculty Meetings

IV.1. The faculty shall be called to meet at least twice each semester to conduct the business of the School. Faculty meetings must be scheduled and faculty members notified of the meeting at least two weeks in advance. The agenda and materials under consideration at the meeting shall be provided to all faculty members at least one week in advance.

IV.2. The Director shall preside at all faculty meetings and shall designate a person to serve as recording secretary. Faculty meeting minutes shall be distributed to faculty members prior to the subsequent meeting.

IV.3. Faculty members (at least three) may petition for a faculty meeting at any time during the semester. If faculty members wish to meet without the Director, they shall elect a new presiding officer for the meeting. If the Director is not invited, they shall be notified in advance about the meeting and its purpose.

IV.4. Informal procedures shall be used at faculty meetings, but formal rules of procedure shall be followed when requested by any faculty member. A majority of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum.

IV.5. Robert's Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority.

IV.6. Voting shall be by voice or hand, unless a secret ballot is requested by a majority of the members present.

V. Committees

V.1. Either the Director or the faculty may form standing and ad hoc committees. Committees formed by the faculty may be dissolved only by a majority faculty vote at a faculty meeting.

V.2. The Director shall normally appoint committee members, but members of any committee formed by the faculty will be elected at large. The Director shall designate the presiding officer of appointed committees. Committees formed by the faculty shall elect their own presiding officers.

V.3. The Director shall neither preside over any committee nor serve as a voting member of any committee.

V.4. Standing committees and committees formed by the faculty shall report to the faculty.

V.5. Committee membership shall be considered a duty of each faculty member. The Director shall not assign an excessive amount of committee work to a faculty member.

V.6. Standing committees in the School shall include, but are not limited to:

V.6.A. School Assessment & Planning Committee. Develops instruments and procedures to collect data on student learning outcomes as they matriculate through the major. Provides benchmarks and identifies potential adjustments to curriculum or courses. Proposes amendments to bylaws as needed; leads strategic planning processes.

V.6.B. Diversity Plan & Civility Committee. Leads and assesses strategic initiatives regarding the School's diversity, inclusion, and equity efforts. Facilitates a channel of communication around diversity and inclusion among students, faculty, staff, and administration. Leads the development of continuing education around cultural competency. Ensures current staff, faculty, staff and administrators are prepared, committed and engaged with recruitment and retention efforts; Develops and strengthens partnerships with diverse communities in Tennessee and globally.

V.6.C. Graduate Studies Committee. Leads development and review of the MS curriculum. Works with the College to represent the School in the PhD program and coordinate course development and assignment. Reviews applications to the graduate program and determines acceptances.

V.6.D. Scholarship Committee. Conducts review of scholarship applications and determines awardees.

V.6.E. Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. Reviews curriculum and course offerings and content. Leads proposals to amend the curriculum and concentration areas as needed. Explores curriculum-related possibilities.

VI. Curriculum Changes

VI.1. The curriculum shall be described in University catalogs. Changes in course requirements, degree requirements, rules and regulations for admission, and graduation shall be the responsibility of the faculty.

VI.2. Proposed curricular changes must be presented in writing to the faculty at least one week (five working days) in advance for consideration at a regularly scheduled meeting. Statements outlining financial impact, effect on other College units, and potential for recruiting diverse students should be included in all proposals.

VI.3. The Director or their designee is responsible for the timely submission of curriculum changes approved by the Journalism and Media faculty to the appropriate College and University committees for their consideration.

VII. Appointment, Retention, Tenure, and Promotion of Faculty

The School of Journalism and Media regularly engages in evaluations of teaching, research, and service activities of faculty in a constant effort to improve performance in all areas.

VII.1. All actions of the School concerning appointment, workload, retention, tenure, and promotion of tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty members shall conform to the standards and procedures set forth in the University of Tennessee Faculty Handbook and/or special guidelines adopted by UTK and based upon review and approval by the UTK Chancellor, Provost, Council of Deans, and the Non-Tenure Track Faculty Advisory Council.

VII.2.A. After consultation with the faculty at a convened meeting, the Director will discuss job descriptions for faculty appointments with the Dean. The Director will appoint a search committee to handle correspondence, publicity, diversity, and on-campus interviews. When an appointment to a tenure-track position is contemplated, all members of the School of that rank and higher rank will be solicited for their feedback on the candidates before any offer of employment is made.

VII.2.B. If the successful tenure-track candidate has one (1) or more years of service at another accredited four-year institution at the rank of assistant professor or above, the Director, at their discretion, may offer the candidate years of credit toward tenure and promotion at UTK. In such a case, the Director may offer the candidate up to, but no more than, three (3) such years of credit. Years of credit toward tenure and promotion include all of the candidate's progress made during those years in the areas of research, teaching, and service. The Director will use their discretion to determine how many years of credit, if any, are appropriate for the candidate, based solely on the candidate's record, according to the expectations for tenure and promotion set forth in Section 5 below. Any such years offered shall be indicated in written form, such as in a memo drafted by the director at the time the position is offered, and will be communicated to the School's tenure and promotion committee at the time the candidate is to be considered for tenure and promotion.

VII.3. Faculty may be considered for promotion and/or tenure upon recommendation of the Director or notice from the Academic Affairs Office. An untenured assistant professor must be considered for tenure no later than their sixth year of service in that rank. An associate professor must serve at least five years in rank before they are eligible for promotion. A lecturer may be considered for promotion to Senior Lecturer rank if they have a minimum of five years as a Lecturer; a Senior Lecturer may be considered for promotion to Distinguished Lecturer rank after a minimum of three to five years as a Senior Lecturer.

VII.4. Faculty members to be considered for retention, tenure, or promotion shall be so notified in writing by the Director of the School at least six weeks before the School tenure and promotion committee is to act upon the matter. Non-tenure-track faculty under consideration shall be invited to submit materials for their dossier. Tenure-track faculty members under consideration shall be invited to submit materials for their dossier and propose the names of four people outside of the university as references. The Director shall solicit the names of at least four more individuals who could serve as external evaluators from the School tenure and promotion committee. The tenure and promotion dossier will normally include no fewer than five letters from external evaluators. All letters solicited and received must be included in the dossier unless the Office of Academic Affairs approves their removal from the review process.

VII.4.A. The Director in consultation with the faculty member involved is responsible for providing documentation for faculty review. At a minimum, it must include information about courses taught, courses developed, student advising, evaluations of teaching, research and writing completed or in progress, evaluations of publications and creative activity, information about service to the School, College, University, and community, contributions to professional organizations, and honors received. After material has been compiled for the promotion/tenure file, the faculty member must sign a form saying they have viewed it (excluding external letters of reviews).

VII.4.B. The promotion and tenure committee consists of the tenured faculty of the School for both tenure-track and non-tenure-track promotions. All faculty members of the School who have tenure shall be called to a meeting expressly for the purpose of voting on retention and/or tenure. Eligible faculty will recommend tenure and promotion on the basis of excellence in teaching, research, and service. Eligible faculty members will evaluate the quality of work in each of these areas. Votes shall be based on individual reviews of the dossier, including external letters of review in the case of tenure-track faculty members. A vote shall be by individual secret written ballot after appropriate discussion. Faculty members may vote on promotion decisions for ranks equal to or lower than their own.

VII.4.C. In each case -- retention, tenure, or promotion -- the call of the promotion and tenure meeting shall be issued not less than two weeks before it is to occur, and the faculty member's

dossier must be made available to the promotion and tenure committee at that time. Members who expect to be absent may submit sealed ballots in advance. Immediately after a vote is taken, the ballots (including absentee ballots, if any) shall be counted and the number of votes for and against shall be announced before the meeting is adjourned.

VII.4.D. A simple majority of the promotion and tenure committee will constitute the recommendation of the faculty.

VII.4.E. One member of the promotion and tenure committee shall write a report to the Director summarizing the committee's discussion and reporting the vote. All members of the promotion and tenure committee shall review the report prior to its submission to the Director. The report shall be included in the faculty member's dossier when it is submitted to the College's Faculty Affairs Committee for review.

VII.4.F. The School Director shall submit to the Dean of the College of Communication and Information the following:

VII.4.F.1. The number of votes for and against the recommendation.

VII.4.F.2. The school recommendation based on the vote of the faculty in the case of tenure.

VII.4.F.3. Statement of the reasons for the School recommendation, with explanation of divergent votes.

VII.4.F.4. The Director's own recommendation.

VII.4.G. The Director shall inform all faculty members who were eligible to vote on the matter of the Dean's final recommendation concerning retention, promotion, or tenure.

VII.5. Tenure & Promotion Expectations.

The norm per University of Tennessee, Knoxville policy is that Assistant Professors come up for tenure and promotion during their sixth year. The expectations for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor are as follows:

VII.5.A. Research Expectations: By the time of the tenure application, an assistant professor focusing on research is expected to have produced 10 academic journal articles or a book published by a well-regarded publishing company and five academic journal articles. Faculty should strive to publish in the 20 academic journals that the school has identified as being top-tier journals in the fields of journalism and media. The School pays attention to achieving publication in journals with certain impact factors, but does not mandate publishing in journals with certain impact factors. The publications of a tenure candidate should demonstrate that the faculty member's research work has extended beyond the research conducted for their doctorate degree. An assistant professor focusing on creative works is expected to have a strong record of having works in peer-reviewed exhibitions and/or screenings, awards, and other forms of professional recognition that demonstrate national and/or international recognition.

VII.5.B. Teaching Expectations: By the time of the tenure application, an assistant professor is expected to contribute significantly to the teaching mission of the School. Candidates should demonstrate effective teaching by earning student evaluations scores that match or exceed

College norms, and by working on graduate thesis and dissertation committees. Serving as mentors to graduate students and collaborating with them on research projects are also expected. By the tenure application, faculty members should have received positive outcomes from at least two peer-teaching evaluations.

VII.5.C. Service Expectations: By the time of the tenure application, an assistant professor is expected to have a clear record of School committee membership, and should be serving the College's service needs in addition to the School's after their third year at the university. Service to the profession is recognized as evidence of the candidate's national reputation.

VII.6. Summary of Accomplishments for Each Faculty Rank.

The following categories specify areas of accomplishment upon which promotion to each rank will be determined. It is the responsibility of each faculty member to keep records that document their accomplishments.

VII.6.A. *Tenured/Tenure-track Faculty*

Professor: Individuals promoted to this rank are expected to

- be accomplished teachers;
- have achieved and to maintain a nationally recognized record in disciplinary research and/or creative activity;
- have achieved and maintained a record of significant institutional, disciplinary, and/or professional service;
- serve as mentors to junior colleagues;
- have normally served as an associate professor for at least five years;
- have shown beyond doubt that they work well with colleagues and students in performing their university responsibilities.

Associate professor: Individuals promoted to this rank are expected to

- be good teachers;
- have achieved and maintained a recognized record in disciplinary research and/or creative activity;
- have achieved and maintained a record of institutional, disciplinary, and/or professional service;
- have normally served as an assistant professor for at least five years;
- have demonstrated that they work well with colleagues and students in performing their university responsibilities.

VII.6.B. *Non-Tenure-track Faculty*

Senior lecturer: Individuals promoted to this rank are expected to

- have demonstrated outstanding teaching at the rank of lecturer, normally through five or more years of service

Distinguished lecturer: Individuals promoted to this rank are expected to

- have demonstrated excellence in teaching at the rank of senior lecturer, typically for a period of three to five years

VII.7. Annual Reviews

Each tenure-track and tenured faculty member shall receive from the Director a written annual review of their performance evaluating the areas of instruction, research and creative achievement, and service.

VII.7.A. Each faculty member should submit to the Director a narrative of their accomplishments since the last annual review, including a summary of teaching, ongoing research, project/thesis/dissertation advising and committee work, and service. The Director, after consultation with the faculty member, will evaluate the faculty member's overall performance.

VII.7.B. Generally, each faculty member will be reviewed in the categories of instruction, research/creative achievement, and service. While it is the faculty member's overall performance that is to be rated, the following serve as guidelines for evaluation performance in teaching, research and creative achievement, and service for the yearly reviews:

- 5 - Far exceeds expectations
- 4 - Exceeds expectations
- 3 - Meets expectations
- 2 - Falls short of meeting expectations
- 1 - Falls far short of meeting expectations

VII.7.C. The Faculty Handbook (3.81) details how each evaluation affects the outcome for the faculty member.

VII.7.D. The workload policy as described in the Faculty Handbook (3.7) governs mainly decisions on whether a faculty member is to continue teaching two courses per semester or, if they do not meet the minimum expectations, be asked to teach an additional class(es); it does not address merit and performance-based salary adjustments.

VII.7.E. For purposes of merit and performance-based salary adjustments, the following serve as guidelines for evaluating performance.

Instruction

5. *Far exceeds expectations*: Accomplishments are exceptional and go well beyond the "exceeds expectations" category. The faculty member has won a national and/or international prestigious award.

4. *Exceeds expectations*: Course evaluations are above the mean for the university-mandated teaching evaluation instruments; teaching materials are thorough, clear and useful to students. Peer reviews, if available, are outstanding. Winning a teaching or advising award or providing other evidence of exemplary achievement, such as developing new courses or new methods of teaching, or having a graduate advisee receive an award for a thesis or dissertation, will be considered.

3. *Meets expectations*: Course evaluations are only slightly below or near the mean of the teaching evaluation instrument. Peer reviews, if available, are satisfactory. Available for advising on the graduate level and does an acceptable job.

2. *Falls short of expectations*: Course evaluations are consistently near the lowest rank and materials are minimally acceptable. Peer reviews, if available, indicate that improvement is needed. Faculty member does a poor job of advising or is seldom available.

1. *Falls far short of expectations*: Course evaluations are consistently in the lowest range of the university-mandated teaching evaluation instrument and materials are of poor quality. Peer reviews, if available, are unsatisfactory. Faculty member does not do assigned advising.

Research and Creative Achievement

5. *Far exceeds expectations*: Accomplishments are exceptional and go well beyond the “exceeds expectations” category. The faculty member has won a national and/or international prestigious award.

4. *Exceeds expectations*: Has academic book, book chapter, refereed journal articles, refereed presentations at regional, national or international levels and other research output during the previous academic year, or has received highly favorable reviews of creative activity by peers at the national/international level. The number of these research or creative items must exceed two and the quality must also justify the “exceeds expectations” ranking and will be judged according to the spirit and letter of the School’s benchmarks. Winning grants and research awards, favorable book reviews, and other evidence of exemplary activity will also be considered.

3. *Meets expectations*: Has had accepted at least two items for a refereed presentation or refereed publication during the previous year, or has had creative activities judged favorably by peers. Faculty members engaged in writing scholarly books and making demonstrable progress toward major research and creative projects are also considered to meet expectations.

2. *Falls short of expectations*: Has an ongoing research/creative activity program, but has failed to pursue that program consistently. (For example, faculty member has not had material accepted for review by peers, for presentation at a conference, or for publication within the past year or has not made progress on a major project or book manuscript.)

1. *Falls far short of expectations*: Consistent failure to engage in a program of ongoing research/creative activity.

Service

5. *Far exceeds expectations*: Accomplishments are exceptional and go well beyond the “exceeds expectations” category. The faculty member has won a national and/or international prestigious award.

4. *Exceeds expectations*: Has completed two or more service activities at the university, college, and school level and/or local, state, national, or international level for a professional or scholarly organization, or has participated in an active role as an officer, journal editor, or editorial board of an academic or professional journal. His/her work brings national distinction to the faculty member and to the School.

3. *Meets expectations*: Has participated satisfactorily in at least one or more service activity at the university, college, and school level and/or local, state, national, or international level for a professional or scholarly organization during the year. His/her service work is important and conducted in a thorough manner.

2. *Falls short of expectations*: Has failed to perform service or has done so in an inadequate manner.

1. *Falls far short of expectations*: Has performed no service assignment in an adequate manner.

VII.7.F. Negative Evaluations.

VII.7.F.1. The School Director and the faculty member (indicating not agreement but that the faculty member has seen the document) will sign the annual evaluation document. Faculty members may attach rebuttals to the document.

VII.7.F.2. If a faculty member is judged as falling short of expectations, they must consult with the School Director and draft a written statement on the areas needing attention. The Dean must review the statement and concur.

VII.7.F.3. If a faculty member is judged to fall far short of expectations, they will be ineligible for merit bonuses and must provide a written report on steps to improve. The Dean must review the statement and concur.

VIII. Amendments

VIII.1. Either the Director or any faculty member may propose amendments to these bylaws.

VIII.2. Suggested amendments shall be submitted in writing to the School faculty at least one week prior to the meeting at which they are to be introduced.

VIII.3. Proposed amendments shall be voted on no sooner than two weeks, or later than four weeks, following their introduction. Written notice of the meeting at which the amendments are to be voted upon must contain the wording that is to be changed as well as the wording of the proposed amendment that will be voted upon at that meeting.

VIII.4. To be accepted, an amendment must receive a two-thirds majority of those voting.

VIII.5. Amendments accepted according to the above procedures shall take immediate effect unless otherwise specified in the amendment.

IX. Implementation

IX.1. These bylaws shall become effective immediately upon approval by two-thirds vote of the faculty.

IX.2. Copies of the bylaws shall be distributed to all School faculty members and to the Dean of the College of Communication and Information. A current copy of the bylaws shall be posted to the School's website at all times.