

By Laws

Department of Communication

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I. Department Mission

The mission of the Department of Communication at the University of Delaware is to both empower students in their personal and professional lives, and to provide an ethical compass for navigating the complexities of modern society. To this end, the faculty is dedicated to providing rigorous and comprehensive instruction to students and to generating important knowledge in the field of communication.

The major in communication is designed around two central goals, increasing knowledge about communication processes and their impact on society, and developing communication skills and competencies. In pursuing these goals, the Department of communication has adopted a social and behavioral science orientation toward the study of human communication. All majors study communication in a wide variety of contexts, including interpersonal and mass communication in both mediated and face-to-face settings. A broad spectrum of classes enables students to critically analyze communication as well as recognize their own ethical responsibilities to self and community. The communication faculty is also committed to turning theory into effective skills for speaking, critical thinking, writing, and media production so the academic knowledge and experience extend beyond the classroom into future opportunities for our students.

The faculty of the department is committed to sharing their knowledge and experience through courses designed to enhance speaking and critical thinking skills; and in so doing, contribute to the university community and society.

II. Faculty

The faculty of the Department of Communication is made up of tenured and tenure-track faculty, continuing non-tenure-track faculty, and adjunct faculty. Terms of appointments, duties, and privileges are listed in the University Faculty Handbook.

Joint appointments establish connections with persons whose scholarly interests and background enrich those of the department. A joint appointment is conferred by a two-thirds vote of the regular voting faculty. Joint appointments are for a three-year term and are renewable by a two-thirds vote by the regular voting faculty. Responsibilities of jointly appointed faculty include reasonable participation in teaching, research, and guidance of student research. Persons holding joint appointments are not granted voting rights and are not eligible for tenure, travel funds, or normal Departmental committee service.

III. Officers

A. Chair

The Chair, as the chief administrative officer of the department, is responsible for communicating and administering policies and procedures of the University, College, and Department, for maintaining and organizing courses of study, and for representing the department within the institution, community, and profession.

The Department Chair is appointed according to the applicable regulations of the University. The Department faculty should participate in the search and appointment process and make appropriate recommendations.

B. Director of Graduate Studies

The Director of Graduate Studies is appointed by the Chair. The Director of Graduate studies serves as the Chair of the department's Graduate Committee and is the departmental liaison with all potential and actual applicants to the department's graduate program as well as the departmental liaison with the University Office of Graduate Studies. The Director gathers application materials and prepares for admission and financial aid decisions. In addition, the director serves as the advisor for all first-year graduate students.

C. Director of Undergraduate Studies

The Director of Undergraduate Studies is appointed by the chair and is responsible for tasks including but not limited to the following: serving as the Chair of the department's Undergraduate Committee, overseeing Departmental senior checkout, implementing changes in curriculum and course offerings, assigning Departmental credits for courses transferred from other Universities, and conducting studies of issues relevant to undergraduate education such as trajectories in course enrollments over time and methods for conducting student ratings of instruction.

D. Director of Internship Program

The Internship Director is appointed by the chair and coordinates all aspects of the department's internship program: (a) fielding student requests to receive credit for internship experiences (including winter and summer, when we do not directly offer internship credit), (b) supervising students during their internships, (c) serving as the departmental liaison for on-site internship supervisors, (d) handling new requests for student interns from interested organizations, and (e) maintaining a record of current internship opportunities.

E. Basic Course Director

The Basic Course Director is appointed by the chair. The Basic Course Director trains graduate teaching assistants by co-teaching/mentoring all GTAs. In addition, the Basic Course Director creates, organizes, and oversees all course management system content, presentation/

Powerpoint units, syllabi, course packets, handout materials, evaluations, and exams for multiple sections of the basic courses taught by GTAs. The Basic Course Director also serves as the Chair of the department's Oral Communication Committee.

F. PRSSA Advisor

The PRSSA Advisor is appointed by the chair. The responsibilities of the PRSSA advisor are detailed in the PRSSA Chapter Handbook. Major responsibilities include: attending chapter meetings; facilitating cooperative events and serving as a liaison with local, regional, and national PRSA organizations; directing competitions; advising and mentoring members; and promotion and membership recruitment.

IV. Meetings

The department shall hold at least one meeting every semester. The Department Chair will set the schedule of meetings at the beginning of each semester. Special meetings can be called by the Chair and at the request of 50% of the faculty.

The Department Chair or a designee shall serve as the chair of the meeting.

The Assistant to the Chair, or any other person designated by the Chair, shall serve as secretary and keep meeting minutes.

All full-time faculty are entitled to attend meetings and vote on departmental business. Part time and adjunct professors, faculty with joint appointments, and professional staff are welcome to attend meetings and participate in discussion, but do not vote.

A quorum will be achieved when 70% of the voting members are present.

Departmental decisions are made by a simple majority of those present, assuming a quorum. Written, secret ballots will be used if requested by any single faculty member.

The agenda shall be prepared by the Departmental Chair from items of general interest and those submitted by any member of the faculty. The agenda should be circulated to the faculty at least one day before the scheduled meetings.

V. Standing Committees

The Department has an Executive committee, three standing program committees (Undergraduate Committee, Graduate Committee, and Oral Communication Committee) and two standing undergraduate curriculum committees (Mass Communication Curriculum Committee, and Interpersonal Communication Curriculum Committee).

A. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee advises the Chairperson on general matters of departmental policy

and administration. The Chairperson serves *ex officio* as chair of the committee. Members include four faculty, each representing different ranks, professor, associate professor, and untenured faculty, and one member elected at large. If any rank is underrepresented in the department (i.e., two or fewer members), then that slot will also become an at large one until the next election. Faculty on sabbatical will be replaced with acting members until their return by vote of the faculty. Duties of the Executive Committee include maintaining and updating departmental governance documents and departmental committees; conferring with the chair on annual evaluation criteria; recommending faculty for secondary appoints; coordinating departmental retreats and long-term planning; bringing forward faculty concerns for discussion, and other related matters.

Faculty may nominate colleagues or themselves for the Executive Committee and the entire faculty will vote, by secret ballot, to select Executive Committee members. Faculty will serve for two-year staggered terms; two of whom begin their term during even-numbered years and one of whom begins their term during odd-numbered years. At the end of a two-year term, a faculty member would be ineligible for committee membership for the subsequent two-year period.

The Executive Committee will meet as needed. Any member of the committee can bring items to the agenda. When the committee members agree, the committee can meet without the Chairperson to discuss faculty concerns.

B. Program Committees

The membership of each program committee includes *ex officio* members (the Department Chair and respective Program Directors) and other members so that the committee as a whole is representative of the Department in terms of rank and curricular areas. These other members will serve staggered two year terms beginning and ending at the start of the relevant Fall semester. All full-time faculty members are eligible for committee membership, through self-nomination or nomination by another full-time faculty member to the Chair of the respective committee during the spring semester before the beginning of their term. In the event of more nominations than open seats for a given committee, membership will be determined through secret ballot by all voting members of the Department with the exception of the chair. The chair will vote only when necessary to break a tie. To the extent possible given faculty availability, individual faculty will be limited to serving on one committee at a given time, with the exception of *ex officio* members designated for multiple committees.

The Program Director will serve as Chair of their respective committee. Committee decisions will be made through majority vote. These decisions are advisory and subject to vote by the faculty as a whole, with the exception of admissions and funding decisions made by the Graduate Committee. The standing committees may solicit input from other faculty members, and may invite such faculty members to meetings as non-voting participants.

1. Undergraduate Committee

The Undergraduate Committee includes the Undergraduate Director as Chair, the Department

Chair, and three other full-time faculty members, two of whom begin their term during even-numbered years and one of whom begins their term during odd-numbered years. The Undergraduate Committee is responsible for undergraduate curricular and advising issues, including but not limited to maintaining the quality of instruction, evaluating and proposing revisions to programs of study, proposing and evaluating interdepartmental programs such as cross-disciplinary majors and minors in which the Department is involved, overseeing the Departmental Honors program, choosing the winners of Department awards at graduation, and other issues relevant to undergraduate education in the Department.

2. Graduate Committee

The Graduate Committee includes the Graduate Director as Chair, the Department Chair, the Oral Communication Director, and four other full-time faculty members, two of whom begin their term during even-numbered years and two of whom begin their term during odd-numbered years. The Graduate Committee is responsible for graduate curricular issues, including but not limited to maintaining the quality of instruction, evaluating and proposing revisions to programs of study, graduate student recruitment, admission decisions, and funding decisions, and other issues relevant to graduate education in the Department.

3. Oral Communication Committee

The Oral Communication Committee includes the Basic Course Director as Chair, the Department Chair, the Oral Communication Fellows Director, and two other full-time faculty members, one of whom begins their term during even-numbered years and one of whom begins their term during odd-numbered years. The Oral Communication Committee is responsible for curricular issues relevant to oral communication, including but not limited to maintaining the quality of instruction, evaluating and proposing revisions to departmental public communication curriculum, and planning and evaluating external public communication initiatives, and other issues relevant to oral communication at the University of Delaware.

4. Curriculum Committees

All tenure-track and continuing non-tenure-track faculty are members of curriculum committees that deal with their respective teaching responsibilities. Curriculum committees are responsible for recommending and developing new courses and interest areas, and recommending to the Chair suggestions for addition, alteration, and deletion of individual courses, and course offerings for each semester.

VI. Special Committees

A. Promotion and Tenure Committee

The membership, duties, and procedures of this committee are discussed in the Department's Promotion and Tenure Document.

B. Search Committee

Search Committees for both faculty and staff positions shall be appointed by the Chair in accordance with University policy.

Search Committees are responsible for conducting the search in accordance with University policy and, upon completion of the search process, make recommendations to the Chair and the Faculty for hiring.

The Chair determines adjunct appointments.

C. Review Committees for Tenure-Track, Tenured, and Continuing Non-Tenure-Track Faculty

In accordance with University policies, the Department conducts pre-tenure reviews of assistant professors, post-tenure reviews of tenured faculty, and regular reviews of continuing non-tenure-track faculty. A separate committee is formed for each review. In accordance with the procedures set out in the Faculty Handbooks, the committee chair and members are appointed by the Department Chair. A committee shall consist of three faculty who are at or above the rank of the faculty member being evaluated.

D. Ad Hoc Committees

Ad hoc committees may be formed by the Department, a standing committee, or the Chair for a specific purpose. These committees shall be dissolved upon acceptance of a final report to the Department, the Chair, or to the standing committee that directed the ad hoc committee's formation.

VII. Amendment of Bylaws

These Department bylaws may be revised after a vote of a two-thirds majority of the faculty. These bylaws are guidelines for the internal operation of the Department. All Department decisions shall be consistent with University policy.