

**Department of Communication Studies**  
**THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA**

**Plan of Organization**

**Article I. Administrative Officers**

**Section 1.01 Department Chair**

*Selection:* Appointed by the Dean of the College of Communication and Information Sciences, consistent with College policies and procedures for selection of department chairs.

*Duties:*

1. Serve as the chief administrative officer of the department.
2. Plan and administer the budget, including recommendations for salaries and for merit or equity raises.
3. Facilitate all departmental programs, including promoting academic program development, scheduling academic course offerings, and administering departmental facilities.
4. Recommend all departmental personnel actions, including appointments of tenure and non-tenure faculty, renewals of faculty contracts, promotions of faculty, and termination of faculty.
5. Monitor and review performance of faculty members, adjunct instructors, as well as appointed officers and standing committees serving the department.
6. Supervise departmental staff.
7. Promote an academic climate that supports the mission of the department.
8. Ensure compliance with all applicable Federal, State, University, College, and departmental laws, regulations, and policies.

**Section 1.02 Official Departmental Recorder**

*Selection:* Recommended by the Faculty Advisory Committee (2.03) and approved by the Departmental Faculty Assembly (2.01). Term, typically: 2 semesters, renewable.

*Duties:*

1. Take notes during Departmental meetings of all formal business.
2. Produce a written report of the minutes, to be approved at the next meeting and published for future reference.

**Section 1.03 Graduate Program Coordinator**

*Selection:* Appointed by department chair. Not a "formal" administrative appointment and does not include any official FTE release; however, three semesters of COM 500 administration counts as 1 course load. Term, typically: 3 years, renewable.

*Duties:* Act as the chief advocate and liaison for departmental graduate studies to the College Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and the Director of Strategic Initiatives, including

1. Represent the department at UA Graduate School events.
2. Monitor and promote the development of the departmental graduate program.
3. Direct the departmental MA program, along with those faculty members holding specific administrative responsibilities for recruitment, advising, admissions, assessment, and on-line course development.

4. Coordinate financial awards and assistance to graduate students.
5. Advise the department chair regarding the schedule of graduate-level academic offerings.
6. Represent the department on the College Graduate Studies Council
7. Ensure compliance with all policies and procedures established by the University and Graduate School for graduate studies.

#### **Section 1.04 Undergraduate Program Coordinator**

*Selection:* Appointed by department chair. Not a "formal" administrative appointment but does include a one course release (.20 FTE) for an NTRC faculty member holding the position. Term, typically: 3 years, renewable.

*Duties:* Act as the chief advocate and representative of departmental undergraduate studies, including

1. Represent the department at UA undergraduate program events
2. Monitor and promote the development of the departmental undergraduate program, including organizing a public colloquium of undergraduate research spring semester
3. Coordinate the recruitment and advising of undergraduate students (may include complimentary membership in UA-AAA)
4. Help coordinate special academic programs for undergraduate students, including the *Accelerated Master's Program (AMP) in Communication Studies*
5. Advise department chair regarding the scheduling of undergraduate-level academic offerings
6. Serve as departmental member of the CIS Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
7. Ensure compliance with all policies and procedures established by the University and College for undergraduate studies

#### **Section 1.05 Director of the Public Speaking Program**

*Contract Position:* A 1.0 FTE non-tenure earning, academic year position, with a regular teaching load of four courses per semester. One course load (equal to .20 FTE release) is for teaching COM 501 and administration of the Public Speaking program.

*Duties:* Act as the chief advocate and representative of the departmental program in public speaking, including

1. Serve as an instructor of record, along with the assistant director, for large lecture sections of COM 123
2. Teach other departmental courses, as assigned by the departmental chair
3. Maintain complete records for all individual sections of COM 123 taught throughout the year, including the following documents:
  - Course syllabi
  - Weekly lesson plans
  - Midterm and final examinations
  - Course attendance & grade records
  - PRPSA survey results
4. Compile and report to the departmental chair assessment data pertaining to learning outcomes for the public speaking program
5. Conduct orientation workshop for all public speaking instructors and lab assistants once a year
6. Supervise and train graduate students for classroom instruction throughout fall and spring semesters
7. Coordinate with the assistant director program planning, including the the Speak-Off tournament for students enrolled in COM 123 in the fall semester and the Holle Excellence in Public Speaking

competition in the spring semester.

#### **Section 1.06 Director of the Alabama Forensic Council**

*Contract Position.* A 1.0 FTE non-tenure earning, academic year position, with a regular teaching load of four courses per semester. One course load (equal to .20 FTE release) is for COM 104 and coaching for program. In addition, as chief administrator of the program and supervisor of three graduate teaching assistants, this position also holds a .20 FTE administrative release.

*Duties:* Act as the chief advocate and representative for the Alabama Forensic Council, including

1. Administer and supervise the budget operation for the competitive Individual Events components of the program
2. Supervise, in conjunction with the assistant program director, the program planning and preparation for tournament travel
3. Train and coordinate the coaching staff for the program
4. Travel with students each year to intercollegiate tournament competitions
5. Award in-state UA tuition scholarships and monitor the involvement of AFC recipients in the program
6. Supervise the hosting on campus of the Hall of Fame High School Tournament, as well as other on campus forensics tournaments, as appropriate
7. Recruit students from high schools, community colleges, and on-campus students throughout the year
8. Publicize and keep records of the individual and team successes of the program
9. Coordinate any on campus or outreach aspects of the program

#### **Section 1.07 Departmental Representative on the College Tenure and Promotion Committee**

*Selection:* Appointed by department chair in consultation with the Faculty Advisory Committee (2.03). Member must be a tenured faculty member with full graduate faculty status (associate professors may serve in the absence of a full professor in the department). Term, typically: 3 years, renewable.

*Duties:* Represent the department on the College committee, which is responsible for evaluating the records of all College candidates for tenure and/or promotion and for making specific recommendations to the Dean for each candidacy.

1. Advise the research faculty members in the department about specific evaluative expectations at the College level for productive research programs.
2. Serve as the representative for research faculty members on matters of the Departmental Administrative Committee (DAC), when appropriate.

#### **Section 1.08 Undergraduate Scholarship and Awards Coordinator**

*Selection:* Appointed by the department chair

*Duties:* Act as the chief advocate for the department in the awarding of scholarships, awards, and honors and serving as the departmental representative on the following committees:

- Undergraduate Scholarship committee
- The Knox Hagood Award committee
- Honors Day committee

## Article II. Standing Committees

### Section 2.01 Departmental Faculty Assembly

Department chair serves as chair of the assembly, which includes all members of the departmental faculty and one graduate student representative, except in matters pertaining to personnel and amendments to this plan, where membership shall be limited to only full-time departmental faculty members. The departmental faculty shall be defined as (1) all full-time departmental tenured and tenure-track faculty members, (2) all full-time departmental NTRC faculty members, and (3) any adjunct instructor who teach at least 6 credits per academic year whose teaching appointment is in the department.

*Functions:* Formulate and recommend policies to the department chair regarding all aspects of departmental administration.

### Section 2.02 Departmental Administrative Committee (DAC)

*Membership:* The Departmental Chair (**1.01**); Graduate Program Coordinator (**1.03**); Undergraduate Program Coordinator (**1.04**), and the Departmental Representative to the College T&P Committee (**1.07**), as needed.

*Functions:*

1. Supervise the day-to-day functions of the department.
2. Serve as a board for judging external funding requests from the department.
3. Determine the awarding of departmental Reese Phifer Scholarship grants and Hagood support proposals, as needed.
4. Serve as the departmental Textbook Ethics Committee, as needed.

### Section 2.03 Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC)

*Membership:* At the start of the academic year, at least three faculty members will be elected by the Departmental Faculty Assembly (**2.01**). At its first meeting, the committee shall elect its chair. The department chair may also sit with the committee.

*Functions:*

1. Consult regularly with the chair of the department on matters of interest and concern to the department, including curricular matters, strategic planning, and facility planning.
2. Provide advice to the chair regarding the chair's appointments of all standing committees of the department.
3. Meetings may be called by the department chair, or the chair of the Committee, or at the request of two members of the Committee.

### Section 2.04 Administrative Committee for the Graduate Program

*Membership:* The Graduate Program Coordinator (**1.03**) serves as chair of the committee. Members include those individual faculty members holding specific administrative responsibilities for the departmental MA program. These faculty members must hold Graduate Faculty status.

*Functions:*

1. Work, as needed, to enhance efforts for graduate student recruitment
2. Review applications to the departmental MA program, as needed
3. Recommend students for scholarship nominations and assistantships
4. Formulate or recommend policy changes, along with other agenda items related to the departmental MA program, to the Departmental Graduate Assembly (**2.05**) for approval

### **Section 2.05 Departmental Graduate Assembly (DGA)**

*Membership:* Graduate Program Coordinator (as chair) and all members of the departmental faculty holding graduate faculty status -- tenured, tenure-track, and NTRC -- and one non-voting graduate student member, except in matters covered by FERPA and student confidentiality, where membership shall be limited to the departmental graduate faculty.

*Functions:* To serve as the governing body for all matters uniquely graduate in character related to the departmental graduate program, courses, and administration.

### **Section 2.06 Undergraduate Program Committee (UPC)**

*Membership:* The Undergraduate Program Coordinator (as chair) plus at least two faculty members (of which at least one shall be a tenured or tenure-track faculty member), and one non-voting graduate student. All but the Undergraduate Program Coordinator (**1.04**) shall be appointed by the department chair from a slate of candidates provided by the Faculty Advisory Committee (**2.03**).

*Functions*

1. Formulate and recommend policies to the Departmental Faculty Assembly (**2.01**) and department chair regarding all aspects of the undergraduate program
2. Serve as the Committee on Programs, Courses, and Curricula regarding all matters uniquely undergraduate in character.

### **Section 2.07 Policies for Meetings of Standing Committees**

- All standing committees shall meet at least once per semester.
- Except when immediate action is required, committee members shall be notified no later than one week prior to a meeting.
- Meetings may be called in the following ways:
  1. By the committee Chair.
  2. By a written petition of one-third of the committee members.
  3. By resolution of the committee.
  4. By department chair.
- Committee members may participate and vote in committee meetings through electronic media, provided that these media provide real-time, two-way, visual and acoustic communication.
- A quorum of any committee shall be a majority of its members (unless specified at a higher level in published policies of the committee).
- Generally, the principle governing procedure for governance of the department is that any official votes should follow a full discussion of issues conducted in a properly called meeting of the committee (or subcommittee) and open to the full committee (or subcommittee) membership.
- Votes on business before departmental governance committees (standing committees established by this plan and subsequent *ad hoc* committees) may be taken by non-standard methods (postal mail, email, facsimile, internet sites) under one of the following scenarios:
  1. An election is to be held for service or office. In this case, if a procedure for soliciting nominations is in order, nominations must be received in an open meeting.
  2. Approval of a report, proposal, or other document that has received vetting during a prior discussion at a properly called meeting of the committee. Thus, final drafts of the products of this business can be approved through non-standard means. The ballot in such votes should contain the option: "request an additional meeting of the committee." If any voting member shall select this option, a meeting shall be called and the non-standard vote voided.
  3. Approval of minutes. The ballot in such votes shall contain the option: "subject to the following addition, deletion, or correction:" In the case where this option elicits a response from any voter, the approval shall revert to a properly called meeting of the committee.

4. When a 2/3 vote of members present and voting at a properly called meeting authorizes the nonstandard methods of voting. Such a vote should:
  - a. affirm that the requisite discussion has taken place,
  - b. specify the mode of voting (postal, email, etc.),
  - c. designate a period of time the vote is to remain open, and
  - d. specify a method of reporting the final vote.
5. Other circumstances specified in policies and documents that supersede this plan.
6. Other exceptions or classes of exception may be approved by the Departmental Assembly by a 2/3 vote. To be in order, such proposals must be narrowly drawn for a specified vote or class of vote, and must --
  - a. define the circumstances under which votes are allowed;
  - b. specify the acceptable mode(s) of voting (postal, email, etc.); and
  - c. specify procedures for each voter to indicate their preference to employ standard methods to vote. Under these procedures, an indication by anyone participating

### Article III. Grievance Procedures

For all grievances, the department shall follow applicable procedures contained (or implied) in the University's Graduate School Catalog, Undergraduate Catalog, and the Faculty Handbook or any successors to these policies.

### Article IV. Amendments

Amendments to this plan of organization shall be presented in writing to the Faculty Advisory Committee (2.03). The Faculty Advisory Committee shall then submit them with its recommendation to the Departmental Faculty Assembly (2.01). A three-fifths majority of members present and voting shall be required for adoption.

Adoption Date: 28 August 2009  
Amended: 3 February 2010  
Amended: 2 November 2011  
Amended: 15 May 2015  
Amended: 15 August 2017