

COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT BY-LAWS

I. Definitions

- A. A part-time faculty member is any member of the Department of Communication teaching faculty whose appointment is considered to be part-time with Texas A&M University.
- B. A full-time faculty member is any member of the Department of Communication teaching faculty whose appointment is considered to be full-time with Texas A&M University.
- C. A tenure track faculty member is any member of the teaching faculty who occupies a tenure-earning or tenure-accruing position.
- D. An academic professional track (academic professional track) faculty member is any member of the teaching faculty who does not occupy a tenure-earning or tenure-accruing position (e.g. lecturers, instructional professors, and visiting professors, among others.)
- E. A tenured faculty member is any member of the teaching faculty who has been awarded tenure by authority of the Texas A&M System Board of Regents.
- F. A graduate faculty member is any member of the teaching faculty who has been appointed by the Texas A&M University Office of Graduate and Professional Studies as a member, associate member, or adjunct member of the graduate faculty.
- G. A professor is any member of the teaching faculty whose primary title includes the word “professor” in the title, regardless of other rank or appointment qualifiers associated with the title.

II. Mission Statement

- A. The mission of the Department of Communication at Texas A&M University is to provide research, teaching, and service to the campus, community, state, university, and discipline.
- B. Within the broad outlines of the mission statement, the department seeks to work cooperatively with other departments and university units to further the study the human communication processes and practices.

III. Administrative Structure

- A. The Department of Communication shall be administered by a Department Head who is appointed by the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts.
- B. Upon the completion of a Head’s term (usually four years), the faculty will be consulted with respect to the reappointment or appointment of the Department Head, as specified in university policy. Such consultation is advisory and directed to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts. However, if the Head does not get 50%+ approval of the

- faculty vote after the first term or 66% after the second term, the Head cannot be reappointed.
- C. The Department Head has the prerogative to appoint such other administrative officers as he or she deems advisable, including but not limited to an Associate Department Head, Director of Graduate Studies and Director of Undergraduate Studies.
 - D. The Department Head shall determine the duties of an Associate Department Head, Director of Graduate Studies and/or Director of Undergraduate Studies.
 - E. An Associate Department Head, Director of Graduate Studies, Director of Undergraduate Studies or other administrative officer serves at the pleasure of the Department Head and therefore serves on a year-to-year basis.

IV. Faculty Meetings

- A. The Department of Communication shall hold at least one faculty meeting each month from September through May.
- B. Faculty meetings may be called at any time and with any degree of frequency at the discretion of the Head or by petition of six or more faculty members.
- C. Faculty meetings are open to all full-time or part-time faculty without regard to rank or appointment.
- D. One representative of the graduate student body shall be appointed or elected by the department's graduate student association as the liaison with the faculty. This graduate student shall have the right to attend all faculty meetings except those involving faculty, staff, or student personnel matters, as defined by the Department Head.
- E. On matters concerning undergraduate curriculum, when formal votes are taken, academic professional track, tenure-track, and tenured faculty shall have voting rights. On matters concerning graduate curriculum, when formal votes are taken, only graduate faculty shall have voting rights. On matters concerning searches for tenure-track faculty, all professors, with the exception of Visiting, Adjunct, and Emeritus professors shall have voting rights. On matters of tenure and promotion for tenured faculty, according to university and system policy, only tenured faculty shall have voting rights. On matters of promotion for academic profession track faculty, only academic professional track, tenure track, and tenured faculty that have a higher rank than the candidate shall have voting rights. On all other matters every member of the faculty, both full-time and part-time, shall have voting rights. On decisions regarding faculty hiring, graduate students and staff will be consulted.
- F. It is expected that the recommendations of the department's standing committees or ad hoc committees shall be brought before the whole faculty for debate and discussion prior to implementation by the Head or other administrative officer.
- G. While department faculty meetings normally operate through consensual decision making, any member of the faculty has the right to call for a formal, recorded vote on any issue brought forward for consideration.

V. Committee Structure

- A. The Department of Communication shall have two types of standing committees: (1) operating committees, and (2) strategic initiative committees.
1. Operating committees address the core duties the department must perform regarding undergraduate program, graduate program, and tenure and promotion.
 - a. Advisory Committee: The advisory committee is primarily responsible for providing the Head advice and guidance regarding departmental issues such as personnel, budget, and strategic planning.
 - b. Undergraduate Instructional Committee: The Undergraduate Instructional Committee is responsible for the development of the undergraduate curriculum. Such matters as new courses, changes in titles of courses, the content of courses, liaison with the College's Undergraduate Instructional Committee and other matters directly affecting undergraduate instruction are handled by the curriculum committee. Many functions of the Undergraduate Instructional Committee are carried out through the office of the Director of Undergraduate Studies.
 - c. Graduate Instructional Committee: The Graduate Instructional Committee is responsible for all aspects of the graduate program, including curriculum, advisement to the Director of Graduate Studies, operating procedures, recruitment, the awarding of assistantships, fellowships, scholarships, or honors, and the day-to-day operation of the M.A. and Ph.D. programs. Many functions of the Graduate Instructional Committee are carried out through the office of the department's Director of Graduate Studies.
 - d. Assessment Committee: The Assessment Committee is responsible for assessing the effectiveness and quality of undergraduate and graduate programs. Such matters as developing learning outcomes, assessment procedures, conducting the assessment, and making recommendations for program development are handled by the Assessment Committee. The Assessment Committee is responsible for coordinating its activity with the Undergraduate and Graduate Instructional Committees.
 - e. Tenure and Promotion/Promotion Committee: The Tenure and Promotion Committee is composed of all tenured faculty members in the Communication Department. This committee is responsible for advising the Head on annual review of tenure-line faculty and the periodic review of faculty holding the ranks of Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, and faculty holding the Instructional ranks. It is also responsible for appointing, in consultation with the Head, the membership of individual tenure-review committees. In all cases of tenure review, each member of the promotion and tenure committee shall have a vote. In cases of promotion to full professor, only those currently holding that rank shall have a vote.

The Promotion Committee is responsible for the review of promotion cases for academic professional track faculty. It is composed of all academic professional track, tenure track, and tenured faculty that have a higher rank than the candidate. It is also responsible for appointing, in consultation with the Head, the membership of individual promotion-review committees.

2. Strategic Initiative Committees: Strategic Initiative Committees are responsible for addressing departmental strategic opportunities and challenges.
 - a. Climate and Inclusion Committee: The Climate and Inclusion Committee’s responsibilities typically include establishing guidelines to recruit and to retain diverse faculty members, developing strategies to assist graduate students and graduate student teachers in facilitating “moments of diversity” in their classrooms, and by developing strategies to recruit and to retain a more diverse body of graduate students.
 - b. Internationalization Committee: The Internationalization Committee responsibilities typically include creating study abroad programs specifically targeted to helping students earn their degrees within an international context, developing research programs that demonstrate the relevance of our scholarship to global communities, and developing additional resources to bring undergraduate and graduate students into contact with the global community.
 - c. Research and Instructional Technology Committee: The Research and Instructional Technology Committee responsibilities typically include advising the department on matters of technological change and innovation, with an eye to keeping the department at least current with contemporary technological advancements, especially those that can potentially facilitate the department’s research agenda and its teaching responsibilities.
 - d. Awards and Recognition Committee (ARC): The Awards and Recognition Committee responsibilities typically include working with faculty to identify awards, recognitions, and honors regarding research, teaching and service and providing assistance in preparing nomination materials.
- B. The Department of Communication may, from time to time, appoint such other ad hoc committees—including search committees—as the Department Head deems necessary. All ad hoc committees will cease to exist upon completion of the task/s for which they were originally constituted.
- C. The Head or the Head’s representative shall be an ex-officio member of all committees, both standing and ad hoc, with exception of the Promotion and Tenure Committee.

VI. Committee Membership

- A. All full-time members of the teaching faculty are eligible for committee assignments.

- B. The Department Head shall appoint both the chairs and the membership of each operating and strategic initiatives committee. All such appointments shall be reviewed on an annual basis.
- C. As a general operating procedure, the chairs of all standing committees should be rotated every three to four years, or earlier if the Head deems such a change necessary.
- D. Part-time and academic professional track faculty members may, at the request of the Head be added to any committee.
- E. Membership on the department Tenure and Promotion Committee is limited to those tenured members with the rank of Associate or higher. Membership on the Promotion Committee is of all academic professional track, tenure track, and tenured faculty that have a higher rank than the candidate.
- F. Membership on the Graduate Instructional Committee is limited to members of the Graduate Faculty at Texas A&M University.
- G. A graduate student representative may, with the consent of the Department Head, be added to any standing committee or any ad hoc committee of the department. All requests for such representation should be directed to the Head.

VII. Departmental Activities and Responsibilities

- A. To fulfill the mission of the department, certain activities, organizations, events, and functions shall be preformed.
 - i. Departmental Colloquium Series Director: This person is responsible for scheduling regular department colloquia involving both local and external speakers.
 - ii. Departmental Public Information Officer: This person is charged with publicizing the department's various accomplishments, including publications, awards, activities, and other matters, that would tend to shed a positive light on the department as a whole or on individual members of the community, and the field of communication. The public information officer should develop and implement a strategy for accomplishing the PR goals with each of these audiences.
 - iii. Graduate Placement Officer: This person is accountable for coordinating training, programming, and guidance for current graduate students on the job market.
 - iv. Departmental Internship Coordinator: This person is responsible for coordinating the department's internship program in accordance with the department's internship guidelines. Handling the paper work involved in placing the intern, receiving and grading reports, corresponding with internship employers and creating/maintaining relationships with internship providers are primary responsibilities of the internship coordinator.
 - v. Departmental Advisor to the Student Communication Association (SCA): This person is the liaison between the department faculty and the student SCA. The

advisor is available to render guidance and advice, and is responsible as provided by TAMU Student Activities but is not responsible for the day-to-day internal administration of the student group, which is under the control of the students.

- vi. Departmental Advisor to the student Telecommunication Media Association (TMA): This person is the liaison between the department faculty and the student TMA. The advisor is available to render guidance and advice, and is responsible as provided by TAMU Student Activities but is not responsible for the day-to-day internal administration of the student group, which is under the control of the students.
- vii. Departmental Advisor to the student Lambda Pi Eta (LPE): This person is the liaison between the department faculty and the student LPE. The advisor is available to render guidance and advice, and is responsible as provided by TAMU Student Activities but is not responsible for the day-to-day internal administration of the student group, which is under the control of the students.
- viii. Departmental Representative to Evans Library: This person is responsible for staying abreast of issues involving library funding and policies. The representative is also responsible for attending any meetings called to discuss library matters and is to facilitate faculty member's requests for the purchase of books, journals, and other library materials.
- ix. Departmental Liaison to the Alumni Association Board (AAB): This person is responsible for coordinating the relationship between the department and AAB. The liaison is responsible for facilitating activities undertaken by the AAB to benefit the department and its students.

B. Each of the above named activities shall be directed by a faculty member to be appointed by the Department Head.

C. Service to the College of Liberal Arts and to Texas A&M University in general is expected of all faculty members. Such service includes, but is not limited to:

- i. Membership on the Liberal Arts Council.
- ii. Membership on the Undergraduate or Graduate Instruction Committee.
- iii. Membership on one or more of the standing committees of the Liberal Arts Council.
- iv. Membership on the Dean's Advisory Committee.
- v. Membership in the Faculty Senate.
- vi. Membership in one or more of the standing committees of the Faculty Senate.
- vii. Special ad hoc committees constructed by the Dean of the College, the Provost, or the President of the University.

- VIII. These by-laws can be amended at any time by a two-thirds vote of the faculty. In the event such a vote is held, all current faculty members, both part-time and full-time, will be polled by written ballot.
- IX. If any of the above provisions shall be found to be in conflict with the latest “Tenure and Promotion Guidelines” of the College of Liberal Arts or Texas A&M University those portions shall be considered severable and shall not affect the status of the remaining provisions.

Approved by unanimous vote of the communication faculty on May 6, 2015.

Appendix A
Review of Faculty on Tenure-Line Appointments

- I. All review procedures of the Department of Communication shall be in conformity with the current rules, regulations, and procedures of Texas A&M University and the College of Liberal Arts and the College's "Tenure and Promotion Guidelines."
- II. Review of faculty on tenure-line or tenure-accruing appointments.
 - A. The department shall conduct annual reviews of untenured faculty on tenure-line appointments. The purpose of these reviews is to assess, on an annual basis, the progress toward tenure and promotion, and to make such recommendations as seem warranted to assist the candidate in producing the strongest possible record at the time that a tenure decision must be made. Such assessment will identify both strengths and weaknesses of the candidate's performance in the areas of research, teaching, and service over the course of the previous academic year.
 - B. Since all tenure-line appointments are probationary in nature and consist of a series of one-year renewable contracts, a recommendation to terminate the candidate's appointment can be made at the end of any annual review period.
 - C. Steady progress toward tenure and promotion in the areas of research, teaching, and service is the ultimate criterion for reappointment during the probationary period.
 - D. Major reviews of progress-to-date normally occur in the third year of employment—often called the midterm review—and in the sixth year when the candidate must stand for tenure. Although each annual review is important, the midterm review is especially important as an early indicator of progress toward tenure. A negative midterm review could result in the issuance of a one-year terminal contract.
 - E. Annual reviews, third-year reviews, and tenure/promotion reviews are conducted by the Tenure and Promotion Committee of the Department which, is composed of all tenured faculty members. The chair of the Promotion and Tenure committee, in consultation with the Department Head, is responsible for appointing the membership of individual review committees.
 - F. Individual review committees will be composed of four members of the Promotion and Tenure Committee—one member to chair the review, one to write the research report, one to write the teaching report, and one to write the service report. The chair of the review committee will write the overall evaluation report.
- III. Procedures for conducting a tenure and promotion review
 - A. The Department Head will obtain the candidate's latest annual report at least thirty days before the review is to commence. This report, along with all previous annual reports, will be made available to the review committee.
 - B. An individual review committee will be formed in accordance with IIE above.
 - C. To the extent possible, the chair of the individual review committee will come from a part of the communication discipline, which is similar to that of the candidate being evaluated.

- D. The members of the review committee shall study all relevant documents as submitted by the candidate under review, including the candidate's narrative statement, the annual reviews from past years, evidence of research performance, teaching quality, and service contributions, and other documents which the candidate may deem relevant. Materials required for a major review are listed in the College of Liberal Arts' "Tenure and Promotion Guidelines," a copy of which will be provided to the candidate in preparation for the review.
- E. It is the candidate's responsibility to assure that all materials relevant for the review have been collected and transmitted to the chair of the review committee. In conformity with University rules, the candidate will need to "confirm the status of the dossier" to make sure that all relevant materials are present before the review commences by submitting a signed Verification of Contents Statement.
- F. The review committee shall study the case and prepare written reports on research, teaching, service, and an overall evaluation. In cases of tenure/promotion, the review committee shall solicit outside letters of evaluation from nationally known scholars at leading peer institutions and shall consider those letters as part of its assessment of the candidate's research.
- G. Each member of the Tenure and Promotion Committee shall have a vote on whether tenure shall be recommended. The Department Head may be present for the deliberation if the Tenure and Promotion Committee invites the Department Head to attend. If the Department Head attends the meeting at the request of the P&T committee for one candidate, the Department Head must be present for all candidates being reviewed however, the Department Head will not cast a vote in this deliberation since she or he must provide a separate written evaluation for the Dean.
- H. The evaluation of the Department Head, along with the committee discussion report and vote of the Tenure and Promotion Committee, the outside letters of evaluation, and the individual reports on research, teaching, and service, along with the entire dossier submitted by the candidate for tenure or promotion, shall be forwarded to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts.
- I. The Dean, in consultation with the Dean's Advisory Committee (composed of six full professors from different departments within the College), will examine the entire dossier and accompanying materials and make a further recommendation to the Provost and President.
- J. Cases decided in the affirmative are forwarded to the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents, which is the body that officially grants tenure.

Appendix B

Review of Faculty on Academic Professional Track Lines

- I. All review procedures of the Department of Communication shall be in conformity with the current rules, regulations, and procedures of Texas A&M University as well as the College of Liberal Arts guidelines as found in the and the College's documents regarding the hiring and promotion of faculty in academic professional track titles.

- II. Review of faculty on academic professional track lines.
 - A. The department shall conduct annual reviews of academic professional track faculty. The purpose of these reviews is to assess, on an annual basis, the faculty member's performance, and to make such recommendations as seem warranted to assist the candidate in producing the strongest possible record at the time that the candidate wishes to pursue promotion. Such assessment will identify strengths and weaknesses of the candidate's performance in the areas of teaching and service over the course of the previous academic year. The Department Head shall conduct the review.
 - B. Because academic professional track appointments consist of a series of one-year renewable contracts, a recommendation to terminate the candidate's appointment can be made at the end of any annual review period. Lecturers and academic professional track assistant professors who have been on faculty for more than five consecutive years will be given a one-year notice on non-renewal. Any faculty hired at or promoted to senior lecturer or academic professional track at the associate or full level shall be provided a one year notice if it is the University's intent not to renew the appointment. If the department head believes renewal is not warranted, a special meeting of the Promotion committee – that is, all faculty eligible to deliberate and vote on the candidate – will be called to consider and decide the matter. If agreed upon by a majority vote of the Promotion Committee, the department head will notify the faculty member of the decision not to renew the contract in writing as soon as possible, but within two weeks at most.
 - C. The decision of when to apply for a promotion is at the discretion of the candidate. The candidate should write a memo the Department Head by the end of the fall semester academic year indicating their desire to be considered for a promotion in rank.
 - D. In the case of promotions for academic professional track faculty, the Promotion Committee shall consist of all non-tenure and tenure track faculty that are at a higher rank than the candidate.
 - E. The members of the review committee shall study all relevant documents submitted by the candidate as part of their dossier. The dossier and review process will follow the guidelines provided by the college's documents regarding the hiring and promotion of faculty in academic professional track titles and Texas A&M University "Tenure and Promotion Guidelines."