

# **Journalism Department Evaluation Plan**

## **College of Humanities and Social Sciences**

### **Western Washington University**

#### **May 29, 2009**

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

The Journalism Department Evaluation Plan is meant to supplement the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS) Evaluation Plan. The Department of Journalism follows the CHSS Evaluation Plan for purposes of Annual Faculty Review, Review of Probationary Faculty, Post-Tenure Review and evaluation of NTT faculty.

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#### **Journalism Department Mission Statement**

The Department of Journalism provides students with educational excellence in an experiential learning environment leading to an understanding of the role of mass media in a diverse democratic society, while teaching critical thinking, and the ethical use of traditional and new media.

#### **Program Objectives**

- To teach journalism, visual journalism and public relations by building upon a solid liberal arts foundation, while providing students with analytical and assertive information-gathering skills, and the ability to write clearly and quickly on complex topics.
- To instill students with a sense of commitment to see that democratic processes in society are served by the timely disclosure of quality information to the reading, viewing and listening public.
- To demonstrate the value of diversity among faculty, students, staff and community while preparing future citizens, media professionals and leaders who appreciate the value of diversity.
- To provide a learning community that celebrates diversity and a curriculum that encourages a thoughtful and sensitive examination of the diversity of our regional, national and global communities.

#### **Learning Objectives**

- To provide students with a firm liberal arts education and high quality professional training, in keeping with national standards for accrediting journalism and public relations programs.
- To provide students with courses on writing, editing, research and critical thinking in every sequence in the department.
- To enhance communication skills in writing and critical thinking so that students may use these skills in media, public relations, public affairs and graduate study.
- To provide students with the knowledge of the technological means of producing and communicating meaningful content as citizens, media professionals, leaders and educators.

## DEFINITIONS

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**Terminal Degree:** The Master's degree is considered terminal in our field; however, a doctoral degree may be preferred for certain teaching assignments.

- For each faculty position, the position description, advertisements, recruiting materials and letter of offer will specify whether a Ph.D. is preferred for that specific position. Faculty include these letters in their dossiers so that they may be evaluated according to the terms set by the college at the time of hiring.
- The Department may consider degrees closely associated with Journalism when hiring faculty, especially when a program is housed within a larger unit, such as English or Communication that confers the degree.

**Professional Experience:** As a professionally oriented department, we place a strong emphasis on journalism, public relations, visual media, online, and mass communication skills.

- All faculty members bring a substantive record of professional experience in an area related to the courses they are expected to teach, as documented in their vitas.
- Faculty are also expected to keep current with changes in media, both print and online technology, and professional practices in writing, editing, design and photojournalism as related to their teaching assignments. Depending on the nature of the activity, a faculty member's efforts with the profession will be documented among the areas of teaching effectiveness, scholarly and creative work, or service.

**Applied or Professional Research:** The department will accept and review as part of a portfolio, articles a faculty member publishes in prestigious journals dealing with professional media issues when those articles have been selected through a rigorous review process by editors; see Category B, under Scholarly and Creative Activity.

**Writing component:** Journalism courses have extensive writing components, and faculty spend a substantial amount of time assessing student writing and commenting on assignments to foster growth and improvement in critical thinking, research skills, clarity of visual and verbal expression, and development of professional and ethical decision-making.

- Faculty are asked to document their efforts by including, under Teaching Effectiveness, sample syllabi and assignments that show the level and rigor of student work required.
- Practicum courses that carry academic credit and require faculty teaching and advising are counted as regular courses in faculty teaching loads and evaluation processes. These courses include serving as adviser to Student Publications and as adviser to Internships.

**Kinds of Faculty Reviews:** Please see the College plan for additional information.

- Annual or quarterly evaluation: conducted by the Chair of NTT faculty.
- Annual activity reports: required by the College for all faculty.
- Probationary review: An annual review conducted by the Chair and the tenured faculty of each tenure-track faculty member's progress.
- Post-tenure review: Conducted every five years (or as set by the College and the Collective Bargaining Agreement) for tenured faculty; conducted by the Department Chair and other tenured faculty.

**Promotion and ranks:** Faculty may advance among the ranks, as defined in the College Plan, from Assistant to Associate and then to Full Professor. Emeritus rank is bestowed on retiring faculty by the University upon recommendation by the faculty, chair and dean.

**Appointment to Senior Instructor:** The Chair will conduct a review of any non tenure-track, or limited-term, faculty member who has served at least five years, full-time equivalent, and who applies for the appointment and submits a dossier documenting superior teaching. The review will involve tenured faculty in the Department.

**Department Strategic Plan:** The Strategic Plan guides the Department over time and reflects the role of the Department in the College as well as its relationship to the journalism profession. Faculty discuss the plan annually during a special meeting, or retreat, and confer on additional long- and short-term goals as well as review progress on objectives and accomplishment of goals. The Strategic Plan is fundamental to budget requests and decisions, faculty position descriptions and responsibilities, and administrative priorities.

**Mentors:** A full-time, tenure-track faculty member is assigned a mentor from among the tenured faculty upon beginning service at Western. The mentor is expected to work throughout the probationary period with the faculty member toward successful adjustment and accomplishments in teaching, research and service.

**Chair letters:** The Chair writes annual letters evaluating probationary faculty members' progress in key areas and setting out specific goals and emphases for the coming year. These letters and forms, as applicable, should be kept in a faculty member's dossier used as a basis for evaluation. Other faculty, including tenured and NTT, may also ask the Chair for, or jointly create, written memos regarding annual goals, especially when faculty undertake special projects.

# Teaching Effectiveness

The Department places high value on excellent teaching. Evaluation of teaching is based upon the overall weight of the evidence presented in the candidate's materials; both peer and student evaluations will be used as evidence of teaching effectiveness.

## **Required materials for all reviews, promotions and appointments:**

- Student course evaluations, including written comments, administered through the standardized forms provided by the University Testing Center for all courses taught in the three years prior to review (or to the beginning of employment at Western, if less than three years).
- Additional evaluations for up to a five-year period should be included if necessary to represent the full or normal range of a faculty member's teaching assignment.
- Syllabi for all courses taught in the same time periods.
- Select, significant course materials that demonstrate expectations of student work and participation, such as tests and research or writing assignments.
- Documentation of new teaching materials and innovative instructional techniques.
- Peer reviews from colleagues' visits to classes or other observations of teaching.
- A statement by the faculty member that describes teaching loads, including the number of courses taught, independent studies, and new preparations. In cases where evaluations do not show exceptional or strong teaching, the faculty member will describe steps being taken to correct any deficiencies and will reflect work with the Chair and assigned mentor(s).

## **Additional requirements for tenure and / or promotion to Associate Professor:**

(See also the College plan, for more detailed guidance and a timeline.)

- A statement from the candidate summarizing his or her teaching philosophy.
- Letters from the Chair summarizing previous annual evaluations.
- Supporting materials from peer observations of classroom teaching and reviews of the Teaching Effectiveness dossier.

## **Recommended supporting materials:**

Faculty members may include documentation of additional activities that are relevant to their teaching assignments and that demonstrate teaching effectiveness, such as:

- Students' awards in professional society or academic contests.
- Service learning projects supporting curricular goals.
- Publication in professional media of student projects.
- Involvement of students in research projects.
- Acquisition of new technological expertise and incorporation into the curriculum.
- Letters from students, parents, alumni, or professionals related to effective teaching.
- Outcomes from participation in fellowships, seminars and programs aimed at improving teaching in the field.
- Being selected for nationally competitive programs is considered meritorious.

***\*Dossier preparation: The Department of Journalism follows the college plan; therefore, candidates should adhere to the CHSS Evaluation Plan on page 6 under "GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING THE DOSSIER."***

# Scholarly and Creative Activity

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The amount, nature and direction of scholarly activity expected of a faculty member are first defined in the letter of offer, which is based on the Department's Unit Evaluation Plan and Strategic Plan. After hire, expectations are further detailed in the College Plan and the Collective Bargaining Agreement for Western.

Faculty in NTT positions, such as Instructor or Senior Instructor, are not expected to perform scholarly and creative activities; their letters of offer define teaching duties only. However, it is recognized that such activities can contribute to the quality of instruction.

Professors at all ranks are expected to engage in scholarly and creative work. As a professionally oriented department, we place a strong emphasis on journalism, public relations, visual, online, and mass communication skills and applied research, and we value both theoretical and applied research, as described in the categories below.

In all review processes, faculty may present varying combinations of traditional academic (Category A) and professional or applied research (Category B) because some have spent significant time in professional work, while others have spent more time in academia. The department considers this diversity and mix a strength and benefit. Faculty may also present work described in Category C. This plan supports the College Plan's requirement for a candidate to document successful academic research ability as traditionally defined when applying for tenure and / or a promotion in rank.

## Category A: Scholarly Research

Traditional peer-reviewed research is considered an essential indication of scholarly ability. Scholarly papers presented at international, national, or regional conferences are expected. Books, book chapters, and journal articles published following selection and review by scholars are more significant than those not subjected to rigorous examination. Quality is more important than quantity. Weight accorded to these materials is measured by their contribution to the intellectual community, their adherence to professional standards, quality of execution, and the distinction they bring to the college and university.

### Documentation

1. Candidates will provide materials meeting the criteria above that demonstrate their ability to create and author original works, including articles published in refereed journals (electronic forms may be accepted), books, book chapters, textbooks, documentary videos, conference papers and poster sessions with documentation of competitive selection, and conference papers competitively selected and published as part of proceedings.

2. Candidates may also provide documentation of:

Original work created as part of scholarly review processes, such as: written blind peer reviews for refereed journals, written academic book reviews and written competitive conference paper reviews.

Original speeches, lectures and commentaries created as part of a selective scholarly process, yet which were not peer reviewed ahead of time, such as: scholarly conference panels and lecture series.

Scholarly service, such as editing academic journals or Web sites, when such appointment reflects selectivity and recognition by peers in the field.

### Post-tenure Review

Tenured professors undergoing periodic review should consult the College Plan and Collective Bargaining Agreement for details and processes. A successful portfolio will document continued excellence in teaching and ongoing activities in scholarly and creative work as well as service.

The relative balance given each of the three areas during review needs to remain flexible to reflect the faculty member's actual assignments during the years being reviewed. Tenured faculty may be asked to undertake significant service assignments to the department, college or university not asked of other ranks, may perform extensive professional work related to external funding or grant opportunities, or may work on substantial curricular review and development. Similarly, a period of intensive scholarly activity may reflect less investment in service or curriculum.

### Academic and refereed journals in the field

The Department Chair will provide evaluation committees updated information on the journals and conferences in the field that are regional, national and international in scope and that rigorously select academic papers through a peer-review process. Journal titles include, but are not limited to: *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, *Journalism and Mass Communication Monographs*, *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator*, *Journal of Communication*, *Public Relations Review*, *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, *Newspaper Research Journal*, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, and *Mass Communication and Society*.

## **Category B: Professional Scholarly Activities**

Because journalism is a professionally-oriented program, practicing journalism and public relations in a way that contributes to the advancement of the field is considered a worthy activity. Therefore, the Department also places importance on writing placed in prestigious professional and trade publications that, although not peer-reviewed in the academic sense, use a competitive process in which editors selectively review authors' works prior to publication.

The Department also places importance on competitive fellowships with prestigious institutions whose missions bridge the academic and professional worlds; these are considered scholarly professional work.

Faculty work in Visual Journalism, such as photography and design, that is displayed or exhibited as a result of a rigorous selection process is also valued by the Department and considered scholarly professional work.

### **Documentation**

Candidates may provide evidence of:

- Publishing articles and reviews in professional and trade journals, newsletters and magazines, and editing or serving on editorial boards. Such publications include: *College Press Review*, *Columbia Journalism Review*, *Editor & Publisher*, *Folio*, *News Photographer*, *Publishers' Auxiliary*, *The Quill*, *Quill and Scroll*, *The Writer*, *Writers Digest*, *PR Week*, and *PR Tactics*.
- Participating in Fellowships with the American Society of Newspaper Editors Institute for Journalism Excellence, the Poynter Institute, or the American Press Institute.
- Presentations given at professional conferences or as part of lecture programs; participation on a panel at professional conferences.
- Collections of visual works selected for exhibit or publication (printed or electronic) as a result of a rigorous editorial or curatorial selection process.

### **Tenure, promotion and other reviews**

Candidates for tenure and for promotion to Associate Professor will provide evidence from Category B, as appropriate, based on the faculty member's letter of offer, annual reviews, teaching assignment, and research plan. For promotion to full professor, and for post-tenure reviews, faculty may provide evidence from Category B, as appropriate for their teaching assignments, research plans and service to the Department, College, University and profession. Evidence from Category B is appropriate for any evaluative review, including annual reports and appointment to Senior Instructor.

## **Category C: Other Scholarly and Creative Activities**

The professional practice of journalism and public relations is also valued by the Department when a faculty member demonstrates the connection to teaching effectiveness. Vital connections include:

- Staying current with rapid changes in the field, such as those fostered by technology.
- Interacting with professionals in the community and fostering ties to the classroom.
- Gaining insight into trends in professional areas where students will seek internships, and graduates will seek jobs.
- Practicing skills such as reporting and editing in environments closely related to classroom teaching of core courses.

### **Documentation and evaluation**

Candidates may provide actual articles, clips, page designs, etc., as well as supporting materials such as letters from media organizations. With these, they will provide a statement describing the benefits of professional work to the Department, their teaching and advising assignment, and to students.

Evidence of work in Category C may be appropriately included for all reviews, including annual reports, review for appointment to Senior Instructor, and applications for tenure and promotion in rank.

The Chair will provide review committees with the Department's view of the quality and selectivity of the media outlets. Quality is more important than quantity, and the selectivity of the outlet is taken into consideration.

### **Initial tenure with promotion to Associate Professor**

Faculty seeking tenure at the university are, in this Plan, considered similarly to those also seeking promotion to the rank of Associate Professor. For both steps, faculty members will provide documentation as outlined above. A typical successful portfolio will include an established research program that has produced documented evidence as described in Categories A and B. In addition, candidates will provide a written research plan that addresses how their research complements their professional interests, teaching assignment, and the Department's Strategic Plan. Significant works in progress may be provided as part of the discussion of the research plan.

## Promotion to the Rank of Full Professor

A typical successful portfolio will include an established research program with sustained scholarship as described in Categories A and B, during the time period since the previous promotion. Quality is more important than quantity, with a critical component being the value of the contributions to the field and to the Departmental mission. Evidence of an ongoing research record should reflect professional maturity and development.

Candidates will provide a statement addressing how their research complements their professional interests, teaching assignment, service, and the Department's Strategic Plan.

## Service

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The Journalism Department values service to the Department, the College, the University, the profession, and the wider community.

### Service to the Department

A. For faculty in all professor ranks, service is expected. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Student-oriented activity: advising students, doing major and pre-major advising; serving as adviser to student organizations, working on alumni events, supervising the alumni newsletter, and being liaison for service-learning partners.
- Faculty-oriented activity: serving as library liaison, as technology and lab liaison, working on curriculum-revision committees, and serving as coordinator of the JOUR 207 Newswriting instructors.

B. For tenured faculty, additional service is expected, including:

- Faculty-oriented service: serving on faculty search committees, mentoring probationary faculty, observing colleagues' classroom teaching, participating in and providing written comment for reviews: annual review of NTT and probationary faculty, evaluation of the chair, and tenure and promotion.
- Program-oriented service: engaging in departmental planning, such as work on the Strategic Plan, on the Unit Evaluation Plan, on assessment measures, and on regular curricular review and revisions.
- Administrative service: serving as Department Chair, and as Chair of the Student Publications Council.

### Service to the College and the University

- Prior to receiving tenure, only limited service is expected at levels other than a faculty member's department. As a professor gains tenure and rises in the ranks, the Department expects he or she will perform additional service to the larger campus. This may take the form of work on committees or special assignments from the Dean or Provost.

### Service to the Profession

- The Department values contributions to professional organizations at the regional, national, and international levels. This may mean serving as officers, committee members, planners, panel chairs, and respondents at conferences and meetings of journalism, public relations or visual media associations representing academia or the professions.

### Service to the wider community

- The Department values faculty contributions to the community in which we all live and work. Faculty may provide documentation of lending expertise to local civic and service agencies and organizations, including serving as speakers or as members of non-profit boards.

### For Tenure and Promotion Reviews

- In documenting service, faculty will provide a statement showing the benefit of their work to teaching, research or the academic community, and will address the balance of service with their other responsibilities of teaching and research.
- For tenure and promotion to Associate Professor, faculty members will document service to the Department and may also document service in other areas.
- For promotion to full Professor, a faculty member will document service to the Department in both categories A and B, plus in at least one other area of the College or University.
- For post-tenure review, faculty will document service in Category B, and they may document service in other areas, as well.