



**School of Communication and Journalism
Strategic Plan**

(Approved by the faculty on 5-30-14)

Mission statement:

The School of Communication and Journalism is committed to sustaining an engaged and challenging educational environment that fosters steady growth and advancement through intellectual, creative and professional proficiencies in a wide range of communication systems and methods, with oral, print and digital among the prevalent modes.

Our mission is both academic and professional. It embraces and encourages: 1) steadfast productivity within scholarly research agendas and creative pursuits, 2) professional affiliations and activities, 3) commitment to excellence in classroom instruction and teaching, 4) dedicated service at all levels of the university environment, and 5) design and implementation of meaningful civic engagement and outreach projects in the community.

Our identity and foundation are framed by core values that include integrity, innovation, diversity, merit and accountability.

Objectives:

1. Global and Cultural Awareness and Respect for Diversity

- Increase the number of undergraduate and graduate students from underrepresented populations.
- Expand the diversity of the faculty.
- Develop study abroad proposals and program.
- Include and track diversity-related topics in a variety of classes.
- Meet and exceed standards of the School's accrediting agency, the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications, that focus on diversity and inclusiveness.
- Continue and expand support for diversity-related projects.
- Foster faculty research on issues of diversity, cultural sensitivity and intercultural communication.
- Participate in university and college initiatives promoting diversity.

Actions:

- Heavily recruit minority and underrepresented groups for faculty positions.
- See improved diversity statistics in student enrollment and retention.
- Track international experiences of students to match averages found at peer institutions, particularly in Communication and Journalism schools.
- Clear documentation of support and outcomes for projects intended to increase diversity of student body.
- Both international and domestic partnerships for teaching, research and student exchange.
- Encourage student participation in international internship opportunities.

2. Emphasize Innovation and Excellence in Instruction and Curriculum

- Maintain our key role in providing excellent teaching in core curriculum courses while preparing our own majors for the challenges of a global economy with an emphasis on creative and critical thinking at all levels.
- Embody and promote high ethical standards that meet or exceed the standards of the School's accrediting agency, the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications, that focus on ethics in curriculum, instruction and professionalism.
- Multimedia curricular advances that focus on strengthening students' skills in visual, written and oral communication.
- Faculty will adjust curricula in keeping with trends in media professions and incorporate appropriate digital and social media skills into courses.
- Provide courses that help students train in communication competencies such as public speaking, interpersonal skills, teamwork, interviewing, writing skills and leadership.
- Help students become more discriminating and critical consumers of media and culture by providing courses that emphasize criticism, cultural literacy and interactional awareness.
- Emphasize critical and/or creative thinking and effective communication in all graduate courses.
- Examine opportunities associated with distance education.
- Feature civic engagement as a topic of discussion in a range of classes.
- Support courses that allow students to learn more about being responsible citizens and/or the opportunity to learn while contributing to the community.
- Provide outlet for student work connected to civic engagement.
- Manage enrollment in courses and in the majors to provide the most advantageous educational experience possible.
- Encourage student majors to take advantage of the advising opportunities offered by the School adviser and faculty members.

Actions:

- Annual review of curriculum in all programs by the program's faculty.
- Promote the newly approved Visual Media track and renamed Media Studies program.
- Seek interdisciplinary opportunities within the School and with other departments on campus.
- Maximize opportunities with Raycom Media partnership in all four programs in the School.
- Recruit guest speakers for courses in all four of the School's programs.
- Participate in university and college initiatives toward promoting links between the faculty and the community.
- Acquire, develop, and maintain current audio, video, and multimedia facilities that will provide high quality, hands-on training for our students.
- Enhance course offerings in digital media and visual communication.
- Offer courses that include community and/or service learning projects components, such as courses in the Civic Engagement minor.
- Provide opportunities to support student-produced multimedia projects and provide outlets for student work.
- Regularly solicit student feedback through Qualitrix surveys
- Monitor courses in all curricula to ensure that they prepare graduates for cutting edge careers in the field.

- Offer students opportunities to participate in student media outlets and in professional opportunities on campus.
- Evaluate and support internships that provide solid points of transition between the university and possible careers.
- Encourage students to enter collegiate and professional media competitions.
- Classes at some point in the semester should discuss codes of ethics that are applicable to the field, such as the SPJ (Society of Professional Journalists) or the PRSA Code of Professional Conduct.

3. Retain and Attract Distinguished Faculty and High-Quality Students

- Attract high-quality undergraduate and graduate students to enhance collaborative efforts between faculty and students.
- Continue support for research and professional development that will enable faculty members to conduct high-quality research and creative activities.
- Support faculty participation on the College of Liberal Arts Civic Engagement initiatives and committees
- Take advantage of professional development and research opportunities offered by the college, university and professional associations.
- Promote a supportive climate that recognizes faculty accomplishments.
- Provide junior faculty with professional and research support to help them achieve tenure and promotion.
- Enhance Research/Creative/Outreach efforts and opportunities.
- Actively pursue funding for endowed professorships.

Actions

- Aim to hire senior scholars and media professionals of the highest quality.
- Recruit quality, promising faculty in all areas of the School.
- Regularly schedule colloquia to discuss scholarly, creative and outreach work.
- Employ mentoring program for junior faculty members focused on research/creative agendas, teaching, outreach and service.
- Create a non-competitive School Professional Improvement Leave program.
- Timely promotion of tenure track faculty at all ranks.