2022–23

# Journalism & Digital Communication

## Faculty Handbook

*This handbook is a guide for faculty members in the Department of Journalism and Digital Communication at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg campus. It includes procedures and forms for common undergraduate and graduate-level issues, and specifies Department, College and University academic policies. When possible, external resources are linked rather than embedded, to ensure the handbook remains current.*

# *Table of Contents*

# *Introduction*

The Department of Journalism and Digital Communication is part of the School of Social Sciences in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of South Florida. Based on the St. Petersburg campus, our close community ties, small class sizes and experiential approach to journalism education have defined our work for the past 34 years. We offer a STEM-designated undergraduate degree in Digital Communication and Multimedia Journalism, and a professional online master's program in Digital Journalism and Design. We have been continuously accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications since 2004.

The Department is housed in the Peter Rudy Wallace (PRW) Florida Center for Teachers on the USF St. Petersburg campus, at the corner of Second Street and Sixth Avenue South. Our facilities include a computer lab; office space for the Neighborhood News Bureau, our student-run community newsroom; the VideoWorks digital production studio, offices for faculty and staff, and our conference room. The *Crow's Nest*, the independent student newspaper for the St. Petersburg campus, also operates out of PRW.

In addition to their teaching and service to the University, community and industry, JDC faculty pursue scholarship using a range of methods and disciplinary perspectives. They write books, conduct experiments and publish in trade journals.

This handbook gathers resources, enumerates policies and articulates expectations for members of the Journalism and Digital Communication faculty. To provide the most up-to-date information, standalone documents are linked to, rather than embedded, whenever possible.

# *Departmental Policies, Guidelines & Plans*

## Academic Honesty & Journalism Ethics

Our Departmental guidelines around academic integrity provide faculty a framework for responding to concerns particular to journalistic work, especially concerns around plagiarism and attribution.

**Relevant Links:**
- [Guidelines on Academic Honesty & Journalism Ethics](#)

## Assessment Plan

Our assessment plan provides a framework for tracking and responding to student learning. Last revised November 2022.

**Relevant Links:**
- [Journalism & Digital Communication Assessment Plan](#)

## Diversity Policy & Plan

Our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Plan articulates the five ways we seek to foster diversity and inclusion and enumerates benchmarks for achieving each goal. Last revised November 2022.

**Relevant Links:**
- [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Plan](#)

## Faculty Meetings

Faculty meetings are open to the public and all members of the Department — part- and full-time faculty, staff, graduate assistants — and serve as a primary vehicle for discussion and deliberation of matters of interest to the Department. Ten meetings are held over the course of the academic year, and each meeting lasts two hours. The chair prepares the agenda and distributes it ahead of each meeting, and others may suggest agenda items. Faculty meetings also serve as a venue from updates on ongoing business items and committee work unfolding outside the Department.

**Relevant Links:**
- [Faculty Meeting Minutes](#)

## General Service Expectations

JDC faculty members are expected to be active and visible members of the Department, College, and University and participate in professional service

activities at local, regional, national and international levels.

Departmental service expectations include:

1. Participation in all faculty meetings
2. Graduate and undergraduate student advising
3. Supervision of individual student research including Directed Readings, Independent Studies, Theses and ARP committees
4. Participation in standing and ad hoc committees to advance departmental objectives
5. Attending commencement

## Governance Document

Journalism and Digital Communication operates as a Committee of the Whole. Our governance document codifies how we organize day-to-day operations, recruit new faculty and contribute to the mission of USF, the St. Petersburg campus and the College of Arts and Sciences.

**Relevant Links:**
- [Department of Journalism & Digital Communication Governance Document](#)

## Graduate Student Advising & Mentoring

Each semester, the Department of Journalism & Digital Communication assigns new graduate students to an academic advisor from the graduate faculty. Advising serves several functions: to ensure students are meeting all the basic requirements to remain in good standing with the University and graduate according to their individual timetable and goals; to ensure students are taking the right electives and accessing the right co-curricular activities and resources to best meet their needs; and to prepare students for their culminating work, either a thesis or applied research project

**Relevant Links:**
- [Graduate Student Advisors' Checklist](#)

## Independent Studies & Independent Research

JDC offers opportunities for independent study and independent research in accordance with procedures established by the College of Arts and Sciences. These opportunities are open to both undergraduate and graduate students, and typically count for 3 credits toward the student's in-major electives. Independent studies/research must be overseen by a full-time faculty member, incorporate learning objectives consistent with the competencies articulated by ACEJMC and focus on topics complementary to—but non-duplicative of—coursework available within the majors. The student

and faculty member should work together to assemble a custom syllabus or project description based on the applicable template.

**Relevant Links:**
- Procedures for Independent Study/Research

## Internships

The Department does not require — but does strongly encourage — students to complete an internship. Students may take up to 6 internship credits as in-major electives. Faculty can help students take advantage of these opportunities in several ways:

1. By discussing the value of internships and the many opportunities in the Tampa Bay region — one of the nation's largest media markets
2. By encouraging students to visit the Department's Internships landing page on the website and Handshake, USF's internship directory to browse current opportunities
3. By forming connections with current and prospective internship sites and "matchmaking" students based on their interests and aptitudes

**Relevant Links:**
- JDC Internships & Jobs Portal

## Mission & Philosophy

Our mission and philosophy statement, first conceived at the genesis of the Department, is the core guiding document that codifies our values and informs both our daily operations and long-range strategic planning.

**Relevant Links:**
- Mission & Philosophy Statement

## Standing & Ad Hoc Committees

The Department maintains seven standing committees to oversee ongoing efforts. Additional ad hoc committees are formed, typically for a semester or two and sometimes longer, to oversee special initiatives. Departmental committees are typically chaired by tenured faculty members, although all full-time faculty are expected to serve.

## Strategic Plan

The JDC strategic plan articulates our goals and the action steps we have identified to meet them. We regularly review and update our strategic plan to assess its applicability, track progress toward stated objectives, and ensure alignment with Campus, College and University priorities. Last revised November 2022.

**Relevant Links:**
- Journalism & Digital Communication Strategic Plan

## Teaching Aides

Undergraduate courses that meet enrollment thresholds stipulated by the College qualify for teaching aide support. In the spring and fall, TAs are entitled to 10 hours, in summer A and B, 20 hours, and in summer C, 15 hours. Additional hours are available depending on thresholds stated by the College.

## Teaching Assistants

The College of Arts and Sciences generally funds two graduate teaching assistantships each fall and spring. One TA is dedicated to the Neighborhood News Bureau project, and the other is designated for the core undergraduate reporting curriculum. The NNB TA is funded for 20 hours a week, and the core curriculum TA is funded for 10 hours a week.

**Relevant Links:**
- [Graduate Teaching Assistantships in Journalism & Digital Communication](#)

## Tenure & Promotion

Our tenure and promotion guidelines outline expectations for faculty teaching, service and scholarship. Effective June 23, 2020.

**Relevant Links:**

- [Tenure & Promotion Guidelines (Department of Journalism & Digital Communication)](#)

## Thesis / Applied Research Project Committees

Students in the graduate program must complete either a 6-credit thesis or 3-credit applied research project to fulfill degree requirements. A committee composed of JDC faculty and chaired by a full-time faculty member oversees this work. Committees are assembled by student request, based on faculty availability. Consult the Graduate Student Handbook for details on expectations for students' culminating work.

**Relevant Links:**
- Graduate Student Handbook

## Undergraduate Advising & Mentoring

Academic advisers embedded in the College guide our undergraduate students toward success each semester. With deep knowledge of our curricular requirements and student needs, these advisers play a vital role in ensuring students sign up for the right classes at the right moments in their studies. JDC faculty also have an important role to play in the advising process by reinforcing key messages, covering co-curricular opportunities, and

inquiring about student needs and roadblocks. In addition to helping students progress toward their degrees, faculty advising provides a valuable channel for feedback from students on what's working well, what challenges they're encountering and what they'd like to see more of.

**Relevant Links:**
- [Undergraduate Student Advising & Mentoring Guidelines](#)

# *General USF Policies & Regulations*

## Disruption of Academic Process

Disruptive conduct in academic settings should be handled via the established University protocols.

## General Academic Policies

Academic policies are enshrined in the catalog. Faculty should consult the respective sections for undergraduate and graduate students, as processes and expectations can vary.

## Important Dates

The official University calendar includes all dates and deadlines, semester-by-semester.

## Incompletes ("I" Grades)

Incompletes provide students with additional time after the conclusion of a semester to finish course requirements. Incompletes are granted at the instructor's discretion and in accordance with policies stipulated in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs. When granting an incomplete, the instructor should select an "IX" grade when submitting final grades in Canvas, where the "X" corresponds to the grade the student would receive without completing any additional coursework. At this time, the instructor will also enumerate what the student must do to resolve the incomplete and how much time they have to do so. Incompletes must be resolved within two semesters at the undergraduate level and within one semester at the graduate level, but instructors should work with students to finish course requirements as soon as possible. Once the student fulfills the incomplete contract by submitting outstanding work, the instructor should contact the Registrar via email (TellTheRegistrar@usf.edu) to request a grade change. That request should include the academic term, the course, the student name, the student U Number, the old grade and the new grade. The department chair should be CCed. Consult the undergraduate and graduate catalogs for further information.

## Midterm Grades

Midterms are required for all undergraduate sections. Issued after Week 7 in the regular semesters, they are a vital feedback mechanism and a

starting point for outreach to students in poor standing.

## Tenure & Promotion Guidelines (USF)

Effective July 1, 2020

## Tenure & Promotion Guidelines (College of Arts & Sciences)

Effective May 19, 2020

## Title IX

USF faculty are responsible employees and as such must report potential violations to the Title IX Office as soon as possible but within 24 hours.

## Travel Manual

The USF Travel Manual outlines the rules for business travel.

## USF Core Syllabus Policy Statements

Certain statements should be included on all syllabi and are in effect even when not present on a course syllabus. Faculty should become familiar with these policies and articulate them clearly on all syllabi.

## USF Faculty Handbook

The University-wide Faculty Handbook includes guidelines and recommendations applicable to all faculty.

## USF Regulations and Policies

USF archives all University regulations and policies in an indexed and searchable database.

# *St. Petersburg Campus Resources for Students & Faculty*

## Career Services

Career Services links students with internships and work opportunities.

## Nelson Poynter Memorial Library

The USF St. Petersburg campus library houses 200,000 books and provides access to more than 720,000 ebooks, 18,000 streaming films and documentaries, and librarians who specialize in all offered majors. The Nelson Poynter Memorial Library also provides tech centers, online learning support, cultural events and an array of resources for student success.

The Library also provides liaison librarians who collaborate with faculty and offer support in the forms of:

- assistance to faculty and students with research support and questions

- instruction and customized workshops regarding any research assignments, information literacy, data literacy topics
- research guides to complement your courses
- access to materials (including textbooks on reserve / open access / e-books for courses)
- connections to services, technologies and other areas of USF libraries

The liaison librarian for Journalism and Digital Communication is Natalie Boulanger (nboulanger@usf.edu)

## Student Outreach & Support

This office provides timely resources, support and guidance to students in need. Faculty can submit referrals through Canvas or the SOS website concerning both academic and nonacademic issues.

## Student Success Center

The Debbie Nye Sembler Student Success Center provides tutoring, writing consultations, testing services, workshops and other learning resources.

## Wellness Center

The Wellness Center empowers the University of South Florida St. Petersburg campus community by promoting a proactive and compassionate approach to holistic wellness and student development in an inclusive, collaborative and multidisciplinary environment.

# Forms, Checklists, Guides & Other Important Paperwork

[Applied Research Project Form](#)

[ARC Late Add Instructor's Form](#)

[ARC Late Add Requests](#)

[ARC Late Withdraw Instructor's Form](#)

[ARC Late Withdraw Requests](#)

[Electronic Thesis & Dissertation Paperwork](#)

[Graduate Student Advising Form](#)

[Graduate Student Course Plan](#)

[Graduate Student Petitions (Add/Drop/Change Hours)](#)

Independent Study Syllabus Template

Independent Research Project Description Template

[Internship Learning Contract](#)

[Internship / Practicum Performance Appraisal](#)

Journalism & Digital Communication Graduate Student Handbook

Journalism & Digital Communication Undergraduate Student Handbook

[Thesis Certificate of Approval Packet](#)

[Thesis Supervisory Committee Appointment Form](#)

[Undergraduate 4-Year Plan](#)

[Undergraduate Advising Assignments](#)

[Undergraduate Advising Form](#)