

# Innovation News Center

## By-laws

Adopted Spring 2024

We believe that an academic culture of shared governance, characterized by (1) mutuality, collegiality and collaboration; (2) transparency; (3) representative participation; (4) mutual accountability; and (5) clarity of roles, provides the foundation for success in teaching and service. We also believe that academic units with a reputation for responsible, respectful conduct attract and retain the best faculty, staff and students yielding long-term, sustainable excellence. In this document, the term “unit” shall refer to the Innovation News Center or INC. The term “chair” shall refer to the Director of the Innovation News Center. The term “associate chair” shall refer to the Managing Editor of the Innovation News Center.

### Section I—Governance of the Unit

The Innovation News Center is a fundamental unit of academic and administrative organization within the College of Journalism and Communications. All provisions contained herein shall be in accordance with and subordinate to the regulations and procedures of the University of Florida Board of Trustees and the Florida Board of Governors, the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the University of Florida Board of Trustees and the United Faculty of Florida, the University of Florida Constitution, the Constitution of the College of Journalism and Communications, state and federal laws and regulations, hereinafter called “University Policy.”

Operating within these various regulations and procedures, the governance of the Innovation News Center shall be shared among the administration of the College, the administration of the unit and the unit’s faculty.

### Section II—The Faculty

#### A. Membership of the Faculty

1. The faculty of the unit consists of those in non-tenure-accruing ranks, as defined in the University Constitution and the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Unless otherwise specified, all faculty have the right to vote on unit issues relevant to their specific roles and responsibilities. Generally, a simple majority of faculty present and voting will carry or defeat a motion, providing that a quorum of two-thirds of the faculty membership is present and voting.
2. Courtesy appointments to the faculty may be proposed by any faculty member (including the chair). Upon a majority vote of the unit faculty such appointments can be made. Faculty on courtesy appointments will not be extended voting privileges in the unit nor will they accrue tenure in the unit.

#### B. Graduate Faculty

1. All members of the faculty of the unit who have been appointed to membership in the Graduate Faculty of the University shall be members of the College Graduate Faculty. (The

University Constitution and the College Constitution specify criteria for appointment to the Graduate Faculty.)

2. Duties. The graduate faculty of the unit shall have the same powers and duties relating to graduate students and programs as other graduate faculty in the College, as specified by the College Constitution. The level of involvement of graduate faculty in supervising students is determined by the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies in consultation with the faculty member and the faculty member's unit Chair.

### C. Rights of the Faculty

1. The faculty believes that academic freedom and responsibility are essential to the full development of a university and apply to teaching, research, creative activity and service. Therefore, the faculty must be free to cultivate a spirit of inquiry and scholarly criticism and to examine ideas in an atmosphere of freedom and confidence. The exercise of academic freedom is founded upon professional ethics and integrity when teaching, conducting research, or otherwise acting as a member of the faculty.

2. Faculty members have the right to know what is required of them in their work and how that work will be evaluated. In this regard, faculty members shall be provided with a written statement of their responsibilities upon hire and through the semester Faculty Assignment Report (FAR) and in compliance with the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

3. All decisions regarding tenure, promotion, sabbatical leaves, salaries, salary increases and evaluations, and all results of those decisions, shall be made known to the individual faculty member in a timely manner. Faculty members have the right to appeal such decisions, in a timely manner, consistent with applicable policies and procedures, and to expect a timely reply. Such decisions shall be made known to faculty as required by the Collective Bargaining Agreement and other University Policy.

4. On all matters relating to tenure and promotion, the unit will follow procedures described in the College's Standards and Criteria for Tenure and Promotion document.

5. The faculty has a right to assemble to discuss matters of concern to the faculty without limit.

6. All faculty members have the right in accordance with university policy to view and request copies of any and all of their own evaluative personnel files within the unit, College and university and the right to provide written response to any information contained in the file should they so choose.

7. Faculty members may employ the grievance process outlined in UF rules and the Collective Bargaining Agreement if they believe their rights as a faculty member have not been met.

8. Policies regarding travel funding will be developed in collaboration with the unit Chair and faculty and approved by the dean.

9. Any member of the faculty may call meetings of the unit faculty to discuss matters of concern, so long as at least 50 percent of the voting faculty within the unit agree that the meeting is needed.

### D. Responsibilities of the Faculty

1. Contributing to the teaching, research, and service missions of the unit, College and university.

2. Participating in the process of faculty governance, such as through service on unit, College and university-level committees, task forces or other groups as requested or appointed.

3. Developing, modifying, implementing and evaluating the unit's policies that guide student and professional content creation and conduct within the parameters set forth by the College and university.

4. Supporting an environment of collegiality, ethical conduct and professional integrity:

a. Being forthright and honest in the pursuit and communication of scientific and scholarly knowledge.

b. Respecting students, staff, and colleagues as individuals; avoiding any exploitation of such persons for private advantage.

c. Serving the integrity of the evaluation process with regard to students, staff, and colleagues, so that it reflects their true merit.

d. Recognizing the responsibilities arising from the nature of the educational process.

#### E. Unit meetings

1. Faculty meetings will be held on a regular basis (including at least once during each fall and spring semester).

2. Notice of a meeting shall be given to faculty at least three business days before the meeting, whenever possible. An agenda shall be provided for the meeting at least 24 hours prior to the meeting date.

3. Any faculty member may suggest agenda items for faculty meetings. Items should be submitted in writing or via email to the chair at least 48 hours prior to the meeting date.

4. No action items may be approved unless a quorum of the faculty (two-thirds of faculty membership) is present and voting.

5. No proxies will be recognized; no prior votes will be recognized because individuals voting on matters of interest to the unit should do so with full information, including participating in the discussion related to the vote.

6. Meetings will follow Robert's Rules of Order. A simple majority vote of those present will carry any motion, provided that at least 50% of the voting faculty are in attendance.

7. Attendance is expected of all faculty members unless on leave or due to other critical professional responsibilities (e.g. teaching class, attending professional meetings.)

8. At each meeting, minutes will be taken. The approved minutes will be published on the College website.

9. Meeting minutes shall be circulated at a minimum five days prior to the next called meeting of the faculty.

#### F. Unit Committees

The Innovation News Center has three standing committees. The members of each committee are elected by the faculty. Each committee will elect its chair. Elections will take place no later than the end of the academic year for a term to begin with the start of the next academic year. In addition, the unit chair may create ad hoc committees to address special issues facing the unit. Each committee will have a minimum of three members. The unit chair and the senior unit College Senator will handle the elections and determine committee assignments to provide a distribution of faculty effort. Standing Committees include:

1. Salary Equity and Merit Pay: This committee reviews and updates unit merit pay and market equity criteria. The committee also reviews faculty applications for the Faculty Enhancement

Opportunity awards and makes recommendations to the chair regarding endorsement of these applications. The unit will use the Merit Pay Criteria for Teaching, Research and Service adopted by the unit faculty. The criteria may be revised by a majority vote of the departmental faculty on recommendation from the Salary Equity and Merit Pay committee.

2. Professional Outreach & Awards: This committee works in collaboration with the unit chair to identify and recommend professionals who may serve as guest speakers, OPS part-time employees, or in other capacities to support the unit. This committee will also create a list of relevant award competitions, solicit entries and enter entries into competitions.

3. Budget and Long-Term Planning: This committee serves in an advisory role to the unit chair regarding financial requests, priorities, technology upgrades and allocations for the unit. These include but are not limited to strategic planning, revenue enhancement, and budgetary implications. A member of this committee will serve on the College's Budget and Long-Term Planning Committee.

### Section III—Administration of the Unit

A. Unit Chair: Appointed by the Dean in consultation with the faculty as determined by the UF constitution, the Unit Chair's duties include faculty mentoring, experiential learning recommendations and implementation, course scheduling and assignments in consultation with department chairs, personnel evaluations, budget management, participation in and support of graduate education, and maintaining relationships with the journalism and communication professional community. The chair is also expected to participate in shared governance and committee activities within the unit, college, and University levels, as appropriate, including calling unit meetings and attending college faculty meetings and Graduate Committee meetings, among other duties, and to fulfill other administrative requirements such as classroom teaching evaluations, annual self-evaluations and annual unit reports, reports of outside activities, and the signing and prompt return of Faculty Assignment Reports, contracts, evaluations, and other such documents. He/she also is expected to engage in an appropriate record of accomplishment in effective teaching of undergraduate and graduate students; to participate in scholarly and professional organizations; to advise undergraduate and graduate students; to chair and serve as a member of committees for graduate students' theses/dissertations, and to become a member of the college graduate and doctoral faculty groups.

B. Unit Associate Chair: Appointed by the unit Chair in consultation with the faculty and Dean, the unit's Associate Chair serves in a non-supervisory role assisting the Chair with administrative tasks as delegated by the Chair. Those duties can include but are not limited to: managing day-to-day operations and multiplatform content creation. The Associate Chair serves at the discretion of the Chair. An appointment is a two-year term, renewable with advisement from the faculty.

### Section IV—Annual Evaluation Unit Clarification

The annual performance evaluations of faculty shall be based upon assigned duties and shall consider the nature of the assignments and quality of the performance in terms of teaching, scholarship (if assigned), and service. A faculty member shall be rated as "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory" in each area of assignment as well as at an overall level. The following elements may be used by the chair when preparing the annual letter of evaluation:

#### Teaching

- Student evaluations
- Pedagogy training
- Awards and honors
- Presentations on teaching
- Classroom innovation

#### Service

- Service on unit committees
- Service on College committees
- Service to journalism and communication industries
- Service to the academy
- Journalistic/media service to the community

### Section V—Process for Determining Merit Salary Increases

Merit pay disbursement in the Innovation News Center unit will be based on meritorious achievement in two areas: teaching and service. Evaluations for merit pay will be based on the faculty member's:

#### Teaching

- Student evaluations
- Pedagogy training
- Awards and honors
- Presentations on teaching
- Classroom innovation

#### Service

- Service on unit committees
- Service on College committees
- Service to journalism and communication industries
- Service to the academy
- Journalistic/media service to the community

Merit-based raises should generally reflect a continuous trend of productivity and excellence during the previous academic year. Merit-based raise amounts will be determined by the chair in consultation with the dean.

### Section VI—Tenure and Promotion

By faculty vote, the Innovation News Center has adopted the College of Journalism and Communications' standards and criteria for tenure and promotion. The standards and criteria for the unit are the same as for the College. As a result, tenure and promotion guidelines for consideration shall be consistent with College and university requirements. These tenure and promotion guidelines shall be applied to current faculty members and to consideration of faculty members to be hired at senior rank or with tenure. The chair, upon receipt of the university

guidelines from the Dean's Office, shall distribute these guidelines to the faculty along with the relevant timeline.

## Section VII—Searches and Appointments

A. Appointment of new faculty searches for positions other than a visiting faculty role shall be conducted by a committee of unit faculty appointed by the chair. The committee shall have at least 3 members. A “search advisor” will also be appointed to the search committee. With approval of unit faculty, individuals outside of the unit also may be appointed to the search committee. At the first called meeting of the committee, the chair and/or representative from the dean's office will provide a charge to the committee and the College's human resources representative will review the university and College rules of conduct for searches and outline proper protocol.

The unit chair will appoint the search committee chair. After consultation with the unit faculty, the search committee shall present a list of qualified and acceptable candidates to the chair or dean's office representative. In the event that any candidate is unacceptable to the chair or a candidate declines the offer, the chair shall meet with the committee to discuss options. In the event that a candidate is unacceptable to the dean, or declines the offer, the dean shall request from the unit chair the names of other acceptable candidates; the chair will identify these candidates in consultation with the faculty. Under most circumstances, “consultation with the faculty” will occur at a called unit faculty meeting.

### B. Appointment of Visiting Faculty

Visiting faculty may be appointed in accordance with the College of Journalism and Communications Constitution. Unit faculty will assist the unit chair in identifying potential visiting faculty members.

### C. Appointment of Emeritus Faculty

Faculty nominated for emeritus status must receive an affirmative vote of the unit faculty before the name can be put forward to the dean and subsequently to the provost and president for appointment to an emeritus status.

### D. Appointment of the Chair

The unit chair/INC Director is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the dean, in consultation with unit faculty.

## Section VIII —Rules of Order

When conducting the business of the unit, we will apply the principles of Robert's Rules of Order and/or the ground rules approved by the unit faculty. In general, faculty will fully participate in all discussions, display mutual respect for individuals and ideas, and adhere to the principles of ethical conduct in such a way as to create an environment of trust and collegiality. Furthermore, faculty agree to hold one another accountable for adherence to these rules of order and to the basic tenets of shared governance.

## Section IX —Review and Amendments

### A. Scheduled Review

Every three years from the date of initial approval, the chair shall appoint an ad hoc committee to review these by-laws and related documents. Changes recommended by the committee must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the faculty through confidential balloting conducted by the committee. Changes take effect on the date indicated (if specified in the motion to amend) or as soon as feasible following approval.

### B. Special Review

Faculty members may request a special review of these by-laws by an ad hoc committee at any time if a majority of faculty supports the request at a unit meeting. The ad hoc committee's review and recommendations must be presented to unit faculty within six months of the original request. Changes recommended by the committee must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the faculty through confidential balloting for implementation. Changes take effect on the date indicated (if specified in the motion to amend) or as soon as feasible following approval.

### C. Amendments

These by-laws may be amended by two-thirds majority vote of the faculty through confidential balloting conducted by the committee. Changes take effect on the date indicated (if specified in the motion to amend) or as soon as feasible following approval.