

Department of Journalism and Digital Communication Faculty Meeting
Friday, September 16, 2022

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CF: Let's get started. Welcome to Brianna Bush, who is our NNB teaching assistant. She's starting DJD this semester as well. One thing coming from the calendar of events – graduation application deadline coming on Monday. Students planning to graduate should do that by Monday at the latest.

JE: If they don't make the deadline, the names won't appear in the bulletin. They can do this in OASIS>Student>Apply to Graduate. If you get a student who graduates but forgets to apply, send them to me.

CF: I'll send a note to Elliott Wiser to let Senior Seminar know. Do the grad students get charged if they late apply?

JE: I don't know.

JE: Next registration cycle is coming up – Oct. 31. We need to make sure the courses are set up properly and restrict properly. First registrants are those with lots of credit hours and those with high GPAs. Sometimes these will be sophomores registering before juniors and seniors. If you have a student who couldn't get into a class that is closed, that is why. Also, if there is ever a student who won't graduate on time if they don't get into a certain course, they need to talk to me. I work with the department and we can get them into the class.

JE: Amanda Timmers is expected to return from FMLA on Nov. 4 and will transition into being the Digital Communication adviser. I will still help but I have 400 majors. I'll bring her to your faculty meetings when she starts.

JE: I see you're talking about faculty advising. Anyone have questions for me?

CF: We will cover advising in a bit if you can stick around.

MA: Unrelated to advising, since consolidation can we not do changes to curriculum?

JE: I thought there was a pause but UGC has indicated it will start up again.

MA: I was surprised to see there have been curriculum changes with the UGC for the last two years via Curriculog.

JE: I'd ask Dean Toler about this.

MA: People have been submitting proposals and changing courses for the last two years. This year, they have a cutoff date of Dec. 5.

JE: Does it go through a vetting process?

MA: Yes. I can't believe we've been told there's no such process for the last two years. In Curriculog you have to upload all sorts of forms and syllabi. Once it's uploaded, the chair of the undergrad curriculum is notified. This year, the chair assigns three people to review. Then it goes to the whole committee. Then the faculty council. Then the registrar, etc. And this has been done for the last two years. Didn't we have a representative on the UGC before?

CF: I think Janet Keeler was on it previously? The communications I have gotten were that course proposals were frozen until just recently. If we have a Dec. 5 deadline on the current cycle, we need to strategize quickly. We need a workgroup to look at our programs to look at both programs and focus on STEM and our science journalism elements.

MA: If we are told that on the St. Pete campus that it's frozen while the UGC is working on this, there's a major communication breakdown.

JE: I haven't heard anything about UGC until a couple of weeks ago.

MA: It's been up and running since 2020.

CF: I've been told directly multiple times that Curriculog has been frozen.

MA: There are people on the committee who have been serving since 2020.

CF: This appears to be a rough patch of the consolidation process. We have an urgent need, then, to think about our curriculum – and this is a good moment to do so given our new faculty and how they can contribute. I will reach out to folks very soon to make a workgroup. I'm grateful to you, Monica, for being on the committee and helping us to understand the process. One aspect is a move to the DIG classes from MMC and JOU.

MA: When the state came up with STEM designation for certain programs, they came up with a list of courses in the state course catalog. Those are DIG, not MMC or JOU.

MW: I was mystified by the process. I'm going to email the chair to see how it works. By the end of the week I will have a roadmap to see how it works at the grad level.

MA: For undergrads, they uploaded a file in the Teams committee that spells out the process.

MW: I have been dealing with curriculum for the past 6 years and I have never seen a constant process. It's always in change.

CF: Do we have a sense of timeline? Dec. 5 is the cutoff, but is there an advantage of getting something in sooner?

MA: Yes. At the undergrad level, once the proposal is in the system with all pieces in place, the chair assigns it to three reviewers who have two weeks to approve the proposal. If approved, it moves forward. So, each proposal gets processed within two weeks.

CF: So there has to be a faculty member responsible for shepherding through the course proposal?

MA: Yes.

CF: We will assemble a workgroup and make big picture decisions moving forward.

CF: Quick updates... Reminder that our Kappa Tau Alpha induction reception is today at 5:30. At 6:30 we will have the ceremony. We will have 14 students inducted into GPA... One top scholar for the undergrads and five for the grads.

CC: The student podcast going well. We had 13 people show interest. Next Wednesday we begin creating it. It will be student led with me and Frechette helping out. It will be campus-centric. As students learn more, it can become more complicated.

MA: Audio?

CC: Audio and video – basically a YouTube show. Done outside of class time, entertaining and informational.

MA: In my social media class, I have three or four people who have podcasts already.

CF: We might consider putting together an info page for the website we can point students to if they find out about the opportunity later. There could be any number of DJD students who might want to participate.

CF: Wanted to mention that Edgardo has been doing work on better managing data on ARPs for the DJD program as well as internships. The ARP project is a gallery or showcase of prior projects. We're creating a database to catalog projects as well as the process of getting a project approved and done. The internship management is a similar concept. Right now, the process is paper-based and it gums up the process. We are digitizing this process and creating an online workflow from internship discovery through approval. Both of these platforms will be operational by the end of this semester if not sooner.

MW: Will there be anything on the supervisor's end where we can send them a link for evaluation? That's been a bottleneck in this process.

CF: Yes. End of internship process will be built in as well. We also wanted to build in a place where students can provide an evaluation of the internship experience.

CF: Let's talk about undergraduate advising. I had sent out some material, including a new JDC Faculty Advising Guidelines document that should serve as a working draft. What is the role of the faculty adviser? How can we compliment the work Joan Eldridge and Undergraduate Advising does? I will share the document as a Google Doc so we can all contribute. We want to make sure students enroll in the right courses at the right times. In addition, we want to make sure they get the most out of their experience and are headed to good career opportunities. I listed out ten themes based on our conversations. We can highlight the importance of working with student media, make students aware of resources, promote scholarships, encourage visiting office hours, and make them aware of our academic integrity policy. We can also promote undergraduate research opportunities. In the document, there are multiple FAQs you can reference.

CF: We are encouraging students to initiate the advising process – we aren't requiring it. But there will be some acclimation to this new process. We might send a note to advisees. Peterson, let's distribute lists of advisees to faculty.

CF: We have our four year academic plan for our majors as well. We have a template for first, second, third and fourth semesters that can be used in advising to track progress but Joan Eldridge has the DegreeWorks official record.

JE: Students have access to that as well and can share it with you. Also, remember that many students have hours outside of the major to get to 120 – there's no free space to do extra electives. If they want extra classes, they will stay here longer. The university focuses on retention.

MA: Can you talk to us about the process of faculty advising?

CF: We want a balance between making this a student-initiated process and our reaching out to them. I recommend we send a quick email to advisees advertising the opportunity of advising. I wouldn't set up an appointment for any more than 30 minutes.

JE: We have 30 minute appointments, so that should be plenty of time.

CF: I'd try to meet with students in the modality they're looking for – office hours, Teams, etc. Taking basic notes is helpful in these sessions, especially given advising over multiple semesters.

MA: Are students aware that now they have a faculty adviser?

CP: I'll get email contacts to advisers.

SS: I reached out to grad students and the response rate was low. How hard should we push for responses?

CF: I think two emails is a good approach for undergrads. Beyond that, other ways of promoting advising makes sense (posting in classes, Canvas announcements, visiting with early undergrad classes).

MA: Those emails don't get any replies. I set up a Canvas section and enrolled all the advisees, published all advising materials, and sometimes made announcements. In my opinion it should be centralized at the department level. We did have that in place at the department level when I was undergrad coordinator.

JE: Autumn in Tampa is promoting each department having its own Canvas page for advising.

MA: It's such a simple tool to use – once a semester you add new students and remove those who graduated. You can do live advising, post announcements, and more. It's a better system than sending emails and chasing students. Back in 2010, we did advising this way, by last name, and it was mandatory. We still had students showing up late who didn't do advising and couldn't get into classes. If you go into classes like MMC 2100 or JOU 2100, you have a captive audience – it's not a constant effort to get people to come to advising.

CF: From what you're saying, we need to decide whether we do mass advising or keep one-on-one sessions while having a Canvas site and going into classes to advise.

MA: We need to have a formal effort in place to have a Canvas section to pump messages to undergrads. If people advise different students, messages will vary. We should have a Canvas site, visit courses, and push the fact that students need to go to the Advising Office in the college along with touching base with their faculty adviser.

MA: Some students are going to be incoming students who are unfamiliar with their adviser. Are they going to reach out to them? I don't think so. We should have somebody in charge of advising as a unified face. We can give all faculty members access to the Canvas site, too.

CF: I think the Canvas section is essential. We can have faculty pages, videos.

MA: When we do advising in class, we can all come – it doesn't have to be one person. We need to have multiple avenues to connect to students.

CF: We will get the Canvas section set up – one for each program. We will use that to get information out. What I'm hearing is we do want individual advising sessions along with this mass communication approach. Other thoughts?

MR: Will we get contact information for our advisees?

CP: Yes.

MR: I feel like I need more familiarity with university requirements. Is there some informational session for new faculty?

JE: I feel like using the word “adviser” is muddying the waters. I feel like you’re looking for a faculty “mentor.” When you say “adviser” people might think about what classes they can take, drop, etc. If it’s a mentor, it’s different from an adviser.

All: Yes, good idea.

JE: It sets the expectation differently. They should be asking about coursework in the major – not out-of-major electives or gen eds or foreign language.

CF: We can talk more about the core things to know about the major. The go-to document is the catalog.

JE: One other thing I’m hearing: looking at it from a student perspective, splitting people up by last name might work for a freshman or a sophomore. But if you look at transfers who come in as juniors or seniors, they know what they want to do and what their interests are. I show these students what the research interests of the faculty are.

CF: Do you have a feel for the ratio of transfers?

JE: More transfers. But every year we have a bigger freshman population.

CF: We will get Canvas section posted and begin funneling resources to faculty.

JE: Please connect with Autumn Mueller because they have a similar process in Tampa.

CF: Moving on, let’s discuss annual evaluation criteria. We started this discussion in the spring but decided we should wait until our new hires were brought on board. Broadly speaking, all departments are doing the same thing – teaching, research, service assignments. In our annual evaluations we are measured on these areas, and generally everybody uses a 5-point scale, outstanding to poor. The Provost’s office noticed that there isn’t a lot of clarity regarding how departments determine this score. The goal is to get more explicit about what it takes to get each level. I’ve attached our criteria. We have slightly different language for associate vs. assistant vs. full professors. We’re being asked to be more clear about what the criteria are.

CF: In a discipline like ours, we aren’t always doing formal research. We publish in a variety of ways – books, journals, articles, etc. One extreme approach is to come up with a point system so everything we do is worth a given number of points, so if the points tally to a given threshold it’s a 5, or 4, etc.

CF: Along with the governance document are our T&P guidelines. We revised those a couple of years ago and they were approved. No signs that this document needs to be revisited or elaborated on. So, these guidelines should line up with the annual evaluation criteria. In T&P, we say to get tenure you have to reach excellence in research and teaching. We identified 10 journal

articles in high quality publications as excellence, then we noted equivalencies – books, creative works, etc.

NY: Books count for x number of peer reviewed articles... is that something we would determine internally or is this something Tampa would weigh in on?

CF: Both. We'd make the initial determination, but then the college and Provost's office would weigh in. This gets back to how we structure this document that protects how departmental decisions are made. Vagueness could be used against us.

MA: When you put in your T&P application, you'll need to provide metrics for every publication (journal scores, citations, etc.). Books and book chapters are harder because they have no metrics, you'd need to use reviews or award nominations.

NY: So, it's safer to go for 10 top-tier journals... but that is not a good look for us, because we need people who write books.

CF: The most cut and dry way to approach this is via peer-reviewed journal articles in high impact journals. But there is intrinsic value in high quality book publications. In other types of publications, we need to take into account other elements in an effort to equate it to a number.

MA: I heard that the university wants junior faculty to show their productivity, doing solid research that goes through a peer reviewed process before we start writing books.

MW: To clarify the point relating T&P and evaluations: The latest contract explicitly states annual evaluation does not affect tenure & promotion. You can't rely on them for that.

CF: I think that is why the provost came back to the evaluation criteria issue. The discrepancy is something they want rectified. There are a couple of questions before us: (1) specific language we end up using and (2) a broader philosophical question around how we want to strike a balance between flexibility and specificity in our guidelines. Do we want a point-based model or do we want to keep things more descriptive and open ended?

CF: This effort also entails teaching and service, which are generally easier to work with.

MA: Philosophically, I think the department is in good shape. If you have the department behind you with strong letters from the chair and T&P committee, that will benefit any T&P application. Then there would be very little pushback at the higher levels. The only problems I see is when a person doesn't have enough publications. For example, Mark's books aren't related to hardcore journalism and Tony's books were on topics other than hardcore journalism. The new hires have interdisciplinary degrees. As long as the department says a publication is journalism, they should be good.

NY: But the safest route is high ranking peer reviewed journals.

CF: There's no easy answer. The question is how we count it, but there's definitely a way to navigate it.

MA: Our T&P documents will go with the application and the committee should evaluate based on those. Once the T&P committee evaluates, applicants have the opportunity to respond.

CF: The timetable for all of this. Annual evaluations are based on the calendar year, in Feb-April. This begins with self evaluation and is based on previous spring and previous fall. New folks will only include the fall semester in their evaluations. The timetable for making adjustments to the criteria would be for this semester, kicking in next spring.

CF: I'm going to share a Google doc that includes our current criteria and we will start a thread on what changes we want to propose before sending to the Provost's office.

CF: Natacha, want to give a snapshot of what you've been up to?

NY: In NNB, I conceptualized it as a participatory experience. Been reaching out to people active on social media to get them involved. Would love to bring them into the classroom.

NY: Spent summer in Beirut and Barcelona researching trauma and senior Lebanese female diaspora, respectively. In Beirut, I submitted a paper.

CP: Self study emails coming.

SS: I got a publication out yesterday about countering the uncanny valley affect.

MR: I'm in preliminary stages of getting my dissertation into book form. Also, looking forward to doing research into Florida pedagogy.