



Communication & Emerging Media

Promotion and Tenure Guidelines

AY 25-26

The Department of Communication and Emerging Media offers two degrees (BA in Communication and BA in Emerging Media), two minors (Communication minor and Emerging Media minor) and two fully online degree programs for the traditional Communication degree program as well as the new Emerging Media program through Palmetto College/Aiken Online. We also offer a Certificate in Strategic Communication. Additionally, the department offers a range of courses to prepare students for careers, graduate study, personal and social life. We seek to cultivate critical thinking and problem-solving skills, develop the knowledge and skills for effective communication using multiple channels in a variety of settings (e.g., relationships, small groups, organizations, public, media), and we promote ethical sensitivity and intercultural competence. Consistent with these educational objectives, as well as the Promotion and Tenure Guidelines specified in the USC Aiken Faculty Manual, the Department of Communication and Emerging Media bases decisions concerning the promotion and/or tenure of faculty on three interconnected areas: teaching; scholarly, creative, and applied professional activities; and service.

TEACHING

Faculty members are expected to enhance learning, as indicated in the Department's mission, which states,

We help each student understand how fundamental theories, principles, and practices apply in many communication contexts such as interpersonal relationships, groups, organizations, cultures, public settings, the mass media, and via digital formats. We also provide students with experience in applying their knowledge and developing products that communicate effectively.

In addition, faculty members are directed to Section 4.1 of the USCA Faculty Manual.

An essential feature of good teaching is effective classroom management and attention to basics:

- Providing students with clear and comprehensive course syllabi (see USCA Faculty Manual 4.1 & 4.2 for required elements)
- Being in class regularly and on time
- Being prepared for class
- Providing a clear structure for course development throughout a semester
- Making expectations for assignments and grading policy clear
- Maintaining high standards for student performance
- Showing fairness and good judgment in grading
- Providing students with specific, timely and constructive feedback on assignments and/or

overall progress

Faculty also support learning by being available to students (e.g., keeping office hours and appointments and responding to e-mails in a timely fashion). In addition, ongoing efforts to improve one's teaching are expected (e.g., keeping course content current; applying assessment techniques; seeking and taking seriously feedback; applying information gained from conferences and other pedagogical sources).

Those applying for promotion and/or tenure should provide multiple indicators of teaching excellence, such as:

1. Evidence of active efforts to ensure teaching effectiveness, such as:
 - Participating in workshops and institutes to acquire and use effective practices or methods;
 - Adopting high impact pedagogies;
 - Incorporating feedback from peers and students;
 - Modifying syllabi and assignments to enhance learning; and
 - Authoring instructional materials.¹
2. Positive reviews of teaching from peers, students and alumni.
3. Evidence of effectiveness as a peer reviewer and/or mentor for other faculty.
4. Developing new courses, leading curriculum revision, facilitating an effective course rotation
5. Supervising, instructing, and guiding students in service-learning, independent studies, honors projects, internships, and/or capstone experiences.
6. Awards and/or recognition for teaching excellence.
7. Leading workshops, guest lecturing or serving as visiting faculty.
8. Consistently positive student evaluations of teaching (standardized scores corresponding to categories of good or better) or a record of improvement in evaluations of teaching along with a narrative of efforts made to improve.

Part of the one's teaching duty is academic advising. Academic advisement is an important faculty function within the Department of Communication and Emerging Media. Faculty members are expected to advise accurately and sensitively. Evidence of effective advisement (e.g., letters from students, alumni, colleagues or the department chair; accurate completion of graduation clearance forms; progression of advisees) should be provided. Additionally, OIERC provides quantitative student evaluation of advising that should be included. Academic advisors should also conform to the department's holistic approach to advising.

SCHOLARLY, CREATIVE, AND/OR APPLIED PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Both tenure-track and post-tenure review faculty must demonstrate evidence of active involvement in scholarship that furthers the faculty member's academic and professional interests and/or enhances course and curricula content and design.

An individual's output must be considered in the context of the USCA Mission Statement and the Communication and Emerging Media Department Mission, Guiding Principles, and Educational Objectives. Furthermore, contemporary approaches to scholarship in the discipline of human communication vary from the social science approach to the interpretive approach to the critical

¹ See also point # 3, 4 and 6 under Scholarship section – Applied Scholarship

approach. Moreover, our department includes faculty from Journalism and Mass Communication backgrounds that often include more creative modes of scholarship. Each approach comes from a particular historical tradition, and each relies on different methods for the study of communication and media (quantitative and qualitative methods, including rhetorical analysis, content analysis, ethnography, textual analysis, performance, data analytics, and the like). This diversity enriches the discipline and allows for the careful study of human communication and media in its many complex forms.

Accordingly, the Communication and Emerging Media Department recognizes the value of the following products:

1. Academic publications (single or multiple authorship, including book chapters)
2. Presentation of papers/posters at academic conferences
3. Participation on panels at academic conferences
4. Publication of book/editorial/article reviews
5. Peer reviewed performances
6. Peer reviewed creative media products/media content creation.
7. Commissioned research reports
8. Involvement of students in research activities

The Communication and Emerging Media Department recognizes the value of **applied scholarship** (the application of professional knowledge). As is the case with traditional scholarship, an individual's involvement must be considered in the context of the USCA Mission Statement and the Communication Department Mission, Guiding Principles, and Educational Objectives.

1. Publication of textbooks; chapters and articles in pedagogical books; refereed articles in pedagogical journals or commissioned reports on innovative pedagogy, professional development or curriculum design
2. Publications in popular, trade, or regional media
3. Editor of a scholarly peer reviewed journal
4. Editor of media products/media content
5. Serving on an editorial board, reviewing for journal publications or for conferences or grants
6. Presentations/speeches or development and facilitation of workshops designed for peers and professionals in the discipline
7. Creating and managing discipline-related media and materials
8. Discipline-related consulting
9. Writing research-based, discipline-related grant proposals
10. Any other creative work such as performances (creating performance in traditions ranging from reader's theatre to performance art for public presentation), photographs, videos, feature articles, podcasts, media content creation including graphic design/web design, publication layouts, especially if they are peer-reviewed, accepted by major clients, or unusually innovative.

In addition, the following **general criteria** influence the assessment of work characterized as scholarly activity and applied professional products:

1. Quality is more important than quantity. Honors and awards, reprints or other types of recognition from peers are possible indicators of quality.
2. Activities that enhance teaching and learning and/or curricular development are valued.

3. Presentations at international, national and major regional academic and professional meetings are considered significant. Presentations given at smaller regional meetings are also important.
4. Work reviewed or juried by peers is valued, as is invited work.
5. Grant proposals that are funded are given more significance than grant proposals that are unfunded.
6. Circulation and overall quality of trade or popular press publications may be considered.

SERVICE

In the Department of Communication and Emerging Media, faculty service is of three types: service to the campus (includes but goes beyond departmental service), service to the profession or the discipline, and service to the larger community. An outstanding record of service involves achievements in more than one area and tenure-track faculty members are expected to participate in campus service beyond the department before the critical year. In order to document achievements, one might include a narrative which explicates the specific work done; letters from colleagues, committee members or chair; a letter from the Faculty Assembly chair or supervisor; or other documents which serve as indicators that significant and high quality work was accomplished. Service to the campus that includes any remuneration (such as advising the campus newspaper or Esports team) counts as service to the university.

Service to the campus—Service to the campus includes service to the department and beyond. In this small department, the candidate is expected to perform department responsibilities willingly and effectively; to work constructively with colleagues, staff and students; to be able to meet the department's current and future needs and priorities; to contribute to department growth and development; and to show the ability to grow and develop in his or her own responsibilities. As noted, tenure-track faculty are expected to engage in campus service beyond the department before the critical year. Examples of campus service include the following:

1. Active membership on Faculty Assembly committees, ad hoc campus-wide committees and/or task forces, search committees (any formal university committee)
2. Service on department-based committees (e.g., search committees, other ad hoc committees)
3. Holding other assigned duties within the department
4. Service to student organizations, student media, or club sports
5. Active participation in departmental activities (e.g., capstone presentations, departmental events, etc.)
6. Mentoring other faculty
7. Serving in major administrative or leadership roles
8. Organizing, facilitating, or participating in university events

Service to the profession—Service to the profession includes activities that contribute to discipline advancement or growth. Examples of professional service include the following:

1. Serving as officers of professional associations
2. Organizing and chairing sessions at professional conferences
3. Serving as journal editors
4. Serving on editorial boards
5. Reviewing manuscripts, grant proposals, external tenure files, etc.
6. Serving as respondents to sessions at professional conferences
7. Organizing conferences and workshops

Service to the larger community—Service to the larger community includes activities that promote community relationships and improve community life, applying a faculty member’s expertise or extending his or her scholarship or teaching. Examples of community service include the following:

1. Presenting/speaking to community groups and/or public and private organizations that demonstrate discipline-related knowledge and skills.
2. Developing relationships (of consultation) with community organizations, businesses, and public agencies.
3. Developing and participating in outreach programs that apply and disseminate knowledge and creative work beyond the confines of the University.
4. Developing and participating in partnerships (such as internship programs) between academic programs and external agencies.
5. Organizing or participating in community events that promote the mission of USCA (e.g., enhance cross-cultural communication, valuing diversity, etc.) .

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Name of Department corrected to Communication throughout the document Fall 2016.

Revisions made and approved by Department of Communication faculty in April 2019, approved by the Dean of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences in April 2019. Forwarded to EVCAA in June 2019.

Revisions made and approved by Department of Communication and Emerging Media to correct Name of Department throughout document, Spring 2022.

Revisions made and approved by Department of Communication and Emerging Media to account for Emerging Media faculty, Spring 2022.

Revisions made by Department of Communication and Emerging Media Chair, Spring 2023 to account for new Emerging Media minor and Provost’s recommendation to move academic advising to the area of service.

Revisions made by Department of Communication and Emerging Media Chair, Spring 2024 to abide by interim provost’s recommendation to move academic advising back to the area of teaching.

Revised Fall ’24 to add new Certificate in Strategic Communication.