ADDENDUM TO THE COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION CRITERIA FOR FACULTY APPOINTMENT, REAPPOINTMENT, PROMOTION, TENURE AND MERIT INCREASE, AS APPLIED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

Revised April 14, 2010

Texas Christian University performance criteria and the College of Communication interpretation of those criteria apply to all full time faculty appointments in the Department of Communication Studies. These criteria and interpretations are found in the *Handbook for Texas Christian University Faculty and Staff* and in the College of Communication document. “An Interpretation of General Criteria on Faculty Appointment, Reappointment, Promotion, Tenure and Merit Increases.”

Each faculty member is evaluated in terms of achievement in the following categories: teaching, research, service, advising, professional development, and professional ethics. An exception is appointment to the rank of instructor or lecturer, which is evaluated in terms of achievement in teaching, service, advising, professional development, and professional ethics.

For all ranks, performance should be distributed across all categories with priority being given to teaching and (for professorial ranks) research. Outstanding performance in one or more areas is not a substitute for inadequate performance in others. In exceptional cases, the balance of performance expectations among the categories may be shifted to provide opportunities for specialized achievement; however, any exception must be made with the approval of the Department Chair (in consultation with the Department Advisory Committee) and the Dean of the College of Communication. Such exceptions must be evaluated in terms of the achievement of Department and College goals.

Performance expectations for appointment and reappointment at the various ranks do vary, with higher expectations for the senior ranks. These expectations are articulated in the College of Communication document, “An Interpretation of General Criteria on Faculty Appointment, Reappointment, Promotion, Tenure and Merit Increases.” Within the Department of Communication Studies, it is expected that promotion will reflect both
internal and external recognition of a faculty member as having earned a national reputation. An increase in duties related to programmatic and disciplinary leadership is expected (e.g., work as a consulting reviewer for prominent journals, significant involvement in graduate programming, serving as Chair of a University committee, etc.).

I. TEACHING

The primary component of a faculty member’s role in the Department of Communication Studies is quality undergraduate and graduate teaching. Each faculty member should demonstrate expertise in content areas and methodologies relevant to discipline and to his/her areas of specialty. Faculty members should initiate innovations in teaching that lead to improvement in the learning experience, conduct timely revision of course materials, and develop new courses as needed. Faculty are expected to demonstrate competence by organizing significant and current subject matter; to present class material with expertise, coherence, and the degree of articulate expression expected of a Communication Studies professor; to maintain grading standards in line with program expectations; to establish a rapport with students that enhances and nurtures the educational process; to evaluate students fairly and impartially; and to maintain professional standards and expectations, including those outlined in the *Handbook for Texas Christian University Faculty and Staff*.

Competence and effectiveness in teaching are evaluated by self, students, colleagues, and the department chair. Evaluation by students is formally represented through administration of the Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) form. Faculty ratings will be compared to department means and should receive scores at or near the department mean. Informally, students and alumni express views through letters and informal communications. Colleagues may evaluate teaching during formal reviews by the tenured faculty and by observing long-term trends in student performance during activities which contain an evaluative component (e.g., oral and written comprehensive graduate examinations, performance in courses, and feedback from externship supervisors). Evaluation by the Department Chair may occur during formal performance reviews for tenure, promotion, reappointment, or merit salary
increases or at other times in response to specific issues and problems. Faculty at all ranks are encouraged to engage in systematic self-evaluation of teaching effectiveness and have the right to include objective self-evaluation as a component of any formal review process. This teaching portfolio may include past and current teaching evaluations, grade distributions, course syllabi, letters of support, descriptive commentary, and any other relevant evidence the faculty members deem appropriate.

Further information regarding teaching effectiveness may be derived from, but is not limited to, inspection and review of course syllabi, directed theses, teaching awards, efforts toward and funding of instructional development grants, and grade distributions.

II. SCHOLARSHIP

Scholarship complements quality teaching. Department faculty must demonstrate competence in a research methodology and a content area appropriate to the discipline, as well as a commitment to an on-going program of research. Publication of a faculty member’s work implies a judgment by editors and reviewers of its relative merit. A reasonably regular rate of publication should be maintained so that faculty members do not have lengthy gaps in the publication of scholarship.

Faculty members are expected to publish research in outlets appropriate to their discipline and to the topic under investigation. The preponderance of the faculty member’s published work should appear in outlets associated with Communication Studies. Although some work in related areas (psychology, sociology, education, etc.) is acceptable, it should be presented in addition to, rather than in lieu of, publication in traditional outlets. These traditional outlets include both association journals and other closely allied, reputable journals. Faculty are encouraged to incorporate whatever generally accepted methodology is suitable to their needs, to the subject under investigation, and to the discipline. In addition to the primary evidence of refereed publications, secondary evidence of research activity includes papers presented at professional meetings; participation in invited seminars, symposia, and workshops; and grant writing activities. Ideally, convention papers are an initial form of scholarship that should lead to publication.
Evaluation of scholarship is based first upon quality and second upon quantity. Measures of quality include judgments made through the publication process as well as independent judgments made by the chair and individual committee members. Factors which delineate quality of research include:

1. **The level and reputation of publication forum.** Association-sponsored journals are evaluated relative to the quality of the journals and the level of the association that publishes them: national, regional and state in descending order. Some non-association journals rate very highly (e.g., quality standards, acceptance rates editorial boards, disciplinary relevance, impact factor) and others do not. While faculty are encouraged to publish in outlets they consider appropriate to their content and methodological specializations, they may wish to seek the opinions of colleagues within the Department and the discipline regarding the quality and appropriateness of journals. Within the professional associations, journals regularly report indicators of quality such as acceptance rates. Faculty members who publish in outside journals should be prepared to provide evidence of the quality of professional outlets. Finally, evidence of the specific impact of faculty members’ work can be utilized to provide evidence of quality (e.g., number of citations, with self-citations removed).

2. **The review and sequence of authors on the publication.** In cases of single authorship the contribution of the researcher is obvious. Accordingly, junior faculty can clearly demonstrate research competence if some of their work is single authored. Evidence of the ability to conduct independent research is expected and single authorship is the best available means of doing so. Multiple authorships are also encouraged and there are a number of important values associated with collegial research. The first author listed in coauthored work is commonly referred to as the lead author. This designation can indicate a principal role in leading the team of researchers. Similarly, first authorship can indicate that the project was originated by, or the majority of work carried out by, the lead author. This is often the case when a student publishes work such as a thesis, along with a faculty advisor. In this second case, the advisor may play the leadership role while the student is expected to conduct a large amount of the work. Conclusions concerning the credit awarded for multiple authorship are often drawn in formal evaluations and faculty members must
communicate clearly to their colleagues when unique situations occur (such as absolute equality of work and an agreement to list authors alphabetically, etc.).

3. The nature of the publication. Publications that utilize research methods to contribute to the growth of knowledge or which make theoretical contributions are particularly noteworthy. Textbooks and textbook chapters, such as instructional literature reviews and pedagogical/clinical impressions, may be fitting complements to a research program, but are not acceptable as sole expressions of scholarship and are not considered primary evidence. Books and book chapters may or may not be considered primary evidence of scholarship depending on the application of research methodology or contribution toward theoretical advancement.

III. ADVISING

Academic advising is an important faculty function that encompasses both academic and career counseling. Advising activities include but are not limited to helping plan academic programs, clarifying degree requirements, suggesting electives and complementary majors and minors, assisting students in course selection, monitoring student progress toward graduation, supporting students who experience academic difficulties, facilitating post-graduate education, making appropriate referrals, and assisting in career counseling.

Quality advising is reflected in a faculty member’s understanding of requirements such as University Curriculum, major, minor, and related requirements (e.g., probationary status, credit by examination, the Honors Program). The faculty advisor must also have a thorough knowledge of advising materials and registration procedures. Evidence of a faculty member’s quality performance in advising should include a review of not only the accuracy and value of the information disseminated, but also the advising technique reflected in the student/faculty advisor interactions. The following factors may also be considered when reviewing these areas: relevant comments from students, attendance at and participation in advising workshops, the number of advisees, and availability for formal and informal advising throughout the school year.
The evaluation of a faculty member’s dedication to advising, considering the factors listed above, could consist of solicited and unsolicited feedback from students and colleagues as well as direct student evaluations.

IV. SERVICE TO UNIVERSITY, PROFESSION AND COMMUNITY

Service is an integral aspect of faculty responsibility. Faculty members should actively seek and willingly respond to calls for their service within (1) the University, (2) the profession, and (3) the community. We recognize that individual faculty members will have different inclinations and interests in service and that service in all three of the above areas may not always be equally distributed. Keeping in mind that it is important to allocate time between all areas of faculty performance, evaluation of service should include consideration of:

1) workload, time, scope and complexity of service;
2) committee memberships;
3) committees chaired;
4) time devoted to committee meetings;
5) contribution to professional meetings;
6) conducting workshops;
7) directing and judging in festivals and competitions;
8) consulting or editorial services;
9) lecture or speaking invitations;
10) participation on editorial boards
11) serving as an expert for blind, peer review of manuscripts
12) other professionally relevant service activities within the University, profession, or community.

V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Faculty members are expected to be current in their discipline, particularly in areas of teaching and research specialization. The scholarly community recognizes the value of continuing education. Faculty members should actively pursue programs of study and self-development, should continue to cultivate their interests and
professional competencies, and should serve as role models to students and colleagues in the lifelong pursuit of learning.

Evaluation of professional development may include consideration of:
1) accumulation of continuing education credits such as preconvention workshops;
2) receipt of research and faculty development grants;
3) receipt of post-doctoral fellowships;
4) attendance at professional meetings and workshops;
5) development of new professionally-related skills (e.g., skills in data analysis, computers and other technical areas).

VI. PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

We fully subscribe to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) statement on professional ethics. This statement was adopted as the policy statement on professional ethics by the TCU Faculty Senate in 1992-1993 and is printed in the Handbook for Texas Christian University Faculty and Staff.

Beyond the AAUP statement, we adhere to the ethical principles of our academic discipline. These are reflected in the Code of Professional Ethics for the Communication Scholar/Teacher adopted by the National Communication Association in 2000. These standards not only deal with ethical issues surrounding research, teaching, and publication, but also the ethical dimensions of professional relationships such as those with colleagues, faculty/student relationships, and with employers and as employees. Faculty members in the Department of Communication Studies are expected to be familiar with, and to abide by, these statements of professional practice. We are committed to conducting our research, our teaching, and our service responsibilities in an ethical manner. Further, we are committed to the fair and equitable treatment of colleagues, students, and administrators.
1 Strict requirements related to grade distributions are inherently difficult for a number of reasons: courses contain unique student performance expectations, small samples of students may display random fluctuation in academic ability and effort, performance differences are often assumed to exist between lower and upper division courses, and faculty members make professional judgments concerning the grades that are most appropriate in their courses. Still, grading is not an academic freedom issue and large variations in the expectations about grading between faculty members can lead to significant problems for the Department, such as attempts by some students to avoid certain faculty members.

Accordingly, we recognize the following minimum standards for faculty grading in undergraduate courses: While we do not assume that grades must mirror a binomial distribution, we agree that grades are “normal-like” in that extreme grades occur far less often than middle grades. Specifically, faculty who have extreme numbers of either A’s or F’s, or a bimodal distribution (large numbers on both ends) are not reflecting the performance expectations of the Department. At the same time, all grades should be used when appropriate. Faculty who rarely, if ever, award an A for exceptional performance, or fail a student when the student clearly should be failed based on that teacher’s own standards, are examples of this issue of not using all grades. Finally, faculty should not over-use particular grades to avoid making difficult judgments (e.g., faculty who give the majority of students in a class a grade of B when a C indicates satisfactory performance).

It is understood that these statements apply to ongoing habits of grading, not the grades obtained in any small sample, such as a single class. It is also understood that some variation occurs between courses, course levels, etc. as articulated above. For the sake of clarity, this discussion has not addressed plus/minus grading; however, we assume that the same principles apply even when the number of potential categories has expanded (e.g., giving over a third of students A’s is not justified simply because some of them are A-).

2 The statement is located at http://www.natcom.org/index.asp?bid=13592