

UTDPP1124

Committee on Student Media

Policy Statement

Background

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and importance of encouraging opportunities for students and members of the University community to engage in the free and open exchange of ideas and information as fundamental to fulfilling its educational and service mission. The University sponsors student media outlets including the University's student newspaper, The Mercury; the University's student radio station, Radio UTD; the University's student opinion and satire publication, AMP; and the University's student TV station, UTD TV. These outlets provide an opportunity for students to exercise Constitutionally protected freedom of the press and speech while simultaneously providing students an opportunity to develop skills and professional experience in communication and related fields.

Purpose

The Committee on Student Media (COSM) is a University-wide standing committee appointed by the President not reporting to the Academic Senate of The University of Texas at Dallas responsible for providing guidance to and oversight of all student media outlets funded by student fees.

Students who work in these University-sponsored student media organizations determine the content of their respective media outlets and are responsible for that content. Student media staff and advisors are not censors. No staff or faculty member who advises student media should be fired, transferred, or removed from their position because of their refusal to exercise editorial control over student media or to otherwise suppress the protected free expression of student journalists.

Committee Charge

The Committee on Student Media exists to adopt rules for and to provide oversight of the general operations of sponsored student media outlets at the University. The committee shall be governed by the Regents' Rules and Regulations of The University of Texas System, this and other related University policies and procedures, and the laws of the State of Texas.

The COSM is charged with the following duties and responsibilities:

1. The COSM will draft, revise, and/or adopt, as needed, bylaws for all student media outlets consistent with this policy and Constitutionally protected First Amendment rights. The committee will publish any such bylaws on an appropriate, publicly available platform.
2. As part of the bylaws for each student media outlet, the COSM will define a process for resolving disputes between student media leaders appointed by COSM and administrative staff tasked with advising and overseeing student media. If these mechanisms fail to resolve a dispute, the COSM will make a recommendation to the Vice President for Student Affairs and the President on how best to resolve the dispute.
3. The COSM will meet at least two times each fall and spring semester, once in the summer, and additionally as necessary to execute the committee's charge.
4. The COSM shall determine a process to select editors-in-chief and station managers for student media outlets with the goal of selecting candidates no later than April 30 of each year. If an editor-in-chief or station manager for any student media outlet is unable to complete their term, the committee shall convene to select a new editor-in-chief or station manager to serve the remainder of the term.
5. The COSM may consider complaints and grievances against any student media outlet staff, including editors-in-chief and station managers, and may enact appropriate sanctions, up to and including removal.
6. The COSM shall consider recommendations from its voting, ex-officio, and non-voting members.

Membership

The Committee on Student Media will consist of voting and ex-officio, non-voting members appointed by the President of the University, or the President's designee, as follows:

Voting members

- Two (2) faculty members nominated by the Academic Senate, one of whom will be

- appointed Chair of the committee;
- Two (2) staff members nominated by Staff Council;
- Three (3) undergraduate students nominated by Student Government, one of whom will serve as Vice-Chair of the Committee; and
- Two (2) graduate students nominated by the Graduate Student Assembly.

Ex-officio, non-voting members

- Senior Director for Student Affairs Marketing & Student Media;
- Director of Student Media;
- Assistant Director of Student Media;
- Editor-in-chief of The Mercury;
- Editor-in-chief of A Modest Proposal (AMP);
- Station manager of UTD TV; and
- Station manager of Radio UTD.

In addition, the committee may invite journalism, media, or other communications professionals with relevant backgrounds to serve as non-voting members of the committee. These individuals would be chosen with the aim of providing the committee and student media leadership with advice and guidance on student media policies and operations.

The Office of Student Media will provide administrative support to the committee for planning meetings and other committee logistics.

Voting members shall serve one-year terms. Faculty and staff voting member terms are from September 1 to August 31. Student voting member terms are from June 1 to May 31. Terms for ex-officio members shall coincide with their appointment terms. Other non-voting members will serve terms defined by the committee. If a voting member vacancy on the committee occurs, the President shall appoint a new voting member nominated by the appropriate governance body to fill the unexpired term. Voting members may serve consecutive terms if nominated by their respective governing bodies and reappointed by the President or the President's designee.

Robert's Rules of Order, when not in conflict with the provisions of the committee charge, shall be the rules of parliamentary procedure when the COSM is in session. For the purposes of COSM meetings, a quorum shall consist of at least three student voting members, one faculty voting member, and one staff voting member.

Regular meetings of the COSM shall be held at such times and places as the Chair shall designate. Special meetings of the COSM shall be held upon the call of the Chair, the Vice-Chair, or upon the written request of not less than five voting members of the committee. Written notification of the time, place, and purpose of a special meeting will be provided by the

Chair or their designee to each member of the committee, including those serving in a regular external advisory role, at least three days before the time of the meeting.

Committee RUO

The Vice President of Student Affairs shall serve as the Responsible University Official for administering this policy.

RESPONSIBLE PARTY

- Vice President of Student Affairs

LAST REVIEWED

- Unknown

HISTORY

- Issued: 2025-04-09