STUDENT MEDIA COMMITTEE GOVERNING DOCUMENT

Preamble

The Student Media Committee (SMC) is an administrative advisory committee appointed by the Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students (VPSA/DOS) or designee. Membership in the committee is reviewed annually. The role of SMC is to assist each of the recognized student media organizations in successfully completing their body of work on behalf of the university.

This document defines the scope and duties of the SMC in light of this role. It is designed to support the recognized student media organizations.

Freedom of the Press

Students are protected in their exercise of freedom of expression by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the state of Ohio and by past-practice at Youngstown State University. Accordingly, student media staff may report and editorialize about divisive and critical events in the University, community, nation, and world. However, the student media staff must observe the same legal responsibilities imposed upon conventional news media. Thus, each of the recognized student media organizations must strive to avoid expressions which: (1) are coarse, vulgar or obscene. (2) are libelous or slanderous.

Leaders and Staff of Recognized Student Media

During the spring semester, student staff for each of the recognized student media organizations are appointed for the upcoming year by the VPSA/DOS or designee upon recommendation of the Student Media Committee. The term of an appointment is typically one academic year.

SMC Membership

The voting membership of the SMC shall consist of at least two (2) faculty members, at least one (1) student, at least (2) YSU non-faculty employees and least two (2) community representatives.

A chair will be appointed by the VPSA/DOS and will be a nonvoting member except in the instances of a tie vote.

Nominations for faculty, staff, and student members are submitted to the chair of the SMC. Preference is given to faculty having experience with student media. However, faculty members currently serving as advisers (both appointed and voluntary) to recognized student publications may not be appointed as voting members. Appointments to this committee should not be concentrated in a single area or division and instead seek to represent the campus as a whole.

Student members are selected in consultation with Student Government and department chairs. Students serving with Student Government or any of the recognized media organizations may not serve.

Community representatives are recommended by media organization advisers or members of the SMC and should be professionally associated with a local media organization.

Appointed advisers and one member of each student media organization may be invited to the meetings and are expected to participate in discussions of matters related to their media. These are ex-officio appointments with no voting rights.

SMC Meetings

The SMC chair shall call meetings as needed, giving due regard to availability of regular members.

- Committee members unable to attend in person may contribute comments and votes via email if they have attended at least one committee meeting.
- A quorum consists of four voting members
- Any action taken by SMC requires a majority vote of a quorum.
- In the event of a tie, the chair will vote to break the tie.

On behalf of the SMC Chair, the Student Media Business Operations Specialist shall inform advisers and student media staff of meetings by sending them meeting notices and agenda information.

SMC Duties

1. SMC shall have the responsibility to authorize the recognition of student media organizations. Currently there are four recognized student media organizations.
    - *The Jambar*
    - thejambar.com
    - Rookery Radio
    - JambarTV

2. The role of the SMC in the selection of staff may vary with each media organization. SMC involvement in staff selection is outlined in the sections of this document relevant to each organization.

3. When requested by a media organization adviser, SMC shall have the power to: reprimand, remove, or suspend from office any editor or subeditor; or terminate employment of any student staff member. Any action, however, must adhere to the principles of the First Amendment and applicable case law. The Student Press Law Center states: “The courts have ruled that if a school creates a student news or information medium and allows students to serve as editors, the First Amendment drastically limits the school’s ability to censor. Among the censoring actions the courts have prohibited are confiscating copies of

publications, requiring prior review, removing objectional material, limiting circulation, suspending editors and withdrawing or reducing financial support."

4. SMC may regularly review the editorial and financial operations of each of the recognized student media organizations.

5. SMC shall develop and maintain procedures and guidelines to be used when exercising the duties articulated above.

Procedural Guidelines

Nomination of Student Media Leadership Positions

1. Editorial positions for the academic year for each recognized student publication are typically considered by the SMC during the preceding spring semester.
2. SMC must recommend Office of Student Media leadership positions early enough to allow sufficient time for the individual to participate in the selection of subeditors.
3. The chair of SMC will inform committee members of the date, time, and location of the meeting when candidates for the Office of Student Media leadership positions will be considered.
4. The Office of Student Media shall publicize the position~~s~~ available early in the spring semester. This publicity will include an announcement in *The Jambar*.
5. Applications of candidates for Student Media leadership positions will be made available to the SMC.
6. Each candidate shall appear before the SMC to answer questions concerning candidacy, qualifications, and editorial philosophy.
7. Following the interview process, a slate of candidates for paid positions will be selected by the adviser and editor-in-chief.

Jambar Operating Procedures

The official name of the Youngstown State University student newspaper is *The Jambar*. *The Jambar* serves in two capacities: one is as the campus communications medium for students, faculty and staff; and the second is as a learning laboratory for students interested in journalism. The newspaper is published once a week during the academic year. *The Jambar* is funded by means of advertising carried in the newspaper and by an allocation from the University.

Staff

The Jambar is published by a student staff. The number of paid positions and value of the wage associated with each position will be determined each spring by the Student Media Business Operations Specialist in consultation with the VPSA/DOS or designee. *The Jambar* staff is appointed annually by the VPSA/DOS designee at the recommendation of the SMC. During the spring, the Office of Student Media initiates a process of soliciting candidates for all *Jambar* positions. Any full-time YSU student in

good academic standing is eligible to apply for paid positions. Vacant positions may be filled mid-year under direction of the adviser.

In addition, SMC solicits input from the adviser and incoming editor of *The Jambar* before making its final recommendations. The person recommended by SMC to fill the position of editor–in-chief provides active input for the subeditor positions. SMC submits its set of recommended staff for *The Jambar* to the VPSA/DOS or designee.

Advisers to Recognized Student Media

Students have the right to request a specific faculty member as adviser or to request that an adviser be removed. Student requests are communicated through the VPSA/DOS or designee, who then works in partnership with the chair of the academic department to appoint an adviser. The adviser has the responsibility to guide students to an understanding of the nature, functions, and ethics of student media to provide instruction that will result in a better media organization. In addition, the adviser should be available to counsel student staff members, provide advice when appropriate, and serve as liaison with the office of the VPSA/DOS and the Student Media Committee. Acceptance of the adviser appointment is agreeance to the terms outlined in this document.

There are two appointed advisers; there may also be volunteer advisers as deemed appropriate. Duties of advisers as laid out in this document are specific to the appointed advisers.

The appointed advisers will be assigned to work with specific voluntary advisers and in the case a voluntary adviser must stop serving, the appointed adviser will step in and serve as adviser.

Position: Adviser, Publications and Editorial (*The Jambar*, thejambar.com, etc.)

Description:

The primary duty of the adviser is to act in an advisory capacity and respond to the needs of the publication staffs in their obligations to produce quality and professional publications that are ethically and legally sound. This faculty member serves as adviser to *The Jambar*, thejambar.com, and any other publication produced by YSU student media staff.

Decisions about the content of these publications are generally considered to be under the sole authority of the student staff, and the adviser does not engage in mandatory prior review. The staffs of these publications are, however, encouraged to seek the adviser's advice on any content decision, especially those with ethical or legal ramifications. The Publications and Editorial adviser works closely with the Electronic Media adviser to coordinate efforts and assist student work.

Duties:

- Spends late afternoons and evenings during production Tuesdays at *The*

Jambar office and is available for advice about articles, design and other matters.
- Checks in at *The Jambar* and otherwise keeps in touch with editors on other days of the week to discuss upcoming stories, fallout from stories that have already run and other matters.
- Attends staff meetings as arranged and requested by the editor-in-chief.
- Arranges for regular critiques of *The Jambar* and thejambar.com.
- Works with the classified staff and assists and advises the office manager in supervising hourly employees and assists and advises the editor-in-chief in supervising the workflow of student editors, reporters and photographers.
- Liaises with the Office of Student Affairs and consults on printing and budgeting. Provides advice and recommendations to the advertising manager, sales manager, and advertising operation.
- With the office manager and editor-in-chief, prepares the annual budget and, when necessary, defends the budget at budget hearings.
- Attends meetings of the Student Media Committee and, in the spring, participates in interviews of candidates for staff positions.
- Assists the editor-in-chief in training staff, solving personnel problems, firing personnel, and helping find people to fill vacancies on the staff.
- Helps research and approve any large purchases of computers or equipment and arranges for solving maintenance problems.
- Assists the University administration and *The Jambar* staff to solve issues with advertisers and reader complaints and concerns.
- Work with voluntary advisers.

Minimum Requirements: Lecturer
Reports To: Chair
Term of Service: Two semesters, renewable

Position: Adviser, Student Electronic Media (JambarTV, Rookery Radio, etc.)

Description:
The primary duty of the adviser is to act in an advisory capacity and respond to the needs of the electronic media production staffs in their obligations to produce quality and professional media productions that are ethically and legally sound. This faculty member serves as adviser to JambarTV, Rookery Radio, and any other media production created by YSU student media staff. This faculty member provides production assistance and advice about technology and operations of electronic media products.

Decisions about the content of these productions are generally considered to be under the sole direction of the student staff, and the adviser does not engage in mandatory prior review. The staffs of these productions are, however, encouraged to seek the advisor's advice on any content decision, especially those with ethical or legal

ramifications. The Electronic Media adviser works closely with the Publications and Editorial adviser to coordinate efforts and assist student work.

Duties:

- Spends late afternoons and evenings during productions, and is generally available for advice about productions and other matters.
- Checks in with JambarTV and Rookery Radio and otherwise keeps in touch with student managers on other days of the week to discuss upcoming shows, issues, and other matters.
- Attends staff meetings as arranged and requested by producers and student managers.
- Arranges for regular critiques of productions by professional media experts.
- Supervises the work of student staff and assists and advises student managers in supervising hourly employees, and assists and advises managers in supervising the work of student staff.
- Provides advice and recommendations on sales, promotions, and advertising.
- Prepares the annual budget and, when necessary, defends the budget at budget hearings.
- Attends meetings of the Student Media Committee and, in the spring, participates in interviews of candidates for staff positions.
- Assists the producers and managers in training staff, solving personnel problems, firing personnel, and helping find people to fill vacancies in productions and on the staff.
- Helps research and approve any large technological purchases and arranges for solving maintenance problems.
- Assists the University administration and student electronic media staff to solve issues with advertisers and viewer/listener complaints and concerns.
- Works with volunteer advisers.

Minimum Requirements: Lecturer
Reports To: Chair
Term of Service: Two semesters, renewable

Recognition of Student Media products

Full-time YSU students in good standing may request that a new student media organization be established. This request must be made in writing during the academic year. The Chair of the SMC will present the request to the SMC and the board will make a recommendation. A successful request should include an implementation plan and estimated budget. The SMC can choose to recognize the organization as either funded, partially funded, or unfunded. When making decisions about funding, existing student media organizations must be considered.

Dissolution or Inactivation of Student Media products

In the event no students or faculty are interested in continuing with a student media product, the Student Media Business Operations Specialist must alert the SMC that the organization will be put on inactive status. This status will exist for one year. After this

year, if there are still no students and/or faculty interested in continuing production/publication, or such minimal interest that a quality product cannot reasonably be produced, the SMC may recommend either dissolution or a continuation of inactivation. The SMC will continue to review the Student Media product annually so long as it is on inactive status.