

Chris Evans

Journalism Education • Student Media Leadership • Experiential Newsrooms • First Amendment Advocacy
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PROFILE

Journalism educator and student-media executive with more than 20 years' experience building student newsrooms, advising independent media organizations, and developing student and professional staff. Current Executive Director of Student Media at Rice University overseeing six student-media and performing-arts organizations and approximately \$600,000 in annual operating and endowment funds.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Executive Director, Student Media | *Rice University*

2024–present

- Lead student-media and student-expression operations spanning *The Rice Thresher*, KTRU-LP, *Campanile* yearbook, Houston Newsroom, and Rice Bands.
- Supervise professional staff and advise student leaders working in journalism, broadcast radio, yearbook, audio, and live-performance organizations.
- Manage two dozen operating, endowment, reserve, and gift accounts totaling \$600,000.
- Direct Houston Newsroom, an experiential journalism initiative producing professional-quality local reporting and audio journalism. Develop partnerships across the Houston media community.
- Provide training in leadership, financial management, and organization-specific skills.

Assistant Professor of Journalism | *Howard University*

2023–2024

- Led *Howard University News Service*, a student-powered newsroom addressing news deserts in Black communities and working with nearly 200 Black-owned news organizations.
- Taught multimedia storytelling, interactive editing, public affairs reporting, and breaking-news reporting.
- Developed audio and text-based scholarship on the Black student press and collaborated on research and practical programs across the university.

Clinical Assistant Professor of Journalism | *University of Illinois*

2020–2023

- Created and directed the Illinois Public Media student newsroom, where students produced hundreds of broadcast and digital stories to professional public-radio standards.
- Worked with IPM journalists to shape regional coverage and integrate students into a professional newsroom.
- Taught undergraduate and graduate journalism courses focused on reporting, multimedia journalism, and audio journalism; supervised honors and graduate theses.

Assistant Director for Student Media | *University of Vermont*

2006–2020

- Advised student-run newspaper, FCC-regulated radio, television, and digital media organizations.
- Trained staffs of 25 to 125 in leadership, financial management, media law, and organization-specific skills.
- Taught newswriting, communication law, multimedia journalism, and leadership courses while leading national work in First Amendment advocacy and adviser development.

EARLIER EXPERIENCE

Journalism Professor and Newspaper Adviser — Valencia Community College, 2004–2006

Faculty Writing Instructor — New York University, 2000–2004

Writer — *Freedom Forum Online*, First Amendment Center, New York City, 2000–2001

English Teacher Trainer — U.S. Peace Corps, Sichuan, China, 1998–2000

Northern Bureau Chief and City Reporter — Florida Today, 1993–1996

Education Reporter — The News-Press, St. Joseph, Missouri, 1992–1993

EDUCATION

Ph.D. with Distinction, English — University at Albany, SUNY, 2023

M.F.A., Fiction Writing — New York University, 2002

M.A., English — University of Central Florida, 1998

B.S., Journalism and B.A., French — University of Kansas, 1991

SELECTED LEADERSHIP & PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Treasurer, New Voices Texas — 2024–present

- Manage finances for a statewide effort advocating statutory protections for student press freedom.

President, College Media Association — 2017–2019

- Served as head of CMA, an organization supporting 700 college media advisers and their students in higher education institutions in the U.S. and Canada.

Organizer and Lobbyist, New Voices Vermont — 2015–2017

- Worked with the Student Press Law Center and a statewide coalition to draft and pass Vermont's 2017 New Voices Act.

Chairman, First Amendment Advocacy Committee, College Media Association — 2010–2017

- Led a team of adviser advocates dedicated to addressing issues of censorship, prior review, and student and educator intimidation by administrations at colleges in the U.S. and Canada.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Scholarship

“The Four Phases of the Digital Natives Debate.” Lead author. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, 2020.

“Threats to the Independence of Student Media.” Co-author. Published by the American Association of University Professors, Student Press Law Center, College Media Association, National Coalition Against Censorship, 2016.

Fiction

Washington Square, *The Florida Review*, *Beloit Fiction Journal*, *South Dakota Review*, *Green Hills Literary Lantern*, *Apalachee Review*, and *Soundings East*.

SELECTED HONORS

Distinguished Doctoral Dissertation Award — University at Albany, 2023

Teachers Ranked as Excellent by Students — University of Illinois, 2020–2022

Award for First Amendment Advocacy — College Media Association, 2017

Distinguished Multimedia Adviser Award — College Media Association, 2014

Board of Directors Award of Excellence — College Media Association, 2011

Program Director’s Award for Teaching Excellence — New York University, 2002–2004

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS & WORKSHOPS

“Multimedia Reporting Workshop.” Instructor, Associated Collegiate Press College Media Mega Workshop, 2025.

“Podcasting 101.” Presenter, Associated Collegiate Press Spring Convention, 2025.

“Addressing News Deserts in the Black Community.” Presenter, AEJMC national convention, 2024.

“Communicating Authentically with Black Audiences in Public Media.” Lead panelist, Public Media Journalists Association national convention, 2024.

“Embedding Students in the Public Radio Newsroom.” Lead panelist, PMJA national convention, 2023.

“How to Teach Writing.” Presenter, College Media Association spring convention; repeated 12 times since 2007.

“Narrative Journalism: A Storytelling Short Course.” Co-instructor, College Media Mega-Workshop, 2017–2019.

“Protecting the First Amendment.” Presenter, CMA/ACP National College Media Convention, 2019.

SELECTED JOURNALISM & PROGRAM OUTCOMES

College Weekly Newspaper of the Year, Division 2, 2026 (finalist) and 2025 (ranked third nationally). College Media Association. *The Rice Thresher*. Rice University.

Pacemaker finalist. 2026, 2025. Associated Collegiate Press. *The Rice Thresher*. Rice University.

Best Independent Online Student Publication, 2024. Society of Professional Journalists. *Howard University News Service*, Howard University.

Hearst Audio News Awards: six top-20 national finishes, 2021–2023; second-place medallion at the 2023 Hearst National Championships. Illinois Public Media Student Newsroom. University of Illinois.

Public Media Journalists Association Audio Spot News Award, Student Division, 2021. Illinois Public Media Student Newsroom. University of Illinois.

Pacemaker recipient for website, 2012, and print edition, 2011. *The Vermont Cynic*. University of Vermont.

TEACHING AREAS

Newswriting • Audio Journalism • Multimedia Storytelling • Public Affairs Reporting • Interactive Editing • Media Law • Student Newsroom Practicum • Writing and Rhetoric • Creative Writing