

Former Journalism Chair Will Norton to Return July 1 to Head New Meek School of Journalism

Contributed by Deborah Purnell
05/25/2009

Will Norton

OXFORD, Miss. - Will Norton, dean of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Journalism, will return to the University of Mississippi July 1 as founding dean of the new Meek School of Journalism and New Media.

Norton served 13 years as chair of UM's Department of Journalism before becoming UNL's journalism dean in 1990. He joined UM in 1974 as assistant professor of journalism.

"It was not an easy decision (to leave UNL) because the faculty, staff and students of the College of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln are such important parts of my life," Norton said. "However, the timing is right."

UM Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Morris Stocks said he's pleased to announce that Norton has accepted the position.

"Dr. Norton is an accomplished administrator who has led the University of Nebraska College of Journalism and Mass Communications for the last 19 years," Stocks said. "As dean, he has provided outstanding leadership, has built strong relationships with alumni and the profession, and has led the program to a position of national prominence. I am confident that his experience and ability will serve our school and university well."

Norton has played a major role in moving UNL's journalism program forward. He oversaw the development of the university's new journalism complex in 2000, and in 2004, he provided a revised curriculum to reflect journalism's fast-changing landscape toward digital media. He has been instrumental in providing opportunities for journalism students to study abroad on in-depth reporting projects.

A national leader in his profession, Norton served as president of the Association for Education in Journalism in 2000-01 and as president of the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication in 1989-90. He is a member of the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications and a member of the Freedom Forum Board of Trustees.

In his new post at UM, Norton will assist with fundraising, resource management and faculty development, as well as research and curriculum matters. He will lead the creation of a new program culminating in a bachelor of science degree in integrated marketing communications.

A veteran of the journalism profession, he is an officer in The South Reporter Inc. of Holly Springs. He also was publisher of The Daily Iowan, managing editor of Christian Life Publications, a copy editor at the Chicago Tribune and sports editor of the Wheaton (Ill.) Daily Journal. He taught at the University of Iowa 1972-73.

Norton holds a doctorate from the University of Iowa and master's from Indiana University, both in mass communications. He completed a bachelor's degree in history at Wheaton College.