

Procedure 2.0402

Public Information Procedure

The College employs a public relations coordinator (PRC) who will, in coordination with faculty, staff, administration and students, inform the students, staff, faculty and public about non-emergency events and issues at the College. The coordinator will also maintain an image of the College that is favorable to potential students and the community. For media procedure in emergency situations, see the **Community Awareness and Public Information** section of the **Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan**.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the media procedure are to:

1. Create an atmosphere of transparency and comradery among administration, faculty and staff.
2. Recruit students for new and existing programs and classes.
3. Complement student life on campus by offering a reflection of student life.
4. Inform the public about the positive contributions of the College to the community.
5. Support fundraising and legislative efforts.
6. Show the College as a diverse, accessible and modern institution.
7. Maintain consistent messaging and professional image.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The PRC is responsible for all internal and external media interactions. The PRC will work with designated spokespeople in relation to external media. The PRC will work with the webmaster in relation to social media.

PROCEDURES

INTERNAL MEDIA

1. The PRC will compile internal updates into a weekly (biweekly during the summer) email newsletter from the President's Office.
 - a. The PRC will send this newsletter on Fridays. During the four-day weeks, the PRC will send the newsletter out biweekly on Thursdays.
 - b. Updates that faculty and staff would like to include should be submitted by email no later than the Thursday (Wednesday during the summer) prior to publication.
2. The PRC will compile stories relevant to students into a monthly (bimonthly during the summer) newsletter, currently titled Campus Connections.

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- a. Ideas or topics can be submitted for inclusion no later than the last day of the prior month.
- b. This newsletter will be emailed out during the first week of the month.
3. Divisions should document (i.e. photograph) their own events if publicizing the event does not meet one of the objectives of the media procedure. Photos and write-ups can be submitted to the PRC for inclusion in newsletters.

EXTERNAL MEDIA

1. Reporters are welcome on campus but must first check in with the PRC. Faculty and staff who are contacted by the press must also forward requests to the PRC unless the media inquiries were the result of a press release.
 - a. Reporters will be escorted around campus.
 - b. The College will not restrict any reporter's First Amendment rights.
 - c. The PRC will comply with any requests for public information not protected under FERPA.
2. All press releases and advertising must have approval from the president or designee. The PRC may approve news releases in the absence of the president.
3. Press releases may be sent out listing the program director as the contact person. This person should expect to receive follow up inquiries from the public or the press and does not have to report such occurrences to the PRC.
4. Programs and events in need of publicity should fill out a ReadyDesk ticket for *press request*.
 - a. Publicity provided can entail:
 - i. Photographs
 - ii. Interviews with students, faculty or staff
 - iii. A press release or article sent to print or TV media and posted on the College's news blog.
 - iv. Postings in the College's social media may include but not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram.
 - b. To balance coverage of events and programs, requests for press will be evaluated based on the objectives of the media procedure.
 - c. Due to limited printings of small publications, stories and events for the Washington County Center should be submitted at least two weeks in advance of the beginning of a class.
5. The College will be represented to the public through a number of spokespeople. The slate of spokespeople will include the best representatives of the diverse programs that the College offers.

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- a. Staff and faculty should direct reporters to spokespeople in their divisions.
- b. Spokespeople can vary over time, but the following characteristics should be taken into account for choosing spokespeople:
 - i. Knowledge of academic program, history or law related to the topic.
 - ii. Representation of the diversity of the College.
 - iii. Public speaking abilities.
- b. The following positions will be included in the list of spokespeople:
 - i. Public Relations Coordinator
 - ii. President or designee
 - iii. Vice President of Administrative Services
 - iv. Vice President of Student Services
 - v. Executive Director of the College Foundation
 - vi. Vice President of Academics
 - vii. Chair of Board of Trustees
- c. Training for spokespeople will consist of attending an annual professional development workshop open to all faculty and staff.

SOCIAL MEDIA

1. Posting on behalf of the College to social media outlets, such as Facebook and Twitter, will be restricted to the PRC and the webmaster.
2. Program representatives seeking occasional coverage on all the College social media platforms can submit a ReadyDesk ticket for *press request*.
3. All programs are required to use the official social media accounts managed by the College.
4. Employees wishing to engage regularly on social media sites may want to create a professional account, similar to having a professional email account. This will protect the privacy of their family photos; political, personal or religious beliefs; and maintain their professional appearance.
5. At this time, the College will maintain official profiles on LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Vimeo. The PRC will engage with new outlets if they can further the objectives of the media procedure.
6. The PRC will work with the marketing coordinator to pay for social media ads where appropriate.

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DIGITAL MEDIA

1. Posting of content covered by the objectives of this procedure on digital media, to include campus monitors, desktop banners, Electronic Sign, and website will be restricted to the webmaster and members of the Office of Research and Institutional Effectiveness.
2. Program representatives seeking occasional coverage on all the College digital media platforms can submit a ReadyDesk ticket for *Digital Marketing* per the Digital Signage Requests Procedure.
3. Digital Media publications will follow and adhere to the objectives outlined above. In addition requests for advertising on the Electronic Sign will be reviewed for relevancy and appropriateness for the public at large.
4. The webmaster will work with the PRC and the marketing coordinator to coordinate the use of Digital Media to be consistent with print media, social media, etc.

References

Legal References: *Enter legal references here*

SACSCOC References: *Enter SACSCOC references here*

Cross References:

History

Senior Staff Review/Approval Dates: *8/22/2016, 2/13/2017*

Board of Trustees Review/Approval Dates: *Enter date(s) here*

Implementation Dates: *Enter date(s) here*