

Public Relations and News Media

CO_MK_EN_35

Responsible Officer
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Responsible Office
Marketing and Communication
Approving Body
Board of Trustees
Approval Date
2019-11
Last Revision
2019-11
Re-evaluation Date
2021

Policy Statement

The Marketing and Communication Department provides assistance and counsel for all Carolina University communication and news media needs in support of and consistent with CU's teaching and service mission. The Marketing and Communication Department serves both the Carolina University community and the news media as the central resource and primary point of contact for all news media representatives.

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the image of Carolina University, including its administrators, faculty, staff, and students is accurately portrayed in the public news and media. This policy will also ensure the development, using mass communication, of the public's knowledge of Carolina University's programs, activities, and events. This policy outlines Carolina University's position on interacting with news media representatives.

Policy Procedures

As the primary liaison between members of the CU community and the media, the Marketing and Communication Department shall:

1. Provide the CU community with the standards and direction associated with:
 1. External news
 2. Major news stories
 3. News releases
 4. Protocol in responding to news media inquiries
 5. Monitoring news media on campus and public information requests
2. Provide information of public and media interest in a professionally prepared format to the news media, including: writing Carolina University news releases, Carolina University campus announcements and media advisories regarding significant events and activities that enhance the image of Carolina University, and are of interest to the CU community and general public as determined by the Marketing and Communication Department.
3. Maintain daily updates of the Carolina University website.
4. Track media mentions.
5. Advise and assist in media issues management, including news releases, media advisories, backgrounders, talking points, news conferences and media strategies.
6. As appropriate, arrange interviews with administrators, faculty, staff, and students with representatives of the news media.
7. Assist media representatives in locating sources of information at Carolina University.
8. Provide media coaching for administrators, faculty, staff, and students in preparation for publicity, such as interviews.
9. Maintain current media contact lists.
10. Serve as Public Information Officer (PIO) for Carolina University.

External News

The Marketing and Communication Department is responsible for disseminating all news releases, media advisories and other Carolina University information to media outlets and will otherwise make all media contacts for Carolina University. Any questions regarding media contacts or coverage should be directed to the Director of Media Relations in the Marketing and Communication Department. Written communication with media must conform to

Associated Press (AP) style and accepted journalistic standards. The Marketing and Communication Department will review publications and web content for appropriate news, newsworthiness and/or design standards, and work with appropriate CU communicators and community members on revisions or concerns.

Major News Stories

News of major importance must be identified by CU community members and planned in conjunction with the Marketing and Communication Department well in advance (embargoes can be established or confidentiality ensured for sensitive topics or when external partners are involved) so that senior administrators can be included, informed and quoted as needed, and announcements planned to increase impact.

Carolina University divisions, schools, departments, programs and budgetary units are asked not to send information or releases separately to media without prior approval of the Director of Media Relations in the Marketing and Communication Department, as duplication and confusion, and sometimes error can result. However, the Marketing and Communication Department will inform the CU communicators from specific divisions, schools, departments, programs and budgetary units of opportunities, and will work with them to coordinate additional news dissemination.

News Releases

All externally targeted news releases (including media advisories and news events) are requested to route through the Marketing and Communication Department. As the central resource and primary contact with the media, the Marketing and Communication Department reserves the right to review all news content to determine newsworthiness and to edit news items for style requirements. The Marketing and Communication Department staff will determine, with input from the involved CU communicators and community members, the best and most appropriate approach (whether news release, media advisory or campus announcement) through which CU news shall be released to the news media.

1. News Releases: The Marketing and Communication Department issues a news release when a CU administrator, faculty member, staff member or student has major research, funding or other newsworthy announcements that will enhance Carolina University's image. News releases are posted on the CU website and sent via email to news media at the discretion of the Marketing and Communication Department.
 1. A standard paragraph about Carolina University and its mission will be added to all external news releases sent to the news media via email or distributed at a news event such as a news conference and/or announcements.
 2. The Marketing and Communication staff will provide assistance in planning events, such as news conferences and/or announcements
 1. The Marketing and Communication staff will send out media announcements in advance of the news conference and/or announcement and prepare, as appropriate, hard copies of news releases and background materials for the event.
 2. The Marketing and Communication staff will also, as appropriate, send out news releases via email following the news conference and/or announcement.
 3. The Marketing and Communication staff will advise in setup and planning for news conferences and/or announcements, but will not be responsible for procuring items, including but not limited to tables, chairs, catering, parking and other directional signs, lecterns and sound systems. To ensure the assistance of the Marketing and Communication staff in setting up an on-campus news event (conference and/or announcement), CU community members must contact the Marketing and Communication staff a minimum of one month prior to the scheduled news event. Text and images for supporting materials to be assembled by the Marketing and Communication staff must also be ready a minimum of one month prior to the scheduled news event.

Media Advisories

The Marketing and Communication Department shall issue a media advisory at the request of a CU administrator, faculty, staff or student to announce an upcoming event or happening (including new conferences, conferences, seminars) consistent with CU positioning, branding and strategic priorities as determined by the Marketing and Communication Department. Media advisories are sent via email to the news media and are not generally highlighted on the CU website or social media outlets until the appropriate time.

Campus Announcements

The Marketing and Communication Department shall issue a campus announcement via the CU website at the request of a CU administrator, faculty, staff or student to announce an event or happening that affects the CU community and is generally open to the public (including non-research related events). Campus announcements are posted on the CU website and are not generally sent to the media.

News Media on Campus or on School Property Worldwide

While on Carolina University property, news media representatives should, if necessary and appropriate, be accompanied by a Marketing and Communication staff member or CU communicator designated by the Marketing and Communication Department. If not previously contacted, the Marketing and Communication Department should be notified of news media representatives visiting

the CU campus by all CU employees involved and/or approached by the visiting news media as early as possible.

Public Information/Open Records

Carolina University complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding the retention and release of personal and/or educational records of all current employees and students. Please direct all Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and/or North Carolina Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) requests to Devin Purgason.

Responding to Media Inquiries

The Director of Media Relations serves as the official spokesperson for Carolina University. In addition, the Director of Media Relations may designate an official media spokesperson for Carolina University on a case-by-case basis, as approved by the Office of the President. The Marketing and Communication Department prefers to arrange media interviews with CU administrators, faculty, staff and students through its office due to media deadlines. This ensures Carolina University not only serves as a valuable source but also meets media deadlines for stories, delivering excellent service in support of the working press.

Academic Freedom

Carolina University respects academic freedom and faculty protections afforded to faculty under the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States. Carolina University recognizes that faculty may respond to media inquiries directly on matters related to their professional duties, the functioning of the university, and/or on matters of public concern to the need for courteous, professional and dignified interactions and the responsibility to refrain from interfering with the normal operations of the university and its ability to carry out its mission. Due to the fact that faculty have a special status in the community, faculty have the responsibility and an obligation to indicate when expressing personal opinions that are not institutional representatives unless specifically authorized as such. Faculty who respond to media inquiries on matters related to their professional duties, the functioning of the university, and/or on matters of public concern, are asked to send, via email or phone call, a brief communication to the Director of Media Relations since the Marketing and Communication Department tracks and reports all media coverage of Carolina University/International University. Should faculty members need assistance or advice in responding to an inquiry, they should immediately contact the Marketing and Communication Department prior to responding. The Marketing and Communication Department is pleased to provide assistance in responding to any media inquiry.

Professional Public Appearances/Publications

Carolina University faculty and staff involved in professional activities such as an appearance at a conference or as a witness to provide expert testimony, or publication of a professional paper or study, should notify the Marketing and Communication staff a minimum of one week prior to the scheduled professional activity to ensure appropriate and timely release of information to the media.

Incidents or Sensitive Issues

Carolina University incidents or stories that may lead to negative perceptions or publicity must be conveyed to the Marketing and Communication Department as early as possible so facts can be gathered and timely responses can be made.

Government Relations

Members of the Carolina University community conveying CU-related information to lawmakers, policymakers and business leaders should first contact the Marketing and Communication Department, which can facilitate communication efforts and help with protocol. This includes invitations to — and communication about — university events, programs and tours to ensure the most effective communication possible with these critical constituents.