Public Relations

Mission / Purpose
The Department of Public Relations strives to provide complete, timely and accurate University information to external and internal stakeholders in support of the Office of Institutional Advancement and the University of West Alabama.

I. Goals and Objectives, with Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

A. Goal: Promote a positive image of the institution and area
Address the major educational, social, cultural, and economic issues of region in doing so promote a positive image of the institution and the area.

1. Objective: Foster relationships to keep stakeholders informed
Public Relations will foster relationships with various stakeholders, keeping them informed of the latest campus news.

a. Measure: Utilize Social Media
Utilize social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, blog, etc.) for disseminating information. Revive UWA Update e-newsletter with a new format and schedule to send to all faculty/staff and UWA alumni and friends with email addresses in the database.

1. Achievement Target:
Public Relations will utilize social media and revive the e-newsletter.

2. Findings (2011-2012) - Target: Met
PR utilized social media outlets to provide updates and announcements; established photo collections on Flickr; and assisted other departments in creating and maintaining social media pages; PR Director works with Marketing & Image Committee members to guide campus-wide usage of social media.

2. Objective: Increase media releases
Public Relations will increase the number of stories and photos related to UWA that are released to the news media.

a. Measure: Increase number of releases by 10 percent
Clipping service, which covers Alabama newspapers, will track increase of placements.

1. Achievement Target:
Public Relations will increase UWA news releases by 10 percent.

2. Findings (2011-2012) - Target: Met
PR composed and disseminated 155 press releases for distribution to media
outlets in and around the UWA service area. Typically, 114 media outlets receive UWA news releases. In addition, approximately 40 news releases were sent to smaller target areas for area events, area interest, and announcements composed specifically for students’ or faculty members’ hometown newspapers. PR disseminated more than 75 news releases announcing scholarships and 32 honors day recognition announcements to students’ hometown newspapers.

3. **Objective: Support "The University We Will Be" campaign**
   Produce campaign materials to support UWA's campaign.

   a. **Measure: Produce support materials**
   Public Relations will produce newsletters, news releases.

      1. **Achievement Target:**
      Public Relations will produce newsletter quarterly.

      2. **Findings (2011-2012) - Target: Met**
      PR worked with Stelter Company to produce quarterly newsletter; distributed news releases on major gifts; assisted development officers with campaign materials.

4. **Objective: Promote a positive image of UWA**
   Public Relations will promote a more positive image of UWA as part of the solution to the issues dealt with by the Black Belt region.

   a. **Measure: Increase releases detailing the University as a regional institution focused on service and civic responsibility**
   PR will increase the number of stories dealing with the ways UWA is addressing the needs of the Black Belt and promoting the University as a regional institution focused on service and civic responsibility.

      1. **Achievement Target:**
      PR will increase number of stories dealing with UWA and the community.

      2. **Findings (2011-2012) - Target: Met**
      PR distributed releases with focus on service to the community, as well as promotion of events designed to provide service or enrichment to the community.

   b. **Measure: Create and maintain websites for Black Belt organizations**
   Public Relations will create and maintain web sites for several Black Belt organizations

      1. **Achievement Target:**
      PR will create and maintain websites for several Black Belt organizations

      2. **Findings (2011-2012) - Target: Met**
      PR assisted new PR specialist of Division of Educational Outreach with site
maintenance for Center for the Study of the Black Belt and Black Belt Heritage Area.

5. **Objective: Provide students with up-to-date campus news**
   Public Relations will impact student learning by increasing students' ability to make informed decisions by providing them with up-to-date campus news.

   a. **Measure: Students will be informed of campus news**
      Students on campus will be informed of campus news through emails, campus newspaper, and news broadcast stories.

      1. **Achievement Target:**
         100% of students on campus will be informed of campus news.

   2. **Findings (2011-2012) - Target: Met**
      The PR office utilizes PR@uwa.edu email account for announcements to keep students informed. This arrangement has been tweaked this year to offer students the most important news affecting the campus as a whole, rather than special interest groups with a small percentage of the campus affected. Guidelines are sent at least once each semester to all students, faculty, and staff. By following these guidelines, we hope to restore the integrity of the PR email system.

6. **Objective: Produce a comprehensive crisis communication plan**
   PR will work to produce a comprehensive crisis communication plan for response to a crucial incident or other emergency that may effect or has affected the health, safety, or welfare of students, faculty, staff, or campus visitors.

   a. **Measure: Create a comprehensive crisis communication plan**
      By creating a comprehensive crisis communication plan, UWA will maintain focus on known facts and positive behavior. UWA will be represented as responsible and caring and will maintain stakeholder confidence. The plan will also help to communicate with UWA's internal audience (employees, students, Board of Trustee, etc) and the public.

      1. **Achievement Target:**
         Comprehensive crisis communication plan produced.

      2. **Findings (2011-2012) - Target: Partially Met**
         The crisis plan is still in progress. PR would be best suited to assist the Director of Emergency Preparedness in this endeavor, rather than overseeing it.

      3. **Action Plan:**
         **A work in progress**
         PR will continue to work with the Campus Police and other departments to design and implement a crisis communication plan.

         **Established in Cycle:** 2010-2011
         **Implementation Status:** In-Progress
II. Other Plans for Improvement:

A. E-newsletter and Alumni site under construction
E-newsletter and alumni site are under construction.
Established in Cycle: 2009-2010
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: High
Implementation Description: Develop template and create schedule
Projected Completion Date: 07/31/2010
Responsible Person/Group: Meaghan Gordon Betsy Compton

B. Employ a more comprehensive clipping service
Employ a more comprehensive clipping service for tracking online, TV, and newspaper hits.
Established in Cycle: 2010-2011
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: High
Implementation Description: Meet with service providers to secure the best deal
Responsible Person/Group: Meaghan Gordon
Additional Resources Requested: Increase budgeted amount for service = $4,000
Budget Amount Requested: $4,000.00 (recurring)

C. Make and maintain professional relationships with members of area media
Continue to meet area newspaper writers and editors and continue to build relationships with Meridian, Tuscaloosa and Birmingham TV. Also, utilize University-sponsored "Community Calendars".
Established in Cycle: 2010-2011
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: High
Implementation Description: Face-to-face meetings with media contacts, utilize community calendars, have a comprehensive schedule of morning show appearances.
Responsible Person/Group: Meaghan Gordon
Additional Resources Requested: Expensive account increase to take contacts to lunch = $750.00
Budget Amount Requested: $750.00 (recurring)

D. Produce award-winning publications
Enter publications in CASE competitions.
Established in Cycle: 2010-2011
Implementation Status: In Progress
Priority: High
Implementation Description: Enter publications in competitions
Responsible Person/Group: Betsy Compton
Budget Amount Requested: $0.00 (no request)

E. Produce capital campaign materials
Produce capital campaign materials such as quarterly newsletters, web site, etc.

Established in Cycle: 2010-2011
Implementation Status: In Progress
Priority: High
Implementation Description: Edit and publish newsletter, design and update web site, produce other campaign materials as requested/needed
Responsible Person/Group: Meaghan Gordon
Budget Amount Requested: $0.00 (no request)

F. Stay up-to-date with current trends in higher education public relations
Both staff members will attend CASE District Conference in Tampa, FL and join professional organizations and receive publications in order to stay up-to-date with current trends.
Established in Cycle: 2010-2011
Implementation Status: In Progress
Priority: High
Implementation Description: Staff members travel to and from Tampa; staff will join professional organizations and receive professional publications
Responsible Person/Group: Meaghan Gordon
Additional Resources Requested: Increase in travel, lodging and conference registration = $1,300.00 Increase in cost to join organizations/receive publications = $900.00
Budget Amount Requested: $2,200.00 (recurring)

G. Utilize part-time staff member
Utilize part-time staff member for photography, writing, editing and design
Established in Cycle: 2010-2011
Implementation Status: Finished
Priority: High
Implementation Description: Provide staff member with all the information and equipment needed
Responsible Person/Group: Meaghan Gordon
Additional Resources Requested: Equipment needs = $2,500.00
Budget Amount Requested: $2,500.00 (recurring)

III. Analysis Questions and Analysis Answers

A. What specific strengths did your assessments show? (Strengths)
PR is effective in distributing news and special announcements to the campus community and across the service region through press releases, email announcements, social media, and special publications.

B. What specific weaknesses or challenges did your assessments show? (Weaknesses)
The production of the alumni magazine, UWA Today, has proven rather difficult in a year with significant turnover in staff. Due to the amount of layout, oversight, and photography required for the publication to be worthy of distribution, assistance is needed from other departments who are equally pressed for time and resources. Institutional Advancement is working to address this by re-distributing the work-flow.
C. What plans were implemented?
PR has developed a wire-style news release to be distributed each week. The Weekly Wire highlights the coming week's activities and news from across campus. Trial issues were distributed the end of the spring 2012 semester, and the publication will begin the fall 2012 semester. PR will work with well-known publishers to improve the quality and effectiveness of UWA Today magazine. The first collaborative issue is due August 2012.

D. How will assessment results be used for continuous improvement?
PR will review progress through assessment results, with the hope of exceeding each goal set during the previous year.

IV. Annual Report Section Responses

A. Key Achievements
PR implemented a wire-style news release for weekly distribution. Trial issues were produced at the end of the spring 2012 issue and were very well received. PR continued to build on the faculty/staff photograph database that has proven very useful with news releases and campus publications. The photographs provide consistency in publications and are available to each individual as a high-resolution photo available for download through “MyUWA”. PR maintained the News and Events section of the University website, offering updates, promotion, and other special announcements. PR assisted departments across campus with their photographic and editing needs on a daily basis. PR Director has overseen the entering of a licensing agreement with Strategic Marketing Affiliates to gain control over the University's marks and images. This process is very common on most college campuses, but UWA has never successfully entered such a program. PR Director will work closely with SMA to ensure the program's success.

B. Public/Community Service
Assisted in release of announcements for Sumter County Fine Arts Council, United Way of West Alabama, Relay for Life, and several other non-profit, community service organizations.
### ANNUAL PLAN

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Approved</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goals</strong></td>
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<td>Goals are broad statements describing what the unit wants to accomplish. Goals relate to both the unit's mission and the University's mission. The goal(s) is stated as the University goal(s) a unit is attempting to meet.</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<td><strong>Outcomes/Objectives</strong></td>
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<td>Outcomes and objectives are statements that describe in some detail what the unit plans to accomplish. Outcomes/objectives are associated with all applicable goals, strategic plans, standards, and institutional priorities.</td>
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<td><strong>Measures</strong></td>
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<td>Measures are statements to judge success in achieving the stated outcome or objective. Measures contain information on the type of evidence and assessment tool that a unit will use to verify if stated outcome/objective has been met.</td>
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<td><strong>Achievement Targets</strong></td>
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<td>Achievement targets are the thresholds that the measures must meet for the unit to determine that it has been successful in meeting its specified outcomes/objectives. Achievement targets are measurable statements.</td>
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<td><strong>Findings</strong></td>
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<td>Findings are indications whether an outcome/objective was met or not. Findings are put into the system under each achievement target. Findings include an interpretation of results, possible uses of results, reflection on problems encountered, indicated improvements/changes and strengths or weakness.</td>
<td>YES ✓</td>
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<td><strong>Action Plans</strong></td>
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<td>Action plans are detailed plans created by the unit to meet an outcome/objective that was only partially met or not met or to make improvement to those outcomes/objectives that were met but still need some strengthening. The plan includes a projected completion date, implementation description, responsible person(s)/group, resources required, and budget amount (if applicable).</td>
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<td>Action plans created in previous cycles have been updated with implementation notes.</td>
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<td><strong>Annual Report</strong></td>
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<td>The Annual Report section contains information on key achievements, faculty and/or staff achievements, and community/public.</td>
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<td><strong>Analysis Report</strong></td>
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<td>The unit has reflected on and created narratives for each of the following areas: specific strengths and progress made on outcomes/objectives, specific weaknesses or challenges, plans that were and were not implemented, and how assessment results will be used for continuous improvement.</td>
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Approved by: [Signature of Dean or Vice President]  
Date: 7-17-2012

Received by OIE: [Signature of Coordinator of Planning and Assessment]  
Date: 8-10-12