COMMUNICATIONS GUIDEBOOK

COMMUNICATIONS & PROJECT PROCESS

The intent of the Student Success communications team is providing clear, consistent processes for developing and distributing your news, communications, and event information in a timely and successful manner. We’re here to help!

Use the following guidelines to answer what questions you may have on who to send information to and when to ask us for help. We can do everything from proofing your materials and giving feedback to working directly with you to design and develop a piece from start to finish. There are situations in which it is imperative and mandatory that you share your information with us. In order to effectively and efficiently work together, we have developed a tiered approval approach.

1. Gather information about your project, such as:
   • Purpose of your communication
   • Who is your audience? Scholars, faculty, the division, employers?
   • What type? Email, web posting, postcard, flier, message through Tennessee Today (faculty/staff) or Vol Update (scholars)?
   • What is the timeline for your piece?
   • Do you have existing information, or do you need help creating new copy/design?

Additional Information

• If you have existing copy, designs, or photography, make sure they follow the UT branding guidelines.
• The appropriate communications team member will assess and respond to your request within 24 business hours and throughout the process.
• For projects with existing copy/design that only need to be proofed and edited, allow at least three business days in advance of the distribution date for submitting the request/materials.
• For projects that are new and/or comprehensive, please allow at least five business days to submit.
• If the DSS communications team member is distributing the message, a final copy will be sent back to you for your files.
• A good practice would be keeping any materials related to the project should it be a recurring project or happen again in the future.

DIVISION COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Richard Lee
Director of Communications
rlee57@utk.edu

Areas of Responsibility:
• Oversight of all communications planning & processes
• Intermediary with vice provost, Student Life, Enrollment Management, & OCM communications directors

Lacey Wood
Assistant Director of Communications
laceywood@utk.edu

Areas of Responsibility:
• Academic Success Center, Center for Career Development & Academic Exploration, Undergraduate Research & Fellowships, UT Success Academy, and Veterans Success Center
• Comms related to division, faculty, deans/department chairs, advisors
• Media relations for press releases and media requests

Patrick Garlock
Assistant Director of Communications
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Areas of Responsibility:
• First-Generation Initiatives, First-Year Programs, Honors & Scholars Programs, and New Student Orientation
• Communications related to scholars and external audiences

Dominique Harrison
Communications Coordinator
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Areas of Responsibility:
• Division websites
• Social media
• Emma email management

Lola Hildreth
Communications Coordinator
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Areas of Responsibility:
• Communications related to student scholars
• Slate email management
2. Determine what communications tier is appropriate for your project. The tier will determine what process you will follow and how involved the communications team is with and during your project.

**Tier One** – Does not require communications team review. Do not submit communications form.
- Social media campaigns in support of existing programming & services
- Repurposing of existing, approved information. Examples include:
  - Condensing multiple documents into one
  - Updating approved template emails for semesters
- Operational emails to singular audience groups including those related to notification of events and time, date, location, deadline.
- Updates to existing copy of websites to change dates, program names, logistical information, etc.

**Tier Two** – Draft created by department and requires communication team approval. Submit communications form.
- Communications requiring design, including PowerPoints, fliers, and mailed materials
- Departmental newsletter templates
- Recruitment materials
- Invitations to programs
- Program launches
- All departmentally branded swag orders
- Messages to mass audiences. As a rule of thumb, this includes messages to groups of 50 or more. Examples include:
  - All students in a particular class
  - Overlapping groups of students

**Tier Three** – Collaboration on development and approval between department and communications team. Submit communications form.
- Communications to large groups such as faculty, deans, department heads, AALG, and all other listservs
- University-level communications and anything being reviewed by the central Office of Communications & Marketing. Examples include:
  - Vol Update and Tennessee Today
  - Vol Family Newsletter
  - News to UT media and external media outlets
- Redesign of major materials
- Substantive changes to existing webpages and creation of new pages

If you are unclear about where your communication falls, please contact your office’s communications project manager.
DIVISION GUIDELINES

Mission of the Division:
The Division of Student Success at UT works to engage each scholar’s experience by supporting their unique strengths and goals. We collaborate with UT faculty and staff to help each scholar maximize their individual strengths and understand how their strengths contribute to their academic dreams, career paths, and personal well-being.

Values
Support Exploration | Eliminate Barriers | Engage Academically | Develop Strengths | Make Data-Driven Decisions

Keywords:
- Scholar
- Success
- Strengths
- Goals
- Experience
- Persistence
- Retention
- Completion
- Exposure
- Flexibility
- Support
- Engagement
- Transition
- Creative
- Compassionate
- Connected
- Innovative
- Enhance
- Enrich
- Hone

UNIVERSITY GUIDELINES

The University of Tennessee
Acceptable uses:
Use the University of Tennessee, Knoxville with a comma only
Use a comma after Knoxville in a sentence
Always use “the”, but only capitalize at the start of a sentence
On subsequent uses, use UT, not UTK
Also use the university, not capitalized

Unacceptable uses:
University of Tennessee at Knoxville
University of Tennessee—Knoxville
UT, Knoxville
U.T.
UTK

Academic Degrees
- Do not capitalize unless referencing the actual degree earned
- Lowercase: bachelor’s degree in political science
- Uppercase: Bachelor of Science degree in political science
- Initials of degrees should be listed without periods
- Examples: BA, MS, PhD

Gender
Gendered pronouns such as he, his, she, or hers are not permitted if the gender of the audience is not known. Use the pronouns “they” and “them” when the gender of the audience is not known. In messages to parents/guardians, reference scholars as “your student” or “your scholar.” Use of “your child” is not permitted. To respect inclusivity, use men or women and not male or female.

Numbers
- For 1-9, write out the number – one, two, etc.
- Numbers 10 and up, use numerals – 10, 20, 55, etc.
- For percentages, use the numeral and percentage written out – 10 percent, 50 percent, etc.
Titles
Avoid using salutations like Dr., instead use job title
Example: Vice Provost Amber Williams, not Dr. Williams
Capitalize titles only when used in front of the person’s name with no commas
Upper case example: Vice Provost Williams
Lower case example: vice provost for Student Success, Amber Williams; Amber Williams, vice provost for Student Success

First-Year
Always use first-year student, not freshman
Hyphenate first-year when it modifies a noun, such as first-year student or first-year programs

First-Generation
The term “first generation” references scholars whose parent(s) or guardian(s) have not completed a four-year degree
Hyphenate first-generation in the same manner as first-year

Accessibility
All materials, including hypersigns, websites, and print materials must be accessible for all users. For example, while many at UT produce materials using Tennessee orange as the background with white copy, that is highly inaccessible to users and not recommended. For more guidelines, please visit: https://brand.utk.edu/standards/colors/accessibility-color/

Color Mixes
Each of the colors in UT’s palettes has a series of numbers, or codes, assigned to them. Which code you use depends on the medium you are designing for.

- CMYK is used for print communications
- RGB & HEX are used for electronic communications
- Pantone (PMS) is used for specialty printing

Black is not a color in the UT palette and should not be used when designing university communications. Fonts and any other elements that may normally be displayed in black should always be Smokey instead.

University-approved accent colors can be found here: https://brand.utk.edu/standards/colors/

Primary Typefaces
Gotham is the university’s primary typeface. It is a clean, modern, sans-serif typeface that works well for display copy, body text, and everything between.

If a serif typeface is needed, Clarendon is preferred. Georgia is an acceptable serif typeface for body copy in long-form print publications such as magazines or annual reports. It may be used when the primary fonts are unavailable but should not be used for display copy.

See here for specialty fonts: https://brand.utk.edu/standards/typography/

Photography
- Avoid stock photography outside of UT’s database, which is found here: https://assetbank.ath.utk.edu/asset-bank/action/viewHome
- Photos should be clear and crisp and taken with a high-resolution camera
- More tips here: https://brand.utk.edu/standards/photographic-style/