

# 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

### **Kelsey Kyne**

Administrative Director  
[kkyne@utk.edu](mailto:kkyne@utk.edu)

Areas of Responsibility:

- Oversight of all communications planning & processes
- Intermediary with vice provost, Student Life, Enrollment Management, & OCM communications directors

### **Heather Davis**

Assistant Director of Communications  
[hdavis16@utk.edu](mailto:hdavis16@utk.edu)

Areas of Responsibility:

- Academic Inclusive Initiatives, First-Year Programs, Honors & Scholars Programs, and New Student Orientation
- Communications related to scholars and external audiences

### **Lacey Wood**

Communications Manager  
[laceywood@utk.edu](mailto:laceywood@utk.edu)

Areas of Responsibility:

- Academic Success Center, Center for Career Development & Academic Exploration, Undergraduate Research & Fellowships, and Veterans Success Center
- Comms related to division, faculty, deans/department chairs, advisors
- Media relations for press releases and media requests

### **Dominique Harrison**

Communications Coordinator  
[dharri91@utk.edu](mailto:dharri91@utk.edu)

Areas of Responsibility:

- Division websites
- Social media

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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 in to 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 | Data-Driven Decision Making

### 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  
 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 should 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.

### 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 the percentage sign – 10%, 50%, 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  
 Uppercase example: Vice Provost Williams  
 Lowercase 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

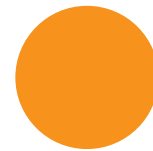
**Accessibility**

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/>

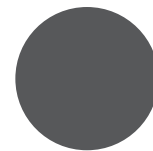
**Color Mixes**

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



Tennessee Orange  
 CMYK 0 50 100 0  
 HEX FF8200  
 RGB 255 130 0  
 PMS 151



Smokey  
 CMYK 0 0 0 80  
 HEX 58595B  
 RGB 88 89 91  
 PMS COOL GRAY 11

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/>