

# Augusta University

## Policy Library

### Mass Communication and News Media Policy

**Policy Manager: Division of Communications and Marketing**

#### **POLICY STATEMENT**

The purpose of this policy is to develop, using mass communications, public understanding of efforts to achieve the Augusta University mission, vision, and values, and to increase awareness of programs, activities and events. This policy has been established to describe our position with respect to interacting with news media representatives.

The Division of Communications and Marketing (DCM) provides assistance and counsel for all mass communications and media relations needs of Augusta University and AU Health System to support our teaching, research, health care and service mission. DCM serves as the primary liaison between the Augusta University community and the media, assisting representatives of print, broadcast and online media in locating sources of information on campus and providing information of public and media interest in a professionally prepared format.

#### **External News**

DCM is responsible for disseminating all news releases, media advisories and other information about Augusta University to media outlets and will otherwise make all media contacts for the university and health system.

Written communications with media must conform to AU editorial standards as detailed in the Augusta University Brand Guidelines and accepted journalistic standards. DCM will review publications and Web content for appropriate news, newsworthiness, and/or design standards and work with areas on revisions or concerns.

#### **Major News Stories**

News of major importance must be identified by campus communicators and/or deans/senior administrators and planned in conjunction with the Division of Communications & Marketing as far in advance as possible (embargoes can be established or confidentiality assured for sensitive topics or when external partners are involved) so that senior administrators can be included, informed, and quoted as needed, and announcements planned for major impact. Communicators within colleges/units may NOT send information, or releases, separately to media without prior DCM coordination, as duplication and confusion, and sometimes, outright error, can result. DCM will inform the communicators within specific colleges, schools and areas of opportunity and work with them to coordinate news opportunities.

#### **News Releases**

Externally targeted news releases must route through the Division of Communications & Marketing. As the central resource and primary contact with the media, the Division of Communications & Marketing reserves the right to edit news items for newsworthiness and style requirements.

#### **News Media on Campus**

A DCM media relations staff member or an employee designated by DCM must accompany any news media representatives on our premises.

---

**Office of Legal Affairs Use Only**

**Executive Sponsor: VP of Communications and Marketing**

**Next Review: 11/2024**

### **Public Information/Open Records**

Records of Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia on Behalf of Augusta University are subject to the Georgia Open Records Act, O.C.G.A.-50-18-70 et seq. See Process and Procedures below for contact information.

**Incidents or Sensitive Issues:** Incidents or stories that may lead to negative perception or publicity must be conveyed to the Division of Communications & Marketing as soon as possible so facts can be gathered and timely responses can be made.

### **AFFECTED STAKEHOLDERS**

*Indicate all entities and persons within the Enterprise that are affected by this policy:*

- Alumni     Faculty     Graduate Students     Health Professional Students  
 Staff     Undergraduate Students     Vendors/Contractors     Visitors  
 Other:

### **DEFINITIONS**

- AU Communications Council – The Communications Council serves as an advisory group for communications and marketing efforts related to Augusta University.
- Campus Communicators – AU personnel with delegated communications responsibilities at the department or unit level.
- Media - representatives of newspapers, magazines, newsletters, online publications, television, and radio
- News releases - communications designed to promote inclusion of information pertaining to Augusta University or AU Health System in media

### **PROCESS & PROCEDURES**

- **Responding to Media Inquiries**

The Vice President for Communications & Marketing serves as the official spokesperson for the university and health system. Media interviews must be arranged through the Office of Communications & Marketing due to the deadlines required by the media. This ensures that we not only serve as a valuable information source, but also meet media deadlines for stories delivering excellent service in support of the working press.

Any questions regarding media contacts or coverage should be directed to the Director of News and Information.

- **Open Records**

Please direct open records requests to the designated Augusta University Open Records Officer:

- Christopher J. Melcher, Vice President and General Counsel  
Augusta University, 1120 15th Street, AA-2007, Augusta, GA 30912  
[openrecords-academic@augusta.edu](mailto:openrecords-academic@augusta.edu), 706-721-8014

Please consult [augusta.edu/dcm](http://augusta.edu/dcm) for additional resources and information related to communications and projects and initiatives. To request assistance with or coordination of efforts covered within this policy, contact the Division of Communications & Marketing at [augusta.edu/dcm/request](http://augusta.edu/dcm/request).

#### **REFERENCES & SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

- Augusta University Brand Guidelines – [augusta.edu/dcm/marketing/brand-strategy.php](http://augusta.edu/dcm/marketing/brand-strategy.php)
- AU Communications Resources – [augusta.edu/dcm/communications](http://augusta.edu/dcm/communications)
- AU Marketing Resources – [augusta.edu/dcm/marketing](http://augusta.edu/dcm/marketing)
- AU Digital Content Resources – [augusta.edu/dcm/digitalcontent](http://augusta.edu/dcm/digitalcontent)
- AU Web Resources - [augusta.edu/dcm/web](http://augusta.edu/dcm/web)

#### **RELATED POLICIES**

- Acceptable Use of Electronic Mail & Electronic Messaging Policy
- Advertising Policy
- Communications and Marketing Policy
- Mass Communication and News Media Policy
- Social Media Policy
- University Seal Policy

#### **APPROVED BY:**

Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Augusta University  
Date: 12/1/2021

President, Augusta University

Date: 12/1/2021