

UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS WORK PLAN

2019-20

IN AUGUST 2019, the UVA Board of Visitors approved “A Great and Good University: The 2030 Plan” setting our institutional heading for the next decade. Concurrent with this strategic plan, University Communications completed its supporting five-year communications plan, outlining our seven goals, shared priorities and unit objectives. These two documents form the basis for our annual workplan.

This workplan is not intended to be a catalogue of all that we do. Instead, it outlines the projects, content themes and internal initiatives that we will pursue in support of “The 2030 Plan” and in alignment with the goals described in our five-year plan.

GOAL ONE

Strengthen Our Foundation

Projects/Programs

UVA STRATEGIC PLAN SUPPORT

Support the launch of “A Great and Good University: The 2030 Plan” through the development of a dedicated website, print collateral, supporting video, and owned, earned and promoted story content that highlights components of the plan and related institutional initiatives.

PROACTIVE MEDIA RELATIONS

Develop and implement a robust proactive media relations strategy that strengthens relationships with traditional media and digital influencers, supports targeted strategic priorities and elevates our ability to effectively manage issues.

ILLIMITABLE PRINT REDESIGN

Reimagine print Illimitable. This includes evaluating the format, process for content selection, and distribution strategies. Establish a print Illimitable working group to recommend approach. Produce updated print product for spring 2020 distribution.

PREMIUM DIGITAL CONTENT

Reimagine the digital Illimitable content type in the UVA Today site. Evaluate and improve the process for content selection, digital format, design, development and distribution strategies. Relaunch a monthly email product in fall 2019 to feature our best and most strategic work.

UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSION MATERIALS

Partner with Undergraduate Admission to refresh prospective student recruitment materials, including posters, acceptance packages, parent piece and enrollment landing webpage.

PROSPECTIVE STUDENT EXPERIENCE WEBSITE

Partner with an outside vendor to develop a new prospective student digital experience to launch in fall 2019. The site will be tailored specifically for the Gen Z audience.

Content Themes

FACULTY AND STAFF

Produce content that illustrates the quality of faculty instruction and research, the professionalism and competence of staff and, by extension, elevates the University’s reputation as a great place to teach, work and provide service to others.

FIRST-GENERATION FOCUS

Develop content that highlights first-generation students, the institution's commitment to attracting and supporting them, their experiences on Grounds, and the transformative value of a UVA education for these students and their lives.

HONOR THE FUTURE

Support Advancement Communications in creating and distributing content, and earning media attention, that supports the Honor the Future campaign by emphasizing how philanthropy improves the quality of education, instruction, research, diversity and access, community, patient care and the breadth of the student experience.

Internal Initiative

TALENT ACQUISITION AND ONBOARDING

Recruit and hire diverse, high-caliber talent to fill some vacancies. This includes recruiting a spokesperson, front-end developer, marketing associate and research analyst. Review the onboarding process to ensure new hires are thoughtfully engaged with University Communications staff and receive necessary support and coaching to ensure success.

GOAL TWO

Cultivate the Most Vibrant Community in Higher Education

Projects/Programs

FOOTBALL HYPE VIDEO AND CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

Partner with UVA Athletics to introduce a new football marketing campaign and series of hype videos that will extend across UVA's Athletics properties and relevant paid placements beginning in the fall of 2019.

"THE GOOD OLD SONG" PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Work with stakeholders across Grounds to encourage the University community to sing "The Good Old Song" with pride and respect, ending the improvised addition of negative phrases into the song.

PRESIDENT’S OFFICE

Support and promote key events and help produce signature community projects such as the annual holiday video, 2019 Community Bridges 5K, Double Take, Final Exercises and other communications support as needed.

ENVIRONMENTAL PAGEANTRY

Maintain a robust pageantry program that expresses the UVA brand throughout Grounds and across the region. This includes the development and implementation of new institutional, Arts Grounds, Bookstore, Engineering, and Football light pole banners, UTS bus art and regional airport installations.

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA CAMPAIGN

Identify ways to increase promotion for, and thereby donations to, the Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign. Actively communicate the impact of the CVC on the local community.

MEMORIAL TO ENSLAVED LABORERS VIDEO

Develop long-form video that follows the construction of the Memorial to Enslaved Laborers and recognizes the University’s complex history, paying tribute to the enslaved laborers who built the University. The video launch date will correspond to the opening of the memorial.

Content Themes

BRIDGE BUILDING

Produce content that reflects and supports the “bridge building” theme, including efforts or activities at the individual level of faculty, staff and students, and at the institutional level, that highlight initiatives creating or strengthening community partnerships. Maintain and explore ways to expand on the UVA Today Building Bridges aggregation page.

DIFFICULT TRUTHS

Communicate UVA’s values through storytelling that demonstrates the University’s commitment to candidly assessing and addressing difficult truths about its past and present behaviors, policies and practices. Content should humanize UVA and address critical issues with a goal of engaging in community-building and open dialogue, including publication of a significant series that reflects the work and findings of the President’s Commission on the University in the Age of Segregation.

Internal Initiative

UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS’ SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITY

Encourage community engagement among our staff including offering professional expertise to support community organizations through an annual communications workshop and/or meaningful “pro bono” work.

GOAL THREE

Enable Discoveries that Enrich and Improve Lives

Content Theme

RESEARCH

Refocus and expand University Content and News approach to storytelling that demonstrates the scope and impact of UVA research, including emphasis on priority areas articulated in “The 2030 Plan,” the new School of Data Science, interdisciplinary initiatives and the sense of discovery that distinguishes higher learning and individual growth.

GOAL FOUR

Make UVA Synonymous with Service

Project/Program

UVA WISE MARKETING

Provide counsel and support to the UVA Wise leadership team and their new marketing group. Effort will support implementing the UVA Wise brand and identity system in support of student recruitment, athletics, community building, economic development and other priorities.

Content Themes

VALUE PROPOSITION

Coordinate and intensify creation of content that illustrates the value of a UVA education. This includes stories about “SuccessUVA,” financial aid, graduation rates, career services and outcomes, cost and debt, inclusive access, rankings, admission, the unique student experience, academic rigor and other components that contribute to the overall value of attending UVA and earning a UVA degree.

NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Through owned and other media, support the University's interests in growing its operations and presence in Northern Virginia.

GOAL FIVE

Increase the Value and Equity of the University of Virginia Brand

Projects/Programs

UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS CONTENT PLAN

Build and implement a content plan that includes a robust strategy for prioritizing areas of focus, messaging, audiences and distribution strategies. Plan initiatives that apply to staff across the department and will cover content produced across all University Communications teams, focusing on items that elevate components in "The 2030 Plan."

UVA TODAY

Produce and distribute compelling, interesting and appealing content that elevates the reputation of the University and supports its strategic priorities, while continuing to pursue avenues to grow audiences and positively influence how consumers of our content think about the University.

BRAND REPUTATION

Execute refreshed marquee presence for the University in major points of entry in the state, including Charlottesville and Richmond airports. Extend sponsorship programs with the Washington Post Live and Daily Progress.

BRAND MANAGEMENT

Enhance brand.virginia.edu with new institutional photos, brand assets, tools and tips for our user community. Support deployment of brand.virginia.edu to the Health System, Advancement and UVA Wise. Revamp the brand steering committee to support collaboration and adoption across the institution.

LICENSING PROGRAM

Partner with UVA Athletics to build and manage a more robust trademark and licensing program. Develop new branded merchandise.

ATHLETICS VISUAL IDENTITY

Partner with Athletics and Nike to support the development and implementation of a refreshed visual identity system.

“OFFICE OF” WEB TEMPLATES

Plan and implement a design refresh for the University “Office of” webpage templates, incorporating the latest and best practices.

GOAL SIX

Positively Influence Perception Among Key Audiences

Projects/Programs

EXECUTIVE-LEADERSHIP MEDIA OUTREACH

Develop and execute against a targeted media outreach plan that establishes and strengthens leadership’s relationships with key media, and positions UVA’s president and other leaders as national and global authorities on select strategic priorities and/or on issues of importance to higher education and society.

MARKETING STRATEGY

Informed by research and business insights, develop a strategic marketing plan that optimizes brand reach and positive messaging to key audiences through promoted content marketing, search, sponsorship and strategic partnerships.

DIGITAL STRATEGY

Develop a digital strategy that includes life-cycle management, supports the University Communications Content Plan, and promotes multi-modal storytelling, enhanced SEO/SEM, effective UX and other evolving digital standards.

BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE AND MARKETING ANALYTICS

Formalize an analytics function within our marketing team. Develop new business intelligence practices to maximize use of analytics across our department for real-time decision making, campaign management, content delivery and audience research.

RESEARCH PLAN

1. Conduct and deliver a comprehensive analysis of Content and News readership and its effect on perceptions of the University.
 2. Design and field a study to benchmark the performance of our Content and News programs against select national and AAU peers.
 3. Design and field fourth instance of a longitudinal perceptions study of the University among alumni, and among non-alumni residents of the Commonwealth.
 4. Conduct one qualitative study of audience-specific messaging and/or communication preferences, time and budget permitting.
-

GOAL SEVEN

Exercise Excellence and Best Practice in Communications and Marketing

Projects/Programs

UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ANNUAL REPORT

Continue the department's work to complete an annual report that showcases our efforts. During the first half of the fiscal year, produce the 2018-19 printed report. During the second half of the year, re-concept the approach for future editions.

OFFICE ENVIRONMENTAL INSTALLATION

Design, produce and install an office environmental installation that highlights the work we do, encourages creativity and collaboration and engages office visitors.

Internal Initiatives

UVA TODAY EDITORIAL PLAN AND COVERAGE-AREA REFINEMENT

Assess and realign content priorities of UVA Today to directly reflect "The 2030 Plan." Use results to redefine UVA Today staff coverage responsibilities, assigning new beat areas and adjusting others to position staff to find and produce more stories that align with plan components, initiatives and focus areas.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT PROCESS AND SYSTEMS

Assess and consolidate our project management processes and systems, refining current practices to enhance cross-departmental collaboration and ideation.

PHOTOGRAPHY DATABASE ASSESSMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

Organize and implement new centralized photography database system to replace fragmented systems. This project will include migration of photographs onto new platform that connects to brand.virginia.edu. New rules and keyword structure to be established to ensure clear cataloging of photography assets.

EXPERIMENTATION

Encourage experimentation and program pilots. Possible areas to consider include niche newsletter development, podcasts and audio, testing augmented reality technology, experimenting with first-person voice within story content.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Support new professional development opportunities within the office and on Grounds.

OFFICE ENGAGEMENT AND CULTURE

Look for new ways to regularly infuse fun into our work week through internal initiatives sponsored by the University Communications Employee Engagement Council to support a positive work environment.
