

UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

WHO WE ARE

WE ARE writers, artists, planners + programmers, strategists, and communicators, proudly promoting and publicizing All Things UVA. University Communications' mission is to strengthen UVA's positive reputation and increase awareness of the institution's many impressive accomplishments. To do this, we:

- **Highlight** the academic rigor, collaborative research, vibrant student life, contributions to our community, commitment to service, athletic prowess, and the overall achievements of our broad University community, including students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends.
- **Emphasize** the University's founding mission to cultivate an educated and informed citizenry, and its animating principle of service.
- **Share** the University story with key audiences by using owned, earned, paid, promoted, and social media programs. Develop strategic communications, content, marketing plans and campaigns that support the institution's highest priorities and address market challenges.
- **Steward** and increase the value of the UVA brand through a robust brand platform, a comprehensive visual identity system, and management of our award-winning collegiate licensing and trademark program.
- **Bolster** the University's reputation by leading an effective and proactive media relations and issues management program.

UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ANNUAL WORK PLAN

2022-23

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 seven goals, our shared priorities, and unit objectives. Together, these two documents inform the foundation of our annual work plans.

The following represents our fourth work plan installment for the five-year period from 2019 to 2024. It is important to note that many of the projects that comprise the 2022-23 work plan reflect a continuation of the significant work from the prior year. Additionally, this work plan 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 FY23 in support of “The 2030 Plan” and in alignment with the goals described in our five-year plan. This work plan will continue to evolve to reflect the changing nature of our work, including the addition of UVA’s collegiate licensing program to our portfolio in FY22.

GOAL ONE

Strengthen Our Foundation

Projects/Programs

UVA STRATEGIC PLAN CONTENT SUPPORT

Support UVA's 2030 Plan through the development of owned, earned and promoted story content that highlights institutional initiatives and key milestones. Mark the 3rd anniversary of the plan's adoption with a UVA Today feature set renewing attention on the plan, what has been accomplished, what is on the horizon, and detailing the historic fundraising success of the past five years to support the plan.

Promote this content across a range of communications platforms and newsletters, manage and curate the Strategic Plan site; and use search, paid, and sponsored programs to raise awareness and readership of strategic plan content across key audiences, including the broader higher education community.

GREAT AND GOOD INSTITUTIONAL CAMPAIGN

Launch an integrated campaign that promotes what it means "To Be Great and Good in All We Do." The effort will launch in September 2022 and include television, print, digital, social, and environmental promotion that raises awareness and shapes audience perceptions of the work happening at UVA in support of the strategic plan. The campaign will rely upon proof points and examples sourced from across the institution showcasing our people, our key strategic priorities, our leadership, and our mission.

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATIONS

Develop an executive leadership communications function, building on the work that began during the pandemic to provide guidance and a central, coordinated voice for senior academic leadership. Add focus on advancing our relationships with journalists covering higher education and those covering UVA.

PROACTIVE MEDIA RELATIONS

Invest time and effort in proactive media relations opportunities. Build upon relationships with print, digital, and television, support communications priorities and strengthen our ability to manage issues effectively. Coordinate earned media and opportunities that advance the institution and its leadership (particularly the president) in areas including UVA's prominence in higher education, civil discourse, free speech, principles of democracy, and community engagement.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT SUPPORT

Partner with Enrollment to refresh admitted student recruitment materials for Fall 2022-23 cycle to attract and support exceptionally talented and diverse students. Materials will include acceptance packages for admitted students and parents, yield landing webpage, and other support as needed. Also, provide counsel to Enrollment as it adds in-house marketing expertise to its core functions, and provide input to related market research efforts. Coordinate with University News and Content (see Student Experience Story content theme below) and Digital Strategy team to time appropriate content to support recruitment efforts.

Content Themes

THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE STORY

In support of student recruitment and reputational enhancement, coordinate telling the story of the UVA student experience and new graduates across all units: UVA Today, social media, video, marketing. Emphasize key moments in the cycle of recruitment to produce compelling content and to repurpose existing content to provide prospective students and parents a clear indication of the value of the on-Grounds experience.

FACULTY AND STAFF

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

HONOR THE FUTURE

Support Advancement in their major gift efforts to the Honor the Future fundraising campaign by creating and distributing content and earned media attention that emphasizes how philanthropy improves the quality of education, instruction, research, diversity and access, community, patient care and the breadth of the student experience.

GOAL TWO

Cultivate the Most Vibrant Community in Higher Education

Projects/Programs

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA CAMPAIGN

Partner with the Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Community Partnerships to re-establish and amplify the University's participation in the Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign by reframing the CVC as our most visible and effective method of living out the principle of "Good Neighbor" in supporting our local non-profits. Create enhanced and permanent structure for the program, including a rotating executive sponsor role, co-chairs, cross-functional working group, and communications leads. Find two to three new approaches to elevate visibility and drive engagement with audiences including students, UVA Health, and areas with low participation.

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

Serve as principal coordinator of communications strategies announcing and supporting community-based initiatives that emerge from or reside in the President's Office. Promote and support significant institutional events and initiatives, including Double Take, Inside UVA podcast, the annual holiday video, Final Exercises for the Class of 2023 and other signature community-based initiatives.

COMMUNITY BRIDGES 5K

Support the planning, communication needs, and event promotion for the 2023 walk/run aimed at connecting the University with the Charlottesville community.

UVA FOOTBALL MARKETING

With the arrival of Coach Tony Elliott, adapt and execute football marketing campaigns to continue efforts to raise visibility for the program across the Commonwealth, and promote ticket sales for the Fall 2022 season.

- **For All Virginia:** Production of a new anthem and television spot, incorporating the new coach and themes; creation of a multi-channel marketing campaign in key markets, and partnership with Athletics to place digital ad buy to drive interest and ticket sales.
- **4th Side:** Support the strengthening of the 4th Side as UVA's signature fan engagement program. Increasingly transition that work to Athletics while providing support in key areas to ensure success.

MEMORIAL TO ENSLAVED LABORERS DOCUMENTARY FILM

Complete a documentary-style, short film focused on the Memorial to Enslaved Laborers and the inspired story of the advocacy that led to its creation. Tentative release date: 2022 Virginia Film Festival.

UVA BRAND ON GROUNDS

Partnering with key areas – Facilities Management, University Architect, City of Charlottesville – create, plan and maintain a comprehensive system’s approach for expressing the UVA brand and visual identity across Grounds. This includes participation in the development of a new wayfinding system; refining our institutional approach to pageantry and banners; defining allowable uses of marks in the environment for fan engagement (V Sabres on roadways); maintaining branded art on buses; and managing the bus shelters program to support key campaigns.

Build upon the work started in FY22 to implement a uniform identity system for the University’s fleet of vehicles, working with partners across Grounds to convert vehicles from all major units – including Facilities Management’s entire fleet – to the new system. Maintain robust monitoring to ensure that we normalize routine process for adoption and compliance with new standards.

Content Themes

DEMOCRACY AND FREE EXPRESSION

Robustly support the University’s commitment to strengthening democracy through content that reflects UVA’s engagement, scholarship and research in this area. Content includes storytelling around civil discourse, free expression, viewpoint diversity, and related themes. This content should address issues critical to democratic principles with a goal of engaging in community-building and open dialogue.

BRIDGE BUILDING

Produce content that reflects and supports the institution’s community “bridge building” focus, including efforts or activities at the individual level of faculty, staff and students, and at the institutional level, that highlight and celebrate initiatives creating or strengthening our sense of community. Communicate a sense of belonging and the University’s aspirations for the future.

COMMUNITY/GOOD NEIGHBOR

Consistently seek and highlight examples of how UVA is living up to its values and working to ensure that the local region is among the best and most equitable places to live, work and study. This includes shining a light on the many individual and collective connections between UVA and its people within the local communities. Promote events and activities from EngagedUVA to expose our audience to UVA’s community initiatives and partnerships.

GOAL THREE

Enable Discoveries that Enrich and Improve Lives

Content Theme

RESEARCH AND DISCOVERY

Advance University News and Content approach to storytelling to demonstrate the scope and impact of UVA's research endeavors, especially in the areas of environmental resilience, brain and neuroscience, with lead writing from a full-time science writer. Emphasize additional research priority areas identified in the Great and Good plan across appropriate beats to increase quantity and sophistication of the storytelling.

GOAL FOUR

Make UVA Synonymous with Service

Project/Program

UVA WISE MARKETING

Provide ongoing counsel and support to the UVA Wise marketing and communications team as they work closely with their Enrollment colleagues to implement more robust marketing strategies aimed at driving recruitment and retention efforts forward.

Content Themes

VALUE AND AFFORDABILITY PROPOSITION

Develop content that illustrates the value of a UVA education and promotes important initiatives such as SuccessUVA. This includes stories about financial aid, graduation rates, career services and outcomes, affordability, inclusive access, rankings, admission, the unique undergraduate student experience, academic rigor, and other components that contribute to the overall value of attending UVA and earning a UVA degree.

GOAL FIVE

Increase the Value and Equity of the University of Virginia Brand

Projects/Programs

UVA TODAY CONTENT PROMOTION & AUDIENCE GROWTH

Explore new content distribution approaches, digital campaigns, and ongoing product development opportunities to promote UVA Today audience and engagement growth. This will include assessing our current product offerings, launching a new UVA Today Daily Report, exploring auto-enrolling and/or marketing UVA Today subscriptions more actively to UVA alumni, and continuing to make overall advertising and promotion of UVA Today a high priority.

With new editorial leadership, assess and consider refinements in how we produce and distribute compelling content that elevates the reputation of the University and supports its strategic priorities. Continue to monitor and adapt the UVA Today site design and functionality to ensure that it remains best-in-class.

UVA TODAY AWARENESS AS THE PRIMARY SOURCE FOR ALL THINGS UVA

Consistently and measurably promote UVA Today as the University's flagship product for news and content. Create marketing and promotional approaches that ensure UVA Today is a visible presence in the UVA environment; is introduced to new audiences (including incoming students, parents, faculty and staff); and is viewed as credible, informative and valuable source of information about the University.

COLLEGIATE LICENSING PROGRAM

Begin first full-year of the implementation of a best-in-class program known for innovation and novel programs that drive brand value and increase licensing revenue. The work should be informed by the research conducted in FY22, as well as by the expertise and insights of our new Licensing Director.

Contract with a new, long-term e-commerce provider for the Cavalier Team Store, add or refine merchandise categories, assess number of licensees, and evaluate new partnerships. In coordination with Counsel's Office, review the University's entire trademark portfolio and the registrations for marks. Revise and republish the University's trademark policy.

Expand on the successes of the Virginia Vintage collection in 2021 to produce new merchandise and develop product promotion campaigns to drive interest and boost sales. Launch new product offerings, including UVA's licensed alcohol program, custom jersey program, Cavalier Dark Mode and Go HOOS license plate program.

Plan and execute advertising and marketing plans to drive purchasing for all licensed collections. Fully leverage internal digital and social resources as well as appropriate CLC, licensee, Athletics and other resources to create optimal integration and promotion to grow the retail footprint for all licensed products.

BRAND GUIDELINES REFRESH

Renew efforts to build brand stewardship across UVA and among communications partners across Grounds. Assess and better manage content on brand.virginia.edu to ensure content is current, useable and useful to our user community. Create new resources that reflect the current brand expression and allow schools and units to more easily create brand-compliant assets. Consider developing content and curriculum on Brand Basics. Add licensing to better reflect the entire brand assets under University Communications management, and provide guidelines on appropriate use of trademarks and IP. Create scheduled checks for brand consistency and compliance across the university.

HOUSE AD CONSOLE

Develop a more robust and sophisticated set of tools and interface that allows for more automated and customized use of UVA Today House ad program. This will involve a new administrative interface to allow for scheduling ads, managing the number of impressions, as well as being able to customize ads for specific audiences.

GOAL SIX

Positively Influence Perception Among Key Audiences

Projects/Programs

UVA TODAY EDITORIAL PLAN

Revise annual editorial plan to reflect FY23 content priorities in support of the institution's "2030 Plan" and/or emerging priorities. Assess beats and areas of emphasis. Continue serving as the primary source of news and information for all things UVA.

VIRGINIA.EDU CONTENT REFRESH

Re-envision, create, publish and maintain the content on Virginia.edu to support the University's value proposition to prospective students, prospective faculty and staff, the UVA community, and the larger public. Produce and manage compelling content that elevates UVA's brand, appropriately supports the "Great and Good" themes, and delivers on the quality of our educational programs and our leadership and proven service to the region, the community, the Commonwealth and the nation.

DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGIES

Develop and implement consistent digital marketing components that support all major campaigns. Continue to build out our internal capabilities to pair with our partners for optimum campaign success and maintain cost efficiencies for communications budgets.

SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGIES

Develop and implement content as outlined in the annual strategy and align prioritization to annual workplan content themes and campaigns. Monthly measurement of performance and audience engagement will drive ongoing optimization of platform utilization and reveal sentiment analysis for the UVA brand.

BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE AND MARKETING ANALYTICS

Through regular reporting, continue to develop and apply best practices to maximize the use of analytics across our department for decision-making, campaign management, content delivery, audience research, and return on advertising investment.

GOAL SEVEN

Exercise Excellence and Best Practice in Communications and Marketing

Projects/Programs

DIGITAL AS A CORE FUNCTION

Elevate and expand our Digital Strategy function and better connect its capabilities in a more comprehensive unit. Core functions of this team will include web development; digital content promotion & campaigns, including social media and performance metrics; and UX and digital product design, production and deployment.

WEBSITE STRATEGIES

Develop a consistent lifecycle for updating key content across all our owned web properties. Monitor web traffic data every month to inform teams of content and campaign success.

DRUPAL 9 MIGRATION

Complete the work of migrating remaining sites over to Drupal 9. This includes Virginia.edu, the Communications site, and the President's site.

BRAND.DOT CANTO API INTEGRATION

Integrate the Brand.Dot image search with the Canto's new cloud API, ensuring best-practice search function for our photography assets. Support for the current Cumulus platform, which powers the existing image search, will be sunset in 2023. Where possible, use applicable learnings and code from the original API integration.

GOOGLE ANALYTICS 4

Google Analytics 4 (G4) is the next generation of the Google Analytics service that provides us access to smarter insights, advanced machine learning, and richer tools to measure traffic and engagement across our platforms. We will be transitioning analytics across all our owned platform ahead of the July 2023 end-of-life of Google's Universal Analytics.

VIDEO PRODUCTION STRATEGY

Complete work on a renewed strategy that captures the full range of video-related projects that we do. This strategy should be informed by University News and Content, Marketing and Brand Strategy and Digital Strategy unit needs, audience behavior, content preferences, emerging trends in digital and social consumption of video-related assets.

BUDGET AND REVENUE MANAGEMENT

Build upon extensive work achieved in prior fiscal years to evaluate and track the funds needed to accomplish our organizational goals and identify ways to maximize the value of our investments. Closely monitor licensing revenues and seek opportunities to reinvest proceeds into licensing initiatives and football marketing programming.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT, CULTURE, & ORGANIZATIONAL REFINEMENT

Engage University Communications team members in a positive staff culture and experience, celebrating values of collaboration, ideation, inclusion, risk-taking and coaching. Emphasis includes:

1. Following the recruitment of a dozen staff members in the past year, ensure new staff are appropriately orientated and acclimated to the organization.
2. Plan and recruit a Creative Director, Assistant Vice President of Digital Strategy, Director of Digital Content, Senior Marketing Associate, and Digital Content Specialist.
3. Periodically assess our approach to our hybrid work pilot to ensure its positive impact on the department's overall productivity and on staff satisfaction with it.
4. Continue programs and initiatives outlined in our 2021-24 Inclusive Excellence plan to advance a culture of inclusivity through our departmental practices, University partnerships and strategic communications initiatives.
5. Encourage and sponsor development opportunities aimed at advancing individual career goals, developing new skills and expertise, and supporting employee passions.
6. Begin planning for an employee climate study in 2023 to assess staff satisfaction and sense of belonging.
7. Nurture a sense + spirit of collaboration among our teams. See ourselves in the work of other teams so we are thinking win-win and thinking proactively about collaboration across the organization.
8. Encourage a renewed sense of the importance of immersing ourselves in the UVA ethos; being more deliberate in spending time on Grounds, walking, engaging, seeing, and experiencing the essence of UVA.
9. Pacing and pressure are paramount if we want to remain exceptional in our endeavors without burning ourselves out.
10. Value curiosity and have the courage to take risks or engage in projects that break new ground, where we will learn, and rarely will be perfect.