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MEMORANDUM

Date: November 10, 2014

Revised: December 1, 2014

To: Joan Braddock, Director, UA Press
Suzanne Bishop, Development Officer, Library
Beth Hammock, External Consultant
Amy Hartley, Major Gift Officer, UAF Development
Lynne Snifka, Assistant Professor, Journalism
Michelle Renfrew, Director, UAF Marketing & Communications
Bill Schnabel, Director, WERC, INE

From: Brian Rogers, Chancellor 

Re: Public Information, Marketing and Communications Special Program Review
Revised to include Joan Braddock and Bill Schnabel as co-chairs

Background

At UAF, public information, event planning, marketing and communications occur in both centralized and decentralized fashion. The university has a central Marketing and Communications (M&C) department which promotes overall institutional interests, and, at the unit level, the schools/colleges and institutes frequently employ communications staff to promote unit interests.

M&C is the lead strategic communications team for UAF and the Chancellor. M&C is responsible for building awareness of UAF and enhancing UAF's reputation through integrated marketing and communications strategies. Core functions of the department are:

- Public relations: researching, planning, implementing and evaluation of small- to large-scale PR activities, program and campaigns
- Marketing: conceptualization, design and placement of image campaigns in-state and out-of-state targeted to prospective students and parents, alumni, supporters, funding agencies, policy makers and community members
- Media relations: liaisons and spokespersons for local, national and international media, pitching and generating stories, news writing, and editing, liaison for 25 unit public information officers

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- Issues management: trusted counsel to university leadership and liaison to media on issues that can affect the university's reputation.
- Brand and reputation management: brand development, awareness and positioning among stakeholders and competitors
- Creative services: graphic design, photography, writing/editing, publications, institutional identity guidelines
- Employee communications: fosters employee engagement and awareness of university initiatives and priorities by providing timely, relevant information to build advocacy and trust.
- Social media: UAF currently shares information across multiple social media platforms
- Web communications: web design, content management, web guidelines, Roxen templates
- Institutional events: engages the community and stakeholders in small- to large-scale activities on and off campus, and
- Crisis communications: lead communicators in times of crisis and member of the Incident Command Team.

M&C began FY 14 with 18.85 FTE and a \$2.3 million annual budget. Nearly all (98.9%) of M&C's funding comes from General Funds.

Decentralized public information, event planning, marketing and communication activities delivered by schools/colleges, institutes and other UAF units varies widely. Some units, such as the Graduate School, do not have communications staff, and rely upon central M&C for support. Other units, such as the Geophysical Institute have a several communications staff (e.g. public information, marketing, web and graphic design). Furthermore, several of the unit staff that perform some communications functions, perform other work as well; for instance, there are 25 departmental staff that perform Public Information Officer functions, but most of these staff are not full time PIOs.

The 2014 Planning and Budget Committee (PBC) considered UAF's marketing efforts as an area for possible spending reductions. The PBC noted that it supports UAF's marketing efforts: "Any successful institution of this size must maintain a strong marketing component." Although the PBC did not make specific reduction recommendations, it did recommend further analysis of the total UAF investment for "marketing and events" at all units (including central M&C) to achieve a 15% reduction in spending through efficiencies such as greater consolidation or shared services. The PBC indicated it felt that a \$100,000 reduction in marketing spending might be achievable in FY 15, and an additional reduction of \$250,000 might be achievable by the end of FY 2016. The PBC recommended that the primary focus of UAF's marketing efforts should be student recruitment/retention, development and external (rather than internal) communications. The PBC also recommended that a more defined relationship between central M&C and unit PIOs be developed. (See attached for full relevant excerpt from PBC report.)

The UAF Cabinet and I agree that a special program review would be helpful for future program and budget planning purposes. However, we believe the scope of the review should be broader than

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just “marketing and events,” to encompass all central and unit communications and public information functions. We agree that the savings targets suggested by the PBC are appropriate targets for the special program review committee to consider.

Special Program Review Scope

Analysis

- Please consider the role of M&C:
 - Has M&C’s role changed in any way since FY08?
 - What functions performed by M&C staff are also performed by other USA departments? Are there opportunities for shared services with other USA departments?
 - The PBC recommended focusing on student recruitment/retention, development and external communications. Does M&C perform other functions that might be more optional? How do those areas of focus translate into M&C positions?
 - Are there places to streamline any M&C processes?
 - What measures of success does M&C use to evaluate its various efforts?
 - For example, has the number of in-state and out-of-state applications increased since FY08? Has the number of in-state and out-of-state students matriculating increased since FY08?
 - Have donations increased?
 - Have the number of stories about UAF in-state and nationally increased?
 - How many and what type of events does M&C have a role in? What is that role?

- Please consider the role of unit-sponsored communications. Inventory the array of communication services delivered at the unit level to assess:
 - For each school/college, institute – what services do they deliver in-house (i.e. PIO, web design/updates, graphics, promotional materials, event planning, etc.)
 - How do units measure the effectiveness of these services?
 - How many FTEs of communications staff exist in departments?
 - What percentage of the unit budget appears to be spent on communication activities?
 - What funding sources do units charge against for their communication activities? Does this vary by unit type?
 - How do the units address each of the following communication priorities?:
 - Student recruitment/retention
 - Development
 - Institutional/unit reputation
 - Do units provide communication services not available through M&C?
 - What services would units like to have delivered by M&C?

- Consider costs associated with communications activities at UAF
 - Have M&C and/or units reduced spending in this area to address FY 15 budget cuts?
 - Does current communication spending seem to correlate with the communication priorities recommended by the PBC (i.e. recruitment/retention, development, institutional reputation)?
 - Could M&C reduce costs by sharing some services with other USA departments?
 - Could units reduce costs by creating schools/colleges or institutes shared services hubs? (i.e. one communication shop serves multiple schools/colleges)?

Recommendations

- Please make recommendations as to how FY 15 spending on communication activities might be reduced by \$100,000 from FY 14 spending levels (if it hasn't been already).
- Please make recommendations as to how FY 16 spending on communication activities might be reduced \$250,000 from FY 15 spending levels (or \$350,000 from FY 14 spending levels).
- Please make recommendations on ways to increase efficiency and coordination between the M&C department and the unit communication teams.
- The Marketing and Communications and Public Information review should identify ways in which M&C and the unit communication teams may be most likely to increase external funding support and decrease costs.
- The Marketing and Communications and Public Information review should offer recommendations on other issues as seem appropriate.

Review Committee

I am appointing the following individuals to serve as members of the Public Information, Marketing and Communications Special Program Review Committee:

Joan Braddock, Director, UA Press **(Co-Chair)**
 Bill Schnabel, Director, WERC, INE. **(Co-Chair)**
 Suzanne Bishop, Development Officer, Library
 Beth Hammond, External Consultant
 Amy Hartley, Major Gift Officer, UAF Development
 Lynne Lott, Assistant Professor, Journalism
 Michelle Renfrew, Director, UAF Marketing & Communications

Process

The goal of this Special Review is to make recommendations regarding changes that could be implemented with the new fiscal year. However, because M&C, the Schools/Colleges and the Institutes may need lead time to plan for implementation of changes, initial findings are due from the Public Information, Marketing and Communications Special Program Review Committee by January 9, 2015 and final recommendations are due by March 6, 2015.

The Office of Management and Budget and Planning, Analysis and Institutional Research will assist the Committee in identifying sources of data that might be useful in its work. Sylvan Robb, (474-6199, ssrobb@alaska.edu) will serve as the OMB/PAIR point of contact for the Marketing and Communications and Public Information review committee. Kari Burrell, UAF's Executive Officer, (474-7498, kari.burrell@alaska.edu) is also available to the Committee as a resource in thinking about goals and approach.

Thank you for agreeing to serve on the Public Information, Marketing and Communications Special Program Review Committee. Your work on this Committee will assist UAF leadership in setting near term priorities in this dynamic environment.

CC: Susan Henrichs, Provost
Mike Sfraga, Vice Chancellor for University and Student Advancement
Mark Myers, Vice Chancellor for Research
Kari Burrell, Executive Officer
Sylvan Robb, Senior Program Analyst