

The offices of **Communications and Marketing** and **Government Relations & Advocacy** have the unique role of working collaboratively across each of the functional areas of the University of Tennessee System to support the achievement of the five goals that have been outlined in the Strategic Plan. While our implementation team is primarily focused on addressing the initiatives of Goal V, we continue to provide ongoing support for many other areas of the Plan. Updates related to our progress in addressing Goal V, along with other goals throughout the Strategic Plan, are outlined below.

## **Goal V: Advocating for the University of Tennessee System**

*Promote awareness and advocacy for the University of Tennessee System and its distinctive contributions to improving the education, economic development and quality of life of the citizens of Tennessee.*

### **Office of Communications and Marketing**

- 1.1. Support the President’s visibility and leadership as the “voice” for the value of public higher education on behalf of the UT System and the people and the communities of the state:** The Office of Communications and Marketing has continued its efforts to collaborate with the President in maximizing his statewide and national speaking engagements by developing messages and talking points that are consistent with the System’s mission, the strategic plan and the messaging platforms initially developed by the Statewide Communications and Marketing Advisory Committee. We have provided direct assistance in developing strategic internal and/or external messages on important issues such as higher education funding, the future of higher education, benefits of the Common Core in Tennessee for higher education, higher education compensation, statewide articulation agreements, undocumented student admissions, student activity fees and campus speakers, partnerships with Coursera and edX in online courses, etc. The Office has also engaged in a more aggressive approach to promoting the President’s social media presence, including on Twitter and Facebook. Improvements in the quantity and quality of messaging has helped to increase his following, which further expands the President’s reach and visibility within a variety of communities statewide. The President’s unprecedented appearance at the annual TPA summer awards program gave him accessibility and exposure to the leadership of every newspaper in the state.

**Next Steps:** Develop an ongoing marketing campaign, which clearly articulates and promotes the President’s vision for UT and the System’s overall value within the higher landscape and to the State of Tennessee.

**Responsible Parties:** VP Communications & Marketing and System Communications Team in collaboration with the President
- 1.2. Leverage the UT System’s position in every county of the state to ensure that people in local communities understand the multiple contributions of the UT System to their regions and daily lives:** Effective communications planning continues to be at the core of the

implementation team's efforts to leverage the System's position across the State. The President's Annual Report to the General Assembly, which is available in both print and interactive electronic formats, demonstrates the System's broad impact and multiple contributions across the State; the Communications team in IPS continues to develop customized reports, by district, for each legislator in the State to demonstrate UT's outreach and training impact on all of the counties in their respective districts; the Office of Communications and Marketing continues to work with the Outreach and Engagement team on the development of an effective outreach database to better capture the activities and statewide impact of UT through its outreach efforts; and the Office regularly promotes UT's statewide role in youth and leadership development through 4-H clubs across Tennessee. Additionally, all campuses and institutes are now represented with dedicated pages in the *Alumnus* magazine, which helps to ensure that we are effectively communicating the work that is going on in each region of the State and how UT faculty, staff, students and alumni are impacting various communities.

**Next Steps:** The Office will continue to enhance its efforts to work with each of UT's functional areas, especially the outreach and engagement team, research, government relations and advocacy, and academic affairs, to identify ways to better promote the many contributions and statewide impact of UT. The System's redesigned Website, social media, the *Alumnus* and innovative marketing campaigns will be at the heart of this effort. The Office of Communications and Marketing will also work to redesign a current set of System fact sheets.

- 1.3. Represent the UT System in regional/state-wide boards that represent education:** Currently, the office is engaged in a number of regional and statewide relationships and organizations that represent our role and/or interests in higher education. We are engaged in such statewide and regional organizations such as the Tennessee College Public Relations Association (TCPRA), the Tennessee Press Association (TPA), Women in Higher Education in Tennessee (WHET), and we have an ongoing working relationship with the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) communications team in promoting the two Systems' position on critical higher education issues across the state. We have also begun to expand our national exposure as a System through the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), most recently being selected as a host institution for identifying premier institutional publications for its Circle of Excellence Awards, and the vice president of the area was recently invited to represent the UT System as a speaker for CASE's inaugural System Symposium in July 2013.

**Next Steps:** The Office of Communications and Marketing seeks to expand this initiative beyond regional and statewide "boards" to include representing the UT System at the national level and in organizations and activities beyond boards, including those that impact public perception of higher education.

- 2.0 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 Implement a collaborative System marketing and communications plan that supports all of the goals of the Strategic Plan and advances the brand position of the UT**

**System and each of its campuses and institutes:** While the development of a multi-year, collaborative System Marketing and Communications plans remains a priority, the Office of Communications and Marketing team, along with the communications leaders at the various campuses and institutes, continue to discuss the important components of such a plan and the on-going role of the statewide marketing and communications advisory committee.

**Issues to be Resolved:** The need to fully understand and delineate the role, priorities and structure of the System Office of Communications and Marketing have been identified as an important gap to fill before further engaging the larger advisory committee in the development of a broader comprehensive plan for the System. Currently, the office's primary focus has been on internal communications, issues management and media relations. In addition, limited fiscal resources and the lack of marketing focus for the System in recent years requires the office to determine the most financially feasible marketing strategies, based on current budgets, and explore the restructuring of the office team to support creative services and marketing.

**Next Steps:** Efforts have already been taken to formally develop an office mission, identify roles and priorities for System communications and marketing, solidify statewide message platforms, outline critical opportunities and challenges, and to chart a plan for engaging the statewide communications and marketing advisory committee. Minor office restructuring is also under discussion to ensure greater focus on marketing and creative services. The Vice President expects to engage in regional meetings of members of the advisory committee to discuss an approach for the proposed plan in smaller groups in order to gain feedback and buy-in before reconvening the entire group.

#### **2.4 Work with alumni to promote UT in their communities:**

The Communications and Marketing team continues to work with alumni and other stakeholders in their efforts to promote UT in their communities. We work directly with individuals on an as-needed basis to provide customized talking points, fact sheets and other resources to assist in their efforts to promote UT. We also offer opportunities for UT graduates to connect with other UT alumni through the placement of business advertisements in the *Alumnus*. This encourages other UT graduates and those with an affinity for UT to support business owners with a connection to the University of Tennessee.

**Next Steps:** With plans to redesign the System Website, the office expects to offer more online resources dedicated to helping alumni and others gain quicker access to System information that would assist them in promoting UT. With anticipated adjustments to the System's Advancement, Alumni and Foundation structure, the Vice President of Communications and Marketing expects to work much closer with System alumni leadership in developing a more formal plan for addressing alumni communications needs.

### 3.1 **Ensure that faculty accomplishments and contributions to state and national issues, research and quality of life are showcased through System marketing and communications activities:**

The Office of Communications and Marketing works collaboratively with its campus counterparts to ensure regular promotion of UT faculty and their accomplishments and contributions through a variety of mechanisms. Faculty features and news releases are posted regularly online as part of our System Announcements; the feature photos on the System's Website often include faculty efforts in support of UT's mission to educate, discover and connect; the System's *Alumnus* magazine often provides features and brief stories on the work of our distinguished faculty; and the office regularly incorporates examples of the work of exemplary faculty and researchers in the President's comments when speaking to the Board of Trustees, community groups or when engaging statewide and national audiences on key issues. **Next Steps:** The Office seeks to work with the President on the development of a more formal annual "State of UT" event, which not only offers a very public statewide status report on UT and public higher, but also uses the accomplishments of our faculty and researchers as a backdrop for demonstrating UT's ongoing value and contributions to the State. We will also explore more direct opportunities to highlight the work and significance of UT's Governor's Chairs.

- 4.0 **4.1 Develop and implement a communication plan in conjunction with campus leadership to enhance the promotion of outreach and engagement...with specific opportunities to communicate with all constituent groups, including alumni and communities across the state:**
- The Office of Communications and Marketing is currently working with the VP of IPS to develop interim and long-term web redesign solutions to enhance the web presence for outreach and engagement. The new site, expected to launch in early summer, will serve as the entry point into a new central database, created by the outreach and engagement team, which will allow campuses/institutes to log outreach and engagement activities. It will highlight and quantify UT's state-wide impact in terms of outreach and engagement by using feature stories from each campus and institute and data from the dashboard. A related communication plan will be linked to its implementation. (Also see updates for Goal V: 1.2 and 2.0.)

### **Government Relations & Advocacy**

- 1.1, 1.2, 2.4 **Support President's visibility and leadership as "voice" of value & access to public higher education; Leverage UT System position in every county to ensure local communities understand UT impact in daily lives; Work with alumni to promote UT in their communities.** In December 2013, GR&A coordinated a series of meetings for the President with state elected officials aimed at facilitating a closer working relationship on issues of interest to UT. Meetings were held in Knoxville, Nashville, and Jackson with their respective legislative delegations. Emphasis will continue to be placed on increasing out-of-session contacts by the UT President to members of the Tennessee General Assembly in order to build and maintain productive relationships.
- 1.1 **Support President's visibility and leadership as "voice" of value & access to public higher education.** GR&A efforts in DC with regard to enhancing visibility and participation in policy

development support this area. In November 2013, GR&A coordinated meetings for the President with: Jeff Smith, Senior Advisor to the Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy; Doug McKalip, Senior Policy Advisor for Agriculture and Rural Affairs, White House Domestic Policy Council; Henry Kelly, Director for Environment and Energy, U.S. Department of Energy. Broad federal visibility was also achieved at November 2013 D.C. reception, which was well attended by Members of Congress, congressional staff, federal agency staff, and association staff.

- 2.4 **Work with alumni to promote UT in their communities.** Alumni are encouraged by GR&A staff to promote UT in their home communities at the annual UT Advocacy Council Meeting and numerous other advocacy speaking engagements and trainings. The number of advocacy trainings increased significantly in FY12-13 and over 15 such engagements have already occurred in FY13-14.
- 3.1 **Support campus and institute efforts to promote visibility of faculty and faculty expertise within the UT System.** (See update above on Goal III, 1.4., p.8-9)

## Communications and Marketing's Involvement in Other Strategic Goals:

### Goal I

2.2 **Provide easy access to student performance data and internal constituents and communicate strategically to external audiences:** The Office of Communications and Marketing will continue to work with the System offices of Academic Affairs and Student Success and Institutional Research in developing appropriate Web-based resources for reporting data as well as designing printed materials that communicate important data related to educational excellence at UT. Recent examples of our efforts in this area have included: Data sheets for state legislators for various hearings; presidential presentations and broadcast announcements related to graduation and retention; and online updates related to student performance data via the System's strategic plan dashboard.

4.1 **Facilitate partnerships to improve secondary student quality and UT graduation rates:** Conferences for Counselors: The Office of Communications and Marketing continues to support the Office of Academic Affairs and Student Success's annual Conferences for Counselors initiative through the development and execution of a communication plan which includes web and event registration site maintenance; design and production of invitations and other collateral; press release writing and media pitching; and the development of an on-line, post-event satisfaction survey via Qualtrics.

4.2 **Analyze, assess and increase online and distance education activities to provide comprehensive degree programs, reduce duplication and foster program development, expand delivery structures and ease of access:** Communication Support for Coursera/edX Pilot:

Staff from the Office of Communications and Marketing planned, wrote and executed the employee communication element of a joint (UT, TBR, THEC, Coursera) announcement, including engagement with Faculty Council members, other key faculty representatives and broadcast messaging to all faculty statewide. Also developed a dedicated website and FAQs.

## Goal II

**2.1 Revitalize the UT Research Foundation:** The Office of Communications and Marketing has continued to provide support for UTRF by: developing announcements related to the Wheelley Award; promotion of the UTRF internship program; editing articles for the UTRF newsletter; assisting in the promotion of the UTRF inventor handbook; providing communications support for the announcement of Innovation Awards, which resulted in media coverage; providing System communications and media relations support for Cherokee Farm, as needed; and developing and distributing press releases for a variety of related initiatives and events.

**3.2 Develop a faculty and staff awareness plan that aligns and leverages UT's communication messaging strategies on economic development:** Initial concepts are in development for a marketing and communications campaign that will include UT faculty and researchers and their contributions to the overall improvement of the state. A particular focus will be placed on Governor's chairs and other distinguished faculty.

**3.3 Develop a communications and marketing framework for the UT research story and assist campuses and institutes with data and information showcasing these accomplishments:** The Office of Communications and Marketing will continue to work with the System Office of Research and the appropriate campus representatives to utilize its existing marketing and communications channels to promote faculty research and tell compelling stories of the accomplishments and impact of UT researchers and innovators without being redundant as it relates to campus efforts. The "Discover, Invent, Change" feature in the Winter 2014 *Alumnus*, which detailed 12 inventions of UT scientists, representing UT Knoxville, UT Chattanooga and the UT Health Science Center is an example of such ongoing efforts. The redesign of the System website will also contribute significantly in helping the System tell UT's research story and in showcasing our accomplishments in this area.

## Goal III

**1.0, 1.1, 1.2 Articulate clearly the role of the UT System in community outreach and engagement...; develop, at the System level, identity and positioning around community and economic impact...and report and communicate the value proposition and impact; and coordinate the communication of metrics to all constituencies:** The Office of Communications and Marketing continues to actively work with the outreach and engagement team and other responsible parties on this initiative. Staff members are engaged in offering counsel and

monitoring communications opportunities while providing hands-on assistance in areas such as Website development and assistance with the development of the outreach database.

**1.4 Increase UT's faculty and staff visibility as subject experts on critical community, state and national issues and solutions:** The Office of Communications and Marketing will work in collaboration with its campus counterparts to develop a new series of annual story pitches, featuring UT faculty and staff experts, which speak to forecasting trends on critical community, state and national issues for the coming new year. The Office expects to launch its first series for the 2015 calendar year. (Also see response under GR&A Goal V: 3.1)

#### Goal IV

**4.0, 4.1, Create a "culture of communication" throughout the UT System through an improved internal communications program...Coordinate and resource expanded internal communications about processes and systems...** The Office of Communications and Marketing is currently working to develop a new internal client communication model designed to better understand the communications and marketing needs and expectations of each VP and functional unit within the System and to offer insight into how each unit can more effectively use our office to communicate with its internal and external constituents. The Office expects to implement the new client model in the fall.

**4.2 Convene staff in similar functions across the System to identify issues and improve processes:**

The Office of Communications and Marketing hosts two meetings each year to convene all communications and marketing staff across the System. The VP also engages in regular one-on-one and/or telephone meetings with statewide communicators as well. The next two-day communicators meetings is scheduled for June 2014.

### Government Relations & Advocacy's Involvement in Other Strategic Goals:

#### Goal I

**2.2 Strategic communication to external audiences.** In November 2013, GR&A staff arranged and conducted a meeting with Dr. Spiros Protopsaltis, Senior Policy Advisor at the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development, and Chancellors Angle and Rakes. Follow up information was requested by the Department of Education as they prepare to assist with the development of President Obama's college scorecard. Information was compiled and delivered by GR&A staff in December 2013.

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## Goal II

- 1.1 **Opportunities for funding.** The DC-based GR&A team provides the UT Office of Research and campuses with regular updates on federal funding opportunities, grant funding, and programmatic funding opportunities.
- 1.2 **System Commitment to Pursue Special Research Projects.** In 2013, GR&A completed a campus/institute research tour aimed at collecting information on on-going research, areas of capacity for potential growth, and areas of aspirational growth. GR&A partnered with the UT Office of Research in this initiative. Based in part on the information collected in this tour, GR&A developed a federal government relations strategy for 2014 focused on better positioning UT for future federal funding opportunities in research areas, enhancing government connectivity for ongoing research programs, strengthening coalition activities, creating new federal partnership opportunities, and utilizing the Howard H. Baker, Jr. Center for Public Policy in developing key federal relationships and unique standing to advance the University's research interests. Emphasis will continue on raising visibility and advancing potential partnerships within the federal government arena.
- 1.3 **Supporting intensified faculty research competitiveness to increase extramural funding (federal funding).** The GR&A team has developed a 2014 federal government relations strategy that supports this item (see description above). In addition, the GR&A staff arranged and facilitated meetings during November 2013 for Institute for Public Service leaders with Department of Commerce (DoC) leaders regarding University interests in DoC's advanced manufacturing initiatives.
- 1.3 **Supporting intensified faculty research competitiveness to increase extramural funding (federal funding).** In November 2013, GR&A planned and executed a UT System visibility event in DC. Leadership from the UT System and all UT campuses and institutes were encouraged to participate. The day included meetings with leaders at key agencies wherein UT has research and policy interests.
- 2.4 **Facilitate and further develop capacity for Cherokee Farms.** Our retained government relations consulting firm in Washington – SMI – is providing marketing services to the Cherokee Farm Innovation Campus (CFIC). SMI has provided direct introductions to over 200 companies, primarily in the advanced materials industry sector. SMI also recently supported CFIC at two trade show events and introduced Mr. Cliff Hawks to several senior level executives. In addition, SMI provided guidance on the development of CFIC marketing materials and communication strategies.

## Goal III

- 1.4 **Increasing UT's faculty and staff visibility as subject experts on critical community, state, and national issues and solutions.** GR&A has aggressively sought opportunities for UT leadership and faculty to participate in national policy discussions and key events that raise the visibility and perceived capacity of UT. In March 2013, GR&A arranged and coordinated dinner for the



UT President, UT System leaders, the UTK Chancellor, and UT-ORNL Governor’s Chairs with President Obama’s Advisor for Science and Technology Policy, John Holdren, and the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy Chief of Staff Rick Siger.

In 2013 and to date in 2014, GR&A has facilitated and contributed to the opportunities to highlight faculty expertise listed in the chart below:

Faculty Member(s)	Opportunity
LeeAnn Luna UTK Research Associate Professor, CBER	Delivered presentation to United States House of Representatives Ways and Means Family Benefits Tax Reform Working Group
Lee Riedinger Bredesen Center for Interdisciplinary Research	Advised on Dr. Riedinger’s op-ed regarding federal immigration reform (published)
Hap McSween Chancellor’s Professor, UTK Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences	Initiated conversations regarding the UTK space research program between Dr. McSween and Phil Larson, White House OSTP Senior Advisor for Space and Innovation
Dr. Jon McCullers, Chairman of the UT Department of Pediatrics	House Finance, Ways, and Means Committee presentation on UT Peds State Investment; Meetings with Governor, Commissioners of Finance and Health, and Speakers regarding impact of UT Peds research on child health.
Dr. Brent Mallinckrodt UTK Professor, Counseling Psychology Program	State level committee hearings to express academic concerns regarding counseling legislation SB0514/HB1185
Eugene Mangiante, MD UTHSC Executive Associate Dean, Office of Graduate Medical Education; Professor of Surgery	House Health Committee presentation on Graduate Medical Education
UTM Provost Jerald Ogg Dr. Mark Kelly, UTM Dean of Education, Health, and Behavioral Sciences Dr. Betty Cox, UTM Interim Chair of Educational Studies  Dr. Todd Winters, UTM Agriculture Dean  Dr. Rick Helgeson, UTM Engineering and Natural Sciences Dean  Dr. Tommy Cates, UTM Executive Director, Extended Campus and Online Studies	Discussions with House Education Chairman Harry Brooks on the UTM Campus (visit planned and coordinated by UT Government Relations and Advocacy staff) regarding UTM’s unique role and state legislative/funding needs.
Dr. Mike Buschermohle and Dr. Rob Freeland	House Agriculture Committee, Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Presentation

2.2 **Engage diverse segments of alumni in building relationships that benefit and support UT.**

GR&A regularly partners with UTAA and the UT Foundation on a number of initiatives aimed at growing the number of advocates with established legislative relationships for UT and creating opportunities for engagement. The advocacy network continues to grow and is on track for its 2014 recruitment goal. Diverse segments of alumni were recently engaged through an advocacy alert on student fee legislation helping generate a positive outcome for the University of Tennessee System. Alumni were also challenged by GR&A staff to establish relationships with elected officials at the 2013 fall meeting of the UTK Alumni Board of Directors, the 2013 Volunteer Leadership Weekend, the 2014 UT Advocacy Council Meeting, and the 2014 UTM Young Alumni Weekend. In addition, alumni and donors traveled to the state capitol in February 2014 to meet with elected officials and advocate for UT on UT Day on the Hill.

**Goal IV**

4.1 **Creating a culture of communication throughout the UT System...that regularly informs the UT**

**Community about System processes, etc.** GR&A produces two “In-session” reports for both internal and external audiences. “The Weekly Watch” is a weekly advocacy publication emailed to members of UT’s Advocacy Network. “The Weekly Watch” highlights key opportunities for advocates to participate in the legislative process in ways that benefit the University, and keeps them up-to-date with “hot” legislative issues. “The Friday Brief” is a weekly legislative update emailed to Trustees, senior staff, and the Alumni Legislative Council. These reports have been generated every week of the legislative session, in addition to regular reporting on the UT Advocacy website.