



COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT 2013-2014 ASSESSMENT REPORT

MISSION

The Communications Department strives to promote UH West O'ahu through meaningful and purposeful exchanges of information to inform and engage the University community and increase the visibility of UH West O'ahu for its many audiences.

We aim to increase awareness of campus programs and partnerships with a comprehensive, consistent, and integrated message to foster growth and student success.

The department's functions include:

- **Public Relations:** Disseminate timely and accurate information and assistance to news organizations and community members. Includes the use of Social Media to engage with constituents.
- **Community Engagement:** Servicing the Leeward and West O'ahu community through the promotion and development of partnerships that position the University as a valuable community partner.
- **Campus Communications:** Manage the University's internal communications with faculty, staff, and students, providing a voice and method for distribution of information, including production of publicity materials, notices, and management of the University's website, social media and other relevant communication channels.

GOALS

1. Increase positive awareness of UH West O'ahu (UHWO) academic programs, events, awards, faculty research, distance education, and partnerships at UHWO, the University of Hawai'i System and statewide.
2. Improve internal communication by helping faculty, staff, students, and administrators effectively disseminate information about their newsworthy events, efforts, and initiatives via proven communication-mechanisms. Develop streams of reciprocal communication methods to encourage feedback and refinement of strategies.
3. Support Admissions department efforts that contribute to enrollment growth and student success by increasing community outreach.



DEPARTMENTAL DASHBOARD

- Focus group assessment of students, faculty, and staff, conducted in spring 2013, found that:
 1. Communication at UHWO in general has improved. Faculty, staff and students vary in their communication tool preferences.
 2. Communication must be relevant, however participants vary on what information is deemed relevant and how to achieve relevancy.
 3. The website is an important, central information source that needs to be updated to include a robust, updated calendar of events and simplified, intuitive navigation.
 4. Communication processes between departments need to be formalized and communication policies need to be developed to accommodate for institutional growth.
- Since January 2013, The Communications Department received 226 requests for publicity with 38% of requests related to Student Affairs; 38% related to Academic Affairs; 30% related to Administrative Affairs; and 5% related to the Chancellor's Office projects. In response, publicity was disseminated: 32% of projects via email; 31% via social media; 27% website; 20% digital signage; and 17% press releases.
- A spring 2013 campus-wide student survey [INSERT NUMBER OF STUDENT RESPONSES] revealed preferred methods of communication: 61.7% email bulletin/short stories; 40.3% text email; 25.4% website calendar of events; 29.7% website; 29% social media; 13.2% on-campus digital signage; 27.3% on-campus posted flyers; and 12.2% the Hoot student newspaper.

POINTS OF PRIDE

- **New website launch** – A new, more user-friendly UHWO website went live on September 18, 2013. Features include a more effective content management system; robust calendar system; simplified, intuitive navigation; and an improved search function. From September 18, 2013 to October 30, 2013 (compared to the same period in 2012) page views increased 2.23%, total visits increased 25.24%, average visit duration increased 14.76% and bounce rate decreased 9.28%.
- **This Week at UHWO email bulletin for faculty and staff** – Beginning in January 2013, a weekly news bulletin has been emailed to all UHWO faculty and staff that includes multiple short articles with links to photos and video about campus events. Focus group assessment data from spring 2013 indicated that the email bulletin is well received and considered a valuable source of information.
- **Comprehensive Communications Plan** – Working in partnership with the UHWO Communications Committee, a communications plan was developed that establishes a blueprint for university policies and procedures that will steer the process and products of



effective communications in support of UHWO's institutional mission. The plan will be shared with UHWO faculty and staff during the spring 2014 Professional Development Day in January 2014 with opportunities for input and feedback prior to implementation.

ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES 2013-2014

Program Objective 1

- 25% of press releases about UHWO academic programs, news and events are picked up by local media.

Methods and Measures

Draft and distribute press releases, conduct media relations on UHWO news and events, publicize events via social media and other communication channels. Analyze news coverage using "Google Alerts," and other web-based media monitoring services, manually searching for published stories on press release topics, keeping written records of inquiries from reporters and community members.

Findings

Of the 14 press releases distributed by UHWO in academic year 2012-2013, 12 were picked up by the media for a pick-up rate of 86% exceeding the Communications Department's goal of 25% of press releases covered by the media.

Conclusions/Status

The Communications Department will work to increase the diversity of its press releases to incorporate stories about UHWO academic programs, faculty research and other areas of interest, and strive for a 90% pick-up rate for the next academic year.

Program Objective 2

- Increase the awareness and utilization of the UHWO calendar by faculty and staff by 15% from fall 2013 to spring 2014.

Methods and Measures

The Communications Department will include information on the UHWO website calendar on its "This Week at UHWO" email to increase awareness of the calendar. Possible tactics include a link with a graphic of the calendar located on the email for familiarity of the system.



Survey UH West O'ahu faculty and staff on their use of and opinion of the website calendar. Conduct survey in fall 2013 (running November 18, 2013 through December 16, 2013) and another survey in spring 2014 following promotional efforts to increase validity of the system. The Communications Department will utilize Survey Monkey.

Findings

17% of UH West O'ahu faculty and staff completed the website calendar survey (40 out of 236 respondents) in fall 2013. The results were as follows:

Awareness

- 12.5% have **never heard of** the website calendar
- 55% are **aware of the website calendar but have never used it**
- 22.5% **use it only sometimes**
- 10% **use it on a regular basis**

Frequency

- 10% use the website calendar **once per week or more often**
- 12.5% use the website calendar **two to three times per month**
- 5% use the website calendar **once per month**
- 15% use the website calendar **once every two to three months**
- 57.5% **never** use the website calendar

Quality

- 22.5% **strongly agree** the website calendar contains useful and relevant information about what is happening on campus.
- 27.5% **agree** the website calendar contains useful and relevant information about what is happening on campus.
- 42.5% **neither agree nor disagree** the website calendar contains useful and relevant information about what is happening on campus.



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- 7.5% **disagree** the website calendar contains useful and relevant information about what is happening on campus.
- 0% **strongly disagree** the website calendar contains useful and relevant information about what is happening on campus.

The results of the spring 2014 website calendar survey are: TBD

Conclusions/Status

TBD. The Communications Department will assess the results of the Survey Monkey survey to determine the reach and usage of the UH West O'ahu Website Calendar System.

Program Objective 3

- Increase the number of UHWO faculty, staff and students who sign up for the UH Alert emergency communication system by 10% from fall 2013 to spring 2014.

Methods and Measures

The Communications Department will work with the Campus Facilities department to disseminate information on procedures for what to do in the event of a crisis or emergency situation. Prior to a campus-wide emergency communication test (scheduled for January 31, 2014), the Communications Department will promote UH Alert emergency notification sign-up by students, faculty, staff, and also notify all groups of an upcoming test of the emergency communication system. The Communications Department will measure the number of people who signed up for UHWO alerts since the October 30, 2013 baseline date and compare this with post January 2014 test data to determine if the number of users increased following the promotional campaign and test.

Prior to the spring 2014 test of the UH Alert emergency text and email notification system, the UH West O'ahu Campus Facilities department also hosted a UH Alert on-site sign-up table outside the UHWO library on January 29, 2014 encouraging faculty, staff and students to opt-in to the emergency notification system. The Communications Department and UHWO Bookstore offered incentive items (free notebooks, UHWO lanyards) to those who signed-up on-site.

Findings

Baseline data: As of October 30, 2013, the breakdown of people registered for UH West O'ahu alerts was as follows:

- UH West Oahu total: 7,674



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- Faculty/Staff: 2,508
- Students: 5,169

As of February 10, 2014, the breakdown of people registered for UH West O'ahu emergency alerts is as follows:

- UH West O'ahu total: 7,967
 - Faculty/Staff: 2,572
 - Students: 5,395

The number of UH West O'ahu faculty, students and staff who signed up for the UH Alert emergency communication system grew by 4% from fall 2013 to spring 2014 falling short of the Communication Department's goal of a 10% increase.

Conclusions/Status

The Communications Department will work to improve its UH Alert sign-up promotional efforts by developing a recurring schedule for promoting the emergency alert sign-ups every semester to inform all new students, faculty, and staff to sign up for the system and remind current users to update their contact information. The department will also work with Campus Facilities to increase the number of in-person sign-ups. In the eight-day period from January 21-29, 67 students, faculty and staff signed up for the UH Alert system. In the two-day period from January 29-31, 63 students, faculty and staff signed up for the system during and following the on-site UH Alert sign-ups on campus. The Communications Department will partner with the Campus Facilities department to increase the number of on-site sign-ups prior to the next semester and subsequent semesters in order to meet the department's goal of a 10% increase in UH Alert emergency notification sign-ups in future semesters.

PLANS FOR COMING YEAR

1. Develop an Emergency Preparedness Awareness Campaign.
2. Improve the current User Request System to increase efficiency and effectiveness of the Communications Department's work product. Assess the Communications Request Form by developing a follow-up survey. Analyze feedback and implement measures to improve Communications Request Form based on comments and suggestions.
3. Formulate process for the UH Events Calendar System to streamline the process.



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ATTACHMENTS

Spring 2013 and spring 2014 focus group assessment

Spring 2013 student survey

Media articles generated from press releases

Spring 2014 faculty and staff quantitative survey