

Board Governance Policy Manual

Media Relations Policy

Purpose

Communicating with the media provides an opportunity to convey information to the public about the actions, outcomes, programs and services of the College. For this reason, the College is committed to developing and maintaining professional working relationships with the news media.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the College:

- provides credible, timely and accurate information and response to media
- conducts media relations in a manner that is understandable, open and transparent in accordance with the College's mandate and governing legislation
- delivers professional, consistent, appropriate key messages through an appointed spokesperson

The policy identifies designated College spokespeople, and outlines processes for providing information to the news media in order to manage the reputation of the College.

Scope

This policy applies to board members, committee members, employees, consultants, and any other individual representing or doing work for the College.

Process

Inquiries from the media, whether by phone or email, are to be handled as follows:

- The communications and public affairs department is solely authorized to handle news media interactions on behalf of the College, including gatekeeping, providing factual information, conducting media briefings, coordinating interviews with official spokespeople, and developing key messages. As such, all inquiries from the media, including requests for information or requests for an official interview, must be directed to the communications and public affairs department. Media inquiries inadvertently received by other departments must not be forwarded directly to the registrar, a deputy registrar, any other employee, the president, or any member of the Board or one of the College's committees.
- College board members, committee members and employees who engage with media in a capacity outside of their role and relationship with the College must not communicate with or release information directly to the media on behalf of the College.
- The communications and public affairs department must be notified of all potentially sensitive, contentious or controversial situations, which the College may be affected by and which may attract media attention. In cases requiring a public statement by the College, the director, communications and public affairs, will work with the registrar or designate(s) to establish the known facts of a situation, develop the College's position, and issue official statements or responses as required.
- Communications and public affairs department staff will coordinate responses to media inquiries as promptly as possible throughout the work day, and after hours in emergency and time-sensitive situations. The College recognizes media deadline pressures and endeavours to provide open and equal access to all news media in order to meet deadlines.

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Authorized spokespeople

The College's external stakeholders are closely interrelated, and the media plays an important role as a conduit to them all. To ensure an accurate, consistent and timely response, only members of the senior management team who are appropriately trained and designated as spokespeople for the College are authorized to speak to media on topics, positions or activities of the College.

The registrar is the official spokesperson for the College. At any time, and depending on availability and the topic of interest, s/he may delegate to a member of the senior management team to participate in the media interview. The process of delegating a spokesperson is facilitated by the director, communications and public affairs.