

PROGRESS REPORT

Working Group Name: Centralize MarCom

Working Group #: 39

Chair: Marilyn Martell

Date: February 25, 2022

Update on Actions Taken Since Last Report:

This is the initial report. An introductory meeting with each member of the working group was held on February 2. Each member of the working group was in attendance. Time was spent outlining the guiding principles that the senior leadership team within the Division of Marketing & Communications identified for the newly centralized organization. These guiding principles have been defined as:

- **Transparency and openness** – We will commit to sharing information (big and small) throughout the process and create channels and opportunities for ongoing dialogue and engagement for stakeholders.
- **Dedication to co-creation** – We will work together to create a shared purpose, vision, and roadmap for the future of university marketing and communications.
- **Don't make assumptions** – We will ask questions and not assume to know the answers to avoid misunderstandings.
- **Growth mindset** – We will design a model with clear pathways for professional growth, development, and leadership.
- **Continuous improvement** – We will maintain flexibility and learning as we go and will embrace an evolving model and adjust based on what is working and what isn't.
- **Clarity of purpose and services** – We will clearly articulate our division's purpose and service offerings with internal stakeholders to eliminate confusion, minimize distractions and ensure our expertise is leveraged effectively to provide the greatest impact to the university.
- **Continuity of services** – We will commit to continuing our day-to-day work as we develop our new model so that there is no lag in marketing and communications support.
- **Supportive approach** – We will move to a culture of "We," invoking the spirit of a truly unified team, and sharing of ideas, experiences and opportunities with one another.

The working group also reviewed the change vision: *One university-wide marketing and communications capability will allow us to reimagine a best-in-class model that combines our many skills, strengths, and perspectives onto one, collaborative team driven by a shared purpose,* and discussed advantages of a central communications model for current employees, internal clients, and external audiences.

Finally, time was spent outlining the group's charge, which is a multi-pronged approach. Each member of the committee is also leading a sub-committee to evaluate communications and marketing across the university. The nine identified subcommittees include: Student Affairs;

Admin-Academics; Admin-Operations; Colleges; College of Arts & Sciences; Health; Athletics, Affiliates (not centralizing – enhancing collaborative working relationships); Branch, Remote & Teaching Campuses.

Meetings with the working group have since been held on February 7, 14, and 21. In between working group meetings, the members are meeting with their sub-committees.

Finally, following our guiding principle of “transparency and openness,” several communications channels and engagement mechanisms have been created to ensure all voices are heard. A census was distributed to all marketing and communications personnel across the university, aimed at providing an accurate and representative understanding of marketing and communications activities taking place throughout the university. The census is closed, and data is currently in review. Additionally, a web presence was created on the existing division website for updates relevant to marketing and communications professionals across campus:
<https://marcomm.tamu.edu/path-forward/>.

Next Major Issue to be Addressed:

Once the first deliverables are complete (1) high-level organizational structures; 2) a list of gaps and/or areas of duplication in service; 3) recommendations on aspirations of the future university-wide team; and 4) a set of recommended core services from each sub-committee), the working group will then streamline the individual subcommittee recommendations to develop one working group report that includes a high-level organizational structure for marketing and communications across the university, streamlined catalog of service-level offerings and defined framework for the central units’ working relationship with affiliates and branch campuses.

Problems or Barriers Encountered and Solutions Identified:

- Balancing centralized areas that are changing simultaneously which frequently coordinate with marketing and communications, such as IT.
- It will need to be determined how alumni relations and events will be handled going forward because this responsibility often falls within marketing and communications teams or at least frequently coordinates with these teams.

Deliverables Completed:

Deliverables are in progress, but none are completed at this time.

Timeline for Completion of Remaining Deliverables:

Upcoming deliverables and anticipated dates:

March 7:

Each sub-committee lead will turn in:

- High-level organizational structure for their area of focus
- List of gaps and/or areas of duplication within your area of focus

- List of what we as a future university-wide, central marketing and communications team can do better
- Set of recommended core services of the central unit

By March 25:

- Final high-level organization structure identified
- Streamlined catalog of service offerings