



**COMMITTEE ON MARKETING, PUBLIC RELATIONS
AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS**

Pre-Meeting Minutes

May 6, 2020

Virtual Meeting

Time Convened: 2:02 p.m.

Time Adjourned: 2:49 p.m.

Committee and Board members present:

Robert G. Stern (Chair), Leonard H. Johnson, Daniel T. O’Keefe, Rahul Patel, and Marsha D. Powers. Trustee Ray Thomas, David Brandon, and Board Vice Chair Thomas G. Kuntz

Others present:

Nancy Paton, Vice President for Strategic Communications, and other members of the university community.

1.0 Call to Order and Welcome

Committee Chair Stern welcomed everyone to the meeting. He reviewed the meeting agenda which included: an update of the performance metrics regarding Q1; a high-level overview of the COVID 19 communications strategy; and an overview of the spring 2020 reputation campaign.

2.0 Roll Call

Board Staff called the roll and noted those Trustees who were in attendance.

3.0 Discussion Items

3.1 Key Performance Indicators

Vice President Paton thanked the committee for their continued support, guidance and advocacy of the strategic communications and marketing plan efforts to advance the university’s reputation and rankings. Vice President Paton described the significant progress that has been made against the key performance indicators.

She provided a review of the first quarter Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) beginning with the executive dashboard.

Organic search volume increased in Q1 from Q4.

Earned media share of voice increased to 15.4% from 14.9% from Q4 and we have moved our position to number three from number four against peers. Trustee Powers asked what school UF took its gains from. The answer is UC Berkeley. Trustee Brandon stated he was very impressed by the dashboards and he is glad to see the metrics moving up. Trustee Zucker said great job and she can’t wait to see what this does for our overall rankings. Trustee Kuntz is very impressed with the dashboards and he stated they look nice populated with relevant data. Trustee Kuntz complimented the committee for such a great job.

The Conversation activity increased in the first quarter to 781,239 from 457,661 in quarter four.

Positive earned media sentiment decreased due to an increase in neutral posts/mentions, not an increase in negative posts. Our decrease in the earned media sentiment is due to a few articles this quarter with negative sentiment. This last sentence contradicts the first sentence. Please clarify.

Social media share of voice decreased by 15.2%. Social media sentiment increased by 153% from quarter four VP Paton stated this is an important metric as it indicates the university's storytelling and engagement efforts are creating a higher level of advocacy.

VP Paton stated that she was very pleased with the performance results on the KPI.

She then reviewed the detailed KPI dashboards for earned media, social media and web performance.

In earned media, reach numbers increased from 558.6M to 924.4M indicating the level of high influence of the media outlets in which we're seeing success in telling our stories. Important to note that the number of articles, while important on an ongoing basis for team productivity, is not as critical as the reach.

Media value generated indicates the advertising value of the articles. Media value increased from \$3M in the fourth quarter to \$4.75M in quarter one.

In the first quarter, UF is strengthened its performance in earned media share of voice, with an increase of 17.2% from quarter four. This performance moved UF up to third amongst peer group.

The Conversation reach increased slightly from 457.7K to 781.2K. UF is currently in second place among peers.

On social media platforms, UF continues to be a leader in higher education. In this first quarter, UF has moved from third to second place among peers on each institutional social media channel in terms of engagement metrics. This dominant presence indicates that the university is not only increasingly relevant to younger audiences but to all audiences. UF also remains a leader in the social space outside the higher education sector.

Website metrics indicated a visitor increase by 16.4% in from quarter one to quarter four.

Bounce rates have decreased this quarter by 5.4% and the average time on page also jumped up by 1.3% in quarter one.

Out-of-state users generate 30.8% of the traffic while in-state users generate 69.2%. Georgia is number one with Washington State coming in second place.

VP Paton stated the most important thing when reviewing the Campaign Dashboard is to understand if the message, the stories that UF is telling, and the channels the university is advertising on are generating desired results with targeted audiences.

With a goal of improving University of Florida's awareness and reputation, two marketing campaigns are being launched during Spring 2020. As these campaigns are still in market, the second quarter statistics are indicative of results for one month.

The private and public peer group targets (specifically Top 15 universities) had the highest engagement with digital display, seeing an average CTR of 2.9% a significant increase over the total fall results of 0.34%.

LinkedIn generated strong engagement across our targeted peer audiences. Average CTR was 61%, which was 146% higher than the CTR generated by the fall campaign (0.1%). 45% of impressions and clicks generated were by senior-level higher ed audiences.

NPR also generated strong awareness among our target audiences. Performance exceeded fall impression results demonstrating that the campaign reached our desired audience of higher education leaders.

3.2 COVID Communications

Chair Stern thanked Vice President Paton. He stated these quarterly performance metrics indicate that the university is on a trajectory of growth in important channels that reach key audiences. And, that the messaging is resonating with people so much so that they enter into an engaged relationship with the university.

Chair Stern reinforced Strategic Communications and Marketing role in keeping audiences informed with critical resources and content. The team has anticipated different scenarios and created a cohesive messaging strategy.

VP Paton stated that the SCM focus initially was on quickly and effectively delivering critical information to the campus community about how the university was responding to the pandemic.

The team created a website to house major operational announcements, FAQs and a page dedicated to daily updates on positive COVID-19 cases among students, faculty and staff. The COVID-19 website went live on Feb. 18. From Feb. 18 to today, the main COVID page has received 317,301 views.

A newly established integrated campus communicators group has been established that meets weekly to integrate information and communications relative to COVID-19.

UF strategic communications and marketing is identifying faculty experts to pitch to national media as thought leaders and trusted sources.

And we developed communications that have expressed to the UF community for its response to the pandemic and highlighted inspirational stories about student, faculty and staff contributions and efforts.

The role of communications during this pandemic is extremely important. Our messaging has been focused on four themes:

- Information and keeping safe
- Finish Strong
- Express gratitude
- Build great will

Communications strategy will be moving forward over the next months to creating and implementing a comprehensive communications plan focused on UF's plans forward.

As such, the current COVID-19 website will be redesigned, we will continue to place

faculty experts and university leaders in national, state and local media. Recent examples cited were Lori Pennington-Gray, director of UF's Tourism Management Crisis Initiative, appeared in a New York Times piece that ran April 16. <https://newyork.am/how-will-covid-19-affect-future-travel-behavior-a-travel-crisis-expert-explains/>;

an op-ed by President Fuchs about the future of higher education after the pandemic in the Tampa Bay Times and tour contributions to the state of Florida during the pandemic which are a focus of an upcoming Florida Trend piece scheduled to run in June.

Chair Stern thanked VP Paton, stating the COVID communications have played an important role in guiding the university through this pandemic.

3.3 Spring Reputation Campaign

Chair Stern stated VP Paton would walk the committee through the underlying strategy of the reputation campaign and exciting new initiatives planned for the important spring voting season.

VP Paton thanked Chair Stern. The 2019-20 strategy centers on implementing innovative media tactics aimed at advancing the University's reputation and rankings goals.

Overarching Goal: Advance UF's Reputation and Rankings

- Strategy:
 - Leverage the power and reach of UF's earned and owned channels
 - Utilize channels that reach our specific audiences, i.e. LinkedIn
 - Tell stories that demonstrate our academic excellence, research impact, student outcomes and campus experience
 - Innovate our strategy through the creation of new channels that effectively reach and engage both internal and external audiences
 - Creation of "Unstoppable Minds" UF's podcast series

VP Paton stated the cornerstone of the Spring Campaign is a Podcast series featuring stories that directly correlate with reputation drivers in an authentic and intimate way that resonates with listeners. These stories highlight members of the UF community who have overcome adversity and persevered in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds.

Chair Stern mentioned that the March Board of Trustees meeting presentation from Simpson Scarborough offered important comparisons from our peers and mentioned the presentation was sent out to the trustees. He stated that he and VP Paton offered to have a personal phone call with each trustee if they had any questions.

4.0 New Business

There was no new business to come before the committee.

5.0 Adjourn

Committee Chair Stern adjourned the meeting at 2:49 p.m.