



Office of Communications and External Relations

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Purpose

This policy serves as a guide for the operations and procedures for communications throughout Tougaloo College. It is important that the procedures are adhered to for the creation and disbursement of Tougaloo College marketing materials. This policy aims to provide a centralized message and process from coordination to approval—ensuring that all marketing materials and communications are consistent with the College’s approved brand identity guidelines.

The goal is to provide necessary information to the Office of Communications and External Relations (OCER) for internal and external messaging dissemination. The office will ensure that communications across Tougaloo College are well coordinated, effectively managed and responsive to diverse information needs.

Scope

This policy applies to faculty, staff, and students.

Policy Statement

All marketing and communications, whether print or digital, must adhere to the College-approved branding guidelines. All content owners throughout the College are responsible for ensuring the accuracy and appropriateness of the communications coming from their respective areas/departments.

The Office of Communications and External Relations aims to foster and encourage an atmosphere of openness and transparency and to:

1. Provide timely, accurate, clear, objective, and complete information about the College’s programs, services, events, and initiatives.
2. Employ a variety of ways and means to communicate and provide information in multiple formats to accommodate diverse needs.
3. Identify and address communication needs and issues routinely in the development, implementation and evaluation of programs, services, and initiatives.
4. Consult with staff, faculty, and students to gain understanding of collective interests and concerns when establishing, developing, planning, and executing priorities.
5. Deliver prompt, courteous, and responsive service that is sensitive and respectful to nature and scope of information.

Duties and Responsibilities

The Director of OCER or designated staff person is responsible for administering the College's communication programs and plans. The Director or designated staff person shall be an official staff spokesperson for the College and shall act as the College's Public Information Officer (PIO).

The responsibility for assuring complete compliance with the provisions of this policy rests with the Vice President, Department Director, and individual employees of the department.

BRANDING

OCER supports the marketing and communication needs of Tougaloo College by advancing the College's position as one of the leaders in higher education. OCER takes an integrated approach to consulting on college-wide projects to recommend solutions that present a consistent and effective brand voice across all channels. Through the production and dissemination of specialized publications and collateral materials, and the management of the college's website and digital properties, the Office of Communications serves as the college's principal communications resource. Specific areas of responsibility include:

Tougaloo College Brand Strategy and Creative Direction Brand Guidelines

- Publications planning and design
- Print shop and print coordination
- Management of the college's website
- College news and media relations
- Social Media
- Changing the Future, Impacting the World, the college's alumni magazine
- Tougaloo College trademark licensing program

To ensure that the integrity of Tougaloo's brand is upheld, you are to submit a logo usage request by using the form that can be found on the OCER page of the website, under the Logo Usage form.

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING PROCESSES

Processes

The OCER is responsible for creating an integrated marketing and communications strategy that promotes a positive image for the College. The staff offers support services to faculty, staff, alumni, friends, and students in various ways. Their operations in connecting the College with external audiences and the media, internal communications, crisis communications, and other public relations information and activities.

The OCER will establish a close working relationship with Tougaloo stakeholders and partners to promote a positive image of the College. The department will document, preserve, and highlight its history as well as foster a platform for its future. External requests should be sent to marketing@tougaloo.edu.

Tougaloo's OCER Provides direction regarding the content and design for institutional publications produced and distributed by various departments on campus. The office itself

publishes brochures, programs, other promotional materials, as well as the College newsletter, alumni profile, and President's publications.

Where do we start?

The best time to reach us about a publication or advertisement is as soon as you have decided that you need one, regardless of how far in the future. Making the connection early allows us to work on your project within our production schedule. The Director of OCER is the first line of communication to ensure that your needs are understood and that the production schedule for all publications is efficient and timely.

Submit a project request form

You will need to submit a project request so that the Department can process your request. That form (<https://www.tougaloo.edu/project-request-form>) can be found on the Tougaloo College website under the Office of Communications. In addition to the form please send detailed information (place, time, date, location, special announcement, intended use, and graphic vision) to ocerprojects@tougaloo.edu.

My event is virtual, do I still need to submit a form?

Yes, if the OCER team is needed to assist in the set up and programming of a virtual event, a form will need to be submitted. This allows the team to properly prepare for or make recommendations for the event that you are planning.

Use the following checklist as your guide. All projects require a project request form.

Format: Do you have one in mind? Do you need a brochure, newsletter, flyer, ad, or direct mail piece? We can help you decide on the best format to reach your audience.

Quantity: How many pieces do you want to print? We will need to know your estimates before determining the budget. Although you may specify several different amounts as options, quantity determines the final price.

Budget: How much do you have to spend? If your project is new and you have no specified budget, we can help you estimate costs and recommend formats that fit your department budget.

Deadline: When do you need your publication or advertisement?

To better assist you...What do we need?

Who is your audience? This helps us determine the type of content you will need.

What is the purpose of your publication? A successful publication should always have a specific purpose or goal. What is the publication or advertisement desired effect? A good question to ask is, what is the single message you want to convey to the reader? What action do you want the reader to take?

What specific facts must be included? Do not forget the obvious, such as your department's exact, formal name and address, especially a phone number and contact person to call for more information.

Should the project be coordinated with other pieces (stationery, enclosures, business return envelopes, reply cards, etc.)? If there is a specific idea or vision for your project, please provide the corresponding items that need to be attached. Please submit items that should be attached at the time of request.

After your project is submitted, the Communications team can follow up with details for project completion. This information can be provided based on the scale of the project and the amount of work.

An exact timeline can be difficult to answer depending on outsourcing and the complexity of the project, so we ask that you provide ALL needs of the request at the time of request.

On average, a very rough guideline follows:

Complex Project (magazines and viewbooks): 4 months or longer

- Booklet: 6 weeks
- Newsletter (depending on size and complexity): 4-8 weeks
- Brochure: 3-6 weeks
- Poster: 2-3 weeks
- Flyer: 1 week
- Social Media Posts: 1-2 weeks
- Ads: 1 week

These estimates are based on having a final, approved copy provided to the office via email, as well as a completed project request form. When substantial writing and editing are required, additional time is necessary.

Office Needs

Tougaloo College has a vendor for business cards, stationery, and envelopes. Each department head/Dean and their designee will be provided access to the system to place orders for their department. Department orders must be approved by the Provost. After orders have been approved, the OCER will review the order for approval for purchase.

ELEMENTS OF THE PRODUCTION PROCESS

Every publication requires the following steps:

- **Writing/Editing:** This can take several hours or up to several weeks, depending on the complexity of the publication. Please provide a copy of your concept by email to Communications & External Relations.
- **Photographs/Videography:** It takes time to schedule, shoot, process, and choose photos to illustrate a particular publication, especially when many images are needed.
- **Design:** Two to three weeks is standard time on an average piece, longer if the job is more complex, less if the project is a repeat.

- **Proofing:** Two or three weeks is often standard for proofing, corrections, and subsequent proofs, especially if several people review a piece. The initiating department participates in the proofing process. Usually, several individuals are involved in the proofing process, and an assigned person signs off on the final proof.
- Standard turnaround is two to three weeks. A major job might take four weeks.

It is strongly encouraged that you plan for ALL the needs of the project in the request and creation phase. Review each subsequent proof carefully and quickly. The Office of Communications and External Relations will operate in accordance with this policy as well as the policy of the of media and marketing partners that are contracted to work with Tougaloo College. Our practices will ensure that we respect the integrity of the project created and all copyrights associated with such projects. Once your project has reached review phase, you will be provided an opportunity to request changes. Please note that the Office of Communications and External Relations is not responsible for making changes to products that were created outside of our office. We will provide recommendations; however, final editing that is outside the scope of this office will be left to the contracted partner. BE ADVISED -- changes to the project request once the design has begun can delay your job.

MEDIA RELATIONS

The media plays an important role in providing information to the public on matters of civic interest. The OCER will work with the media to ensure that information is disseminated accurately and timely.

All media inquiries should come to the OCER first. This ensures that media requests are met while upholding the rights and privileges that may be associated with the information being requested. OCER will provide any guidance that may be needed on inquiries and responses to the media. You may add the OCER to the email or advise the requester/reporter to reach out to the OCER Director.

It is advised that when speaking with the media, all employees must remember that they represent Tougaloo College. All conversations should be polite, clear, professional in tone, and free of personal judgments and derogatory remarks. Despite the pressure of a reporter's deadline, personnel should not hesitate to say they do not know the answer to a question. Tougaloo College employees should not speculate, offer opinions, or provide partial answers and should ***ALWAYS STAY ON THE RECORD***. Anything that you say could be used in the production of a story or article.

Press Releases

The OCER releases press releases on behalf of the college. If you have a release from your department, a copy of the official statement or correspondence and release date is to be provided to the OCER by email. All press releases should include contact information from the specific department sending the release. All correspondence, both internal and external, should be done on the approved letterhead.

Presentations

All presentations should be done on the pre-approved templates. There are currently four approved templates that can be obtained by request from the OCER. Please email the OCER for more information on the presentation templates.

Media Vendors

The request for media needs is to be handled through OCER. When placing a project request, please submit your need for videography, photography, livestreaming, and audio, etc. The quote and final invoice will be provided to the requestor for approval and final selection.

Website

The OCER maintains and manages the Tougaloo College website. Each department is assigned an administrator who has privileges to assist the management of their specific section of the website. The website is intended primarily to provide public information concerning services, activities, and policies of Tougaloo College.

Any messaging or images on the website must be consistent in format and brand of Tougaloo College. Each department's section of the website must be continually monitored by its administrator and updated with current information, including recent documents and contact information.

No department or School of Tougaloo is permitted to host its own website.

Social Media Policy

Tougaloo College desires to reach and communicate with a broader audience to further the goals of the college and the missions of its departments, where appropriate. The OCER has an interest and expectation in deciding what is "spoken" on behalf of the college on social media sites. This policy establishes guidelines for the use of social media and is intended to apply to social media sites including, but not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and social media sites.

Anyone who maintains or has access to the official social media sites of Tougaloo College must agree and maintain practices that are ethical, moral, and a positive image of Tougaloo College.

Authorization is required to have administrative rights for social media sites. This authorization also applies to any posts. Approval by the by the Director of the OCER and the Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Services shall be received prior to posts on the social media sites of the college. Such approval shall be based on whether such a site furthers the college's purposes as set forth in the above paragraphs of this policy.

The OCER does not intend to create a public forum but holds the ability to maintain a forum related to topics posted by the college, with language appropriate.

Inappropriate content includes:

- a. Comments not related to a topic posted by the college.
- b. Profane language or content.
- c. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination based on race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status about public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation.
- d. Sexual content or links to sexual content.
- e. Solicitations of commerce.
- f. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity.
- g. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public.
- h. Content that violates a copyright, trademark, or other legal ownership interest.
- i. Accusations of immoral or illegal conduct.

CONCLUSION

We ask that you plan and come to us early for scheduling. Though you may have a project team, please allow one person to be the contact with the Office of Communications and External Relations. We will work closely with your project manager to ensure that the project is completed. As stated, a request form must be completed and you are asked to provide specific details or a rough draft copy via email, in Microsoft Word or PDF.

The Office of Communications and External Relations is in the Blackmon Building. Our office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

If you have any questions regarding any of the areas governed by our office, please contact the director, Dr. Ashley H. McLaughlin, at (601) 977-7870, or via e-mail at amclaughlin@tougaloo.edu.