

September 26, 2022

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** M. Katherine Banks, Ph.D.  
President

**FROM:** Barbara Mendoza, Senior Associate Vice President, Division of Marketing & Communications  
Working Group Chair *Barbara Mendoza*

**SUBJECT:** Implementation Memo – Working Group 39

**Recommendation to be Implemented:** Centralize marketing and communications across the university

**Strategic Considerations:**

Marketing and communications across the university have historically been highly decentralized, with at least 45 separate teams in colleges/schools, divisions, units, etc. The teams vary in the services they offer and their expertise significantly because “teams” can range from just one staff member to approximately 50. As Texas A&M University continues to grow, the Division of Marketing & Communications (MarComm) must have the ability to provide improved and consistent service to support our key stakeholders.

As a first step, an overarching objective was created to guide and drive the centralization process:

- One University. One Brand. One Team. One university-wide marketing and communications unit will allow us to combine our many skills, strengths and perspectives into one collaborative team driven by a unified purpose and vision.

Next, a phased approach was developed with essential steps to assess and implement the realignment/centralization of marketing & communications:

- **Phase I:** Reorganize MarComm across the university
- **Phase II:** Assess select functional areas in MarComm and centralize, where applicable
- **Phase III:** Assess remaining functional areas in MarComm and centralize, where applicable

The key issues considered in this recommendation address: creating a centralized marketing and communications organization, ensuring that each part of the university is supported, defining what that support looks like, and identifying feedback mechanisms to ensure that we are meeting the marketing and communications needs of the the faculty, staff and students.

## **Logistical Issues Addressed:**

As a first step (Phase I), MarComm was re-organized on September 1, 2022, based on the titles/position descriptions of staff across the university. Centralized staff perform marketing and communications as part of their full-time responsibilities. These staff members were informed of their new supervisors before September 1, 2022, and it was also communicated that their assigned supervisor was temporary in most cases. The temporary supervisor assignment was to allow a full assessment of Phases II and III before making additional structural changes. The supervisors of the soon-to-be centralized staff were also informed of their staff member's new supervisor as of September 1.

The staff who made up the Division of Marketing & Communications prior to September 1 were also informed of structural changes within the current division. These changes were made to establish a foundational structure that Phases II and III could be built on in order to set the new MarComm up for success. The organizational changes were also essential to construct a more efficient and lean structure due to recent leadership changes.

A Town Hall was hosted prior to September 1, 2022, where the plan to realign MarComm was outlined, and questions were answered from staff.

## **Major Challenges Encountered and Resolutions:**

The realignment of MarComm achieved the first phase in the centralization process – changing reporting lines. However, before roles and responsibilities are redefined, the services the division will provide must be evaluated before fully implementing a centralized organization. To ensure business continuity throughout this transitional period, the current responsibilities of our staff will not change immediately.

Once a proper assessment of duties is conducted, any changes resulting in a new reporting structure and/or staff responsibilities will be communicated to the applicable stakeholders within the colleges, schools, divisions, etc.

Upon a complete evaluation of services and responsibilities offered throughout MarComm, the division will establish a Service Model available for all faculty and staff. The Service Model will intend to outline the following paths for project requests:

- the service continues to be supported by marketing and communications
- the service need can be met through new templated offerings
- the service is realigned to another functional division
- the service is handled by the administrative operational unit

## **Key Logistical Issues to be Completed and Timeline:**

**Immediate Actions:** The following actions are being addressed by MarComm's senior leadership team *during the Fall 2022 semester*:

- Finalize the Service Delivery Model – **January 2023**
- Establish performance metrics/accountability standards and feedback mechanism – **January 2023**
- Develop project prioritization matrix, intake and approval – **January 2023**
- Begin defining the culture of MarComm – **January 2023**
- Establish/revive/realign Communities of Practice (i.e., Brand Council, GoWeb, Design Council, Editorial Board, Project coordination, etc.) – **January 2023**

**Phase II:** Assess select functional areas in MarComm and centralize, where applicable.

- Throughout Fall 2022, the following service areas will be evaluated to determine if organizational structures should change within the unit, or a functional process should be created:
  - Digital Signage
  - Media Relations
  - Photo/video
  - Web
  - Emergency Communications
  - Events
  - Marketing/Advertising
  - Analytics
  - Insights
  
- A lead has been identified for each functional area. Each leader will prepare a report and will follow the same timeline:
  - **Late Oct /early Nov 2022:** Provide updates about each functional area’s progress at MarComm Town Hall
  - **December 5, 2022:** Phase II realignment report deadline
    - *Web to turn in a progress report as realignment continues into Phase III*
  - **Mid-January 2023:** Implementation of Phase II realignment

**Fall 2022 Committees**

- Committees were also established with the functional areas assessment Fall 2022 to simultaneously build a strong and necessary foundational structure for the division regardless of the centralized unit or function. These committees will be led by and made up of MarComm staff.
  - “Orphan/adopted” duties
  - Editorial Style Guide
  - Brand Hub
  - Alternate Work location (utilizing the approved guidance that HR publishes – a staff member from HR will also be included)
  - Onboarding (to include a staff member from HR)
  - MarComm Manual, Policies and Procedures

**Phase III:** Assess the remaining functional areas in MarComm and centralize, where applicable.

- Throughout Spring 2023, the following service areas will be evaluated to determine if organizational structures should change within the unit, or a functional process should be created:
  - Web (continued)
  - Graphic Design + Creative
  - News/content
  - Social media
  - Project coordination

- A lead has been identified for each functional area. Each leader will prepare a report and will follow the same timeline:
  - **March 2023:** Provide updates about each functional area's progress at Town Hall
  - **May 1, 2023:** Phase III realignment report deadline
    - *Web to turn in a progress report as realignment continues*
  - **Begins June 12, 2023:** Implementation of Phase III realignment

Additional areas will be addressed upon the completion of the Fall 2022 committees and the implementation of Phase II – during the Spring of 2023. These critical areas include:

- Establish MarComm career ladders
- Develop a mechanism to report/update university leadership/stakeholders
- Create a student internship program
- Create a staff mentoring program
- Establish MarComm Advisory Board
- Establish governing body/process to review new contracts
- Identify professional Development/Training
- Develop MarComm strategic Plan

Approved:



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M. Katherine Banks, Ph.D.  
President

October 10, 2022

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Date