

**TITLE:** Media Relations Procedures

**NUMBER:** COM100

**EFFECTIVE:** 1 JUL 2009

**REVIEWED:** 27 MAR 2015

**PURPOSE**

To provide guidance to institute staff for handling information requests from entities outside the university.

**PROCEDURES**

To issue a release

1. Compile information, preferred media outlets (publications, TV/radio stations, newsletters of partner organizations or affiliates, and local/national newspapers) and send details to the Information Specialist, who will edit and process through UT Media Relations.
2. Advise whether you will be available for media interviews, or give the Information Specialist enough information that she can be the contact.
3. For an upcoming event at which you want media participation, allow two weeks advance notice so the release can be timed appropriately.
4. For post-event release, allow about one week if information is not time sensitive.

Unsolicited inquiries

1. Please send the request to the Information Specialist.
2. If you are comfortable speaking about the subject and the executive director approves, you may then get back in touch with the reporter.
3. The Information Specialist will look for the story and document the contact.
4. It is always acceptable to decline comment if you are unfamiliar with the topic or not at liberty to discuss it.
  - a. There are effective ways to decline comment, but still advance the message or outcomes of your program. For example, if a fireman is arrested under suspicion of arson, and you are asked for comment, decline comment on the individual. Instead, give a brief mention of fire safety training recently conducted in the region and the outcomes of the program.
5. Potential questions about students or program participants' attendance at training: Release information that is public record or that is accessible through a public records request (Tennessee Public Records Act).
  - a. Discuss the curriculum of a program, who sponsors the program, but do not comment or speculate on someone's success or failure in the program, your perception of their participation in class, etc. Again, steer the conversation to your program, not its participants.

## **CONTACT**

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