PURPOSE: To identify and implement communication practices that will support the mission and goals of Texas A&M Health Science Center (TAMHSC) by providing a framework for marketing and communications efforts of the TAMHSC. This will be accomplished through targeted communications goals, objectives, strategies, and outcomes assessments.

RESULT: Through strategic planning in public affairs, marketing, media relations, internal communications and outcomes assessments, the TAMHSC will be positioned as a comprehensive, distinct academic health care institution dedicated to the delivery of quality educational programs, prominence in scientific discovery, innovation in clinical practice/management, leadership in health policy, and responsive public service to the state of Texas.

I. GOALS:

- Position the TAMHSC as a leader among the state’s Health-Related Institutions in educating future health care professionals
- Position the TAMHSC as trusted source of information on health professions education and public health policy
- Establish core TAMHSC messages that will be delivered through institutional communicators and an informed faculty, staff and student body who carry it out into the community
- Ensure consistent and accurate use of TAMHSC branding
- Position the TAMHSC as a leader in training health professionals who will address the basic (primary) needs of the state’s underserved populations

AVENUES:

A. Public Affairs: Increase awareness of and support for TAMHSC and its colleges, centers and campuses among target audiences

B. Marketing: Promote and strengthen the TAMHSC brand and mission through production of cohesive marketing materials in support of a (forthcoming) marketing plan

C. Media Relations: Increase positive media coverage to inform and educate target audiences about TAMHSC

D. Internal Communications: Strengthen TAMHSC’s internal communication efforts to ensure for consistent and unified messages

E. Crisis Communications: Work to integrate all crisis communications and response plans as a means of minimizing negative impacts and allowing for a timely response during crisis situations

F. Outcomes Assessment: Assess strategic initiatives, events, and implementation of the Communications Plan from a cost-efficiency standpoint and continuous quality improvement approach

II. TARGET AUDIENCES:

External
• Media – National, state and local, including:
  o Outlets covering the communities in which TAMHSC has a campus
  o Trade publications (health care, economic development, academia, legislative)
  o Greater Austin and Central Texas media with legislative focus
• Elected officials and staff
  o Federal and state (both legislative and executive branches), county and local areas where TAMHSC has a presence
• Statewide health professions workforce
• Patients and potential patients of TAMHSC’s community-based programs/clinics
• Donors and potential donors
• Community leaders
• Partnering organizations (hospitals, other clinical affiliates, etc.)
• Potential faculty and students
• Influencers (e.g., voters on US News & World Report rankings)
• Research community and biomed/biotech industry (including Research Valley Partnership, granting agencies, foundations and corporations)
• Industry oversight board and accrediting bodies (i.e., Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, etc.)
• Professional associations and advocacy organizations
• Higher education leadership and peer institutions
• Alumni

Internal
• Board of Regents
• Chancellor and System leadership
• A&M System components
• Students
• Faculty
• Staff

III. COMMUNICATION TOOLS:
• Media outlets
• Public events
• Social Media
• TAMHSC websites
• Vital Record (news.tamhsc.edu)
• Intranet/myHSC
• College annual reports/newsletters
• Fact sheets (for campuses and programs)
• Email announcements
• Executive memos
• Vital Record newsletter
• Hometown Health tips newsletter
• HSC-Alert messages
• Communications surveys

V. STRATEGIES:
A. Public Affairs:
   Objective: Increase awareness of and support for TAMHSC and its colleges, centers and campuses among target audiences

Strategies/Tactics:
1. ✔ Identify and promote key messages to be incorporated throughout all communications activities
   a) ✔ Create key messages and positioning statements for TAMHSC based on TAMHSC Strategic Plan
   b) ✔ Develop tip sheet or accessible PowerPoint slides (from task force presentation to EC) on how to use the key messages (integrated into brand quick tips document & Public Affairs website)
c) ✔ Develop editorial/content calendar for 2013 to feature key messages and guide all public communication themes, gather story input from Comm Council

d) ✔ Utilize key messages in all available venues (websites, news media, newsletters, events, etc.)

2. ✔ Implement new tagline “Transforming Health”
   a) Update website with new tagline by conducting “search and replace” of “Bringing Learning to Life” (September 2013: in progress)
   b) ✔ Update website header with new tagline (removed in 2013 web redesign)
   c) ✔ Distribute Executive Update Memo/Email announcing new tagline and encouraging implementation
   d) ✔ Create and distribute new email signature file
   e) ✔ Use new tagline when printing new materials (use old materials first for cost saving)

3. Develop and maintain materials needed to convey an accurate image of TAMHSC in public venues
   a) ✔ Conduct inventory of existing communication tools used across TAMHSC and recommend improvements (See Appendix D)
   b) ✔ Develop overview of TAMHSC PowerPoint slides with talking points that can be given to community groups or incorporated into external presentations given by TAMHSC faculty/staff presentations
   c) Develop and maintain TAMHSC Fact Sheets in print and online for each campus location, focusing on “community impact” such as enrollment and employment statistics, economic impact, public health outreach, clinical care delivered, etc. (September 2013: in progress)

B. Marketing:
Objective: Promote and strengthen the TAMHSC brand and mission through production of cohesive marketing materials in support of a marketing plan (to be developed)

Strategies/Tactics:
1. ✔ Conduct marketing research projects as foundation to develop a marketing plan
   a) ✔ TAMHSC Situation Overview in the form of a SWOT analysis (See Appendix B, Attachment C)
   b) ✔ TAMHSC Internal Audience Perspectives Survey and Analysis (See Appendix B, Appendix A)
   c) ✔ Competitor Summary (See Appendix B, Attachment B)
   d) ✔ Target Market Analysis (See Appendix B, Attachment C)
   e) ✔ Make recommendations as result of the marketing research projects (See Appendix A)

2. ✔ Hire marketing-focused staff member to lead/create marketing plan
   a) ✔ Conduct inventory audit of HSC-level marketing contracts (contracts/agreements initiated by Office of Public Affairs)
   b) Develop marketing prospectus using marketing research projects as resource (see strategy 1) (September 2013: in progress)
   c) Develop photo repository to serve as functional digital media resource to complement all marketing and public affairs efforts (September 2013: in progress)

3. Manage and redesign TAMHSC website as a marketing tool for external audiences, in support of the marketing plan (See Appendix A)
   a) ✔ Utilize institutional editorial calendar to feature quality, proactive stories on the TAMHSC homepage that highlight key messages
   b) ✔ Launch mobile version of TAMHSC website (See Appendix A, Attachment A)
   c) ✔ Develop a web calendar system for displaying the academic calendar (See Appendix A, Attachment B)
   d) ✔ Redesign the TAMHSC website in a responsive web design layout
4. Utilize social media to engage a wide range of audiences and promote key messages
   a) ✔ Develop social media plan to establish and heighten profile (See Appendix C)
   b) Implement social media plan (See Appendix C)
   c) Promote social media externally to build followers

5. Protect the TAMHSC brand and manage rebranding process during realignment with Texas A&M University
   a) ✔ Develop timeline for institution-wide rebrand (phase 1 completed, phases 2 & 3 in progress)
   b) ✔ Develop new logo to maintain image of TAMHSC as block unit within Texas A&M University brand architecture
   c) ✔ Update Public Affairs website as a resource for rebranding questions and materials
   d) ✔ Develop online toolkit of print and electronic marketing templates to integrate new brand architecture
   e) ✔ Develop and provide stationery “starter kits” to all internal units
   f) Work with Texas A&M University to integrate TAMHSC into online stationery ordering system (September 2013 – in progress)
   g) Work with TAMHSC Facilities to develop a plan and priority listing for facilities-based rebranding (exterior signs, fleet, interior signs, etc.)

C. Media Relations:
Objective: Increase positive media coverage to inform and educate target audiences about TAMHSC

Strategies/Tactics:
1. ✔ Conduct an inventory of media relations tools currently utilized and make recommendations (See Appendix E, Attachment A)

2. ✔ Develop an editorial process for issuing external releases through Office of Public Affairs
   a) ✔ Utilize an editorial checklist to determine newsworthiness, internal vs. external use/distribution, and necessary approval process
   b) ✔ Implement editorial process as defined by Task Force (See Appendix E)

3. ✔ Evaluate effectiveness of Hometown Health, to include calendar of due dates
   (Summer 2013: Hometown Health suspended, new Vital Record newsletter implemented, including health tips & media subscription option. Health tips section created on Vital Record website)

4. Update faculty media expert listing to serve as a resource for securing article sources, coordinating media interviews and responding to legislative testimony requests
   a) Create accessible (to all communicators), searchable database of experts

5. ✔ Redesign news.tamhsc.edu to serve as an online newsroom that will aid in media relations (include media experts, story ideas, TAMHSC calendar)
   a) ✔ Pending redesign, promote tool via website placement and recurring reference in media communications (September 2013: News stories more prominent on tamhsc.edu and promoted via new Vital Record newsletter)

6. ✔ Develop tracking process to compare distribution scope vs. quantitative results (i.e., Vocus hits, hard copy clips, email open rates, etc.). (September 2013: MailChimp newsletter implemented to promote stories
and track analytics from open rates, etc.; developed new format for weekly news clips distribution highlighting key messages and qualitative hits
a) ✔ Revise weekly reporting email to more substantive format (quality over quantity)

D. Internal Communications:
Objective: Strengthen TAMHSC’s internal communication efforts to allow for consistent and unified message flow

Strategies/Tactics:
1. ✔ Review and improve internal communication flow and development of communication tools for increased effectiveness
   a) ✔ Provide content suggestions/draft to Executive Office for monthly Executive Update email
   b) ✔ Make recommendations for better coordination of Executive’s Email and Pulse; consider frequency and content of both
   c) ✔ Revise Pulse newsletter based on institutional needs with TAMU realignment and audience needs in mind (September 2013: Pulse newsletter eliminated; replaced with Vital Record newsletter to highlight news and important items)
   d) ✔ Develop 30-day communication/transition plan for new executive leader (done for Pederson and Giroir)

2. ✔ Conduct inventory of communications tools utilized by each college and center (See Appendix D)
   a) Use results to determine efficient application of these tools, opportunities for integration with similar TAMHSC tools, and best practices that can be applied in other areas

3. ✔ Update Public Affairs website to clearly explain and promote awareness of all applicable style guides and ensure adherence (ongoing with rebranding phases)

E. Crisis Communications:
Objective: Work to integrate all crisis communications and response plans as a means of minimizing negative impacts and allowing for a timely response during crisis situations

Strategies/Tactics:
1. ✔ Develop Issues Management Response Process (Appendix F)

2. ✔ Recommend creation of a task force to coordinate facilities, security and communications to review and integrate departmental and campus plans into one master document for the TAMHSC

3. ✔ Coordinate with EHS department to sit on task force and action committees

4. ✔ Review and update all crisis communications plans to ensure that appropriate communications functions are incorporated (communications staff member included in Clery Act Committee and HSC Alert process)

5. ✔ Secure external web hosting (Amazon) to ensure our website is safe and resilient to traffic spike during crises

Note: Items with the symbol following symbol have been completed. ✔