

 Policies and Procedures		Number 2500	Title: Media Relations		
		Replaces	NA		
		Effective	June 25, 2011	Next review :	June 25, 2016
Executive Responsibility	Administrative Responsibility	Recommended by Policy Review Committee		June 16, 2011	
President	Director of Communications and Development	Recommended/Approved by Education Council		N/A	
		Approved by President		July 4, 2011	

1. PURPOSE

In consultation with the President, the Communications Coordinator and/or Director of Communications and Development the Communication and Development Department directs and disseminates authorized Selkirk College media releases to all media and act as the contact for news media seeking information about the College, its faculty, administration and students.

2. SCOPE / LIMITS

This policy applies to all forms of information being released by the college to the media. These can be news, video and audio releases, public service announcements (PSA's), news conferences and face to face meetings with the media.

3. PRINCIPLES

The College generates news through its programs, services, activities, events and personnel. The potential news items may be of interest locally, provincially or nationally. The College will seek out media coverage through its media relations. This includes the development of information, in a useful form for media, such as news, audio and video releases, public service announcements, news conferences. All such news is directed and disseminated by or through the Communications and Development department.

4. DEFINITIONS

Official Spokespersons

The Chair of Selkirk College's Board, or his/her designate, is the official spokesperson for information about Board decisions.

The President, or his/her designate, is the official spokesperson for information of an educational or operational nature and in event of a crisis situation.

The Communications Coordinator and Director are the official spokespersons for information of a general nature and for the dissemination of information, as delegated, during times of crisis communication. In most cases the Communications Coordinator will be the first point of contact for the media.

All communications planning will include the identification of an Official Spokesperson.

Media, Video and Audio Releases

Media, video and audio releases are short news stories or announcements which the College will write, audio record and/or video record for distribution to media to publicize an event or activity, to announce something claimed as having news value and/or to reinforce a central theme or message to manage the College's reputation.

College news releases will be issued through the Communications and Development Department.

- All news releases will be video recorded or audio recorded or written by the Communications Coordinator or delegate, in consultation with the appropriate department or individual.
- News releases will be generated for those activities deemed newsworthy in order that the College can maximize potential media coverage.
- Departments and individuals requesting media, audio or video releases must be prepared to provide background details and photographs or sound bytes (where appropriate).

Public Service Announcements (PSA)

College PSAs are usually ten to 30 seconds long (90 words at most) dealing with routine activities that relate to the community. In most cases they promote College activities that are open or free of charge to the public.

- All College PSAs will be issued through, or in consultation with, the Communications Coordinator.
- As media deadlines require PSAs at least one week in advance of the event to be publicized, the Communications Coordinator will require PSA information two weeks in advance of the event.

News Conferences

The College will call news conferences when it wishes to announce items of major significance and/or complexity (e.g., facility opening, major change in funding for College, crisis situation). A news conference is considered a formal invitation to the news media. At a news conference the media will expect to hear a major announcement, to have an opportunity to ask questions, record answers, take pictures and to receive a press kit containing information on the announcement.

- News conferences will be called as deemed necessary by the Communications Coordinator and Director. All news conferences must be approved by the President.
- The Communications Coordinator will prepare the College for the news conference by making all preliminary arrangements, briefing the spokesperson(s), checking the physical arrangements (room, acoustics, a/v, etc.), providing press kits, orchestrating the conference and doing follow-up after the conference.

Meetings with Media

On an as-needed basis the College will arrange meetings with media outlets. The purpose of the meetings will be to develop rapport with specific news outlets and to determine the most effective approach in dealing with any particular issues.

- All meetings with the media concerning College business will be in consultation with the Communications and Development Department.
- College departments or individuals who feel the media have misrepresented the College in an article or broadcast, should consult with the Communications regarding the possibility of requesting a retraction or providing a rebuttal.

5. PROCEDURES

Media to College Communications

At various times media representatives may go directly to a regional campus/centre or department seeking information about College activities or personnel. In such instances the following procedures for response apply.

Personal Contact

The Chair is the only Board member authorized to speak for the Board or the College, other than in instances where they are specifically authorized to do so. If asked, Board members may voice their opinion publicly, but in so doing should make it clear that opinion is not that of the Board or the College unless authorized.

Administrators and faculty contacted by the media to provide information and/or opinions on College-related issues should advise and work in consultation with the Communications Department. The Communications Coordinator or Director will designate a spokesperson and work with them to respond to the issue in question. This is required in order that the College may provide a consistent message to the media and to avoid any liability and/or embarrassment that may result from innocent inaccuracies.

All other College employees are to consult with the Communications Department regarding the appropriate response to media inquiries.

6. OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES

2501 Publications and Promotional Materials, 2502 Web site

Key words:

Communications, Media, Relations