



Texas A&M University-San Antonio Media Relations Procedure

Procedure Statement

Texas A&M University System Regulation 09.02.01, Official Messaging, requires Texas A&M-San Antonio to establish a procedure to ensure that all official messaging by the University is approved. The Regulation also requires that the University establish the authority to facilitate effective operations.

Reason for Procedure

This procedure aims to define the process by which the Regulation will be managed at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. Official communication authority with the media and media relations has been delegated to the Office of Marketing and Strategic Communications by the University President. This office will ensure appropriate, accurate, and timely responses on behalf of the University with student, local, and national media. They will also review, coordinate, and support interview requests made to the University and/or faculty and administrators in their official capacities by the media. Clear and accurate dissemination of messages to the media is critical to protect and enhance the University's reputation.

Media relations communications include, but are not limited to, press releases, official statements, advisories for events, crisis communication and images.

Official Procedures

1. Designated Authority for Media Relations

- a. The Office of Marketing and Strategic Communications (StratComm) serves as the official liaison and when necessary, spokesperson, for the University.
- b. StratComm manages the University's relationships with the media, including pro-active dissemination of news and information about announcements, events, etc.; responding to news media requests; and providing crisis and emergency communication counsel, strategy and implementation.
- c. Communications with news media on behalf of Texas A&M-San Antonio or in a manner that officially represents or appears to represent Texas A&M-San Antonio and/or its interests shall be conducted by administrators and staff as coordinated through StratComm.
- d. All official A&M-San Antonio press releases and official statements to the media will be distributed through StratComm and/or its designee.

2. News Media Inquiries

- a. News media refers to any representatives of newspapers, blogs, magazines, newsletters, television, radio, podcasts, or any other platforms that post or disseminate information for consumption by secondary audiences.
- b. For news media inquiries and requests to the president, university administration, or on behalf of the university, requests should be directed to Office of Marketing & Strategic Communications.
 - i. Responses are to be reviewed/approved by the Associate Vice President for University Communications, Vice President for Strategic Communications, President or other delegate.
- c. External Media: All requests from external new media seeking information, quotes, on-site visits, interviews or other information should be made by emailing PR@tamusa.edu.
 - i. A&M-SA is committed to ensuring reporters have access to our faculty and staff subject-matter experts. This connection not only provides journalists with valuable information for their news reporting, but also highlights the expansive, impactful knowledge and experience of our University faculty and staff.
 - ii. As appropriate, StratComm will then connect media with faculty and staff resources, expert interviews, and otherwise facilitate contact.
- d. Student Media: StratComm seeks to support and be a resource for our student media to help provide a professional, pragmatic and real-world experience of learning and enrichment.
 - i. As such, student reporters should follow the same news media protocols when requesting information from the president, university administration, or on behalf of the university and email PR@tamusa.edu with questions or inquiries.
 1. StratComm aims to serve as a resource for journalists and student media, and will support in appropriately routing or responding to inquiries in a timely manner.
 - ii. Student journalists are encouraged to reach out to experts at A&M-SA on topics they are seeking information and interviews on. Student media is requested to include PR@tamusa.edu on those requests.

3. Guidelines for Employees

- a. Employees who are contacted by news media, both external and student media, for comment in relation to official university business or on behalf of the university should notify StratComm by emailing PR@tamusa.edu.
 - i. StratComm will help in reviewing, vetting, and coordinating any interviews or responses in partnership with the employee.
 - ii. If administrators, faculty and staff wish to comment on issues or topics outside of their expertise and would like to use their University affiliation and title, they should first contact StratComm.
- b. Employees who are contacted directly on topics related to their area of expertise are requested to notify StratComm prior to responding by emailing PR@tamusa.edu.
 - i. StratComm is a resource for employees and can support in reviewing and vetting requests as needed, and support employees should an interview or comment be granted in helping with preparation and coordination.
 - ii. A&M-SA is generally supportive of administrators, faculty, and staff commenting to the news media on topics in their areas of academic or professional expertise. These interactions and relationships strengthen Texas A&M University-San Antonio's reputation for intellectual and cultural expertise and its contributions to the local, state, national and international communities.
- c. Employees contacted directly by student media are encouraged to respond appropriately based on their role or area of expertise, and should include PR@tamusa.edu if they are not already on the request.
 - i. If an employee is unsure of a response, if it is appropriate they speak on a topic, are unclear they are the best source, or for any other general support, they should reach out to StratComm for assistance. The StratComm office is a resource to support the mutually beneficial relationship between reporters and the university, and will provide appropriate support.
- d. Administrators, faculty and staff who are speaking as private citizens without affiliation to the University are not required to contact StratComm, but should ensure there is no implication that they are representing A&M-SA through their affiliation or role.
- e. StratComm is the only office approved to send and distribute press releases, pitch stories to media, and otherwise initiate media contact on behalf of A&M-SA and employees seeking to comment in their official capacity.

- i. An employee or department seeking to publicize an event, program, achievement, or individual through news media shall contact StratComm prior to official announcement.
- ii. Offices are encouraged to plan ahead and notify StratComm of requests to disseminate news at least 2 weeks in advance.
- iii. Requests should be made using [Marketing & Strategic Communications Request Form](#).

4. Media Access to Campus

- a. News media are permitted to access the Texas A&M-San Antonio campus, but should coordinate with StratComm prior to coming on-site to film, photograph, interview, or otherwise conduct official news media business on campus. This will ensure that all necessary and appropriate privacy rules and laws for students are followed.
- b. StratComm will accompany all media on campus at all times while they conduct news media business.
- c. At times, access to certain, typically restricted, areas may be granted. Requests for those areas should be made via email to PR@tamusa.edu with sufficient advance notice to review any requests and coordinate – if approved. In those instances of approval, a StratComm representative must accompany news media. Areas that will require approval include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Residence halls,
 - ii. Private office suites,
 - iii. Classrooms, laboratories and conference rooms while being utilized,
 - iv. Other locations on campus where a general expectation of privacy exists.
- d. Texas A&M-San Antonio provides media with reasonable access to campus but may regulate access in order to comply with state and federal laws on student and personnel data; not disrupt teaching or research; protect the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff; and protect the privacy of students who reside on campus.
- e. Campus Events: All members of the news media interested in attending events, capturing video footage or images on campus, or arranging for interviews should contact StratComm at PR@tamusa.edu or RSVP as indicated in media advisories, prior to arriving on campus.