

How to Build A Communication Plan That Works

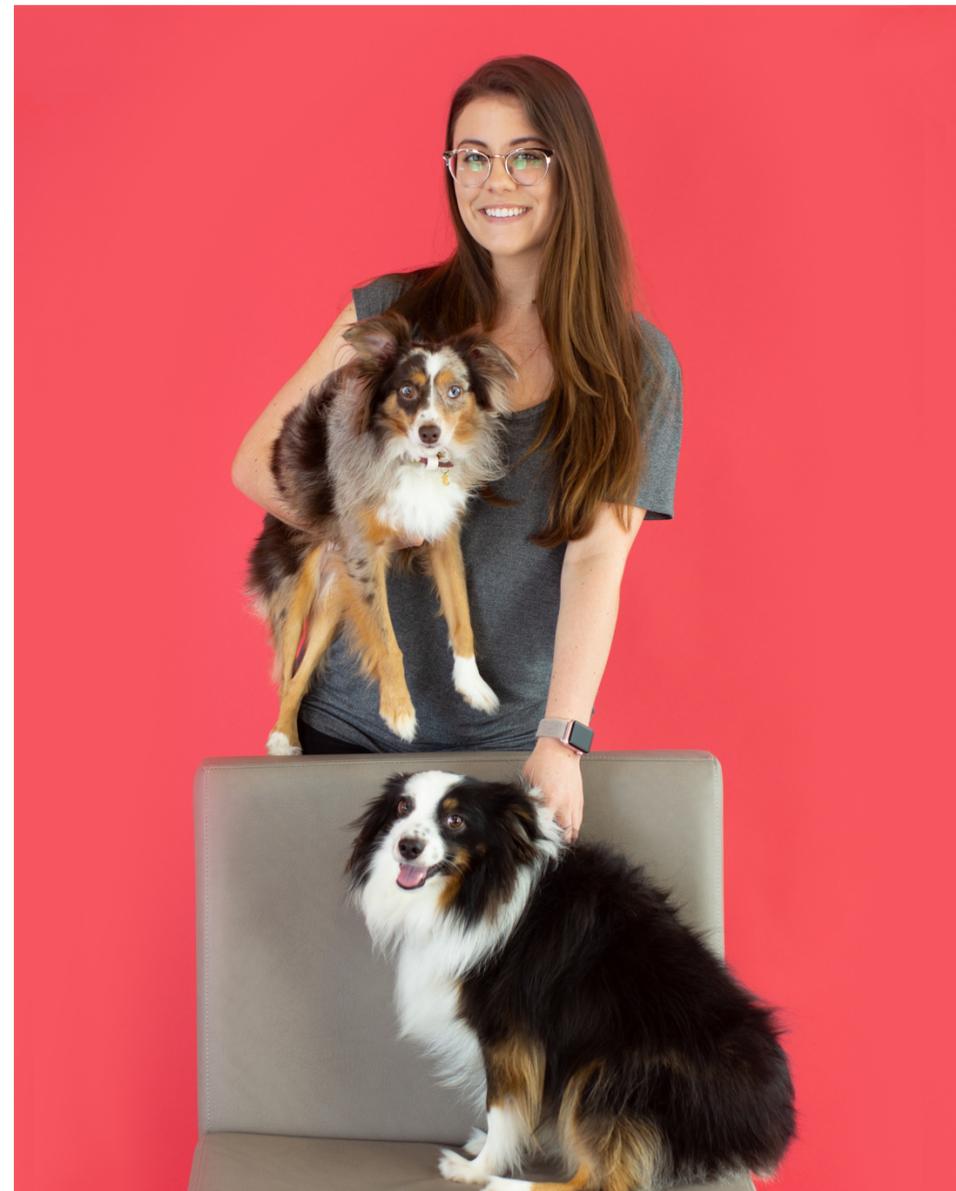
2021

**University of Houston System
Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services
Leadership Conference**



**ALEXSAUNDRA
PRESTON**

Assistant
Director



**ELISE
FEATHERLY**

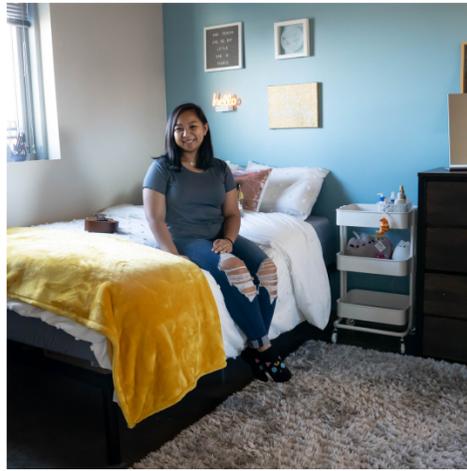
Communications
Coordinator

ABOUT US

SHRL Marketing Team

4 professional staff
6 student staff

Services We Offer:
Graphic & Web Design
Videography
Photography
Communications
Social Media
Outreach



ABOUT SHRL

7 Residential Halls
+40 Full-time staff
+8,000 residents

Projects:

Resident Recruitment
Conference Programs
Alumni Engagement
Branding and Cohesion
Student Satisfaction Support
Crisis Communications
Other duties as assigned





TODAY'S DISCUSSION

1. Foundations of a successful communication plan
2. Processes you need to implement your plan
3. How you can assess the effectiveness of your plan



⋮ What is a Communications Plan?

- 
- ⋮ An end-to-end plan for delivering strategic messages to key audiences in order to drive positive business outcomes.

What is a Communications Plan?

- An end-to-end plan for delivering strategic messages to key audiences in order to drive positive business outcomes.



Who are you trying to reach?

What's your message?

How will you reach them?



WHY?

WHY DO I NEED A PLAN?

- Keep leadership and stakeholders informed
 - Maintain consistency in your messaging
 - Serve as a resource to those who are interested in your department/organization
-

Foundations of A Communication Plan



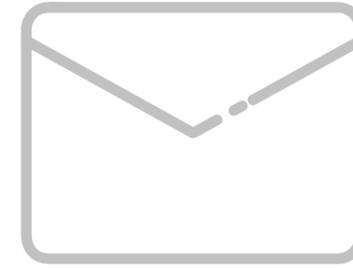
Goals & Objectives

What do you want to accomplish with your communication plan?



Audience

Who would benefit most from your communications?



Action

What do you want your audience to do?



Goals and Objectives

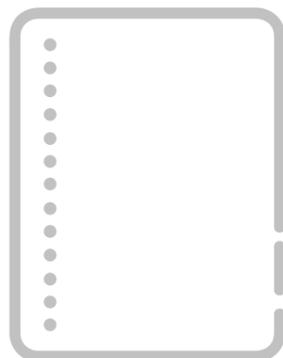
What do you want to accomplish with your communication plan?

Examples

- S.M.A.R.T
 - Recruit students to live on campus by the beginning of fall 2021
 - Raise money for student scholarships by December 1, 2021
 - Increase awareness of our services by the end of the semester

TIPS

- Pull from your strategic plan or your mission, vision, and values.
- Focus on one goal at a time to help with measuring effectiveness.



Audience

Who would benefit most from receiving your messages?

Examples

- Current Students
- Prospective Students
- Faculty/Staff
- Alumni
- Community Members

TIPS

- Ask other departments who already communicate with the audience you are trying to reach for feedback.
- Get specific about audience habits, wants, needs, and goals.

What We Know About Our Audiences - SHRL



Current Residents

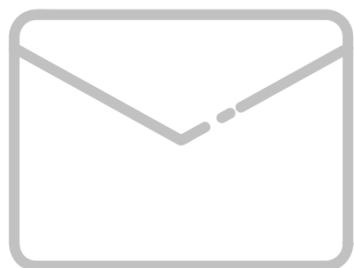
- Age 18+
- Utilize Instagram and Twitter
- Email: high engagement at the start of semester

Prospective Residents

- Age <18
- Utilize Instagram and Reddit
- Email: mostly read by parents & families

Alumni

- Age 25+
- Utilize Facebook and Twitter
- Email: more likely to subscribe and engage



Action

What do you want your audience to do? What is your call to action?

Examples

- Apply to live on campus
- Register for an event
- Be Aware of XYZ
- Complete a feedback form
- Event-Based Actions
 - Sign Up
 - Attend

TIPS

- Be sure to include a clear call to action in all communications.
- Set goals for your actions to determine if your plan is on the right track.

LIVE ON CAMPUS TODAY!

availability in all 7 residential halls

[TAP HERE TO APPLY](#)

ASK UHHOUSING

LIVE Q&A

Thursday, June 3: 4-5pm

Tuesday, July 1: 12-1pm

Thursday, August 5: 4-5pm

Tuesday, August 10: 12-1pm

[Sign Up](#)



Processes You Need In Place



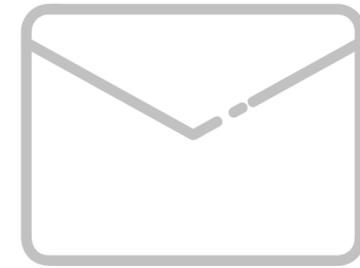
Outline/Overview

What do you want to say?
What is the tone?
What is your timeline?



Channels/Platforms

What platforms do you
have access to? In-house
or paid subscriptions?



Start Writing

What do you want to
write first?



Outline/Overview

What do you want to say and how are you going to say it?

Examples

- Determine the tone you want to use
 - The tone should match your audience
- Identify your key points
- Create a timeline for the implementation of your plan

TIPS

- Don't reinvent the wheel! Utilize examples from other departments and communications pros
- Establish deadlines that serve as milestones for implementation.



GOAL ONE

Strengthen Our Foundation

Target Audiences

UVA students, faculty and staff; alumni; donors; prospective students, faculty and staff; media; elected officials (local, state and federal); business and industry partners; peers; and Virginia residents

In support of this institutional goal, University Communications' shared priorities will be to:

- 1 Identify and highlight the most compelling stories of UVA's students, faculty and staff. Our communications will honor their work, experiences, achievements, contributions and overall value.
- 2 Increase positive perception of UVA for the purpose of attracting the best and brightest students regardless of background, renowned scholars, excellent teachers and highly skilled staff.
- 3 Measurably increase the reach and impact of our communication programs to strengthen UVA's reputation and emphasize the University's priorities and accomplishments.



Communication planning template

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Describe the purpose of your plan and how it will be organized.

1.1 The _____ communication plan is organized into the following sections:

- Section 1.0 - Introduction
- Section 2.0 - Situational analysis
- Section 3.0 - Goals
- Section 4.0 - Objectives
- Section 5.0 - Strategies
- Section 6.0 - Tactics
- Section 7.0 - Target audiences
- Section 8.0 - Key messages
- Section 9.0 - Budget
- Section 10.0 - Action plan/timeline
- Section 11.0 - Evaluation

2.0 SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Provide a brief summary of your research findings.

2.1 Research (Describe any research you have done to better understand your issue.)

2.2 SWOT analysis (Describe any strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that you have identified to better understand your issue and the current environment.)

3.0 GOALS

Describe the desired result of your communication plan. Your plan should have no more than three to five major communication goals.

- **Example goal:** UAF Wood Center will be the first choice for students, employees and the community looking for dining options on campus.



Channels/Platforms

Which platforms can you realistically manage?

Examples

- Email
 - In-house
 - Paid: Constant Contact, Mailchimp
- Social Media
- News Releases
- Print Materials (Flyers, Brochures, etc)
- Website

TIP

- Ensure your messaging is consistent across channels.
- All platforms should be updated **BEFORE** distribution.

Fall Housing Recruitment Campaign

Email



Hey Coog!

The team at Student Housing and Residential Life wants to welcome you to the Powerhouse! We are proud of your recent accomplishment and we are devoted to helping you succeed throughout your time at the University of Houston.

When you live on campus, you're setting yourself up for success. On average, our residents have a higher GPA, take more credit hours, and are more likely to graduate on time, compared to students who commute.



That's why we'd like to invite you to live in one of our on-campus communities specifically designed for first-year students like you!



If you're ready to sign up now...

Log into AccessUH [here](#) using your myUH ID and password and then click on the myHousing icon to complete your application. Come check out all we have to offer on our [website](#).

Questions?

Call us at 713-743-6000 or email housing@uh.edu.

We can't wait to welcome you to campus this Fall!

Don Yackley
Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs
Student Housing and Residential Life
housing@uh.edu
713-743-6000

Please make sure to review our COVID-19 FAQ page, which we are continuously updating. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at housing@uh.edu or 713.743.6000.

This is an official message sent by the University of Houston. To verify the validity of this message email security@uh.edu.



Hey Coog!

I just wanted to let you know how excited we are for you to start your journey at UH this fall!

In preparation for this huge transition you're about to make, we wanted to provide you with the perspective of a student who, just like you, had the choice to live on campus in their first year of college.

"Everyone on my floor is always studying and working which has taught me that I can sit down and talk and do work at the same time. My community has really helped me stay focused and pushed me to work hard."



Still want more information on where you can live? You can view all of our available communities on our [website](#).

Spaces are limited, so sign up today to secure your first-choice residence hall! You don't want to wait.

To sign up now...

Log into AccessUH [here](#) using your myUH ID and password and then click on the myHousing icon to complete your application.

Have questions about online Orientation? Check out these [Q&A Sessions](#) that are happening this month.

Questions?

Call us at 713-743-6000 or email housing@uh.edu.

See you in August!

Kevon Martin
Freshman at UH
Student Housing and Residential Life
housing@uh.edu
713-743-6000

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SocialMedia



Video



Postcard

READY TO SIGN UP?

- Log into your AccessUH and select the MyHousing icon
- Complete your application
- Submit your \$50 application fee
- Electronically sign your housing agreement
- Find a roommate via RoomSync
- Select your bedspace

NEW RESIDENT CHECKLIST

- Wear red every Cougar Red Friday
- Attend an event hosted by your Faculty in Residence
- Rub the Cougar Paw for luck
- Watch and share an episode of "In the Loop"
- Get involved with at least one of the 500+ student organizations
- Tailgate at a home football game
- Take a shuttle to class
- Grab a midnight snack at Moody's 24-hour dining hall
- Apply to be an Resident Advisor, Desk Assistant, or Conference Assistant
- Take a selfie with President Khator
- Relax on the grass near the Cullen fountain
- Get coffee & study at Cougar Grounds
- Enter your room in the #CoogsCribsChallenge
- Compete in the Bed Races during Homecoming
- Get food delivered by the Starship Robots
- Go swimming in the leisure pool at the Rec
- Strive to be on the Dean's List
- Watch the variety shows at Frontier Fiesta
- Visit your professor during office hours for extra help
- Get to know your Resident Advisor and Desk Assistants

3.0
AVERAGE RESIDENT GPA

FIRST YEAR LIVING
COUGAR VILLAGE I
COUGAR VILLAGE II
MOODY TOWERS

+ 8,350
BEDS ON CAMPUS

SOPHOMORE + UP
COUGAR PLACE
MOODY TOWERS
THE QUAD

7
RESIDENCE HALLS

LOFTS & APARTMENTS
UNIVERSITY LOFTS
BAYOU OAKS

10
LIVING LEARNING COMMUNITIES





Hey Coogs!

Are you interested in being a student leader in Student Housing and Residential Life? Good news! We are looking for Resident Advisors for the 2020 – 2021 academic year!

A Resident Advisor (RA) is a student staff member who works within a diverse community of students to foster student success in living-learning environments by building relationships, promoting engagement and leading with an ethic of care.



If you're interested in learning more about the RA position, requirements and application process, please attend an upcoming interest meeting*:

Tuesday, October 29, 2019 at 7 pm - Agnes Arnold Auditorium 101

RA Selection Communication Plan

Interest Meetings

- October 29
- November 6
- November 14

Website

- Add News release
- Add dates to the employment [page](#)

Emails

- October 9 – Be a UH RA; all [residents](#)
- October 23 – Be a UH RA; all [residents](#)
- November 13 – Last Interest Meeting; all residents

Social Media

- FB events for the interest meetings – Make [Live](#)
- Post on October 9 – UH RA Artwork
- Week of October 28 - UH RA Artwork
- Week of November 11 - UH RA Artwork

In the Loop

- Mention RA Selection for week of October 7



Write Your Communications

Just. Get. Started!

Examples

- Start with the longest channel
 - Edit for Web
 - Cut down for Social Media
- Collect feedback along the way
- Is it C.L.E.A.R.?

TIP

- Don't overthink it!
- Your first draft will need edits and that's ok.

Is this communication CLEAR?

Comprehension – Do I understand what this message is asking me to do? Ex. How to sign up to live on campus.

Length – Is this message too long at first glance?

Engaging – Does the header grab my attention? Are the formatting/colors/design interesting?

Appropriateness – More so relating to COVID-19. Are there parts of this message that need to be updated to match new protocols?

Relevance – Does this message contain old or outdated information? Is this information valuable to FTICs? Are the photos relevant?

Assessing the Effectiveness



Metrics

What metrics are important to share concerning how well your communications are performing?



Feedback

Who is available to provide on-going feedback about your communications plan?



Metrics

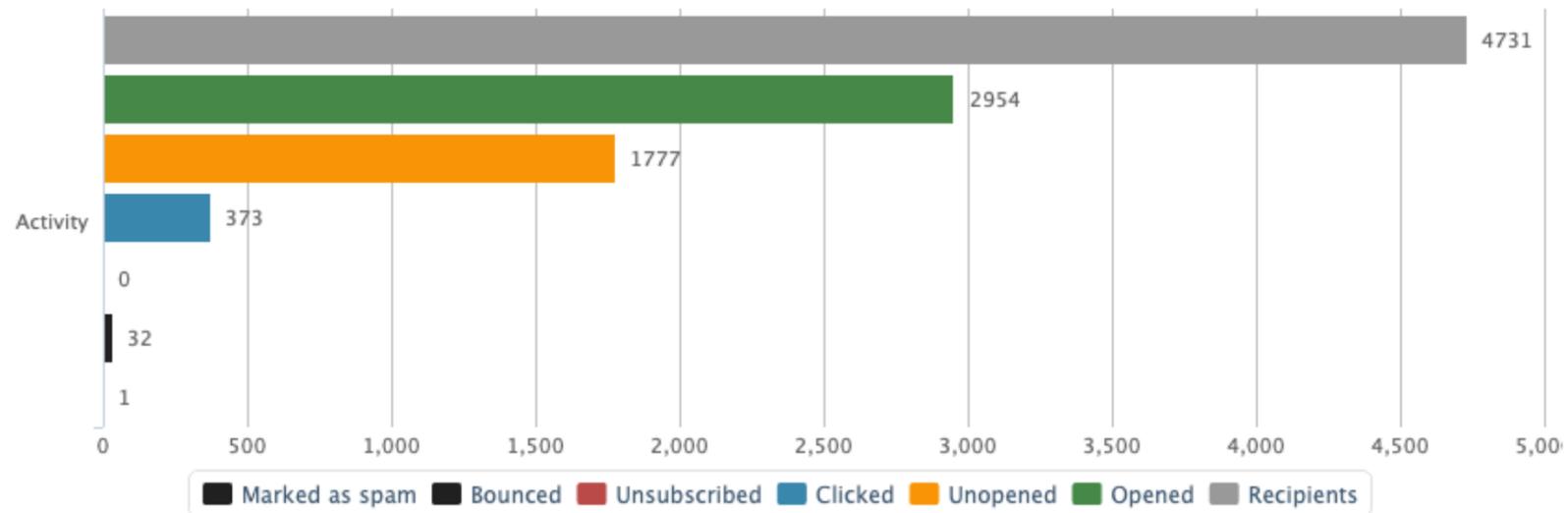
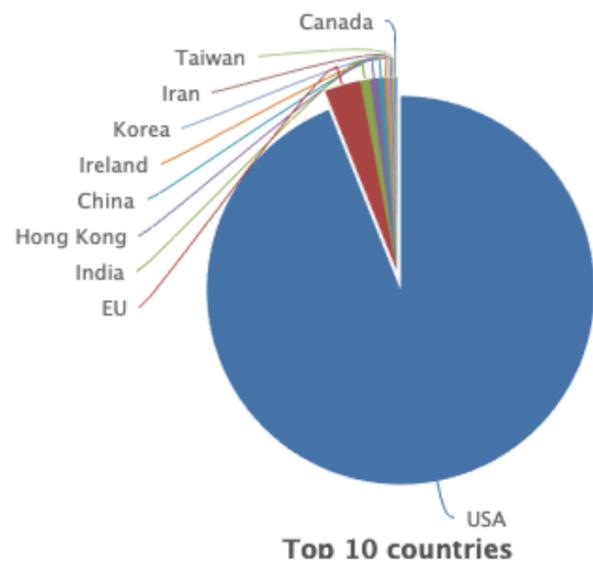
What do you want to accomplish with your communication plan?

Examples

- Email
 - Open Rates
 - Click-Through Rates
- Social Media
 - Engagement
 - Insights
- Print
 - QR Codes

TIP

- Use the built-in metric system of whatever platform you're utilizing. Most have one and they are usually very user-friendly!



62.86% opened 2954 unique / opened 5845 times

1777 not opened ⬇️

7.9379% clicked a link 373 unique clicks

0% unsubscribed 0 unsubscribed

0.68% bounced 32 bounced

0.02% marked as spam 1 marked as spam

Link activity ⬇️

Link (URL)	Unique	Total	Export
http://www.uh.edu/housing/housing-options/university-lofts/	144	178	⬇️
http://www.uh.edu/housing/housing-options/cougar-place/	127	140	⬇️
https://uh.edu/housing/housing-options/the-quad/	115	122	⬇️
http://www.uh.edu/housing/housing-options/bayou-oaks/	125	133	⬇️
http://www.uh.edu/ussc/launch/	84	84	⬇️
http://www.uh.edu/housing/housing-options/housing-rate-sheet/	218	284	⬇️
https://dineoncampus.com/uh	107	113	⬇️
https://www.uh.edu/ussc/launch/	92	94	⬇️
https://accessuh.uh.edu/login.php	122	157	⬇️
http://uh.edu/housing	117	135	⬇️

Insights

Last 7 Days

Recent Highlights

You received +56.8% more content interactions in the last 7 days compared to May 4 - May 10.

Overview

895 Accounts Reached +22.4%

80 Content Interactions +56.8%

Your Audience See All

2,254 Total Followers +0.1%

Content You Shared

1 Post



4 Stories

Audience

Last 7 Days

Age Range All Men Women

13-17	1.0%
18-24	42.7%
25-34	30.6%
35-44	10.7%
45-54	11.5%
55-64	2.7%
65+	0.9%

Gender

63.5% Women 36.5% Men

Most Active Times Hours Days

Sundays



Audience

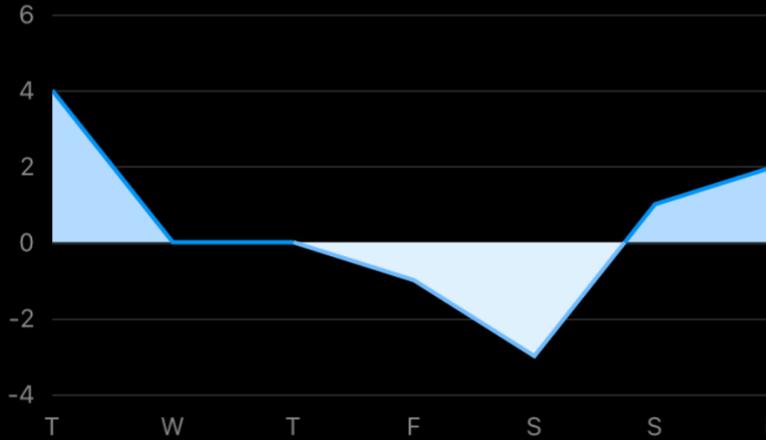
Last 7 Days

Follower Breakdown

2,254 followers +0.1% vs May 4 - May 10

Growth

- Overall 3
- Follows 16
- Unfollows 13



Top Locations Cities Countries

Houston	45.4%
Pearland	2.0%
San Antonio	2.0%
Sugar Land	1.9%

COOGS LIVE ON CAMPUS. HERE'S WHY:

CONVENIENCE

When you live on campus, you can hit the snooze button a few more times because you're only minutes from classes, dining, and major campus events. You can also share a suite with neighbors from around the world or experience loft-style apartments. You have options when you live at UH.



Scan for Housing Options

Community Amenities:

- 24-Hour fitness center
- Bike storage
- Free laundry
- Key-card access
- Computer lab
- Social lounges
- Philo TV streaming
- On-site maintenance



INVOLVEMENT

Every resident is a member of the Residence Hall Association and selected representatives address current issues, review policies, and sponsor programs throughout the year. You can also be involved in Hall Council or the National Residence Hall Honorary to advocate for your fellow Coogs.



COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

As you make plans for the fall, we hope you will join us in making COVID-19 prevention a priority for the upcoming academic year. Your health and well-being is important to us.



Scan for COVID-19 FAQs

- ### COVID-19 Precautions
- Increased cleaning efforts
 - Required face masks
 - Dedicated Quarantine and Isolation Spaces
 - On-campus testing





Feedback

Who is available to provide on-going feedback about your communications plan?

Examples

- Focus Groups
 - Current audience
 - Prospective Audience
 - Team Members
- Survey
 - Communication Preferences

TIP

- Ask people if they're signed up for your communications!
- Provide incentives for participation.

Takeaways - Do's

- Consult with the subject matter experts
- Mimic organizations/businesses/departments who are doing it well
- Be Flexible
- Double check your grammar and hyperlinks

Takeaways - Dont's

- Put off creating a plan until there is an emergency
- Neglect audience feedback or patterns
- Forget to inform your team about what is being distributed
- Wait to make adjustments



Questions?