



MEMO

From the office of the...

Marketing & Communications Director

TO: Executive Board
FROM: Michael Wooder
SUBJECT: Changes to OP – Marketing & Communications Dept and to PR Assistant Job Description
DATE: April, 9, 2020

I would ask that the Executive Board approve the recommended changes in the Marketing and Communications Department Operating Policy and corresponding job description of the Public Relations Assistant as attached. I am advising Executive Board that it is an organizational need to modify the existing role of Public Relations Assistant into the role of Marketing & Communications Assistant, with revised responsibilities as presented.

The PR Assistant role, as it stands, is a copywriter position. It focuses almost exclusively on research and writing articles for the MSU website (two to three times a week), as well as the copy editing and layout of the President's Page for publication in the Silhouette (once a week), in addition to attending weekly Comms Team meeting.

There are two major changes coming to our organizational workflow that necessitate a re-alignment of this communications role:

1. The Silhouette will be reducing print issues to once a month
2. The next website will have less focus on homepage news articles

As noted in the recent budget presentation from the Vice President (Finance), the Silhouette will be reducing its print publishing next year. Therefore, we will not be publishing a weekly advertorial, as we currently do, in the form of the President's Page. This will become a monthly exercise at most and may take the form of more immersive story telling of students, services, and supports inside a brand narrative, accented by photography and video work of other team members.

Also, as the MSU will migrate websites in 2020/21. In doing so, we will actively move away from dedicating as much homepage real estate to news articles. Data collected this year indicates that students were most likely to consume news articles a few times a year, specifically when they focused on major events and announcements. Web analytics further supports this data by showing us that the volume of articles we produce is incongruent with the web traffic they receive. Alternatively, we have good growth of our social media following across all areas of the organization. Social, along with print media, digital communications, video, SMS messages, and email are the areas students have told us they want to be consuming our content. We need our copy writer to help us do these things as we move into the future.

After (lengthy) consultation with all members of the Comms Team, as well as the Board of Directors, I am recommending what I feel are modest but important changes to the responsibilities of the next Assistant. We need to keep a copywriter role, but it should be one that assists with social media engagement activities, video script writing, and advertorial creation, working in a more collaborative way with other Comms team members.

The hours of the role should remain the same. In my opinion, I don't see the spread of work being more than it is now. I don't expect the role to do more work in a week than in currently does as the aforementioned changes would be executed on separate weeks, based on our goals and priorities. They would not take place simultaneously and therefore will not lead to an increase in the hours needed to perform the job.

I would be please to answer any questions. Thank you for considering this proposal.

Sincerely,

Michael Wooder