

STRATEGIC MARKETING PLAN

2024 – 2026



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Education &
Human Development



OVERVIEW

With the Marketing and Communications team re-established as a unit of the College of Education & Human Development, we have an important opportunity to maximize our effectiveness by further developing our team, optimizing our processes, and reimagining how we elevate the College and its initiatives.

Based on ongoing conversations with Dean Michael A. de Miranda and College leadership, our team has created a list of broad, yet strategic goals that are in line with the College's priorities. We also built a list of overarching and specific activities to help us move toward those goals. Our team will perform each activity through precise tactics on specific platforms and use proper metrics to gauge our success, so we know when to proceed and when to pivot.

Every component of this strategic marketing plan will be driven by our mission, our vision, our role and our goals.

OUR MISSION

We champion the College of Education and Human Development's brand by providing insightful strategies, professional expertise, and resources that create positive perceptions and enhance the reputation of the College among our stakeholders, partners and constituencies. We help all persons in the College execute materials that maintain brand standards.

OUR VISION

We strive to be the respected authority for creating, driving and maintaining marketing strategies and resources that elevate the College's brand across all platforms and in all instances.

OUR ROLE IN THE COLLEGE

We consult to provide expert support and guidance to all units in the College by creating or directing the development of professional marketing strategies and professionally designed materials, as well as guidance on the best platforms to use for specific messages. We are responsible for maintaining the College's branding across all platforms and following Texas A&M University brand guidelines in developing logos and other pieces of physical branding. Our work should enhance the College's professional reputation, help enroll more students and elevate our programs and events across the campus.

Our work is broadly divided between writing, social media, web design, graphic design, photography, video, and events. We use our expertise and skills in aid of our marketing goals and generally are unable to provide these skills as service offerings across the College.

MARKETING TARGETS

Potential Undergrad and Grad Students
Potential Faculty
Current Students
Current Faculty
TAMU Administration
All TAMU Colleges/Faculty/Staff/Students
Donors and Potential Donors
Texas communities as impacted by our Centers
Education Staff Seeking Professional Development
Young Parents in the Community (Children's Centers)
Mental Health Patients (CAC)
Peer Education Colleges in US

MARKETING CHANNELS

Website/Web Ecoystem
Faculty Affairs Newsletter
Dean's Speaking Opportunities
White Papers
News Stories
Social Media including YouTube Channel
Events including Voices of Impact
Newsletters
Paid Advertising
Transforming Lives Magazine
Campus Emails
Digital Signage
Flyers
Promotional Items
Podcasts
Graphics in and on our spaces

OUR PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

Our overarching objective is to make all marketing activities intentional and based on a list of priorities from the College. We will use our individual expertise to work as a unified team to create thoughtful tactics that address those priorities and we will evaluate all activities by reviewing appropriate metrics.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

- Deep Marketing Experience (both general and higher ed)
- Strong team
- Already generally successful

Weaknesses

- Need to develop stronger philosophies about how to run all our College platforms.
- Need stronger vision for Video in the College.
- Need to do a better job developing stories and creating opportunities to reach broader audiences.
- Limited experience marketing to some of our targets such as Young Parents

Opportunities

- Refocus our brand as we move forward
- Don't have to do "what we have always done."
- Reimagine how to use platforms and channels
- Rethink activities through a strategic lens
- Revitalize the team by making strategic changes

Threats

- Loss of key team members
- Not delivering work in a timely fashion, undermining credibility
- Lack of buy-in from stakeholders

OUR GOALS

1. Increase graduate student enrollment for in-person and online degree programs.
2. Increase undergraduate enrollment.
3. Elevate research profile on campus and nationally.
4. Incorporate more multimedia and video across all platforms.
5. Support all ongoing initiatives that increase revenue streams across the College.
6. Develop strong brand through storytelling and strong visual identity.

ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT EACH GOAL:

1. Increase graduate student enrollment for in-person and online degree programs.

- Establish a baseline and analyze our current activities
- Meet with Depts and Dept Heads to determine their priorities
- Meet with Dr. Irby to learn more about how Professional Development modules are used and how we might connect them to promote Grad degrees
- Hold an event showcasing all our Centers and Institutes and have grad student poster sessions, inviting regional grad students to attend (tell these grad stories)
- Create a unique mailing list to regularly contact potential grad school candidates
- Market to current teachers in Texas and surrounding states
- Find and develop print and video stories celebrating grad student experience
- Continue to leverage existing relationships with other Texas A&M units including the Grad and Professional School, A&M Faculty Affairs and the A&M Division of Research.
- Develop advertising strategy
 - Conferences Journals, Academic Journals and Events
 - Social Media
 - Ad banners on our site promoting grad versions on undergrad pages
 - Emphasize affordability and return on investment
 - Out-of-State Recruitment
- Find new ways to celebrate our College
- Work more closely with Recruitment
- Tell more stories to undergrad students to encourage research pipeline to grad degree

2. Increase undergraduate enrollment.

- Create a unique mailing list as we work with student groups and organize/participate in activities
- Meet with Paul Timoney/Marla Ramirez to build new strategies
- Suggest a personalized letter as part of Slate campaign
- Work more closely with Recruitment to help generate stories that engage potential students
- Find and develop print and video stories celebrating our students (esp. Signature Stories)
- Capture quick videos with everyday student stories – incentivize with swag
- Develop stories that showcase our support of undergrad students
 - Advising, Byrne Center (grab and go, mental health, first gen, learning communities, study space)
- Develop an advertising strategy for CS campus and HECM
- Have a more robust Welcome Back Bash coverage
- Social media giveaways for those who follow our accounts
- Work with Student Groups and Undergraduate Student Council
- Capture recent alumni in videos

3. Elevate research profile on campus, in state and nationally.

- Increase storytelling - print and especially video
- Create White Papers with faculty from VOI
- Place research videos on LinkedIn
- Work with media group in Central MarCom to get researchers on the Associated Press list
- Hold an event showcasing all of our Centers and Institutes and have grad student poster sessions
- Work to get research stories in professional journals
- Promote our Professional Development Opportunities more widely and more often
- Have VOI speakers make 1-minute vids about their topics – fresh videos
- Paid advertising with AERA, newsletter, journals, professional organizations,
- Build on our newsletter - incorporating video and increasing how frequently we send to peers
- Leverage and advertise podcasts more, even on newsletter or other emailing items, and explore adding podcasts to Spotify
- Create snackable, summary videos of faculty sharing what they're working on and why it matters. Could also help promote centers, institutes and labs through these. Videos can be shared in our newsletter, web and social media
- Stay on top of timely research, re-edit or repurpose to stay on the pulse of timely events
- Create more ways to spotlight our faculty, including a web carousel of all-star faculty – showing their research in hopes that more faculty will want to participate

4. Incorporate more multimedia and video content across all platforms.

- Bring video and other more interactive visuals into online content (Transforming Lives, emails, and newsletters)
- Create animations into graphic designs for digital platforms
- Create more YouTube Shorts - could also tie into Reels and Facebook, could also tie into longer form videos
- Create stills with a great quote to encourage clicks to video on-site.
- Create Video Lists - i.e., "12 reasons I like our college" with different students saying their favorite thing about the college, favorite classes, professors, research topics, etc. Could also mix up from having undergrad students to having faculty and grad students
- Capture why VOI speakers are participating and why it matters to them to help promote and (more content as well as help find future speakers)
- Working with student groups to get interviews and insights
- Highlight the ways our College supports first-generation students
- Create Videos about Learning Communities
- Provide bits of content different lives - video, web content, social media shorts, BuzzFeed lists, animation elements for graphics, etc.
- Focus and make a campaign out of a topic so it's being promoted across lots of platforms and media elements
- Share projects across our team during and outside of our weekly meetings to see how other members can cross-collaborate (Ex: How a story in an article can also be told via video, web or a graphic.
- Use B-Roll on the website as a visual element while scrolling, then link to social media, YouTube, etc.

5. Support all ongoing initiatives that increase revenue streams across the College.

- Gather more assets - video and photo - to help build sites/materials for groups such as ChallengeWorks, CAC, Children's Centers and Youth Camps
- Use paid advertising to develop revenue streams
- Create custom email lists for ChallengeWorks, CAC, Children's Centers and Youth Camps
- Consolidate all camps into one location on the web for easy viewing and comparing
- Social Media ads would help with online degrees (as well as Prof Dev. opportunities)
- Better explain opportunities in ways that are easy-to-understand and digest while avoiding technical/ educational language
- Slugs at the bottom of long-form articles to promote or sidebar
- Self-promote within Transforming Lives
- Leverage LinkTree to include Centers, Grad Degrees, Professional Development, etc.

6. Develop strong brand identity through storytelling and strong visual identity.

- Provide more templates for the College to use and stay on brand
- Sunset unnecessary logos
- Meet with Department Heads and Departments to share MarCom team's vision of the brand and how the team can help them
- Keep doing what we're doing with good storytelling, visuals, and our own version of signature/research stories
- Reach out to peers more often
- Build distribution lists - email marketing with short, digestible messages and more frequent contact
- Segment and target audiences better
- Explore ways to share videos with peers
- SEO - optimize search engine results
- Rotating Rockstars - have big-name faculty chime in and cycle through to increase exposure of our faculty and research
- Understand what messaging is attracting the most attention/clicks/reads to make messaging resonate more with our audiences
- Plug newsletter in our projects such as Transforming Lives to grow our audience
- Create a student toolbox with easy-to-find resources that they regularly need - like IG Highlights, spot on site, etc.
- Increase social media followers by incentivizing following our handles

CAPTURING METRICS

Video

- YouTube data
 - age/how many completing video/most popular topics
 - clickthrough rates on videos and on tx.ag links embedded in video
 - compare older videos that are more scripted vs less scripted, more casual videos.
 - show links before end of video

Web

- Google Analytics
 - How many/how many unique/filter out internal traffic
 - How did they get to page/where did they go
 - Site speed
- SEO

Events

- Keep track of attendance with registration or handouts
- Track number of events
- Capture email addresses and use exit polls/surveys

Social Media

- Engagement rates
- Follower growth
- Number of shares
- Utilize additional metrics from Sprout such as tags and campaigns
- Paid advertising and results/data like cost per impression/click

Graphic Design

- Capture data on use of tx.ag links and/or QR codes
- Use different links/QR code for different platforms to determine which platform is most effective
- Do A/B testing with different versions of graphic (headers, titles, graphics, etc.) to see which graphics resonate the most
- Track how many times templates were used/downloaded
- Track deliverables requests and completions
- Collect project effort

CURRENT TEAM

Patrick Zinn, Director of Marketing & Communications

Communications (Content, Writing, Social Media)

- Ruben Hidalgo – Manager of Communications
- Travis Bowles – Communications Coordinator
- Julianna Diaz – Communications Specialist II

Graphic Design & Video

- Chad Becker – Creative Manager
- Ryan Cano – Graphic Designer III
- Joshua Thuma – Graphic Designer II
- Jorge Goyco – Graphic Designer II (TCALL with dotted line to the MarCom team)
- Logan Jinks – Video Coordinator
- Jeremy Galindo – Multimedia Production Specialist

Web

- Josh Siegel – Communication Specialist III (Web)
- To be hired – Communication Specialist II (Web)
- Sarah Oakley – Communications Specialist I (Web)

Events

- Wendy Kreider – Event Coordinator

