

CCAS Crisis Communications Plan

The CCAS Crisis Communications Plan establishes a process and guidelines for dealing with a variety of situations, and ensures that relevant faculty and staff are familiar with their roles in the event of a crisis or controversy. The plan is designed to be used in conjunction with the normal decision-making hierarchy of the college and is not meant to supplant that decision-making process or decisions made at the university level regarding crisis response.

Purpose:

- Keep stakeholders/constituents informed and updated
- Decrease the likelihood of exacerbating the situation through lack of timely communication
- Reduce the length of time required to bring resolution to the issue
- Minimize any reputational and/or legal repercussions of a crisis

Crisis Communications Team: Roles/Responsibilities

- **Paul Wahlbeck:** As appropriate, informs members of the GW senior administration i.e., the provost, GW legal counsel, DEI director, etc.
- **Kim Gross:** Manages response to any crisis involving programs/special initiatives
- **John Philbeck:** Manages response to any crisis involving faculty members
- **Rachel Riedner:** Manages response to any crisis involving undergraduate students
- **Chad Heap:** Manages response to any crisis involving graduate students
- **Evie Downie:** Manages response to any crisis involving research integrity
- **Julia Choe:** Manages response to any crisis involving staff
- **Toaran Sun:** Manages response to any crisis involving global issues
- **Liz Burns:** Manages response to any crisis involving alumni/donors
- **Denise St.Ours:** Manages drafting/reviewing messaging; coordinates with GW central communications as necessary; ensures dean has been kept in the loop on response

Formulate a Response:

- Who are the primary and secondary stakeholders that need to be addressed?
- What is the most important outcome you wish to achieve?
- What is your core message to achieve that outcome?
- How will the message and the medium differ depending on stakeholder group?
 - Decide what channels will be used to convey information, i.e., in-person meeting with students/faculty, written statement to the community, email to parents, town hall, etc.
- Who will draft and be assigned to review the message?

Response Tips and Best Practices

- Assess the situation and determine whether a response is warranted
- Determine scope and impact of issue
- Keep crisis team informed, as appropriate, of any potential controversy

- Before taking action, seek advice to ensure CCAS and GW interests are effectively represented and not in conflict with existing policies
- When possible, prepare messaging in advance of potential crisis
- Defuse the controversy through early action and communication
- Be timely, factual and respectful of privacy issues
- Refrain from providing information not relevant to the issue