News Releases and Public Announcements

The Colleges have a robust news website, the Daily Update, which includes news announcements and feature stories. These are categorized: Headlines, Academics, Athletics, Events, Community and Alums, with some overlap as to what stories might be included in each category. For instance, a faculty Fulbright story would appear in both Headlines and Academics.

Stories are solicited via a publicity request form which HWS community members may complete with pertinent information, as well as through regularly-occurring meetings with different individuals and groups on campus, such as Senior Staff, Institutional Advancement, Admissions, Community Engagement and Service Learning, and the Salisbury Center for Career Services and Professional Development. Campus community members also contact the office directly via phone or e-mail to share news and interesting stories in the hopes of getting them placed on the Daily Update, distributed to the media and included in the “This Week in Photos” feature.

The Daily Update will publish any stories that fit general guides for newsworthiness – do they have the time, date, place and details sufficient for readers to understand (and participate, if an event)? Stories must have a relationship to the Colleges and will not be simply community announcements or advertising messages (such as apartments for rent, etc.). The office looks to produce stories that reinforce the Colleges’ commitment to global understanding and study abroad opportunities, community service, inclusive excellence, and service learning, illustrating the contemporary facilities and state-of-the-art technology.

In terms of developing news releases and determining what is distributed to the media, the office follows the tenets of newsworthiness. Staff develops announcements for new programs, accolades and events that have the greatest likelihood of being used by the media because they are timely, relevant, fit their profile (regional or beat) and contain all necessary information to comprise a complete story. When possible, the Office includes quotes from the most relevant source, whether it is the President of the Colleges, a student, or a faculty or staff member most closely associated with the story.

All news releases and announcements are to be made through the Office of Communication, which also initiates all media contact. Faculty and staff are advised to direct all media inquiries, should they receive any, to Communications to help coordinate or at the very least log. (There are instances where frequently interviewed faculty are contacted directly by media with whom they’ve established a relationship. In these instances, they share the context of the interview and any information they have as to when and where it should be used with Communications.)

In the event the Colleges are required or requested to comment on a legal or policy issue, the request is taken into consideration with legal counsel and, if warranted, statement is issued by the Office of Communications on behalf of HWS.

The Vice President for Communications is Hobart and William Smith Colleges’ official spokesperson and provides official comment to the media in all instances a direct interview with someone else would not be possible or appropriate, including written statements.