MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS CHECKLIST

The following information has been written to help you create targeted, successful communications. Please take the time to review each step in the process.

☐ STEP 1: Identify your target audience.
• Know basic demographics about them. Your target audience could include current UH students, parents of students, faculty or staff, alumni and/or the Houston community.
• Know basic psychographics about them. This consists of how they think, how do they best receive information, and their behaviors and attitudes of the group. This will help you build a more detailed picture of your target audience.
Without knowing your audience, you don’t know what they need to hear or how they’d like the information presented. After you know your target audience well enough to speak to them, move on to step 2.

Primary target audience: ________________________________

Secondary audience: ________________________________

☐ STEP 2: Know your main message - what is the benefit you are offering your audience that they need (the “big idea”).
• This can be anything from one word to a short, simple sentence.
• To come up with your “big idea,” think about what your organization means to your target audience; what your organization does that sets it apart from all the others at UH; and what are its key distinctions.

DSAES distinctions:
1. Provides opportunities for students to develop leadership skills and apply those skills on campus, in the community, and in the world.
2. Builds community by connecting students to one another, the university and the community through programs that provide opportunities to serve, lead, and interact.
3. Mentors students to help them reach their full potential, discover their passion and define their future.
4. Teaches students to connect knowledge and skills to daily living using an ethical and leadership-oriented approach to become responsible and ethical citizens.
5. Challenges students to make their own decisions and accept the outcome of those decisions.
6. Offers programs and services that foster health and wellness and establish lifelong habits.
7. Holistic programs designed by expert staff that integrate classroom knowledge with real-world experience.

Once you’ve defined the main message about your organization, you will want to make sure it is clearly stated in your communications.

Primary message: ________________________________
STEP 3: Decide on what action(s) is required.

- ALWAYS include a call to action in any communication you develop. This should be a one-sentence statement that asks the reader to do something. It can be clicking through to your website for more information, going online to register for an event, or simply showing up.
- This is a critical part of all communications - it requires the reader to respond and get involved.

Call-to-action: ________________________________________________________________

STEP 4: Decide on your communication/marketing method.

- Now that you know who your audience is, what your key messages are and the call to action, you need to decide how you are going to best communicate with your audience.
- Most communication, especially for university students, is best done digitally (email, websites, and social media). These tactics also align with UH’s sustainability efforts.
- Other alternatives include printed flyers, posters, table-tents, yard signs and banners. Remember to think back to step one and who you audience is and how they best receive information. (Refer to the Campus Marketing Resources document.)

STEP 5: Design your communication

- The best way to capture your audience’s attention is to make sure your materials are visually appealing. Develop graphics and content with all the information your audience needs. Remember to keep the target audience engaged and involved in your message.
- To receive assistance in designing/printing your materials, you may contact the following:
  - Creation Station: www.uh.edu/uccs/index.html
  - UH Printing & Postal: 713-743-5900 or Nalan Giannukos

- Key points to remember when requesting design assistance
  - Send your request at least two weeks before you need your finished file. This will allow time for edits to be made.
  - After the design is finalized, it will be the department’s responsibility to coordinate printing, approval and distribution of the materials.

STEP 6: Proofread and Execute

- Before you print or send anything via email, have two other people proofread the piece.
- If you have access to someone in your target audience, ask them for feedback.
- Once you’ve received feedback from your department and target audience, make revisions if necessary and proofread again; then send it to branding@uh.edu (copy De’Awn Bunch) for approval prior to final printing.

STEP 7: Assess the effectiveness of your communication

- If you know someone in your target audience that received your message, take a few minutes to ask them how they felt about it, if they liked it, if they read the whole message, if they understood what was being conveyed, and what changes could be made to better communicate with them.
- Use the feedback you received in your next message to your target audience. This will continue the effectiveness of your communication and build your brand.
**General tips on copywriting**

There is one phrase you should have in mind when writing copy for any communication piece – “Keep it short, simple and to the point!”

Emails and print collateral don’t need to be wordy. If you can refer your target audience to a website or other easily accessible publication for more information, do it. This will allow for short messages that can be read quickly, and if the audience desires more information, they know exactly where to find it. If it takes people more than 30 seconds to one minute to read your entire message, or even appears to, people mostly likely won’t commit the time to read the entire thing.

Always include a **call to action**. Remember this is the most important part of the message because it requires the reader to respond and get involved.