

Implementation of the Communications Protocol

AS ENDORSED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM AND DEANS' COUNCIL

Changes resulting from the implementation of this policy will occur gradually, only after consultation with affected staff and in full compliance with all University policies and collective agreements.

Transfer of communications leads to faculties

Currently, most faculty communications leads dual-report to the Senior AVP of Communications and their dean or designate, and have half their budget paid for by the Office of Advancement. The Communications Protocol will see reporting responsibilities and base operating budget transfer fully from the Office of Advancement to the relevant faculty.

Transfer of staff and budget to faculties/units

Generally, communications staff within the Office of Advancement that perform work solely for one unit will transfer (along with supporting budget) to that faculty or unit. Consistent with the offer of communications management services, the faculty or unit may decide, at their option, to continue having their reporting relationship be to a manager at the Office of Advancement for the purposes of directing work, providing coaching and keeping them accountable to communications best practice.

Communications staff within the Office of Advancement that perform work for multiple clients will remain with the Office of Advancement. In these cases, supported faculties and units will be transferred either budget space or credit (TBD) and will maintain, by default, support from the Office of Advancement in a manner consistent with the Communications Protocol.

Classification of communications leads

Communications leads currently classified over the classification recommended in the Communications Protocol will be held at the higher classification.

In the case of *communications leads in faculties, Continuing Education and the School of Public Policy* classified under M2 will be reclassified up. Advancement will transfer to the faculties additional base operating funds to cover a salary increase up to the 25th percentile of the M2 band, taking effect with the start of the new fiscal year on April 1, 2022.

Common profiles

Draft common job profiles for communications roles will be developed in conjunction with communications leads and Human Resources. Common profiles will, generally, only be implemented upon position vacancy. Articulating this default of profile review on vacancy is not meant to limit either management or bargaining unit rights to initiative a job profile review.

Rate cards and prioritization scoring

Draft rate cards and prioritization scoring will be developed and circulated by the Senior Director of Communications Systems and Planning by April 1, 2022.

Establishing "credits" for units and faculties

Each year, faculties and units will be provided a modest number of credits they can use before hard costs will be incurred. Draft credits will be based on capacity within the Office of Advancement and established by the Senior AVP of Communications as part of the finalization of the annual budget. As the purpose of this program is to assist faculties in dealing with unanticipated and unbudgeted communications needs, these credits will be provided disproportionately to smaller faculties.

Establishment of governance bodies

As articulated in the Communications Protocol, no University-wide communications standard will be set without consultation with faculty communicators or broad feedback from communicators across campus.

- **Communications Council.** Comprised of all University of Calgary communicators. This council will meet quarterly and as needed.
- Communications Process Committee. Comprised of directors within Communications at the Office of Advancement and all faculty communications leads. This committee will meet monthly and as needed.

Increased design support from Office of Advancement

Subject to the finalization of the 2022/23 budget, the Office of Advancement will double the number of design positions to meet the mandate to provide design services established in the Communications Protocol.

Contact

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Communications Protocol Communicators Guide

Communications Protocol Background

Communications at the University of Calgary is a *shared responsibility* between the Office of Advancement and communications teams located within – and accountable to – the university's faculties and business units. Communications at the University of Calgary is:

- **PURPOSEFUL.** We communicate in support of clearly defined business goals that are set by local leaders. We define objectives that tie back to those goals.
- MEASURABLE. We carefully measure the cost and effort that goes into our communications, as well as the impact realized. We are mindful that a dollar invested in communications is a dollar not invested elsewhere.
- VALUE-DRIVEN. We approach our work in an ethical fashion. We value equity, diversity, inclusion, shared governance and collaboration. We take an entrepreneurial approach to our activities and weave our university's values into everything that we do.

In the spring of 2022, the Communications Protocol was endorced by the Executive Leadership Team and Deans as a new framework governing how to support communications across campus.

Project Intake

Client makes a request for communications support.

Communications requests can come in via:

- Communications web intake form
- Email
- Meeting
- Hallway conversationPassed along from a manager

No matter how the work came to us, you have to determine how the Communications Protcol will be applied.

Billable or Non-billable

Communicator determines if the requested project is billable or not billable.

Ask yourself is this work our core business, or theirs?

Is this work on spear?

- Is this work building our brand as an entrepreneurial university (such as the Start Something campaign)?
- Does this work demonstrate our economic impact to the community?

Activities that support our reputation as Canada's entrepreneurial university and / or demonstrate economic impact are our core business and completed for free based on our capacity.

Is this a mandatory team meeting, including:

- Morning team stand-up
- o 1:1 with my manager
- Communications Services team meetings
- o ACT
- Advancement Town Halls

These meetings are part of our regular team management and are part of our core business.

Does this work maintain a common comms channel or process for all communicators?

- o Training employees on using our softwares or systems
- Uploading a news release into meltwater
- Creating the UToday newsletter

Communicators are required to use set processes and softwares under the Communications Protocol. It is our responsibility to maintain those processes. and channels as our core business.

Is this work crisis communications?

- Is there imminent threat to our reputation as an institution
- Is a director or above leading the communications approach to this issue?

Crisis communications are a key aspect of reputation management and are our core business.

If you responded yes to any of the above questions, the task is non billable. Proceed to launch a project.

If you responded no to these questions, the task is billable. Proceed to scoping.

Scoping – less than 20 hours

If the project will take **less than 20 hours**, then you can complete a quick email authorization for the work.

- Send an email with the statement below and include the approximate hours of work you expect for the project, who will work on it etc.
- Reguest that they authorize the work over email.
- Once this is complete, and client has approved the work, you can move on to the next step.

Email authorization

As per our [conversation/correspondence], Communications will perform the following work for FACULTY/UNIT NAME and take best efforts to complete that work by the dates noted:

- ACTIVITY SUMMARY. To be completed by Month Day, Year.
- ACTIVITY SUMMARY. To be completed by Month Day, Year.
- ACTIVITY SUMMARY. To be completed by Month Day, Year.

This work will be done by the following members of the Communications team at the following hourly rates:

• NAME, \$[HOURLY RATE]/hour

We estimate this work will take approximately X hours to complete for an estimated cost of \$Y. Please note that this is an estimate and actual costs will depend on hours worked.

Any fee will first be applied to your existing communications credits. Only those costs that exceed your annual allotment will be charged to your unit. As of the latest billing cycle, your remaining communications credits are ______.

If you're in agreement with the above, please reply to this email to that effect.

For more information about the communications protocol please visit www.ucalgary.ca/communications-protocol

Scoping – More than 20 hours

If the project will take **more than 20 hours**, then you must complete a Scope of Work (SOW) document.

- Complete the Scope of Work document, including inquiring how many hours you will need of other comms units.
- Your manager may request that they review all SOWs before they go to the client. Check with your manager if you are unsure if this step is required.
- Provide the SOW document to the client.
- Request they approve the SOW and authorize the work.
- Once this is complete you can move to launching a project.

Standard task time estimates

Communications Services

Landing page, form building: 28 hours

UToday articles: 20 hours

• Speaking notes and powerpoint presentations: 20 hours

• Social media: 14 hours

• Electronic billboards: 7 hours

Creating and printing assets without design team: 20 hours

• LiveWhale: 4 hours

• Website updates: 7 hours

Copy editing: 1 hour smaller project, 2 hours bigger project

Media Relations

• Writing news release or preparing for an announcement 28-35 hours

Design

- 1-3 digital assets (ie. Marketo graphic, social media graphic, web graphics): 4-6 hours
- 4-6 digital assets: 8-10 hours
- 6+ assets: Minimum 12 hours
- Motion graphics (simple animation moving text, objects appearing/disappearing):
 16-22 hours
- Motion graphics (complex animation): 40-50 hours
- Merchandise (this really depends on the complexity of the merchandise) for a simple swag item with specs confirmed: 8-12 hours
- Postcard: 8-12 hours
- Name tag: 4-6 hours
- Greeting card: 8-12 hours
- Poster: 8-12 hours
- Tent card: 8-12 hours
- Envelope: 2-4 hours
- Brochure (single sheet, folded): 20-24 hours
- Lamppost sign: 8-12 hours
- Presentation folder: 20-24 hours
- Publication (multi-page): 14-21 days (80-120 hours)
- Pull-up banner: 12-18 hours

Launching a project

Email the communications coordinator Lisa Chisholm to launch the project. commsprotocol@ucalgary.ca

Include the following details for this project

- o Is this billable or non-billable?
- Client name / faculty
- o Job name
- Start and end date
- Tasks
- Who is managing the job
- Which individuals will also be part of the project
- Who needs access to Harvest to track their time
- o Provide a copy of the email authorization or approved SOW

Lisa will set up the Harvest project, ensure the naming convention and grant access to anyone who needs it.

Working on the project

It will be important to track your time accurately and consistently in Harvest.

- Make sure you are using the Harvest projects Lisa prepared for you
- Track your time in 15 minute increments
- **Be honest.** Reflect the actual time it took, not the time you believe it should have taken. If it takes you 17 hours to do something you believe should have been accomplished in 8 hours, please reflect 17 hours in your time tracking.
- Ensure your time tracking is kept up to date. All time tracking must be accurate
 by the 5th day of each month to allow the data to be exported and invoices
 distributed by the 15th.

Closing the project

Email Lisa Chisholm at commsprotocol@ucalgary.ca to let her know that the project has been completed and should be archived.

Invoicing

Invoices to clients will draw from Harvest and Workfront to pull time tracking data.

They will be provided to clients monthly and include their annual allotment, how much has been used thus far, charges for the past month and any balance owing.

A budget transfer will take place at the end of the year for any balance accrued in the past year.

As a communicator, you can view a client's invoices on Teams.

FAQs

What is the Communications Protocol?

Launched April 1, 2022, the Communications Protocol is a framework governing the shared responsibility for communications between the Office of Advancement and communications teams located within university's faculties and business units.

Who does the Communications Protocol apply to?

The Communications Protocol applies to all communicators on campus. It includes consistent hiring and classification guidelines, and defines common standards and approaches that must be used by all communicators, including:

- Calendaring and planning

- Measurement

- Media relations coordination

- Visual identity and brand

It also includes a variety of communications services that are available for use by faculties and units on campus that can be provided at cost.

Who approved the Communications Protocol?

The Communications Protocol has been endorsed by the Executive Leadership Team and Dean's Council.

Why is there a charge now?

In 2019, the newly formed Office of Advancement announced that it would no longer support internal communications needs for faculties and units. This was due to a shift in resources and a need to focus on building the main UCalgary brand. However, this dramatic reduction in services left many units without access to communications professionals and affected the strategic business needs of the university.

To better balance the communications requirements of faculties and units, and to ensure fairness across the system, the Communications Protocol was created. Allocations have been established for each executive team member and individual faculties to help support their communications needs.

Am I the only one who has to pay?

Anyone seeking access to communications supports that are not considered "on brand" activities will be required to pay for those services at cost. Faculties and units on campus have been provided with an annual allocation of communications services – a defined budget they can use at their discretion.

How do I ask for communications support?

There are numerous ways to request support for communications.

- Email the communicator you have been working with most regularly
- If in a faculty, contact your faculty communicator
- Submit a communications request using our common intake form
- Submit a design request in workfront
- Submit a media request

How do I get my project for free?

Communications projects that clearly demonstrate "on-brand" messaging are provided to faculties and units at no cost. This includes stories, events, ads or communications campaigns tied to the following brand elements:

- Canada's entrepreneurial university (such as the Start something campaign)
- UCalgary's economic impact to the community

How are rates determined?

The Office of Advancement works on a cost-recovery basis. Hourly rates are calculated based on the price it takes to recover the cost of staffing a position. For example, a junior communications specialist is charged at \$45 per hour, a communications specialist at \$55 per hour and a senior communications specialist at \$70 per hour. This reflects the difference in salary rates based on varied experience levels of communicators.

Charges are based only on the hours dedicated to the specific task requested. The Office of Advancement assumes all costs associated with management support and / or oversight of communicators on your behalf.

How much is my allocation?

Allocations for faculties are based on the size of the faculty – with smaller faculties receiving more support to balance their smaller in house communications team.

Small faculty – \$29,738 Medium faculty – \$22,050 Large faculty – \$11,250

Allocations have also been made for each member of the Executive Leadership Team.

- Office of the President \$147,000 Office of Vice President (Finance) \$36,750
- Office of the Provost \$147,000 Office of Vice President (Research) \$36,750
- Office of Advancement \$147,000 Office of Vice President (Services) \$36,750

How was my allocation determined?

Allocations are based on historic service levels and current communicator positions that are fully funded within the Office of Advancement. They are reviewed annually.

My allocation isn't big enough. How do I get it raised?

Allocations are tied to current funding levels within the Office of Advancement. In 2022, the Office of Advancement is dedicating more than \$850,000 of its annual budget for the communications needs of other faculties and units across campus. This is in addition to maintaining common standards, processes and softwares on behalf of all UCalgary communicators, or providing free communications supports for on brand activities. As with all units on campus, communications must operate within its budget constraints and can no longer assume the communications costs for units above what has been allocated.

You don't understand, this is really important work that needs to be done!

We understand that this is important work on behalf of the University of Calgary and tied to your core business. That is why we have created allocations to support your communications needs. Communications represents a cost to the university in salaried hours. If your requirements exceed your annual allocation, you will need to allocate budget to cover those communications costs.

How will I know how much I owe?

Before taking on work on your behalf, communicators will send you an estimate for the costs associated for you to approve. This estimate is made in good faith, based on our average times for completing common tasks. Each month, your faculty or unit will receive an invoice updating you on the charges that have been incurred, the amount of your allocation and the current balance.

When do I pay?

A budget transfer will take place once per year, at the end of each fiscal year. Montly invoices will keep you informed of the status of your communications allocation.

What if I don't have budget to pay for this?

Any charges accrued over the fiscal year by a faculty or unit will be charged at the end of the fiscal year. Monthly invoices will be provided to update the status of annuall allocation and indicate any costs beyond them. It is up to the responsible manager to track the charges and account for them in your budget.

How can I reduce the number of hours, or overall cost, of my project?

Be open to more junior staff completing more of the work. Charges are based on the salary costs of professionals, with junior communicators being a lower hourly cost than a senior communicator or manager. For many tactical tasks, junior communicators would be a great opportunity to stretch your communications resources.

Be contious about how many meetings you are requesting. Meeting attendance will be charged under the communications protocol. Ensure any meetings you are requiring a communicator to attend will help drive communications supports required.

Be careful about multiple levels of approvals. By clarifying early in the project who needs to approve materials, and by trying to have between 1-2 rounds of approvals for your products, you can reduce overall costs.

Given these charges, do I have to use you for my communications project?

No. The use of Office of Advancement communications services is optional – for both parties. All communicators must abide by the shared systems, processes and policies, including upholding the UCalgary brand. However, you are free to hire outside communications professionals to support your work. The Office of Advancement is also permitted to turn down work it cannot assume due to capacity limits.

I have questions about my invoice, who can I speak to?

Please contact the lead communicator who has been working with you on the project or projects in question. They will connect you with their manager to discuss the charges.

I disagree with these charges, how can I escalate this matter?

You can ask to speak with Sarah McGinnis, Senior Director of Communications Services or Corey Hogan, Senior Associate Vice President of Communications to resolve this matter.

Any disputes arising from the implementation or interpretation of the protocol can ultimately be adjudicated by the Provost or designate.

APPENDIX 1

Rate Card

As outlined in the Communications Protocol, the Office of Advancement provides communications services "to advance our brand story and support the broader university community". In cases where the work requested does not directly promote the core University of Calgary brand, the Office of Advancement will bill back to the faculty or unit, at cost, the price of providing those services.

Base hourly rates as of July 1, 2022

(\$/hr)	Jr.		Sr.
Communications Services	45	55	70
Media Relations	45	55	70
Digital	55	75	80
Design	45	55	70
Manager	_	90	90
Media Relations	45	55	70
Project Manager	-	70	-

Overtime/off-hour rates as of July 1, 2022

(\$/hr)	Jr.		Sr.
Communications Services	70	85	105
Media Relations	70	85	105
Digital	70	115	120
Design	70	85	105
Manager	-	135	135
Media Relations	70	85	105
Project Manager	-	105	-

PLEASE NOTE: There is a four-hour minimum charge for work performed outside of office hours.

Increments, minimum charges and optionality

Work is billed in 15-minute increments. There is a minimum four-hour charge for work performed outside of office hours. There is no minimum charge for work performed within Communications' office hours (8:30am to 4:30pm).

The use of Office of Advancement services is not mandatory. Subject to the collective agreement and procurement requirements, faculties and units are free to outsource communications activity. The Office of Advancement may turn down requests due to lack of capacity (technical or otherwise) but will not otherwise turn down requests for service.

How are rates set?

The Office of Advancement works on a cost-recovery basis. Base hourly rates are calculated based on the price it takes to recover the cost of staffing a position (including benefits) and assumes a 75% utilization rate.

staff cost to employer / (worked weeks * hours per week * standard utilization) = hourly rate

Table 1. Sample calculation for hourly rate

For ease of operations and price clarity, all staff in a category are pooled to create an average category rate and hourly rates are rounded to the nearest \$5 increment. Hourly rates do not include office or management overhead (the price of office space and management salary is not added into the rate).

Off-hour rates are 1.5x of base rates, rounded up to the next \$5 increment. In addition to reflecting the higher cost of staffing outside of business hours, they are intended to discourage the use of staff time out of regular business hours. In all cases, overtime can only be assigned in compliance with HR Policy, our collective agreement with the AUPE (where relevant) and prior approval of both the relevant manager and the communications lead in the requesting faculty/unit.

APPENDIX 2

FY2022/23 Communications Credit Allocation OFFICE OF ADVANCEMENT SUPPORT FOR FACULTY AND UNIT COMMUNICATIONS

As detailed in the Communications Protocol, the *Communications Department in the Office of Advancement* (Communications) bills faculties and units the cost of providing communications services requested that do not directly promote a national market position of being *Canada's Entrepreneurial University* or a regional understanding of the *economic value of the University of Calgary*.

Before real costs are incurred and inter-unit transfers are required, faculties and units draw down credit banks allocated annually. FY2022/23 allocations reflect that the credit system is being introduced 25% of the way through the fiscal year.

Communications credits allocated for July 1, 2022 through March 31, 2023

Office of the Provost	\$147,000	(2100 to 3266 billable
 Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Office of Indigenous Engagement Sustainability Strategy Campus Mental Health Strategy International Strategy Teaching and Learning Strategy Office of Institutional Analysis Office of the Registrar Vice Provost Student Experience 		hours)
Office of the VPF	\$36,750	(525 to 817 billable hours)
 Ancillary Services 		
Finance		
Internal Audit		
Office of the VPS	\$36 <i>,</i> 750	(525 to 817 billable hours)
 Facilities 		
Human Resources		
 Information Technologies 		
Risk		
Office of the VPR	\$35,750	(525 to 817 billable hours)
Research Services		
Research and Innovation		

Office of the President	\$147,000	(2100 to 3266 billable
• President	*	hours)
Board of Governors		·
• Senate		
 ELT/SLT communications support 		
Other portions of the Office of	\$147,000	(2100 to 3266 billable
Advancement		hours)
Alumni Engagement		
 Development 		
Community Engagement		
Faculty of Arts	\$22,050	(315 to 490 billable hours)
School of Architecture, Planning and	\$22,050	(315 to 490 billable hours)
Landscape		
Cumming School of Medicine	\$11,250	(161 to 250 billable hours)
Dinos Athletics	\$22,050	(315 to 490 billable hours)
Faculty of Graduate Studies	\$22,050	(315 to 490 billable hours)
Haskayne School of Business	\$11,250	(161 to 250 billable hours)
Faculty of Kinesiology	\$22,050	(315 to 490 billable hours)
Faculty of Law	\$29,738	(425 to 661 billable hours)
Faculty of Nursing	\$22,050	(315 to 490 billable hours)
Schulich School of Engineering	\$22,050	(315 to 490 billable hours)
Faculty of Science	\$22,050	(315 to 490 billable hours)
Faculty of Social Work	\$29,738	(425 to 661 billable hours)
Faculty of Veterinary Medicine	\$29,738	(425 to 661 billable hours)
Werklund School of Education	\$22,050	(315 to 490 billable hours)

Credits represent committed staffing costs within the Office of Advancement and cannot be used to pay for other costs either internally or with external vendors, though they may be transferred between faculties and units. Because of variability of demand throughout the year, available credits are not a guarantee of available capacity.

Why do we provide credits?

Credits are allocated to:

- assist faculties/units in dealing with unanticipated needs and vacation cover-off;
- increase equity between smaller and larger faculties; and
- recognize higher historical support levels that have been provided by the Communications Department to certain units across campus.

Importantly, credits are <u>not</u> allocated to support important university priorities that fall outside the Communications Departments' stated brand objectives. Funding support for such university priorities, including enhanced communications, should be established and provided through the responsible unit's budget. The size of the credit pool available for distribution is based on funding levels in the Office of Advancement.

APPENDIX 3

Credit Sub – Allocations for ELT

On July 1, 2022, Communications will begin to implement the time tracking, scoping, and use of dedicated credits as part of the approved communications protocol.

Each ELT member has an overall allocation for communications support for their unit under the communications protocol. The annual allocations are based on the current funded positions within the Office of Advancement's communications team. The allocations will be revisited annually based on staffing levels.

For the balance of the 2022-2023 fiscal year these allocations are:

Office of the President – \$147,000
Office of the Provost – \$147,000
Office of Advancement – \$147,000
Office of Vice President (Finance) – \$36,750
Office of Vice President (Research) – \$36,750
Office of Vice President (Services) – \$36,750

To further enable the communications protocol implementation, sub-allocations have been drafted on behalf of each ELT member. They are based on historic levels of support for each team, with resources weighted to units who have traditionally required additional communications for external events and campaigns in the past.

These proposed sub-allocations are **at the discretion of each ELT member**. Amounts can be moved between sub-units as needed without triggering a charge back so long as each ELT member does not exceed their annual allocation.

Credit allocation draft recommendations for 2022/2023 fiscal year

Office of the Provost – total allocation is \$147,000

- Provost executive communications support \$22,050
- Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion \$22,050
- Office of Indigenous Engagement \$22,050
- Sustainability Strategy \$14,700
- Campus Mental Health Strategy \$14,700
- International Strategy \$14,700
- Teaching and Learning Strategy \$14,700
- Office of Institutional Analysis \$7,350

Office of the Registrar / Vice Provost Student Experience – \$14,700

Office of Vice President (Finance) – total allocation is \$36,750

- VPFS (Finance) executive communications support \$10,500
- Ancillary Services \$11,250
- Finance \$7,500
- Internal Audit \$7,500

Office of Vice President (Services) – total allocation is \$36,750

- VPFS (Services) executive communications support \$7,500
- Facilities \$7,500
- Human Resources \$7,500
- Information Technologies \$7,500
- Risk \$6,750
 (Any significant reputation management will not be included in these rates)

Office of Vice President Research – total allocation is \$36,750

Recommend leave it to VPR to distribute as they know their clients the best.
 Comms requests would likely come all via VPR comms team

Office of Vice President Advancement – total allocation is \$147,000

- Vice President Advancement Executive Communications \$24,450
- Alumni Engagement \$24,450
- Community Engagement \$36,750
- Development \$24,600
- Strategic Events \$36,750

Office of the President – total allocation is \$147,000

- President executive communications support \$73,500
- Board of Governors \$18,375
- Senate and Chancellor \$36,750
- ELT / SLT communications support \$18,375