

Students' Union of St. Thomas University, Inc.
Communications Plan

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Title I – Name

S.1. This organization shall be called the “Students’ Union of St. Thomas University, Inc.,” hereinafter referred to as the “Students’ Union.”

Title II – Definitions

S.1 In this Communications Plan:

- a) **“Member”** means any student at St. Thomas University who pays membership fees to the Students’ Union;
- b) **“SEC”** means the Students’ Executive Council of the Students’ Union;
- c) **“SRC”** means the Students’ Representative Council of the Students’ Union;
- d) **“Employees”** means all employees of the Students’ Union;
- e) **“Event”** means all activity or announcement organized by the Students’ Union, residence groups, off-campus groups, ratified clubs and societies, the university, government or other stakeholders;
- f) **“Social Media”** means online platforms or channels in which the Students’ Union directly participates or engages in. At this time, this includes: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram;
- g) **“Physical Communications Materials”** means physical promotional or communicative materials for events, including but not limited to, posters and table toppers;
- h) **“Physical Communications Materials Request Form”** means a Google form outlining all the necessary information required by the Communications Coordinator to create physical communications materials;
- i) **“Executive Supervisor”** means the member of the SEC who has been designated as the direct supervisor of the Communications Coordinator;
- j) **“Communications Coordinator”** means the employee of the Students’ Union who works with their Executive Supervisor to be one of the main contributors to the Students’ Union communications;
- k) **“Style Preferences”** means the Students’ Union document with the stylistic preferences for writing and style for all official Students’ Union publications;
- l) **“Branding Guide”** refers to the the official guide to the Students’ Union branding, created by Rockhill Design Company; and
- m) **“Plan”** refers to the entirety of this document, the Students’ Union of St. Thomas University Communications Plan.

Title III – Objectives

S.1 This document was compiled with the purpose of laying out and describing communications procedures and practices for the Students' Union. This plan shall be used as a guideline for Students' Union Executives and Communications Coordinators. Due to the fast-paced world of technology and communications, this plan should be reviewed by the Executive Supervisor and the Communications Coordinator annually. Each review, and any necessary changes, should be completed during the summer before the academic year begins or before the end of September.

Title IV – Communications Coordinator

S.1 Each year, the Communications Coordinator shall be assigned a direct supervisor who is a member of the Executive team. This person is referred to as the “Executive Supervisor” throughout this plan.

S.2 The Communications Coordinator should meet with their Executive Supervisor to review this Communications immediately at the beginning of the academic year. During this initial meeting, the Executive Supervisor and the Communications Coordinator shall:

- a) Decide if any necessary changes need to be made to the plan for the upcoming year;
- b) Review their responsibilities as employer and employee as set out in this plan;
- c) Decide how they may choose to divide primary communications responsibilities amongst themselves; and
- d) Review the Students' Union Branding Guide.

S.3 Roles and Responsibilities of the Communications Coordinator and Executive Supervisor. The Executive Supervisor and Communications Coordinator shall:

- a) adhere to all provisions of Students' Union Constitution, By-Laws and Human Resources Policy;
- b) work together throughout the year to ensure that the Students' Union effectively communicates with their members through various vehicles of communication;
- c) be responsible for working together to market the Students' Union to its members and stakeholders;
- d) be the two people within the Students' Union primarily responsible for all forms of official Students' Union communication, including but not limited to: social media communication, social media direct messages, physical communications materials, branding, website design and posts, and press releases, position statements and more;
- e) review this plan with the Help Desk Coordinator early in the academic year to ensure they are aware of the Students' Union's communications and social media practices; and
- f) review this plan with the Welcome Week Chair upon their hire to ensure they are aware of the Students' Union's communications and social media practices.

Title V – Communications Committee

S.1 There shall be a Communications Committee of the SRC, hereinafter referred to in this Title as the "Committee."

S.2 The Executive Supervisor and the Communications Coordinator shall Co-Chair the Communications Committee.

S.3 The committee will be made up of; the two co-chairs, four residence representatives of SRC, one off-campus representative of the SRC, and one at-large representatives of the SRC.

S.4 The Activities Coordinator shall also sit as an ex-officio member of the committee.

S.5 The Co-Chairs of the committee shall encourage other students to become members of this committee that are not members of the SRC.

S.6 All members of the committee shall receive training on: what the Students' Union is, the services the Students' Union provides, the rest of the information in this Communications Plan, and any other relevant information.

S.7 When the committee meets, the Co-Chairs shall inform the committee of upcoming events, social media posts, promotions, press releases and any other public relations information that is relevant to the committee.

S.8 The committee shall regularly provide feedback and ideas for the Co-Chair's consideration, on ways in which the Students' Union may decide to communicate with their members.

S.9 If a committee member is in violation of the Constitution, By-Laws or Human Resources Policy, they may be removed from the committee at the discretion of the Co-Chairs.

S.10 If one of the Co-Chairs is the person in violation of the above documents, they may be removed from the committee at the discretion of another member of the SEC.

Title VI - Promotion Practices

S.1 Social Media Practices

a) promotion via social media for the Students' Union shall be a collaborative effort between the Executive Supervisor, other members of the SEC and Communications Coordinator;

b) the Students' Union shall strive to begin promoting all Students' Union events via social media, at a minimum of two weeks prior to the event;

- c) the promotion of the event shall increase incrementally as the event approaches from the two-week mandatory start time; and
- d) the Students' Union shall strive to provide on-going promotion during events by means of live tweeting, live videos, photos, posts, stories and any other relevant promotional activity.

S.2 Practices for Physical Communications Materials

- a) the Communications Coordinator shall be the creator of all physical communications materials;
- b) a minimum of three-week notice prior to an event must be given to the Communications Coordinator by fully completing the Physical Communications Materials Request Form for them to create any physical communications materials;
- c) the Communications Coordinator must have the physical communications materials that are requested before or on the three-week deadline completed and sent to the Executive Supervisor for approval no later than the following week;
- d) the Communications Coordinator will then place the completed and approved communications materials in the Help Desk for pick-up by the individual who requested them and all other constituencies participating in the promotion;
- e) if physical communications materials are requested after the three-week deadline, discretion is left to the Communications Coordinator and the Executive Supervisor, if the physical communications materials will be created in the requested timeline; and
- f) if physical communications materials are not picked up by either the individual who requested them or another constituency participating in the promotion, the Communications Coordinator and Executive Supervisor may decide not to provide physical communications materials for that constituency in the future due to the waste of resources caused by physical communications materials not being picked up and used for promotion.

Title VII - Branding

S.1 The Executive Supervisor and Communications Coordinator shall be in possession of all branding materials and be primarily in control of Students' Union's branding.

S.2 The Executive Supervisor, Communications Coordinator, and any others permitted to use the Students' Union's branding shall adhere to the branding advice set out in the Branding Guide, created by Cat Squires of Rockhill Design Company.

S.3 The Executive Supervisor and Communications Coordinator shall enforce the Branding Guide at all times.

S.4 It is the responsibility of both the Executive Supervisor and the Communications Coordinator to ensure that any individual authorized to use Students' Union's branding, does so in accordance to the Branding Guide.

Title VIII - Website

S.1 The Communications Coordinator shall be primarily responsible for the Students' Union's website.

S.2 The Communications Coordinator must train the Executive Supervisor on how to perform basic website updates and changes.

S.3 The guidelines surrounding the regular annual update of the Students' Union's website are as follows:

- a) the website must be updated with the new Executives photos, contact information and biographies by May 1 each year;
- b) Before the end of September, the Executive Supervisor and Communications Coordinator shall perform a brief audit of the website each year to ensure that all information on the website is correct and up to date;
- c) if discrepancies are indicated in this audit, they shall be corrected as soon as possible by either the Executive Supervisor or the Communications Coordinator;
- d) the website must be updated with Councillors photos, contact information, and biographies, two weeks after the fall By-Election;
- e) the website must be updated with Employees names and contact information by the end of September; and
- f) the Executive Supervisor and Communications Coordinator shall work together throughout the year to maintain the events page and calendar on the Students' Union's website.

Title IX - Social Media

S.1 The Students' Union shall strive to be consistently and regularly active on all forms of social media that exist under the Students' Union brand.

S.2 The Students' Union shall strive to regularly create their own posts on social media and share other relevant posts to the Students' Union.

S.3 The Students' Union shall strive to include quality photos and videos in as many social media posts as possible to allow for increased post engagement.

S.4 The Students' Union shall also respond to messages on their social media accounts when necessary.

S.5 The Students' Union shall also operate the Students' Union's social media accounts in a manner that is appropriate, professional and one that complies with the Constitution, By-Laws and Human Resources Policy of the Students' Union.

S.6 The above sections also apply to the Help Desk Facebook Page, which will be managed by the Help Desk Coordinator.

- a) it is the responsibility of the Executive Supervisor to review this plan with the Help Desk Coordinator; and
- b) the Executive Supervisor and Communications Coordinator shall monitor this page to ensure that the page is consistent with the Students' Union communications and social media practices set out in this plan.

S.7 The above sections also apply to the Welcome Week Chair if they choose to create and manage social media accounts for Welcome Week.

- a) it is the responsibility of the Executive Supervisor to review this plan with the Welcome Week Chair; and
- b) the Executive Supervisor shall monitor this page to ensure that the page is consistent with the Students' Union communications and social media practices set out in this plan.

S.8 Upon request or independently, the Executive Supervisor and Communications Coordinator may make reports to council on the Students' Union social media and website analytics.

Title X – Press Releases

S.1 The Students' Union shall strive to write press releases for all events specifically related to St. Thomas University, that would be in their members interests.

S.2 The Students' Union may write press releases for events related to the municipal, provincial or federal government that are matters of importance to their members.

- a) Due to the fact that the Students' Union is a member of a provincial advocacy organization (New Brunswick Student Alliance) and federal advocacy organization (Canadian Alliance of Student Associations), the Executive Supervisor and Communications Coordinator may choose to promote the press releases put out by these organizations in addition to or in the place of writing a release directly from the Students' Union.

S.3 The guidelines surrounding the Students' Union's press releases are as follows:

- a) press releases may be drafted by the Communications Coordinator and approved by the Executive Supervisor and the President;

- b) if the topic of the press release is specific to another member of the SEC, the press release may be drafted by them and then sent to the Executive Supervisor for approval;
- c) all press releases by the Students' Union shall strictly adhere to the Canadian Press Style and the Students' Union style preferences;
- d) the Students' Union shall place all releases on letterhead and with a media contact;
- e) the Students' Union shall post press releases on all official online Students' Union channels;
- f) the Students' Union shall post their press releases at high traffic times during the day and week to allow for greater engagement;
- g) the Students' Union shall post releases as photos rather than files on social media; and
- h) the Students' Union may include relevant photos with the release to allow for greater engagement.

Title XI – Media Relations

S.1 The Students' Union procedure for media calls is as follows:

- a) media calls shall be received by the General Manager;
- b) the General Manager shall then inform the SEC that a media request has been submitted; and
- c) the Executive Supervisor shall decide, in consultation with the Communications Coordinator if desired, if the Students' Union will respond to the media call, who will respond on behalf of the Students' Union and any other appropriate actions.

S. 2 It is recommended that the SEC receive media relations training annually at the beginning of their term.

S.3 It is recommended that the Executive Supervisor reach out to media organizations annually to ensure they have correct contact information for the Students' Union and to ensure that the General Manager is their first point of contact for media calls.