



**COMMITTEE ON MARKETING, PUBLIC RELATIONS  
AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Telephone Conference Call**

**April 30, 2019**

**123 Tigert Hall, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL**

**Time Convened: 2:10 p.m.**

**Time Adjourned: 3:02 p.m.**

**Committee and Board members present:**

Robert G. Stern (Chair), Leonard H. Johnson, Michael C. Murphy, Daniel T. O’Keefe, Rahul Patel, Marsha D. Powers, Katie Vogel Anderson and Anita G. Zucker.

**Others present:**

Nancy Paton, Vice President for Strategic Communications and Marketing; Todd Sanders, Director, Digital Communications and Social Media; Sean Chohan, Sales Engineering, Brandwatch; Eric Potheair, Enterprise Sales Director, Brandwatch, and other members of the University community.

**1.0 Verification of Quorum**

Assistant University Secretary Melissa Orth called the roll and noted those Trustees that were in attendance.

**2.0 Call to Order and Welcome**

Committee Chair Stern welcomed everyone to the meeting. It was noted that this was an informational meeting to prepare for the June 6, 2019 regular meeting, and no action was planned or taken at this preparatory meeting.

**3.0 Discussion Items**

Committee Chair Stern indicated there would be three discussion topics related to advancing the strategic communications and marketing plan. First will be to review/recap the March Committee Report. Second will be a demonstration of our new digital analytics platform conducted by Brandwatch, an international firm which specializes in online environmental understanding and analytics. The demonstration will be led by Sean Chohan, an alumni. And the third item will be Vice President Paton reviewing the timeline for implantation of the tactics related to successful achievement of our strategic goals.

Committee Chair Stern stated that the plan centers on five critical strategic imperatives, our goals, and to advance the university’s reputation and rankings to achieve our aspiration of becoming a Top 5 nationally-ranked public university. As we process on our five plan goals, it is vital to measure, track, analyze and optimize our efforts. The creation of key performance

indicators or KPIs will serve to gauge our performance. I am pleased to report that discussions and work are already underway to create the KPIs and related dashboards. Today's demonstration of our digital analytics platform will illustrate the key metrics we can and will capture as part of our KPIs. Vice President Paton and I will partner to establish these metrics and our goal is to have a draft KPI dashboard ready to review later this month (May).

Committee Chair Stern thanked everyone for their input and kind words which were very much appreciated. I think the entire Board of Trustees and the senior university leaders reacted positively to the plan. We appreciate your efforts and we are ready to move forward to implement and will see that several initiatives are already underway. We are ready to hit the ground running.

Vice President Paton thanks Committee Chair Stern and the committee members for their enthusiastic support of the new strategic communications and marketing plan. We have already advanced many of the imperatives/goals we determined as critical to driving progress on our overall goal of advancing UF's reputation and rankings. In each of our committee meetings, we will focus some discussions on exploring one or more of our strategic imperatives in detail.

Today we are pleased to share with you a demonstration of our very new analytics platform that will establish and implement a functionality to understand, analyze, learn from public conversations occurring about our university and establishing further digital metrics. This new platform aligns and advances: Goal 1: Build a distinctive national brand; Goal 2: Propel UF's thought leadership reputation; and Goal 3: Safeguard the UF brand and reputation. This tactic was outlined under Goal 3, to establish and implement functionality to understand and analyze online conversations.

Vice President Paton indicated that the goal is to use the platform to identify opportunities to amplify our stories, to reach new and influential audiences who may choose to elect to partner with us as brand advocates, to help our community members receive answers or attention on matters of importance to them and to understand emerging issues that may be relevant to us. As Committee Chair Stern mentioned, we are pleased to partner with Brandwatch, a firm that was selected after review of other organizations due to their expertise in this field, their work with national brands and their expertise in higher education. Many of our peers are partnering with Brandwatch. The company brought on board Sean Chohan, Sales Engineering, who is an alumni who graduated in 2008 with a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish. Sean is joined by Eric Potheair who is an Enterprise Sales Director with Brandwatch.

Sean Chohan and Eric Potheair both presented on what the new platform can do and showed examples of data that has already been captured.

Vice President Paton stated that the five strategic imperatives or major goals will advance UF's reputation and rankings and help us reach our aspiration as expressed in our Decade Ahead Strategy to be the premier university that the state, nation and world look to for leadership.

We will advance our UF Reputation and Rankings by successful achievement of their five goals:

- Goal 1 Build a distinctive national brand
- Goal 2 Propel UF's thought leadership reputation
- Goal 3 Safeguard the UF brand and reputation
- Goal 4 Transform and innovate through technology
- Goal 5 Establish internal brand strategy

Vice President Paton indicated she would outline the timelines for the tactics that are being brought forward in the plan that will drive our goals. The tactical implementation will span the next six quarters and beyond. While the timeline focuses on initial embarking on establishing these tactics, full maturation will occur over the next few years.

We are finalizing our ITN now to select a firm to partner with us on the brand position and identity research as well as defining the brand platform and positioning strategy and messaging/content platforms. The brand and identity research and subsequent platform and positioning strategy represents a significant strategic investment for our university. Committee Chair Stern indicated that the first two action items were critical as we do a deep dive to determine who we are. We are focused on going forward.

Vice President Paton stated they were identifying opportunities to create deeper and stronger relationships with news organizations within the state and nationwide. We will soon begin the creation of a refined strategic thought leadership plan. While we currently place faculty and administrative leaders on key topics of relevance to current events/news, I believe our efforts could strengthen through the creation of a plan that will proactively align and create opportunities for us to amplify our academic leadership and research expertise.

We are in the planning phases to extend the number of faculty and administrative leadership who we will partner to serve as scholarly thought leaders on public platforms. We recently had an insightful meeting with the conversation where we discussed the potential of an initiative to reach out to middle and high schoolers who are important groups to create brand affinity with.

Today's presentation was indicative of the progress toward this goal. We are also in the final stages of building our university's key issues/information portal as outlined in the second tactic listed.

Progress is underway on the first two tactics outlined for implementation this quarter. We have already embraced Instagram TV and have executive new long-form video content including two long-form video series (i.e. short tv shows) to tell our stories on this channel.

One story featured e-sports, which featured a recent alumna and current student who has become professional gamers. The other recent series is based on Game of Thrones, where we ask a herpetologist from the Florida Museum to discuss what science thinks of the dragons featured in this wildly popular series. Each of these IGTV shows average 20,000 views in uptick against the performance of our regular news feed. As the approach is refined, the views and audiences will increase.

Vice President Paton indicated that the revamping of the ufl website is underway which is considered the front door to the University. There are over 1M pages and 700+ websites. This does not include the health science center. We have conducted usability and traffic testing and held focus groups with more than 80 people to determine the expectations and needs. I will report on this important initiative in greater detail at a future committee meeting.

We will move our focus forward on this imperative with the creation of an internal communications function in our new organizational structure which is currently in the process and I am driving to completion and approval in June.

Critical to the success of our goals and the tactics therein is the creation of strong foundational success drivers. The implementation of the drivers is set to occur as outlined. We will discuss the KPIs, our metrics to measure, track, analyze and optimize our efforts at our next committee meeting. Committee Chair Stern and I will partner to create these metrics. These future dashboards are critical to ensuring ongoing progress and success.

#### **4.0 New Business**

There was no new business to come before the board.

#### **5.0 Adjourn**

Committee Chair Stern adjourned the meeting at 3:02 p.m.