

# Working with the Media

## *A Guide for AAUP Chapters*

[www.aaup.org](http://www.aaup.org)

aaup

# Presenters



## Greg Loving, PhD

President

University of Cincinnati AAUP chapter

Associate Professor of Philosophy

[greg.lovings@uc.edu](mailto:greg.lovings@uc.edu)



## Jeff Cramerding, JD

Communications Director

University of Cincinnati AAUP chapter

[cramerjy@ucmail.uc.edu](mailto:cramerjy@ucmail.uc.edu)

aaup

# Logistics



Gwendolyn Bradley,  
AAUP Staff

[gbradley@aaup.org](mailto:gbradley@aaup.org)

aaup



# Why Do Media Work?

- To shape public opinion on immediate issues
- To shape public opinion on broader issues
- To develop positive relationships with reporters BEFORE there's a crisis
- Part of a broader package of communications strategies



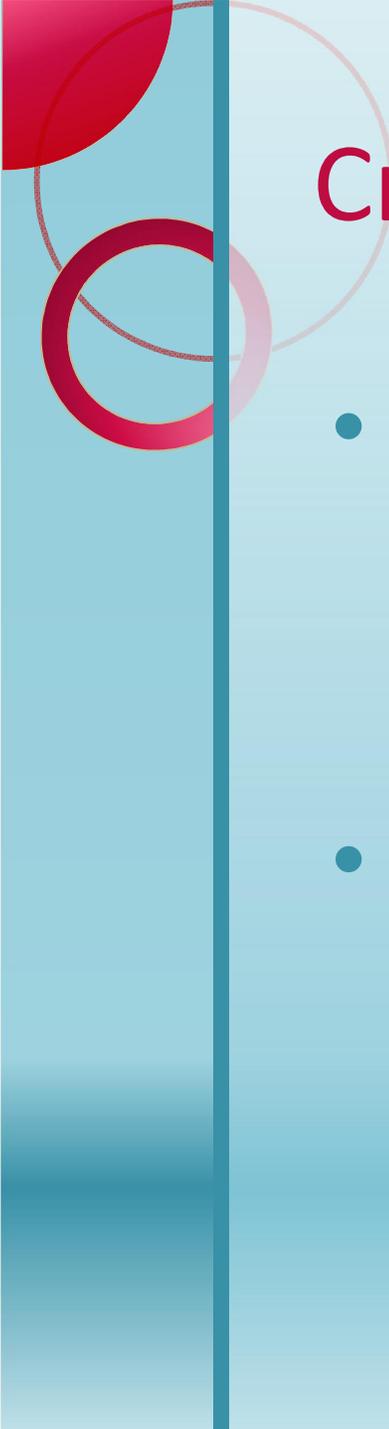
# Clarify Your Goals

- What do you want to achieve?
  - Raise the chapter's profile
  - Support a lobbying or contract campaign
  - Respond to actions by the administration
- What resources do you have available?
  - Chapter resources in both time and money
  - People with the desire and skills necessary



# Crafting Messages

- Good messages are consistent and simple
- Messages represent the group, not individuals—*get everyone on board!*
- Understanding your audience is key



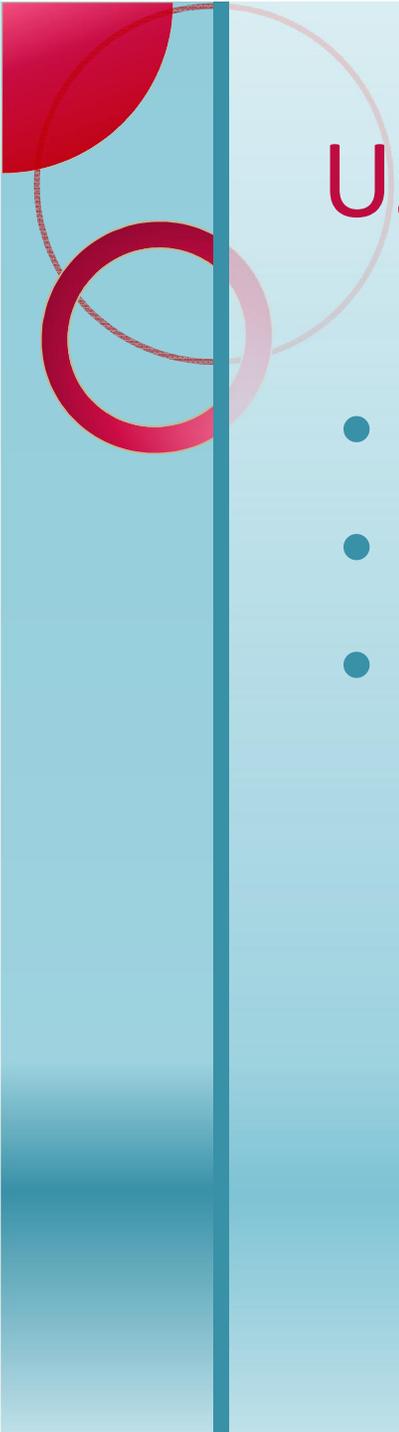
# Crafting Messages

- Research your target audience
  - Use terms understood by your audience
  - Details and tone will differ with audience
  - Always assume the administration will see it
- Be careful with the desire to educate
  - Avoid it in media you don't control
  - Recognize the long term nature of the project



# Sample Messages

- Attract and retain high quality faculty
- Support people who work with students
- Equal pay for equal work
- Education is a public good,  
not a private privilege
- Others?



# Using Messages for Media

- Media you control
- Media you don't control
- Both types run together now



# Types of Media Communications

## Chapter Website

- Should be the go-to location for information
- Does not have to be fancy
- Should be uncluttered, easy to navigate, up to date
- Recent and important information, including press releases, should be on the home page
- Use all media to funnel audiences to your site



# Types of Media Communications

## **Social Media**

- Use Facebook to communicate with faculty and friends of faculty
- Use Twitter to communicate quickly and effectively with the press



# Types of Media Communications

## **Media Advisories**

- A media advisory lets reporters know of an upcoming event or news story
- Advertise events 3-5 days out
- Again on the day of the event
- One page only!



# Types of Media Communications

## Press Releases

- Use sparingly
- Headlines should be punchy and in large font
- Less than one page, third-person with declarative sentences and simple vocabulary
- Include direct quotes
- Top right corner: list names, emails, phone numbers for two accessible contact people



# Types of Media Communications

## **Editorials**

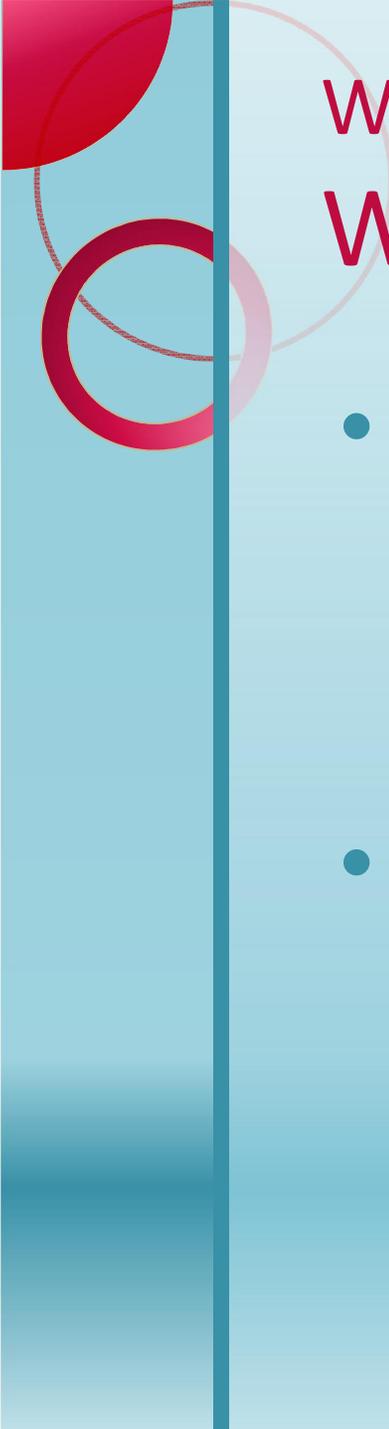
- Broaden your communication strategies
- Show personalized/individual support
- Letters to the editor: less than 300 words
- Editorial articles: less than 1,200 words
- Comment on online articles



# Types of Media Communications

## **Interviews with Reporters**

- Get “lead story” (or better placement)
- Build relationship with reporter
- Direct reporter to other interview subjects or story ideas



## Want a low-pay no-thanks job? Work for the Media!

- The life of a reporter—outsourced, underpaid (if at all), overworked
  - Beat reporters are an endangered species
  - Reporters often have little background
- The *first* question: “Are you on deadline?”



## Know the Lingo

- On the record—they can use it and attribute it to you
- Off the record—background information they will not write about
- On background—they can use it but not attribute it to you
- Embargo—you cannot talk about it
- “No comment” *is a comment!*



## It's About the Story (Not the Facts)

“Most reporters do not gather facts and then write a story based on those facts. Most reporters have a particular goal in mind before they ever call you... If you sense this is the case, be cautious, because no matter what you say, the reporter is going to write the story they want because they don't have time to change the theme of the story. ”

“How to Talk to a Reporter”

<http://crankalicious.hubpages.com/hub/How-to-Talk-to-a-Reporter-Making-Journalists-Write-the-Story-You-Want>

**aaup**



# Space is *very* limited

- Newspapers—600-1500 words
- Television
  - Entire stories—less than four minutes
  - YOUR space in that story—30 seconds max
- 140 characters can twist anything
- Just because you build it doesn't mean they'll come



# Five Interview Rules

*And why faculty find them to be difficult*

1. Choose and train press representatives
2. Work on the reporter's schedule
3. Develop relationships, but remember your boundaries
4. Stick to your talking points
5. Stop talking



## Rule #1: Choose and train press representatives

- Usually the chapter president
- Also train other key leaders & staff
- Have leaders talk to reporters if possible
- Media often requires multiple interviews to flesh out a story—don't let *them* pick



## Rule #2: Work on the media's schedule

- Respond promptly when contacted
- Ask what deadline they are on
- Be ready to comment immediately
- If you need to do some research or strategize with others, tell them when you can talk, and make it soon
- You can always blame delays on classes or meetings—*sparingly*



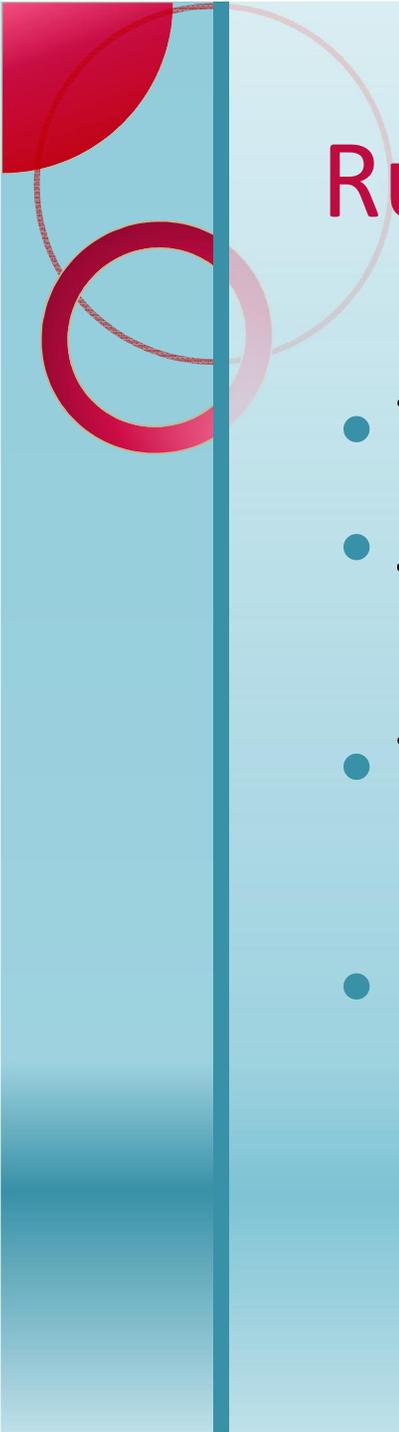
## Rule #3: Develop relationships, but remember your boundaries

- Information is a two way street
- Use “off the record” sparingly unless you have developed a good relationship
- Don’t assume they are friend or enemy
- Give constructive feedback on stories but understand their process and limitations
- Cut off access if you are routinely misquoted or misrepresented



## Rule #4: Stick to your talking points

- Talking points are based on messages
- Talking points written for each story
- Limit the number of people involved in creating talking points
- Facts are not talking points
- Ignore the reporter's question and return to your talking points



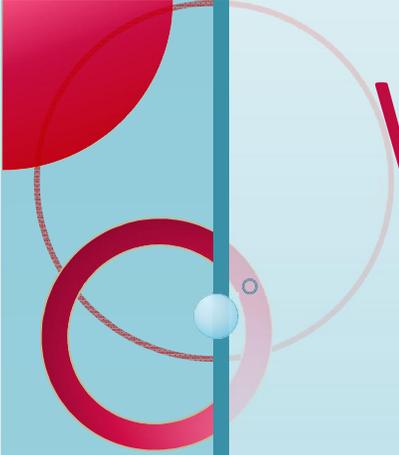
## Rule #5: Stop talking

- They can only use what you say
- Just because they ask doesn't mean you have to answer
- The less you say, the more likely your message will get across
- Better *not to be used* than misused



## Wrap up

- Use a process to develop goals and messages that represents the group
- Scale your goals to your resources
- Make someone individually responsible for each media element
- Work according to the rules of the media, not according to the rules of academia



# Working with the Media

## *A Guide for AAUP*

### *Chapters*

Questions?

greg.lovings@uc.edu

cramerjy@ucmail.uc.edu

More Info:

<http://www.aaup.org/get-involved/local-toolkit/media-relations>

aaup