

Media Relations Policy and Procedures

As a public institution, the University of Hawai'i at Hilo and its programs, activities, and plans are of special interest to the public. It is important to present the University both accurately and in the best possible light. When information is released, every effort must be made to avoid misunderstanding, misinterpretation, or confusion. Once a misconception takes root, it is always difficult and often impossible to make full correction.

In the interest of orderly, consistent management of the information released to the media, the following policy and procedures are in effect:

Policy

The University Spokesperson is the Director of University Relations (808-974-7567). When the Director is unavailable, the Director of Media Relations (808-974-7642; cell 987-1043) will serve as the University Spokesperson.

The University Spokesperson will:

- provide information to and respond to inquiries from the news media regarding official University policies, positions, announcements, personnel issues, crisis management, emergency situations, University fiscal operations, and other matters which reflect on the standing of the University
- be informed promptly when any member of the UH Hilo community receives inquiries from the news media.
- keep the Chancellor and other senior administrators informed of all relevant media situations and inquiries
- in consultation with the Chancellor, prepare statements for the Chancellor to release to the media
- inform the Office of External Affairs of all media situations and inquiries

The Director of Media Relations will:

- serve as the University Spokesperson should the Director of University Relations be unavailable
- keep the Chancellor and other senior administrators informed of all relevant media situations and inquiries by direct communication or through the University spokesperson;
- coordinate, edit and distribute all University news releases, including those prepared by other members of the University community, checking them for accuracy and appropriateness with the Chancellor, deans, and designated contact person(s), ensuring that they are phrased in the appropriate style and manner

- retain and file copies of all news releases emanating from UH Hilo, including those released by the Athletic Department, establishing a central locale for all University communication with the media
- ensure copies of all news releases are posted on the Web sites of UH Hilo and the UH system.

The Sports Information Director is responsible for the Athletic Department's news releases regarding athletic events. However, the Director of Media Relations is responsible for news releases on all other Athletic matters.

Procedures

Responses to Inquiries from the Media

1. Administration, deans, directors, faculty, and staff should not respond to inquiries from the media concerning matters such as personnel issues, crisis management, emergency situations, and University policies and fiscal operations; instead, they should *immediately* refer such inquiries to the University Spokesperson. This may be accomplished by calling the University Spokesperson and relaying the inquiries, or by asking the media person to call the University Spokesperson directly.
2. Administration, deans, directors, faculty, and staff may respond directly to media inquiries on ordinary, day-to-day matters such as course information, scholarships, faculty awards and publications; however, all inquiries from reporters or other media persons should be reported immediately to the Director of Media Relations by telephone.
3. Administration, deans, directors, faculty, and staff who respond to media inquiries must promptly submit copies of their responses to the Director of Media Relations, in hardcopy or as email attachments.

Endorsed by Chancellor's Executive Council on September 6, 2002

Approved by the Chancellor on October 21, 2002