

# Media Relations

As a publicly funded state university, Henderson State University is committed to sharing of knowledge and ideas with media and the general public. The university recognizes the important role of the news media as a channel of communication and will provide representatives of news reporting organizations with timely and accurate information regarding the university's programs and activities.

Henderson State University's Office of Marketing and Communications serves as the university's designated contact point for the news media and is the source of official information about the university. Faculty and staff members serving as subject matter experts in their areas of research or teaching are asked to let the Office of Marketing and Communications know about their contact with the media so that the office can be on the watch for media coverage and can reach out to members of the media to see if follow-up from the university is needed.

Media requests can be directed to [press@hsu.edu](mailto:press@hsu.edu).

## Working with journalists

Professional media relations staff members in the Office of Marketing and Communications serve as responsible advocates for the university. Their communication with members of the media and the public is guided by the principles of integrity, honesty, accuracy and ethical decision-making as described in the [Member Code of Ethics](#) of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA).

Staff members in the Office of Marketing and Communications will respond promptly, courteously and professionally to requests from members of the news media who seek information about the university or access to the

university and its administrators, faculty, staff and students. In turn, the university expects members of the news media to conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner when contacting or interacting with members of the university community and when visiting campus.

### **Student press interaction**

Because they are involved in a teaching and learning environment, members of the student press at Henderson State University will interact with faculty members and administrators in the same way as practicing journalists. The Office of Marketing and Communications will serve as the primary point of contact for administrators and arrange interviews, and faculty members will work with students directly.

### **Media access to facilities**

News media are permitted to enter public areas of the university's campus without permission, but are encouraged to contact the Henderson Office of Marketing and Communications first so that staff may help facilitate visits to campus. In addition, media are asked to respect student requests for privacy if they do not wish to be filmed. Access to classrooms, offices and to all residence halls is strictly prohibited without prior permission from the university. Media personnel who infringe upon, delay or conflict with the university's normal operations may be asked to leave campus. News media are not required to obtain permission before filming in public areas of the campus. During emergencies, officials may require news media to remain within a designated media-- filming zone for law enforcement for safety reasons.

### **Press releases**

The Office of Marketing and Communications will issue press releases to the media on behalf of the university. Event-- and research--focused releases, when faculty and staff members make the office aware of the need for these

releases, will be composed or edited in accordance with Associated Press Style and sent from the office aswell.

## **News conferences**

The Office of Marketing and Communications is the only on--campus entity granted the authority to call and hold news conferences on behalf of the university. Such news conferences typically are held only for major university announcements. News conferences are convened as a way to share news with the media efficiently; the focus atthe event will be on meeting the needs of the news media.

Henderson's Athletics Department may convene news conferences on matters related to intercollegiate athletics. All other departments should coordinate with the Office of Marketing and Communications. In matters that impact both the university and athletics, members of both areas will coordinate on news conferences.

Faculty, staff and students who would like to discuss the protocol for calling a news conference should contactthe Office of Marketing and Communications.

## **Spokespeople**

When public comment on behalf of the university is requested, university's senior leadership – in conjunction with the Office of Marketing and Communications and the Vice President for Advancement – will identify an appropriate spokesperson. Faculty are always free to discuss any topics related to their areas of academic expertise.

## **Emergency communications**

During a crisis or incident that disrupts normal university operations, the university has procedures in place to communicate with faculty, staff, students and members of the media and public as needed.

University Police and the Office of Marketing and Communications are authorized to communicate emergency information on behalf of the university using approved communication channels – RAVE Alerts, email, text alerts, phone calls, websites, social media and emergency sirens, along with other channels as judged appropriate given each emergency situation.

During a weather emergency or other event that disrupts normal university operations, university marketing and communications staff will reach out to members of the media to engage their assistance in notifying the public.

### **Compliance with FOIA**

As a state entity, Henderson State University complies fully with the Arkansas state [Freedom of Information Act](#) (FOIA), which is one of the most comprehensive and strongest open--records and open--meetings laws in the United States. Requests for public records for all Arkansas State University System institutions, including Henderson, should be directed to Jeff Hankins at [jhankins@asusystem.edu](mailto:jhankins@asusystem.edu).