

SCHOOL OF OPTOMETRY POLICY

Date Revised: 12/19/2025

Effective Date: January 5, 2026

Responsible Party: Office of Communications

Contact(s): Satina Richardson, MA, Communications Director

Communications Policy

1. Purpose

This policy ensures that all communications from the UAB School of Optometry are accurate, professional, and aligned with the School's mission, UAB brand standards, and strategic goals.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all faculty, staff, students, and affiliates who create or distribute communications on behalf of the School, including:

- News releases and media statements
- Website and blog content
- Social media posts
- Videos
- Email newsletters
- Internal announcements
- Paid advertisements
- Promotional materials

3. Communication Principles

All communications must:

- Reflect the values and voice of the UAB School of Optometry
- Be inclusive, respectful, and accessible
- Comply with UAB's brand and editorial guidelines
- Protect confidential and sensitive information

4. Review and Approval Process

4.1 Initial Review

Drafts are submitted to the Communications Director for review of tone, clarity, branding, and compliance. For student-generated content, a faculty or staff sponsor must review the draft before distribution.

4.2 Departmental and Legal Review

If the content involves clinical services, research findings, or policy matters, it must be reviewed by the appropriate department head or the Office of Risk and Compliance. Media statements and press releases must be coordinated with UAB Media Relations, via the School's Communications Director.

4.3 Final Approval

Final approval is granted by the Director of Communications or the Dean's Office, depending on the nature and visibility of the communication. High-profile or sensitive communications may require approval from the UAB Office of the Provost or the Office of Marketing and Communications.

4.4 Content Review and Updates

All communications materials, including website content, brochures, and other public-facing documents, must be reviewed at least once per year to ensure accuracy. Department heads are responsible for conducting this annual review of all content under their purview and making necessary updates. Content areas (not exclusive) are listed in **Table 1**. Depending on the document or policy, the initial review is performed by the originator and/or committee, followed by appropriate leadership. Some materials require voting by committee, e.g. Handbooks. Review of materials occurs in person, in meetings, and through electronic communication, as appropriate.

5. Crisis Communication

In the event of a crisis or emergency, all communications must be coordinated through School leadership, the UAB Emergency Management Team and/or University Relations (B-Alert). No independent statements from faculty, staff or students may be issued. While people often feel sharing information is helpful in an emergency, communication regarding emergencies must be handled carefully, accurately, sensitively and through the appropriate channels.

6. Non-Compliance

Failure to follow this policy may result in content removal, revocation of communication privileges, or disciplinary action in accordance with UAB policies.

7. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Communications Office in collaboration with the Dean's Office and updated as needed.

Table 1. Content areas and responsible reviewers.

	Location	Responsible Reviewer	Frequency
Admissions	Website, printed materials, Teams folder	Associate Dean for Student Affairs, Director of Admissions, Student Affairs team, Dean's Group	Annually, as needed

Administrative Affairs, Fiscal Affairs	Website, Teams folder	Director of Administration and Fiscal Affairs, Dean's Group	Annually, as needed
Alumni Affairs	Website, Teams folder	Senior Director of Development, Director of Alumni Affairs, Dean's Group	Annually, as needed
Clinical Affairs	Website, printed materials, Teams folder, Clinic Manual, Clinic Canvas Course	Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs, Clinic Manager, Dean's Group	Annually, as needed (semester)
Continuing Education	Website, printed materials, Teams folder	Director of Continuing Education, Dean's Group	As needed based on program timing (4+/year)
Curriculum (Graduate)	Website, printed materials, Teams folder, Graduate Program Handbook	Associate Dean for Research and the Graduate Program, Director of the Graduate Program	Annually, as needed (semester)
Curriculum (OD)	Website, printed materials, Teams folder	Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Curriculum Committee, Dean's Group	Annually, as needed (semester)
Dean's Report, Friday eNews, Focal Point	Website, Teams folder	Dean's Group, Communications Team	As needed, weekly to annually depending on content
Faculty Affairs	Website, Teams folder, Faculty Handbook	Department Chair, Faculty Advisory Committee Chair and Committee, Dean's Group	Annually, as needed
Mission, Goals, Objectives	Website 'About' tab, Teams folder	Dean, Dean's Group, Dean's Strategic Advisory Committee, Pillar Committees	Annually, as needed
Research and Research Facilities	Website, printed materials, Teams folder	Associate Dean for Research and the Graduate Program, Dean's Group	Annually, as needed
Residency Program	Website, printed materials, Teams folder, Residency Manual	Director of Residency Program, Residency Committee, Dean's Group	Annually, as needed
Strategic Plan	Website, Teams folder	Dean, Dean's Group, Dean's Strategic Advisory Committee, Pillar Committees	Revised/Approved every 5 years, reviewed for progress 3x/year
Student Affairs (OD)	Website, printed materials, Teams folder, Student Handbook	Associate Dean for Student Affairs, Student Affairs team, Dean's Group	Annually, as needed
Student Performance Measures	Website, printed materials, Teams folder	Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Registrar	Annually, as needed (April, September)