



**Marketing/Communications Office
Program Review
March 2009**

Mission

The Marketing/Communications Office is responsible for promoting De Anza College and providing information about the college and its programs. The director of Marketing/Communications is also the public information officer for the college.

Number of FTE

Four staff members comprise the Marketing/Communications Office:

Program Coordinator – Lois Jenkins

Graphic Arts Technician – Bonnett Saussol

Director – Marisa Spatafore

Web & Print Communications Design Coordinator – Lori Susi (currently on staff development leave, whose work has been backfilled by an excellent offsite designer)

Staff work closely with the Technology Resources Group, particularly with Web content developer Julie Ceballos, whose position was moved to the TRG approximately three years ago and whose work is in writing, editing and presenting Web material. She attends department staff meetings on a regular basis.

We have had two student assistants over the past two-and-a-half years whose work has been project-based.

Responsibilities

In general, Marketing/Communications is responsible for

- College communications, both internal (e.g. Campus Memo; collegewide e-mails) and external
- All aspects (e.g. editorial, design, vehicle selection, placement and dissemination, as appropriate) of marketing communications, including advertising, collateral, catalog, schedule, campus electronic billboard and banners, and Web site design and content oversight
- Developing and maintaining effective relationships with the local, state and national media to publicize De Anza's programs and activities and to communicate in crisis
- Managing special events (e.g. building grand openings) and annual events (e.g. the State of the College report, Opening Day activities) that promote the college and the accomplishments of its faculty, staff and students; providing support for the annual "A Night of Magic" fundraiser.

In addition, the current director participates as a member of college senior staff in all discussions of policy, program and budget and takes a leadership role in external affairs and Foundation activities.

Budget Summary

After a period of severely curtailed “B” budget funding, the Marketing Office received a substantial one-time increase that allowed the creation and dissemination—through nontraditional, or at least atypical, advertising vehicles (e.g. bus sides, backs and shelters and shopping mall plasma screens) of a coordinated recruitment campaign to promote the college to students as “Just What You Need.” This concept was designed, insofar as possible and with input from the college’s first-ever marketing forums in 2007, to express that De Anza can provide much (depth) to many (breadth). This was conceptually presented in some advertisements, with models declaring “I need a college degree” (in both English and Spanish); “I need a better job” (emphasizing workforce preparation) and “I need a college that works for me” (to underscore personalized attention and special programs). Internally, the slogan “Simply the Best” was adopted to reflect the long-acknowledged quality of the college to those already enrolled, but deliberately not used in external recruitment in order not to intimidate students who, we learned from Outreach staff, held the college’s reputation in some awe. The current messaging, look and feel will be maintained for a significant period of time for purposes of identity and branding.

Attached are documents that show how much “B” budget Marketing was allocated over the past three years and how the funds were used to promote the college.

Strengths

- Highly trained, creative and experienced staff who work well as a team and also independently
- Ability to produce marketing materials and provide support across the campus with minimal staff
- Ability to work successfully with programs and departments across the campus to serve their needs

Strengths are also manifest in the department’s accomplishments, including

- The above-noted campaigns. In a relatively short time, with talented staff, the messaging, aesthetics, cohesion and overall presentation of marketing materials has achieved a much-desired level of sophistication and utility.
- Improved internal and external communications, including the enhanced Campus Memo, with additional Web site links and augmented profiles, including the addition of staff Employees of the Month to the publication which had previously featured only faculty Distinguished Educator Award winners, and the incorporation of board-approved items such as new employees, promotions, service awards, etc. The department judiciously and appropriately utilizes collegewide e-mail, and conducts ongoing education for faculty and staff in the various and best methods for promoting their particular events. Externally, among other items, the department has improved—through oversight and the provision of materials—the news and items on the front page of the Web site, and has also enhanced the quality and timing of messages on the electronic billboard. All communications, both internal and external, are conducted with an understanding of overarching goals and with careful and deliberate positioning of the college.
- Intensive media relations regarding the 2007 alleged sexual assault by members of De Anza’s baseball team were proactive, honest, thoughtful and intentional.

- Among other external activities, the director completed a two-year chairpersonship of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group's Education Committee, interacting with a wide variety of business, community and education. She was invited to join the board of Silicon Valley Reads and brought two authors (Bo Caldwell, "The Distant Land of My Father" and Brian Copeland, "Not a Genuine Black Man") to speak on campus. She volunteered in the community with Girls for a Change and maintains a leadership role on the Silicon Valley Higher Education Roundtable (SilVHER) Working Council. She is a member of the De Anza Commission and is the college liaison to the district Foundation.

Weaknesses

- While the department does reasonably well in promoting the college via news releases and maintaining and initiating contacts, and through Web site news items, staffing limitations—i.e., the elimination of the writing position in the last round of layoffs—are keenly felt. Times of constrained budgets are ideal in which to maximize free media, and the lack of a writing position prevents the department from doing so in the targeted way in which we would like, and in terms of being able to promote events and accomplishments and achieve placements. This year, however, we developed and continue to enhance a media list with local reporters as well as specialty press we can inform on key topics (e.g. environmental sustainability and the arts).
- Some office staff experienced high stress levels due to the subsequent increased workload. All editing and writing responsibilities were shifted to the director and program coordinator.

Trends

- For the past two years the office focused its marketing campaigns toward historically underrepresented student populations, in particular Latina/o students, in support of De Anza's strategic initiatives. Marketing developed a coordinated advertising campaign via print, radio, transit bus, movie theater and mall screens, and updated campus brochures, folders and posters to reach our Latina/o community. There was a 12 percent increase in Latina/o students at De Anza from fall 2007 to fall 2008 (with overall headcount increasing six percent); while not specifically quantifiable, we believe we helped contribute to that, along with Outreach, in particular. Moreover, impressions through comprehensive advertising campaigns are cumulative over time in building brand awareness.
- On the negative side, reduced staff made serving the campus community in a timely manner a challenge.

Quantitative Workload Measurements

In 2007, the office developed a tracking method for projects that helped facilitate efficient use of limited personnel. (See attached document.) All jobs for graphics were prioritized according to the needs and timing of the program or department requesting services. The writing and editing for the projects were mainly handled by the program coordinator, but not tracked in the same manner as the graphics work. The time spent on event planning and support is also not reflected on this list. That is something the office

may attempt to quantify in the future because the current projects list does not reflect the amount of time the program coordinator and the director devote to supporting the total work of the office.

Qualitative Measurements

The quality of the work produced by the Marketing/Communications Office is broadly supported anecdotally, as well as by the 11 state and national awards it received in 2008. From the CCPRO (Community College Public Relations Organization) conference in April:

- First place – Class schedule
- Second place – Viewbook/Student Recruitment Book (“Your Guide”)
- Second place – Theatre/Performing Arts Campaign (VPAC seat brochure and groundbreaking materials)
- Third place – Internal Newsletter (Financial Aid piece)
- Third place – Promo/Advertising Campaign

From the National Council for Marketing & Public Relations (NCMPR) Annual Conference in September:

- Gold – Printed Academic Catalog 2008-2009
- Bronze – Printed Viewbook (“Your Guide”)
- Bronze – Poster (Graduation Open House)
- Bronze – Folder Cover (die-cut, triple pocket De Anza folder)
- Bronze – Logo design (De Anza’s 40th Anniversary)
- Bronze – College Web site

Planning Agenda

In light of budget constraints and environmental sustainability, we have reduced the number of printed schedules by almost half, to about 8,500. We are currently evaluating options for schedule production, from the current gold standard (award-winning and conceptual, with glossy color cover) to all black-and-white to simple newsprint, but initial inquiries indicate that the cost would not drop appreciably for the latter two versions, at least in part because of the decreased quantity necessarily being ordered. With the searchable schedule available on the Web site, it is possible that the “B” budget for printing could eventually be trimmed by up to \$35,000 per year if printing the schedule were phased out over time. We will assess which students might be inconvenienced by this initially; nevertheless, in facing budget reductions and as trends for everything from news to books and beyond migrates online, we should consider all options. We are aware of two fellow California community colleges that have already discontinued printing schedules and a third experimenting with doing so for summer 2009.

We are also looking at what kind of advertising the department can afford that will maximize reaching the communities we serve and are targeting, including students from historically underrepresented populations. We will continue to advocate for the less-typical (but generally more expensive) advertising vehicles that we feel have been the most effective (e.g. buses and malls). For example, a major bus-side campaign results in between 14.8 million to more than 29.6 million impressions, including in targeted

communities. We believe that a comprehensive shopping mall campaign would reach large numbers of our potential students and are deeply interested in pursuing this for 2009-10.

Comments

Staff are excellent. The quality of the work produced in the office has not declined despite the reduction in personnel, as evidenced by numerous awards. Timeliness only occasionally suffers to a degree.

Strategic Planning

1. How does your program or service respond /address the College's strategic initiatives?

The Marketing Office supports Outreach by targeting advertising to our community's Latina/o population. (For spring 2009, we are branching out into online Spanish-language newspaper ads.) We also created a student guidebook to De Anza ("Your Guide") for the Outreach Office and folders and other material for its high school events. We are in the process of creating a "Career and Technical Programs Guide" for the Outreach office and expect to have it completed by summer 2009. We have also created and/or updated program brochures or handbooks for a number of departments and programs across the campus, including DSPP, Honors, Sankofa, Paralegal, ICCE, Counseling, Administration of Justice, SSRS, Puente and Summer Bridge, all of which are used in recruiting new and historically underserved students. Placing downloadable brochures on the appropriate Web sites is under way.

2. Which initiatives does your program or service respond to and in what ways can the response be measured or evaluated?

Marketing is most easily understood in terms of relating to Outreach (see above), including in the degree to which quantitative measurements (work products, potential contribution to recruitment) can be performed. As also noted above, special attention is dedicated to advertising to historically underrepresented populations, particularly Latina/o, and to reflections and representations of the student body in all aspects of marketing communications, speaking as well to the support of Cultural Competence. The fact that current students observe the prominence and status of De Anza College in the community—such as in advertising, media placements and general reputation—may be considered an element of Retention. The department has supported Community Collaborations in the production of a variety of collateral, and the director's ongoing community involvement represents the spirit of the initiative.

3. How does the work of your program or service respond to increased access, growth, retention and/or student equity?

Dedicated efforts to feature and recruit historically underrepresented students is clearly in support of all of the above.

4. What other programs/services are you working with to accomplish your proposed goals/outcomes?

The department works with numerous programs and services across campus on a project basis and others, particularly Outreach and the Technology Resources Group, on an ongoing basis.

5. What is important to understand about your program, or service and the consequences to the college if it was discontinued or reduced?

While it is challenging to make choices during times of budget reductions and there are many competing needs, it seems clear that eliminating the writing position in the department also greatly reduced the securing of reputation-enhancing free media placements. It also is apparent that curtailing the advertising budget was detrimental, resulting in less visibility of the campus to the public and potentially lost enrollment. The college must remain visible to its regional community in a variety of ways. To quote Henry Ford: "A man [sic] who stops advertising to save money is like a man [sic] who stops a clock to save time."