

1. PURPOSE

Media attention has the potential to increase or decrease the reputation of The American University of Paris (AUP). It is thus important to positively, constructively and professionally manage the University's engagement with the media. Overall responsibility for the University's media and public relation rests with the Office of Communications and more specifically the Director of Communications and Outreach. The following is a general policy intended to facilitate positive interactions with external media, while keeping the Office of Communications staff apprised of happenings and news on campus or involving AUP staff or students.

2. WHO IS AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

Employees; students; individuals representing the University in an official capacity who have access to AUP's official communication channels, and/or have access to the University's campus.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

The Office of Communications (OCO) at AUP publicizes University news and developments, faculty and student achievements, matters involving the President and administration, special accomplishments, programs, events, activities and other news related to the activities of the campus community. To provide clear, concise communications, all media inquiries should be channeled through the OCO. This policy was established to describe the University's position with respect to interacting with news media representatives.

3.1. Principles

Effective communications with the media are critical to AUP's ability to carry out its strategic mission and to promote continued public support for the University.

Effective media relations best serve the University by:

- informing the public of what we can do for them;
- promoting the University's achievements, activities and events of significance;
- expanding the general visibility of the University;
- ensuring that accurate information is conveyed to the public regarding incidents and issues of a controversial and/or sensitive nature.

3.2. Staff Responsibilities

Notwithstanding the rights of individuals to freedom of speech within French law, staff of the University has an obligation to act in the best interests of the University at all times.

Staff is expected to participate fully in University consultation and decision-making processes on any official University matters and to refrain from debating opinions on such matters through the media.

Staff must not:

- express views and opinions in the public domain with the intention of discrediting the University;
- express views on behalf of the University, unless authorized to do so by the Director of Communications and Outreach.

Any staff member who becomes aware of an issue or event that has the potential to impact significantly the University's reputation or stakeholder relationships must immediately notify the Office of Communications. The staff member must not make any comment to the media, even if it is the media who have alerted him or her to the issue/event.

3.3. Media Contact by Staff as Private Individual

The University affirms the right of staff to interact freely with the media as private individuals.

When staff members discuss with the media, or write about matters outside their areas of work, they are expected to make it clear that they are speaking as private individuals and not as staff members of the University. The use of University position titles, letterhead or postal addresses is prohibited in this context.

When staff members speak to the media on their own behalf, or on behalf of organizations not associated with their work at the University, University property must not be used as a backdrop for filming or photographic purposes.

3.4. Media Contact by Staff as Academic or Professional Expert

Academic staff members are encouraged to respond to media enquiries related to their areas of academic expertise and are not required to seek permission before doing so. However, staff members are requested to inform the Office of Communications when they have had contact with the media, so that the resulting media coverage can be monitored.

Staff who answer a media enquiry as an academic expert must make it clear that their opinions are based on their expert knowledge and research. Where the subject is likely to be contentious, they must make it clear in their response to the media that their opinion does not represent the considered position of the University.

The University affirms the right of staff members to interact freely with the media as academic or professional experts. In exercising this right, staff must ensure that they do not claim or imply that they speak on behalf of the University, or express views on other official University matters.

While academic debate over research findings, theories or viewpoints is encouraged, personal attacks on other members of staff or students, or disparagement of any area of the University through the media, are prohibited. See also AA013EN – Freedom of Expression.

The University may be held liable for defamatory comments or libelous statements made by a staff member. Staff must therefore ensure that their comments and statements do not have legal consequences for the University.

3.5. Rules Applying to Members of the Media

Access to campus facilities and buildings for media is prohibited without prior written approval by the Director of Communications and Outreach. These areas include but are not limited to:

- La Tour Maubourg Administrative Building (5, boulevard de La Tour-Maubourg)
- Combes Student Life Center (6, rue du Colonel Combes)
- Quai d'Orsay Learning Commons (69, quai d'Orsay)
- Grenelle Teaching and Mentoring Center (147, rue de Grenelle)
- Monttessuy Center for the Arts (9, rue Monttessuy)
- Saint Dominique Classrooms (102 rue St. Dominique)
- Passage Landrieu Classrooms (2, bis Passage Landrieu)

Although the Office of Communications traditionally approves advance requests for still and video photography, in the event of an emergency, or to limit disruptions to normal University operations, news media may be restricted to certain areas of campus for filming or live broadcasting.

The American University of Paris name, logos, marks or their variations may not be used without the written permission of the Office of Communications (BP004EN - Name & Logo Use)

Student media organizations may be offered special access to campus events or facilities in recognition of their unique roles at the University.

Still or video images of campus features may not be used for commercial or promotional purposes outside of scheduled news coverage without approval from the Office of Communications.

As visitors to campus, media representatives are expected to abide by all applicable AUP policies and procedures.

3.6. Emergencies

Campus Security staff members are responsible for immediately notifying the University administration, relevant senior staff and the Director of Communications and Outreach of any serious security issue or emergency that occurs at the University and that could significantly impact its community, assets or reputation.

The Office of Communications, in consultation with the AUP Leadership Team, the Crisis Management Team, other University administration and any other relevant staff, is responsible for releasing to the media any information about an emergency situation.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director of Communications and Outreach is responsible for the University's media relations and coordinating with the University's administration. Given the structure and complexity of the University and its operations, it is important for staff to share an understanding of, and commitment to, the systems and processes which have been developed for the positive management of media relations.

5. DEFINITIONS

University Administration The Leadership Team and/or Board of Trustees, as designated by the President; the Crisis Management Team, when applicable.

6. APPROVALS & HISTORY

March 11, 2017	First iteration drafted by the Manager of University Communications.
April 16, 2018	Leadership Team approval.
March 2020	Annual review.
November 19, 2020	Annual review; contact information updated.
November 1, 2021	Approved.
January 18, 2024	Updated, to be approved.
November 1, 2025	Next review.

7. ISSUING OFFICE AND CONTACT

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