CAS COLLEGE OF ARTS + SCIENCES

EFFECTIVE NEWSLETTERS

MAY **2016**

A strong departmental newsletter—one with compelling stories, eye-catching images, and useful, "insider" information—can be a great tool for making your readers feel connected, involved, and invested in your department's future. Done well, it can help keep your alumni engaged and proud of their connection to the department, planting the seeds that may lead to greater involvement and support in the future.

This guide is intended to help you create a compelling, effective newsletter. It is designed to help those charged with project-managing and editing newsletters do so as easily, efficiently, and economically as possible.

CONTENTS:

PLANNING YOUR NEWSLETTER

Careful planning and plenty of lead time will go a long way toward increasing success and reducing stress. This process is designed to help you avoid headaches and avert crises, and make sure every moment (and every dollar) spent on your newsletter is worthwhile.

TIMELINE

Before you begin, create a timeline for your project. We recommend using the timeline form on page 5 of this guide. If you need more time to accommodate the workflow of your particular department, contributors, and approval process, adjust for that, but resist the urge to compress your timeline.

You should begin planning your newsletter at least three to four months before you want it in your readers' hands. Here's a general idea of how long each phase of the process will take if all goes smoothly:

Planning and assigning content: 2 weeks
Content creation (writing, gathering images and photographs): 3 weeks
Compiling and editing: 2 weeks
Copyediting and design: 3 weeks
Corrections and approvals: 2 weeks
Printing: 1 week (2 weeks for quantities >900)
Total: 13-14 weeks

Timeline form: page 5

CREATIVE BRIEF

A creative brief serves as a road map to keep your project on course toward an agreed-upon goal. It is the first step in a successful newsletter project. Before you start your project, request a project initiation meeting with Lisa Raleigh (Raleigh@uoregon.edu) or Marketing Communications (marcom@uoregon.edu). This conversation should include the newsletter editor and any other key stakeholders in the project, and will result in a document that defines your key audience, critical messages, goals, tone, and other elements that are important to your project's success. It may also include budget, quantities, and any other deliverables or required elements. This document will be shared with the designer and all others involved in the project, and must be approved by anyone who will be approving the final project (e.g., the department head).

Creative brief form: page 6

CONTENT

This is the heart and soul of your newsletter. No amount of careful planning or great design will make up for content that doesn't engage your readers. Content includes stories and information, of course, but also photography, illustration, infographics, charts and graphs, and calls to action. When planning your content, try to think from the perspective of your readers—what will be interesting to them? Resist the urge to create a newsletter for yourself, your colleagues, or your dean. This one's for the readers (whom you've identified in your creative brief). Plan for an interesting mix of content with plenty of variety to appeal to different readers—stories of various lengths, different approaches to presenting information, plenty of visuals.

ASSIGNMENTS

Once you've planned out your content, you may need to assign writing or "hunting and gathering" to others.

When assigning work, be sure to clearly state your expectations. For example, writing assignments should include the following:

Deadline: Give writers a clear deadline. If the story doesn't arrive on the agreed-upon date, follow up that day so they know you're serious. A missed deadline or two can derail your entire project.

Word count: Be specific, giving only a small window for variation. If the story comes in long, send it back with a request to edit, or let the writer know you will need to edit it. You'll find ideal word counts for various types of stories and page layouts on page 9 of this guide.

Story angle: What do you want the writer to write about? This is a good time to make sure your contributors know who your audience is and what the goals of the newsletter are. You may even want to share your creative brief with contributors.

Required information: Photo captions, details of conferences or publications, graduation years for students and alumni, and contact information for sources are examples of things that you should ask for up front, to save time trying to track them down later.

Approval process: Will your contributor need to see any revisions you or other approvers make? Make sure this is clear now, to save time and avoid misunderstandings later.

Content guidelines: page 7

PRODUCING YOUR NEWSLETTER

Compiling and editing content

Your content should be delivered to design services all at once, in a single Word document. As content is completed, either by you or your contributors, compile copy in a single document, in the order it will appear in the newsletter. Indicate which page it should be on, if that's something you want to specify (it's also good to remain flexible with the positioning of some content, to allow the designer latitude to lay out the newsletter as pleasingly as possible). A page map can be helpful in planning the placement of your content.

Photography and other images

Many contributors will submit photographs to accompany their stories. If your newsletter is being printed, these images MUST be high resolution (300 dpi at 5" x 7" or larger is a good standard). If your image file is less than 1 MB, it is likely unsuitable for print. Original cell-phone photos are usually sufficient; pictures pulled off of website are not (and may risk copyright infringement as well). If you aren't sure if your images are high-res-olution, feel free to send them to Marketing Communications for review (marcom@uoregon.edu)

Marketing Communications maintains a large database of campus photography, and subscribes to a stock-photography service as well. If you do not have images to accompany some of your stories, never fear. We can help locate appropriate imagery.

Think about using illustration as well as photography. This can add interest and variety to your newsletter, and is a great way to illustrate conceptual pieces. Maps, infographics, and charts are other good options. Talk with Marketing Communications early on in your process, and we can suggest creative ways to illustrate your newsletter.

Newsletter style guide: page 8

APPROVALS

Once you've created, received, and compiled all copy—and before you deliver it to design services—make sure it is approved by ALL necessary approvers. This will save significant time in the long run. Marketing Communications will not design your newsletter without assurances that all necessary approvers have signed off on all of the copy first. When you create your timeline and creative brief at the start of your project, be sure to identify who needs to approve it and at what point. This will differ from department to department.

Working with Marketing Communications

Marketing Communications will work with you to see your project through copyediting, design, and printing.
Guidelines for submitting a project are here: http://creative.uoregon.edu/getting-started
The online job-request form is here: http://jwj-fm.uoregon.edu/fmi/iwp/res/iwp_auth.html

Username: **jobrequest**
Password: **jobrequest**

Fill out the form completely, including quantity, delivery information, and deadlines (which should be consistent with the necessary lead times in the timeline you created at the beginning of your project).
When submitting your project to Marketing Communications, you will have the opportunity to attach your approved, edited copy and any images. You will receive a confirmation within a day that Marketing Communications has received your job request, and you will hear within two to three days from the designer who will be working with you to design your newsletter.
Your text will be copyedited for grammar, punctuation, spelling, and consistency with UO editorial style. A redlined version will be returned to you for approval if there are any significant or subjective changes.
The designer assigned to your project will work with you to ensure the layout of your newsletter is attractive, effective, and consistent with UO and CAS branding guidelines.

PRINTING

Printing and Mailing, the UO's in-house print shop and mailing house, will handle the printing of your newsletter. Once the final layout has been approved, Marketing Communications will provide files to Printing and Mailing. You will receive a printer's proof (electronic or hard copy, depending on your preference) for final approval before your newsletter is printed. At this point, changes should be minimal, if there are any at all.

Print runs of fewer than 2,500 copies are generally printed digitally, which takes about one week. Allow two weeks for printing larger quantities, which will be printed on an offset press.

DISTRIBUTION

Mailing lists

You are responsible for providing Printing and Mailing with a mailing list and any other distribution instructions. Printing and Mailing will deliver copies as instructed. Mailing lists should be in an Excel spreadsheet.

Electronic distribution

Marketing Communications will provide a PDF of your newsletter for email distribution or posting to your website at your request. We strongly advise posting content directly to your website rather than posting a PDF for download. This can significantly broaden the distribution of your content by making it easy for people to share links via email and social media.

TIMELINE

Use this timeline to plan and track your newsletter's production cycle. It usually works best to determine when you would like your newsletter in readers' hands and work backwards to construct the timeline. Note that if a deadline is missed, all subsequent deadlines must be adjusted.

TASK	DURATION	DEADLINE ASSIGNED	ACTUAL DATE COMPLETED
Project initiation meeting	1 day		
Creative brief approved	3 days		
Content assigned	5 days		
Writing and content creation	3 weeks		
Compiling, editing, and approvals within department	2 weeks		
Copyediting (MarCom)	3 days		
Final text approval (department)	3 days		
Layout and design*	2 weeks (to first draft)		
Corrections and final approvals of design draft	2 weeks		
Printing	1 week (2 weeks for quantities > 900)		

* Layout and design will not begin until Marketing Communications has received final, approved text and all other content (photographs, information for charts or graphs, etc.)
Design fee includes two rounds of corrections. Additional revision requests will be charged at $55/hour on top of the original design fee.

Creative Brief

MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

Department:
Contact:
Project:
Date:
Prepared by:

OBJECTIVES

What is the primary purpose of this piece?

Where will this piece be used or distributed?
How will its success be measured?

AUDIENCE

Who is the primary audience for this piece? (Be specific.)
Is there a secondary audience?
How aware is your audience of the subject of this piece? ☐ Very ☐ Somewhat ☐ Not at all
What is your audience's attitude toward the subject of this piece? ☐ Receptive ☐ Neutral ☐ Skeptical
What motivates your audience?
Why is this audience important?
What do you hope your audience will do (action) after experiencing this piece?

MESSAGING

If your audience could understand or remember only one key message from this piece, what should it be?

If it is a complex piece, what are the additional key messages?

WHAT ELSE WILL ASSIST CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT?

Deadlines
Required elements
Department positioning, brand elements
Available Resources

NOTES AND PROPOSED DELIVERABLES

NEWSLETTER STYLE GUIDE

For efficiency, effectiveness, and economy, CAS newsletters follow a similar format and adhere to clear design standards. Required visual elements include the use of specific fonts, color palette, the "elemental" CAS and departmental icons, the color bar, and consistent application of the University of Oregon logo system. This relative consistency enables your materials to benefit from the impact of the overall UO design framework and provides a clean, coherent appearance when presented with overall CAS materials (in a packet prepared for a prospective donor, for example).

Within these consistent guidelines, though, there's plenty of room for the priorities and personality of each department to shine. Your department's distinctive character and achievements should be highlighted in the content you choose to share—your stories, images, and people.

Page counts: Eight pages is the recommended length for departmental newsletters. They may be four pages if desired; anything longer than eight is discouraged. Printing requires that newsletter pages be laid out in increments of four.

Word counts: The following are suggested word counts for various types of stories. Stories should not exceed 800 words. Aim to include stories of various lengths to add variety and interest to your publication.

Cover story/primary feature (one per issue): 600 - 800
Secondary feature: 350 – 500
News story: 180 – 210 words
New faculty, alumni news, etc. (collections of short pieces): 50 – 100 each
News round up (faculty accomplishments, student scholarships, etc.) 250 – 300 total
Listings (degrees awarded, donors, books published, etc.): 200 – 220 total

Photo specs: Photos must be high-resolution for print. Follow these specs when requesting photos:

300 dpi
5" x 7" size (or larger if the image will be printed larger than 5x7)
Sharp focus
File format: jpg or tiff
General rule: image files should be at least 1 mg in file size. If they're not, they're likely not high-quality enough for print.

CONTENT GUIDELINES

The following pages demonstrate a variety of ways to organize your content for maximum impact. Here are some basic guidelines to keep in mind to make your newsletter more interesting and effective:

Remember your audience: Refer back to your creative brief frequently, and be sure you're considering your agreed-upon audience when you choose topics, which stories to prioritize and the tone of your stories. What's interesting to you and your departmental colleagues may not be as interesting to alumni and donors who are not immersed in the day-to-day of your department. Focus on news that appeals to a more general audience, compelling profiles, significant achievements, and the great work that earned your faculty, students, and alumni recognition—rather than the recognition itself.

Don't treat all stories equally: Although it may feel smart politically to give each story or member of your department equal space, that's not the best approach to keeping your readers interested. Give the most interesting, mission-critical stories the most space and best position.

Protect your front page: This is the first thing a reader see and what inspires them to look inside; therefore, this is where you best story and greatest image should go. This is not the ideal position for the message from the department head (that works great on page two!). Think about which story you can tell that will best support your department's goals (which are stated in your creative brief!). A long lead story may continue onto the back page.

Keep word counts short: Tell your stories as efficiently as you can to keep readers' interest and leave room for images. Marketing Communications' editors can help trim unneeded words. We recommend no more than 800 words for any newsletter story, and much shorter for most (150-200).

Be creative: Not every story must be told in narrative form. Think of creative ways to share your stories with readers, such as:

- Photos with expanded captions
- Annotated photos, illustrations, or maps
- Lists
- Charts or graphs
- Interviews or Q&As
- Selected quotes from students, faculty, or others
- Archival or historical images
- Contests, calls to action, or requests for readers to share

Include a call to action and contact information: Make sure your readers know how to contact you with ideas, questions, or requests for more information. Or how they can tell you what they're up to—maybe for a future newsletter story. And let them know how they can get involved with the department—Do you have a calendar of events? Ways to donate? Can they mentor students or provide internships? Social media accounts to follow? Make it easy for them to reconnect and interact with the department.

RESOURCES

(All links are clickable)

UO Creative/Marketing Communications website: http://creative.uoregon.edu

Marketing Communications job request form (password: **jobrequest**):

http://jwj-fm.uoregon.edu/fmi/iwp/res/iwp_auth.html

UO Style Guide (brand guidelines): http://brand.uoregon.edu/

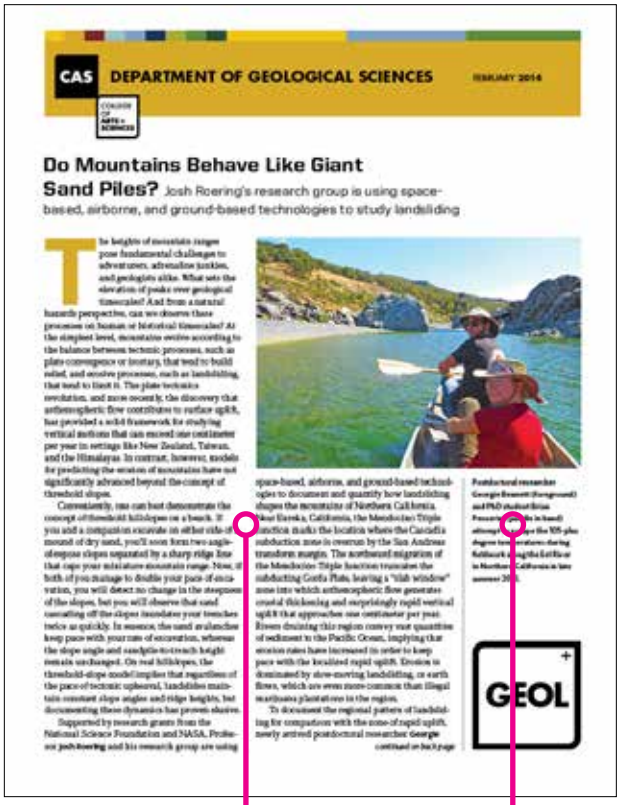
Editorial Style Guide: http://brand.uoregon.edu/editorial-style-guide

Photography resources: http://brand.uoregon.edu/photography

University Communications website: http://communications.uoregon.edu/

Printing and Mailing: http://uoprint.uoregon.edu/

Right-hand page (1)



CAS DEPARTMENT OF GEOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Do Mountains Behave Like Giant Sand Piles?

Josh Roering's research group is using space-based, airborne, and ground-based technologies to study landsliding

Cover story
front page: 450 words,
continues on back page
850 words total

Caption
up to 50 words

Left-hand page (2)

Greetings From the Department Head

Becky Dorsey and Alan Rempel are the new head and associate head of the Department of Geological Sciences.

Thank You for your generous donations

Honor Roll of Donors

Letter from the Dept. Head
235 words
250 words with one image

Donors
350 words

More donors
335 words
(can be combined in a longer story up to 700 words, or fewer with images)

Right-hand page (3)

Alumni News

Please visit us and share your stories at geology.uoregon.edu/alumni

Alumni News
60-85 words each
450 words total

Left-hand page (4)

Faculty News

Microanalysis of Supereruptions

Probing the Newberry Magma Chamber

Microbes Methylating Arsenic

Research
(published papers)
180-210 words

Faculty News
150 words each

Right-hand page (5)

Mixing Estuaries

Clean Experimental Petrology

Faculty News Briefs

Faculty News
250-300 words

Faculty News
250 words

Faculty News Briefs
180-210 words per column, can jump to next page

Left-hand page (6)

Welcome, New Faculty Members We are delighted to welcome three new tenure-track assistant professors to the department. They were hired in spring 2013 and bring new expertise and energy in the disciplines of vertebrate paleontology, numerical modeling, and earthquake seismology.

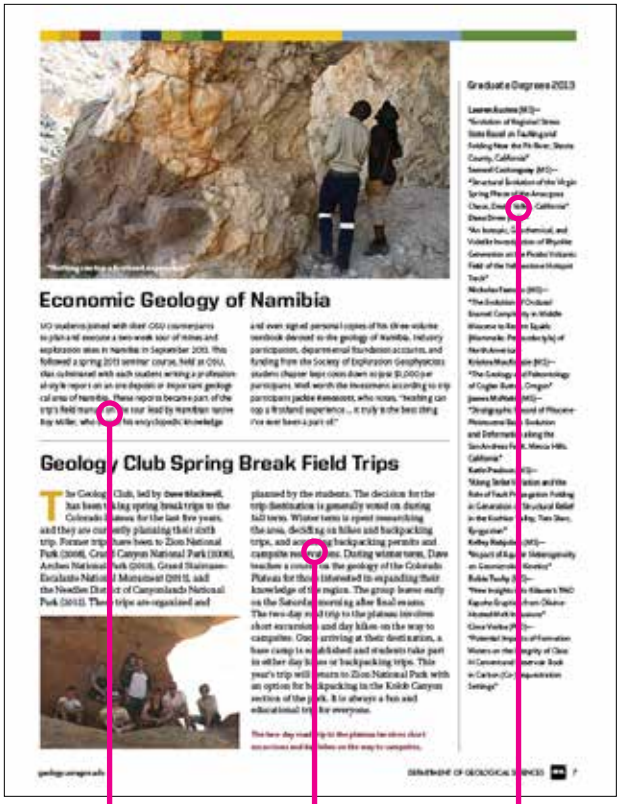
New Faculty
35 word intro

Faculty News Briefs, continued
180-210 words per column

New Faculty
100 words each

Right-hand page (7)

Left-hand page (8)



Economic Geology of Namibia

Geology Club Spring Break Field Trips

Graduate Degrees 2013

Ben Mackey, PhD '18, used historical air photos to demonstrate that a catastrophic landslide dammed the Eel River about 22,000 years ago.

News item
150 words

News item
210 words + caption

Graduate Degrees
up to 210 words

Cover story
continues from front page

caption
up to 50 words

pull quote
25 words

Additional page options

Recently Published

Mixing Estuaries

Longer story
500 words

Published work
up to 210 words

Graduate Degrees 2013

Geology Club Spring Break Field Trips

Longer news item
400 words + caption

Graduate Degrees
up to 210 words

Mixing Estuaries

Longer story
700 words