UNT Health Science Center communication guidelines and information
Introduction

Team,

Communication is a shared responsibility here at UNT Health Science Center. I ask that you help tell our story about the remarkable work we are doing together as one team.

Our success depends on us communicating with a single voice that is purposeful, clear and consistent. By delivering our key messages in a unified fashion, we reach our many audiences with a focused story that will tell them who we are, what we do and why we’re here.

What is our most powerful message? It’s us, working together as one team.

My best always,

Dr. Michael R. Williams
Overview

As you promote UNT Health Science Center, start by asking three simple questions:

• Who is your audience?

• What do you want them to know or say about UNTHSC?

• What are you asking them to do?

These questions help focus our messaging when communicating with internal or external audiences that are important to you and your team. Consistent messages make it easier for people to get to know us. Inconsistent messaging can confuse your audience.

The Office of Brand and Communication has developed key messages and guidelines to assist you. These guidelines help highlight and clarify UNTHSC’s One University vision, reinforced through Extraordinary Teamwork.

When possible and where it makes sense, UNTHSC team members are expected to integrate the messaging found in this guide into their internal and external communications.
All of our communications should be anchored to the key messages, which support the One University vision. It’s not necessary that every communications piece include every key message. But they should all include at least one of them – and the more the better.

**Tip**
If your audience is internal to UNTHSC, it’s best to reference the One University vision. If your audience is external, it’s better to emphasize the key messages that support One University – especially the message of Extraordinary Teamwork – rather than explicitly reference the vision itself.

The key messages:

- **UNTHSC first**
  The One University vision means that communication should focus on UNTHSC first. Individual schools, programs or teams come second. Keep the spotlight where it belongs – on our work together.

- **Extraordinary Teamwork**
  Unity of purpose and vision are necessary to produce Extraordinary Teamwork. We set ourselves apart through Extraordinary Teamwork. At its highest level, it takes on a “team of teams” model where relationships among teams resemble relationships among individuals within a single team. We work as teams across departments, disciplines and schools to create a better education for our students, stronger research, improved patient care and a better work environment.

  **We are one team.**
• **Defining and producing the providers of the future**
  Our students will be the providers of the future. They are, in a sense, the product we all help produce. Everyone here helps define what that future looks like. Providers are the doctors, pharmacists, therapists or PAs who care for you in clinical settings. They are also the researchers in the lab or the public health professionals addressing childhood obesity or infant mortality. Providers from UNTHSC take care of patients, tackle public health challenges or conduct scientific research. They are emotionally intelligent, comfortable with technology and work in teams to make patients healthier and care safer.

• **Financial strength**
  UNTHSC is a good steward of state and local funding, federal research dollars and awards from private organizations. We also leave a sizable footprint on the North Texas economy. Our students and highly skilled alumni add hundreds of millions of dollars to the region.

• **Sustainable people culture**
  UNTHSC invests in its people. From Our Values to coaching to leadership training, UNTHSC is committed to building a lasting, values-based culture. The end goal: to be recognized as a destination workplace, a Best Place For All.
Elevator Speech

An elevator speech is a brief, clear message that gives your audience a better understanding of UNT Health Science Center.

In just a few sentences, it should emphasize the key messages that support our vision while giving people a clear picture of who we are and what we’re about.

Here is our elevator speech:
UNT Health Science Center is One University comprising six graduate colleges for health care providers, researchers and scientists. We have a strong culture based on values, and through Extraordinary Teamwork we produce leaders in health care and science who transform lives.
Now, and Next
UNTHSC Communication Framework

Use the **Now, and Next** communication framework in written communications, oral presentations and in meetings. This is an easy-to-use format for communication, designed to deliver information with clarity and help operational focus for accountability and future work.

Think of **Now, and Next** as the guardrails that keep our communications understandable and on the right path.

Communicate what is being accomplished **Now** by discussing accomplishments, milestones, ongoing work or existing challenges. Use **Next** to communicate what you expect to accomplish, what needs to change or upcoming projects.

Every communication with an audience is an opportunity to inform them about UNTHSC, even if you have to briefly go off topic.

**Example:**
You’re leading an internal meeting, or presenting to an outside group.

- **“Before I begin discussing today’s topic, let me tell you a few things happening now UNT Health Science Center…”**
  - Our pharmacy school recently graduated its first class and received full accreditation.
  - The UNT System just hired its first female chancellor. She was the No. 2 person at NASA.
  - Our DNA lab has been in the news for helping identify the victims of a serial killer.

- **“We’ve got some exciting things coming up next at UNTHSC…”**
  - One of our Alzheimer’s experts is launching the nation’s largest study of cognitive disease in Mexican-Americans.
  - We’re working with TCU to open a new medical school that could help open hundreds of new residency slots in North Texas.
  - A new research building is scheduled for completion next year and will house our MD school, pharmacy college and our eye research institute.
Finding a way to explain the story of UNTHSC in a relatable way is more powerful than reciting facts and figures. Our DNA lab is world class, but it becomes more memorable when you explain how it helped solve famous cold cases. Interprofessional education is important, but it makes more sense to a lay audience when you explain that it will improve the care they receive and how it will take Extraordinary Teamwork to make it happen.

How To Tell Our Story

People recall stories more easily than facts. They form connections based on emotions.

Use some of these storytelling tips to improve your communication:

• **Show, don’t tell**
  Use concrete examples to drive home your message. For example:

  ◦ **Vague:** The Institute for Patient Safety is a team effort.

  ◦ **Stronger:** UNT Health Science Center’s Institute for Patient Safety was founded last year thanks to $4 million from the Texas Legislature. It will advance patient safety with the help of our founding partners: JPS Health Network, Cook Children’s Medical Center and Texas Christian University.
Story Telling (cont)

• **Explain how UNTHSC programs improve lives**
  
  ◦ **Vague:** The Asthma 411 program improves the health of Fort Worth children.
  
  ◦ **Stronger:** UNT Health Science Center’s “Asthma 411” program gives school nurses the equipment, training and medical clearance to treat students’ asthma attacks in the schools, keeping children from missing class, parents from missing work and reducing costly trips to emergency rooms.

• **Share stories**
  
  ◦ **Vague:** The Texas Center for Performing Arts is a unique partnership between TCOM and the UNT College of Music.
  
  ◦ **Clearer:** In the Texas Center for Performing Arts, dancers have found a physician who not only treats their pain but understands their need to perform in spite of it.

• **Avoid jargon**

  Always consider your audience. For scientific or medical crowds, technical language may be appropriate. But other audiences may be confused by language you would otherwise commonly use. For these groups, keep it conversational. Communicate as if you were speaking to a family, friend or neighbor.

  ◦ **Jargon:** “The patient presented with...”
  
  ◦ **Clearer:** “The patient showed symptoms of...”
CommKit FAQs

Why is it important to follow these guidelines?

To help us all communicate with one voice that is purposeful, clear and consistent. Having consistent messages makes it easier for people to get to know us and helps avoid confusing your audience.

How should I determine my message?
Ask yourself these questions:

• Who is my audience?
• What do you want them to know or say about UNTHSC?
• What are you asking them to do?

The answers will help ensure your message is on target.

What are some powerful overall messages I can use?
Here are a few messages that clarify our vision: One University, built on values, defining and producing the providers of the future. Choose those that are most relevant to your communication goal.

• UNTHSC first: One University means communication should focus on UNTHSC first and individual schools, programs or teams second.

• Extraordinary Teamwork: We set ourselves apart through Extraordinary Teamwork. We work as teams across departments, disciplines and schools to create better education for students, stronger research, improved patient care and a better work environment.

• Defining and producing the providers of the future: Our students are the providers of the future. Providers are the doctors, pharmacists, therapists and PAs who care for us—and the researchers and public health specialists who help provide a healthier community for us all.

• Financial strength: We are a good steward of funding from all sources, and we make a sizable contribution to the local economy.

• Sustainable people culture: We invest in our people and are committed to building a lasting values-based culture.
CommKit FAQs (cont)

How can I succinctly pitch what UNTHSC does?
• Use this “elevator speech.”
  • UNT Health Science Center is One University comprising six graduate colleges for health care providers, researchers and scientists. We have a strong culture based on values, and through Extraordinary Teamwork we produce leaders in health care and science to transform lives.

How can I make these messages most memorable to my audience?
• Use concrete examples.
• Explain how our programs improve lives.
• Share stories.
• Avoid jargon.

How can make sure my information is easy to understand and well organized?
Use the Now, and Next format. Start your communication with what is being accomplished Now by discussing accomplishments, milestones, ongoing work or challenges. Use Next to communicate what you expect to accomplish, what needs to change and upcoming projects.

Who should I contact with questions?
The Office of Brand and Communication is happy to assist. Email Jeff.Carlton@unthsc.edu or Cari.Hyden@unthsc.edu.
Templates and Resources

Available at: https://www.unthsc.edu/brand-and-communication/resources/

The Office of Brand and Communication has created and compiled tools and resources that are useful for communications and presentations. They include:

• **Templates for business cards, research posters and PowerPoint presentations**

• **Iconic UNTHSC photos available for download**

• **A do-it-yourself photography guide**

• **Media training for students, staff and faculty**

• **Web content training and videos**

• **Social media directory**

• **Graphics and branding guide**
Communication Checklist

• Key questions
  - Who is your audience?
  - What do you want them to know or say about UNTHSC?
  - What are you asking them to do?

• Key messages
  - UNTHSC first
  - Extraordinary Teamwork
  - Defining and producing the providers of the future
  - Financial strength
  - Sustainable people culture

• UNTHSC Communication framework
  - Now, and Next

• How to tell our story
  - Show, don’t tell.
  - Explain how UNTHSC improves lives.
  - Share stories.
  - Avoid jargon.

Questions?

The Office of Brand and Communication is happy to assist you. You may contact Jeff Carlton (jeff.carlton@unthsc.edu) or Cari Hyden (cari.hyden@unthsc.edu) if you have any questions. We welcome the opportunity to help your communications better connect with your audiences.