The University of Delaware’s College of Agriculture and Natural Resources provides the following support services for faculty, staff, students, and partners of the college:

- Website Design and Maintenance
- Social Media Coordination and Support
- Professional Writing and Media Relations
- Event Planning and Support
- Photography and Videography Services
- Graphic Design and Product Development
- Special Projects Coordination

**GENERALIZED EXISTING PORTFOLIO OF SERVICES**

*To request Communications help or support, faculty, staff and professionals are asked to complete a web form located at: [http://ag.udel.edu/forms/commForm/form.php](http://ag.udel.edu/forms/commForm/form.php).

**CANR Communications Staffing**

Katy O’Connell, Communications Manager
Christy Mannering, Web Developer
Adam Thomas, Communications Specialist II
Danielle Quigley, Photographer, S-contract, part-time, 20 hours per week
Beth Tucker, Graphic Designer, miscellaneous wage, 20 hours per week
Margo McDonough, Writer, miscellaneous wage, 10 hours per week

**Website Design and Maintenance**

*Staffing: Christy Mannering, Katy O’Connell*

- Respond to work requests for web projects
- Change the home page rotating photos
- Change the home page spotlight section
- Change the departmental spotlights
- Change the Extension spotlights
- Train staff in appropriate web editing tools for the maintenance of web pages
- Maintain a strong, working knowledge of current web design trends and techniques
- Attend OCM creative team meetings
- Continue the import of Extension factsheets as needed
- Integrate eXtension functionality into Extension pages
- Work with feedback from internal and external uses, as well as Google analytics to make usability improvements to the site

**RSO web support is not provided by CANR; student clubs must work through UD Student Centers for assistance.**
Social Media Coordination and Support

Staffing: Katy O’Connell, Christy Mannering, Adam Thomas

CANR follows the social media guidance outlined in UD’s Social Media Guide (http://www.udel.edu/socialmedia/pdfs/SocialMediaGuide_1102.pdf) and actively participates in UD’s Social Media Working Group. CANR’s social media contact works with this group to maintain the UD Social Media Portal (http://www.udel.edu/socialmedia).

Faculty or staff wishing to create an “official” social media account for his/her unit should contact the CANR Communications Office in advance of creating the account. In order for an account to be considered “UD official” there are certain guidelines that apply. Student and RSO social media accounts are managed by Student Life.

Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and FourSquare are the four priority social media platforms used at UD. As such, these are at the forefront of CANR’s social media presence. Other platforms (LinkedIn, Flickr) etc. are also used on a less significant scale.

UD official 4-H pages are only listed for pages maintained by 4-H staff, not by individual groups and/or leaders.

- Respond to work requests for social media support
- Continue Web 2.0 integration of social media services (i.e. RSS feeds of Facebook news on web pages, embedded podcasts, etc.)
- Maintain CANR’s official social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube
- Maintain CANR Connect, the college’s official Wordpress blog
- Serve on UD’s Social Media Working Group
- Maintain accurate location information on all Foursquare locations
- Train staff as needed
- Insure that all existing “official” social media accounts abide by the UD Social Media Guide
- Update CANR Connect web page with updated lists of social media accounts
- Investigate the appropriate development and use of CANR specific mobile applications
- Expand the use of podcasts in coverage of CANR special events, and as an added special for CANR news pieces

Professional Writing and Media Relations

Staffing: Adam Thomas, Margo McDonough, Katy O’Connell

Due to the changing needs and preferences of the news media, the University is no longer issuing press releases. Media advisories are issued for college-wide and/or university wide events and/or initiatives. CANR will, however, continue to send links to articles already posted to news media in agriculture and natural resources publications as appropriate. In
addition, media specific to Kent and Sussex counties may be issued directly to members of the news media, until members of the news media indicate a different preference. Communications also abides by the OCM guidelines for article writing and submission to official outlets. This includes items such as word counts, quotes, layout for uploading, etc. Communications also abides by the Development Press Release Policy when recognizing and publicizing gifts.

- Respond to work requests for writing projects
- Post stories to UDaily and the CANR Blog
- Provide articles for UD magazines and special publications (UD Messenger, UD Research, UD Global/Special Issue)
- Respond to media requests for experts
- Produce weekly Native Delaware columns for the News Journal
- Provide support to Two Cent Tips, a newsletter of Family and Consumer Sciences Extension
- Attend weekly UDaily planning meetings
- Assist in the preparation of the annual plan of work and accompanying report
- Proactively seek topics of interest for research articles to appear in UD media outlets
- Prepare media alerts as needed
- Work with all new faculty and Extension professionals to add their information to the UD Experts database at their time of employment
- Revise the annual plan of work to include appropriate outcome statements and measurable objectives
- Work with county Extension offices to develop a consistent means of issuing articles, releases and media advisories
- Provide editorial support for the Extension Director’s Weekly
- Provide support for the Extension Director’s reports to partners

**Event Planning and Support**
Staffing: Katy O’Connell

- Coordinate Homecoming activities with the CANR Director of Development
- Coordinate Alumni Weekend activities with the CANR Director of Development and UD Alumni Relations
- Coordinate CANR’s Annual Ag Day
- Provide assistance to and support of Friends of Ag Breakfasts, and legislative visits/events, Ag Week and the Delaware State Fair

**Photography and Videography Services**
Staffing: Danielle Quigley, Adam Thomas

- Respond to requests for photographic services
- Provide photo support for CANR Communications tasks (web, graphic design, events, etc.)
- Work with OCM to have CANR photos featured on the UD home page & UDigital (at the target rate of 1 per semester)
- Provide a minimum of 1 video piece per month to be showcased on the CANR YouTube page
- Include “video bonus material” whenever appropriate for UDaily articles
- Work with UD Admissions and CANR Academic Programs to film “major finder videos”
- Schedule routine sessions to take images of professors, research professionals, extension agents, and students conducting field work

**Graphic Design and Product Development**
Staffing: Beth Tucker, Katy O'Connell

- Respond to requests for graphic design services
- Provide support to the Academic Programs office for printed materials
- Provide graphic design support for all UDairy Creamery packaging and marketing materials
- Maintain branding consistency across CANR communications, including monitoring and advising CANR units
- Coordinate the College’s annual holiday card

**Special Projects Coordination**
Staffing: Katy O'Connell

CANR Communications is often called upon to assist senior level college administration in a variety of tasks that do not fall into one of the aforementioned categories.

- Serve on the UDairy Creamery Advisory board and provide support as needed
- Assist Blue Hen Blankets & Yarn sales and promotion
- Assist Dare to Bee Honey sales and promotion
- Assist with communications as it relates to sensitive issues

**BUDGETARY NEEDS**

The CANR Communications budget was combined with the Information Technology budget for FY13. We recommend separating the budget in order to maintain an accurate separation and allocation of funds.

The existing Communications budget has been sufficient for routine supplies and business but has not allowed for any new projects, innovation, or training for staff other than the Communications Manager. These items will be essential to the growth of college communications support.
STAFFING PLAN

As it exists now, CANR Communications staff are adequate to address communications needs of the college. The unit receives support from UD’s Office of Communications and Marketing and a few key support staff and professionals throughout the college.

Current the Communications Manager has shared responsibilities for oversight of the IT unit. Separate IT team leadership will be essential to the continued success of both the Communications and the IT unit. This can either happen through the hire or appointment of an IT manager, or a new hire in educational technology, which would have leadership duties as well. Freeing up time spent on IT oversight will allow the Communications Manager to be more strategic in his/her planning.

In addition, it will be important to consider that with web and digital communications as a growing area, that one web developer for the college will likely not be adequate. Consideration may be given to a web developer for Extension and/or content managers with distinct duties in each department who would work in close conjunction with the existing web developer position.

As the college expands its recruiting efforts to grow undergraduate enrollment, it will be essential to increase content writing for the web and print materials. Consideration should be given to expanding writing support with a focus on recruiting. This position may also have a role in development communications, another area that will likely grow in the long term.

Any new hires should occur under consultation with UD’s Office of Communications and Marketing as their strategic goals and hiring might have overlap and play into the goals/efforts of the college.

POSSIBILITIES FOR OUTSOURCING AND COLLABORATION

Central Office of Communications and Marketing Support

In addition, CANR Communications provides support to and receives support from the University’s Office of Communications and Marketing. Individuals in the college are first directed to the college communications office and can then be referred to OCM on an as needed basis. The CANR Manager of Communications serves as the primary liaison between CANR and OCM; the full time college communications specialist (writer) shares responsibilities between CANR and OCM.

OCM provides the University with services related to: advertising; graphics standards; licensing and trademarks; public and media relations; photographic services; print communications; research, graduate, and global communications; web communications; and web standards. CANR works with an OCM senior art director, who serves as a liaison who can help the college find University assistance when needed.

Outsourcing
Communications is an area where outsourcing makes sense when staff are maxed out on tasks, when rapid response is key, and/or when the level of service needed is higher than what the college and/or OCM can provide. Specifically, CANR may outsource with freelance writers, photographers, graphic designers, and web developers/coders to do a multitude of projects.

**ACTION ITEMS**

CANR Communications reviewed the draft Programmatic Unit (departments and Cooperative Extension) and has provided these overarching action items based on those plans. Appendix One provides the detailed items provided specifically from each programmatic unit plan.

- A strong web presence is currently and will continue to be essential to the recruitment and retention of students, and the visibility of the impact of CANR research and outreach serving the constituents of Delaware and beyond. Additional support beyond existing resources will be needed to advance CANR in this area. Programmatic units will need to work in close conjunction with the web developer and database administrator, as well as other communications staff, to provide core content, learn how to manage supporting content, and contribute to page management.

- Programmatic Units are heavily dependent upon the communications unit for assistance in the development, marketing and delivery of education programs (undergraduate, graduate and outreach) as well as for informing multiple forms of stakeholders about the numerous research outcomes and accomplishments of the college. It will still be a major function of the Communications unit to develop strategies for communicating with stakeholders such as federal and state legislators, related industry, state and local agencies, other land grant universities and the constituents themselves, and to tailor messages appropriately.

- CANR Communications will need to work in close conjunction with the Office of Academic Programs and Student Services, programmatic units, UD’s Admissions Office, and UD’s Office of Communications and Marketing to ensure a robust plan for the recruitment of students into CANR’s dynamic programs. CANR Communications will play a vital role in the recruitment of students in terms of written and digital communications.

- CANR Communications should be consulted in the grant writing process as much as other support units, especially as many funding agencies are now looking for advanced solutions for “broader impacts.” Traditionally this consultation has been an after thought and in order for CANR to be even more successful in securing grants, PIs might seek the expertise of Communications professionals in these areas.

- CANR Communications will play a vital role in working with the programmatic units and the development office to draft and implement messaging regarding giving and development opportunities and priorities.

- CANR Communications will play a vital role in preparing governmental correspondence and serving in a governmental relations capacity as resources become less certain. CANR Communications will play a vital role in communicating the impacts of CANR to the constituents of Delaware and beyond.
CANR Communications will play a vital role in marketing value added products from the UD Farm and Greenhouses.

CANR Communications must not duplicate services provided centrally.

CANR Communications must take advantage of professional development opportunities to stay abreast of cutting edge advances.

FOUNDATIONAL STEPS TO BE TAKEN IN FY14

1. Work with the Office of Communications and Marketing to outsource the revision of the college website.
2. Complete the integration of National Branding into UD Cooperative Extension materials.
3. Launch and integrate the Ask an Expert feature for the UD Cooperative Extension webpages.
4. Work with each Department to develop value statements and/or their top “bragging points” for student recruitment to be used in marketing efforts.
5. Work with the Office of Academic Programs and Student Services to define a timeline for marketing pieces for the recruitment of students, and integrate new college branding and value statements.
6. Work with the Office of Academic Programs and Student Services to develop a plan for non-traditional advising modes of communication (video, blogs, etc.).
7. Conduct additional trainings and information sessions for faculty and professionals about the services provided by CANR Communications, and train support staff in task items that can be easily maintained at the departmental level.
8. Transition Homecoming events away from the Communications Office.
APPENDIX ONE: ITEMS FROM PROGRAMMATIC UNIT PLANS

*The items below are specifically pulled from the draft Programmatic Unit Plans (Departments and Cooperative Extension). Some units specifically mention communications items, while others simply infer it. It will be important in the finalization of the master plan to put some more concrete text around the needs of the programmatic units.

ANIMAL AND FOOD SCIENCES

Communications is inferred throughout the plan, with no specific items or mention.

APPLIED ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS

Communications and Information Technology (combined)

- Students’ first impression of an academic department is determined by their view of the website. It is crucial to have a current and informative website for recruitment and dissemination of important information.
- Most notably we are lacking in technical assistance for web development and maintenance, computers, software, and support for research. We have been doing the best possible with what is currently provided by the college.
- There is an urgent need for a major overhaul and redesign of our departmental webpages across the college.
- The centralized administration of technical and web development support has been inadequate and quite limited in meeting our departmental needs. For example, we have been asking for help in revising the structure and content of our department websites for almost two years and have yet to get the type of assistance we need.
- The allocation of more resources to web design/maintenance and general IT may be needed to complement the role filled by one single web designer in CANR.
- Faculty and staff members of APEC would like to have more access to making basic updates to the content of our departmental website.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Goal: Enhanced Educational delivery through facilities and distance technology enhancements. Maintaining sustainability of extension also requires preparing for the next generation of learners and their desired methods of learning. A hybrid of distance technologies involving synchronous and asynchronous methods along with traditional face-to-face methods is needed. (Support Units-IT and Communications)

Recommendations Short Term:

- Continue development of eXtension resources including Ask and Expert (roll out July 2013) and online course content.
- Continued development of web capacity for marketing and content.

Goal: Communications Enhancements. Cooperative Extension is heavily dependent upon the communications unit and IT for assistance in the development, marketing and delivery of education programs as well as for the informing multiple forms of stakeholders about the outcomes and accomplishments of the program such as federal and state legislators, related
industry, state and local agencies, other land grant universities and the constituents themselves. A unified statewide message is needed. (Support Units-Communications and IT)

Recommendations Short Term:

- Incorporation of National Branding into UD Cooperative Extension Brand and use broadly to establish name brand recognition.
- Initial “Ask an Expert” as part of Extension web presence and linkage to national Land Grant eXtension System
- Further develop web presence including YouTube, on line courses and certificate programs.
- Key message points of plan of work translated into a public piece
- Establishment and institutionalize social media efforts
- Communication strategy related to strategic initiatives in this plan (i.e. move to more statewide work, rationale for cost recovery and assistance in communicating the transition, areas of programmatic expertise.

Recommendations Long Term:

- Establishment of regular communications with federal and state legislators, related industry, state and local agencies and constituents about Extension outcomes and accomplishments.
- Incorporation of new communication technologies as they develop.

ENTOMOLOGY AND WILDLIFE ECOLOGY

- The availability of and instruction in how to use current web-based design tools. For example, instruction in how to use Wordpress, Dreamweaver, or other web design programs, how to create applications, how to track web traffic for evaluation purposes, etc.
- Most of our faculty would benefit from increased technical support for our websites. We have several that need maintaining and updating (e.g., Biological Control, FRAME, MARUS, Planthoppers).

PLANT AND SOIL SCIENCES

Communications and Information Technology (blended among areas in the plan)

1. Grow and enhance undergraduate education
   - Recruit a larger number of incoming students into our programs.
   - Make our programs relevant and interesting to a greater number of students.
   - Promote our majors, career opportunities, and courses to students.
   - Promote the availability of research or internship opportunities for our best undergraduates.
   - Promote our students and graduates for industry and government jobs.