



## Communications Advisory Committee (CAC)

**To:** Silvia Pedraza, Chair, SACUA

**From:** Yulia Sevryugina, Chair of Communications Advisory Committee 2021-22

**Subject:** Report on activities of Communications Advisory Committee (CAC) for 2021-22

**Advisory to:** Kallie Michels, VP for Communications (with Dave Reid)

**Members:** Chandan Kumar, Stephanie Preston, Kayla Niemann, Josh Pasek, Marna Clowney-Robinson, Cliff Lampe, Janice Molloy, Craig Smith, Cassandra Kelly, Dylan Bernstein

**SACUA Liaison:** Damani Partridge (FA 2021) and Silvia Pedraza (WN 2022)

**Meeting Dates:** 10/28/21, 11/15/21, 2/10/22, 3/16/22

**Summary:** CAC had 4 well-attended and informative meetings during the 2021-22 academic year.

The topics of focus for the year included:

1. *Culture Journey – Culture Change and Values Identification* addressed by the guest-speaker Nick Kaleba (Associate Director, HR Communications). We discussed political implications of this work in the current environment, especially surrounding the issues of free speech, challenge of finding the common set of meaningful values across a broad range of principles while protecting minority opinions and values.
2. *UM Sustainability Communication/Carbon Neutrality* addressed by the guest-speaker Adam Fisher (Sustainability Communications Manager). Committee discussed how we may give better visibility to a range of initiatives concerning sustainability and carbon neutrality. Among them are President's Carbon Neutrality initiative, Planet Blue Global Impact, Planet Blue Campus, and Planet Blue Carbon Neutrality.
3. *Building trust between the university and faculty, staff, and students through transparent communication* about decision processes. This included issues like sexual harassment, COVID-19, removal of former President Schlissel, and University's response in statements to the press and in internal communications to criticism and to investigations. We discussed how important is to ensure and facilitate transparency, fairness, equity, and inclusion in university communications.



Topics to be continued or carried forward to year 2022-23 are:

1. Facilitate communications concerning sustainability, carbon neutrality, climate change, DEI, sexual harassment, anti-racism, COVID-19, financial setbacks, and challenges to free speech.
2. Pursue best practices in ensuring transparency in University's communication regarding the decision making.
3. Pursue effective internal communication, specifically focusing on it being clear and concrete.
4. Explore how the University could demonstrate compassion in its response statements to the press and in internal communications to criticism and to investigations.
5. Consider how both internal and external communication may repair University's external reputation (partners and stakeholders) and facilitate building trust between University communities and its leadership.