MAY 2022 – MAY 2024 STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING PLAN
MID-PLAN UPDATE | AS OF 1.10.24

GOAL: INCREASE UNDERGRADUATE AND ONLINE MASTER’S APPLICATIONS AND ENROLLMENT

<table>
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<th>Measurables:</th>
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<tr>
<td>● Undergraduate applications received / enrollment: Up to 120 applications by 2024</td>
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<td>● Enroll 28 MS online students by the Fall of 2024</td>
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<td>● Enroll 20 OMALS-Agribusiness students into the Agribusiness Fundamentals Certificate by fall of 2024</td>
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<tr>
<th>Increase Undergraduate Application</th>
<th>Increase Online Master’s Application</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate web page hits</td>
<td>Inquiries:</td>
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<td>(Jan. – Dec. 13, 2023)</td>
<td>● 2022: 46</td>
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<td>● 2023: 91</td>
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<td>Cohort:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>● 2022: 12</td>
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<td>● 2023: 26</td>
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<td>Certificates:</td>
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<td>● Agribusiness Fundamentals: 4</td>
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<td>● Applied Economic Analytics: 3</td>
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- Worked with Virginia Tech rankings project director to establish a funnel for online ranking submissions to the U.S. News & World Report

**GOAL: INCREASE PH.D. APPLICATIONS**

Academic year:
- 2021 - 2022: 99
- 2022 - 2023: 69
- 2023 - 2024: Application numbers not available until April 2024

*Inquiries for the Ph.D. program for 2023: 39; so far for 2024: 4*

**MEASURABLES:**
- 34 Ph.D. students by 2024
  - 2023: 27

**GOAL: DEVELOP PROGRAM-LEVEL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND A PLAN FOR REPORTING AND FACILITATING INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS WITH VISIBLE COMPANIES AND ORGANIZATIONS**

*Sampling of highlights*
- Bridge Program Pilot; $20,000 grant
- Two alumni surveys were conducted in April 2022 and Nov. 2023 to update contact information, work, and experiences, and gather their company's HR contact for future interactions for our Bridge program.
- Career Fair conducted in 2022; then CALS took the reins in 2023 due to its success
  - 2022: Nearly 30 vendors, 200 students in attendance

**GOAL: RAISE AWARENESS OF FACULTY RESEARCH**

*Sampling of highlights*
- Increased media interviews, social media spotlights, and profile stories
- Increased Reporter Tip Sheets for media distribution
- Conducted a “How to deal with the media” workshop hosted by Virginia Tech’s media relations office for AAEC faculty.
- Developed spreadsheet for faculty expertise, updated each semester with also outlines current research
- Increased faculty award submissions, which has resulted in a few wins
2022: Klaus Moeltner
AAEA Distinguished Teaching award – graduate teaching over 10 years
2023: Submission decisions still pending

Faculty webpage hits (Jan. – Dec. 13, 2023)
- 2021: 3,322
- 2022: 10,849
- 2023: 10,280

GOAL: INCREASE EXTENSION AND OUTREACH VISIBILITY AND PRESENCE IN VIRGINIA AND THE MID-ATLANTIC REGION

Extension main webpage hits (Jan. – Dec. 13, 2023)
- 2021: 826
- 2022: 2,505
- 2023: 3,311

Developed a Virginia Commodity Marketing website with resources that outline commodity information and resources to help build successful agricultural enterprises for Virginia Producers. It includes auctions, historical prices, basis, marketing trends, and more.
- The site has received nearly 2,000 hits since its launch in August 2023

GOAL: IMPLEMENT BRAND ALIGNMENT

Sampling of highlights

- Created a Faculty and Staff Resource page that houses brand assets (logo, QR codes, and updated letterhead and syllabus)
- Developed new marketing materials
  - Departmental one-page overview
  - Undergraduate brochure
  - Online master’s brochure
  - Online master’s one-page overview
  - Center for Agricultural Trade one-page overview
  - 6 major flyers
  - COINS recruitment flier and poster
- Developed mission, taglines, vision, and core values

Highlight of major tactics:

- Extensive content and design website updates, online inquiry forms
- Developed marketing plan for the online master’s program; in progress Recruitment Coordinator and Partnership Manager position
- Developed search engine optimization plan with attention to keywords and phrases
- Increased production of promotional videos with a focus on undergraduate and master’s program
- Articulation agreements: In progress – Radford University and Roanoke College (4+1)
- Increased alumni involvement: Award submissions, profiles, alumni newsletter The Exchange
2022 winners:
  - CALS Alumni Achievement Award: Greg Estep
  - CALS honorary alumni award: Dhamu Thamodaran
2023 winners: Many nominations pending
  - VT Graduate Alumni Achievement Award: Owen Wagner

- Increased social media posts
- Advertising outlets: Examples include: VT magazine, Ag Morning Clip, VT alumni chapters, Virginia Business Magazine, and recruitment events.

**Analytics:**

Alumni, Faculty, and Student Profile stories, including reporter tip sheets (Jan. – Dec. 13, 2023)

- 2021: 19
- 2022: 36
- 2023: 47

AAEC web hits (Jan. – Dec. 13, 2023)

- 2021: 79,964
- 2022: 153,634
- 2023: 135,646 *(Note: 3 week data gap during Universal Analytics to Google Analytics 4 migration)*

*Social media - 28% increase from 2022 - 2023*