

Program Review 2021-2022

Office of Communications

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General Information (Program Review 2021-2022)

2021/22 Program Review

2021/22 PROGRAM REVIEW FORM

Form: 2021/2022 Program Review (See appendix)

Reference Section

MESA2030 COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

ROADMAP TO MESA2030: STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2026

MESA DATA DASHBOARDS

Requests Forms

REQUEST PORTAL

Appendix

A. 2021/2022 Program Review (Form)

Form: "2021/2022 Program Review"

Created with : Taskstream

Participating Area: Office of Communications

2021/2022 Program Review

(REQUIRED) Name of Lead Writer and Manager/Service Area Supervisor

Jennifer Kearns

(REQUIRED) In what ways (if any) did changes to an online/remote modality due to COVID-19 impact student success and equity in your area/program? Please provide evidence.

The Mesa College Office of Communications staff moved quickly and successfully to an online modality in March of 2019. We continued to provide services to the campus community and the District. However, it became immediately apparent that Mesa College and the District lacked the digital resources, digital capital, and infrastructure needed to adequately support students, faculty, and staff in a fully online (web-based and digital) modality. The immediate and primary changes implemented by our office included systems for remote project management and work flow, along with the production of new types of content, products, and services for our campus clients.

Naturally, requests for printed materials diminished greatly, and conversely, there was a sharp and steady increase in demand for digital assets. Our move to adjust the kinds of products and services we provide, underscored the need for Mesa College and the District to have more resources and staffing in this area. Since the last reporting period, our office received over 1,200 requests for project assistance. Please note that these are requests from our campus clients only, and the figure does not include the full breadth of our daily/weekly/monthly workload.

From an equity stand-point, many of our clients were well-positioned to move to a digital modality, as they already had robust webpages and a social media presence. However, many were not – and needed our assistance to create and learn how to use/implement those assets. Since our services are provided for free, in some ways, this allowed us to provide more equitable services to students because our clients (campus Programs/Departments) could create materials without the limitations of a print budget. In some ways however, having digital-only materials highlighted and exacerbated the digital divide that affects some of our most vulnerable students who are/were without access to reliable equipment (phones, tablets, laptops, etc.) or internet.

Specific additional web and digital support included:

Website: Initial transition was challenging to set up technology and the webpages needed to provide students with vital and immediate information. Initial time for set-up and to build the webpages, etc. was time consuming, once established it was relatively easy to maintain and be more productive. As mentioned, students also had to transition online and get computer equipment and also deal with internet challenges.

- Transition in person process/info to an online format

- Example: Online Support Services webpages and additional attributes (on-line chat, chat-bot), events such as Jumpstart
- Website became greater conduit for communication
 - Increase in time sensitive updates
 - Increase in announcement type content
 - Increase demand for dynamic content
 - Example: COVID Page, Announcement Header on the Homepage, Endless google sheets setup to provide dynamic content
- Tech support / consulting needed more often
 - Example: Marching Order, Campus Community Forums

Social media:

- Going remote increased the number of direct messages and complaints that we generally get in a “normal” year.
 - While the campus was closed, specifically at the beginning of the quarantine, a lot of students had questions, concerns and comments about going back to campus or being forced to learn via online platforms.
- During quarantine the use of Instagram increased while use and interaction of the Facebook platform decreased.
- For the first time there was a decrease in followers on Facebook, but we did see an increase in Instagram and YouTube followers.
 - We established new platforms for communications, including the additional of a campus TikTok account

Please see below for other specific examples of changes and impacts on our other work areas:

- Design: We continued to provide graphic elements and templates for clients, so that they can use and implement them into PPT, Word, Publisher, Canva and/or Canvas at their comfort level. Their willingness to use templates and design elements and then follow our Guidelines to create their own designs (when something simple is needed) is more efficient than having our office create multiple design versions with multiples emails/communication needed in between.
- Photography: Less events/opportunity to photograph – which gave us less visual inventory to create materials. For the first year, we had to utilize older photos, and in some cases stock imagery. Also, when we did need to schedule specific photo shoots, it was a much more difficult process to schedule and arrange due to safety, availability, etc.
- Video: Increased demand for video and video assets, for which we have very little inventory and minimal staff to support. Current videographers are employed in other offices/work areas. Additionally, we utilize consultants to assist with video, which requires additional budget and project management.

(REQUIRED) What practices has your area/program implemented since the last program review cycle that you would like to improve/continue? Identify impacts on student success and equity.

There are practices, programs and tools that our office began to utilize that helped increase productivity and efficiency – and we would like to continue with those practices. The practices below have allowed us to be more efficient and equitable in how we can produce our work to positively impact students.

- Remote work: Several of our staff were able to work more efficiently and be more productive in a remote environment. As a non-student facing work group, we would like to have the ability to utilize flexible and hybrid/remote work options and opportunities for our staff.
- Design: Purchasing third party graphic/stock images from a provider (i.e. Freepik) allowed us to be more productive and efficient in our design process. It also provided us ideas and samples for their own designs and photoshoots.
- Web: Continue with the building of digital infrastructure to support better data integrity and automation.
- Project management/workflow: We plan to continue implementing virtual project management and communications options like Trello, Slack, and Zoom.
- Photography: We worked diligently during remote operations to “work smarter, not harder” in coordinating photoshoot and video opportunities.
 - We plan to continue to coordinate with students, staff, faculty and the district on this.
- Social Media: Since the last program review, we have been able to use online platforms like Freepik, Hightail, and Buffer, which have allowed us to streamline more social media posts, and cross-train part-time staff.

(REQUIRED) What practices has your area/program implemented since the last program review cycle that you would like to change/discontinue? Identify impacts on student success and equity.

There are no practices or programs that our office implemented since the last program review that we would like to change and/or discontinue. However, due to COVID, the need to work remotely, and the subsequent analysis of our office processes and procedures, there are several pre-existing programs, practices and processes that we would like to change, re-inforce and/or discontinue. The primary example is that remote work exposed the limitations of our current internal and client-facing project management system. We need improved functionality/processes to accurately track and manage work for ourselves, our clients and ultimately our students.

(REQUIRED) What college-wide practices implemented since the last program review cycle have affected your area/program positively or negatively? Identify impacts on student success and equity.

The Mesa College Office of Communications staff moved quickly and successfully to an online modality in March of 2019. We continued to provide services, but as stated above it became immediately apparent that our office lacked the digital resources, digital capital, infrastructure and staffing needed to adequately support the campus during this switch. The immediate and primary changes implemented by our office included systems for remote project management and work flow, along with the production of new types of content, products, and services for our campus clients. Conversely, remote work has allowed for increased productivity, better work/life balance through decreased commute time, decreased distractions, and increased flexibility for many Office of Communications staff.

Design:

- Due to COVID the Office of Communications has been impacted in regards to nearly twice as many requests to create promotional graphics (and subsequent social media promotions (than in previous years).

- Clients started to use Canva and create their own designs. Sometimes, this was helpful because they were able to show us their vision. However, we cannot adapt their designs in Canva (it is not compatible with Adobe), so we would have to start the designs over from scratch.
 - Our Office would refine their designs to meet Mesa graphics standards, or recreate the look in Adobe Illustrator or InDesign. In many ways it was positive because it would shorten the ideation stages of the design process, and the clients like the final product more because it's their idea/vision.
- During COVID, many clients had difficulty following the design process and procedures put in place by our office to streamline our ability to assist them. Our process request system stipulates that clients should provide us with final text, etc. that is ready and approved before starting design. This helps prevent endless edits, versions and back-and-forth communication, which frustrates all parties and takes much longer.

Photography:

- Due to safety guidelines, we were unable to take as many photos as we normally would. This made creating new designs and promotions difficult, as our visual inventory was very low.

Events:

- Some campus virtual events were easier to organize and support.
- Others, such as Commencement and the Scholarship Ceremony, required more support.
- Virtual events were held more often, so required more frequent repetitive promotions and support (greater time commitment). I.e. Campus Forums, Student Services events including Student Health Services events, Transfer Events, updating and promotion of Student Health Services contact information, promotions for HEERF Funds, etc.