

GUIDELINES FOR DEPARTMENTAL NEWSLETTERS

This Guideline is intended to be used as a universal guide for MWSU academic departments desiring to create a newsletter as an outreach communication vehicle with their alumni and other constituencies. While maximizing flexibility is important, the purpose of these guidelines is to assist departments in tying outgoing communications to the University in order to support a unifying brand. Our guidelines are intended to provide essential benefits to departments to expedite publication, assist the editing process by focusing each newsletter's purpose regarding content; provide assistance with content ideas for freshness and interest; provide overall professional design; and expedite the distribution of the newsletter.

Audience: MWSU graduates of the department and other constituents.

Role and Purpose: The purpose of the newsletter is the following:

- To communicate with constituents about departmental news, faculty and student achievements, programs, etc.
- To establish contact and develop ongoing relationships with constituents of the department.
- To create an opportunity for dialogue with the department's constituents.
- (Fundraising Option) To create an opportunity for additional financial support for critical departmental needs.

Specific Editorial Goals: The following suggestions are intended to help focus newsletter content:

1. Develop articles that are timely and interesting to the target audience while encouraging the engagement of the reader with the department.
2. Utilize photography and illustrations of the highest quality and impact that add to the story content.
3. Incorporate a design that is uncluttered, professional, and consistent with University graphic standards.

Editorial Content:

(Suggested content ideas, not necessarily in order of importance or priority)

1. New programs, faculty, and other departmental news
2. Faculty and student achievements
3. Personal close-up features
4. Feedback from alumni
5. Other

Mechanical Specifications:

Formats and layout designs have been developed that are consistent with MWSU Graphic Standards for various length of newsletters in order to fit the editorial content and budget. The Department will make the final decisions as to which format, paper stock, and color options they prefer.

- 8 ½ x 11 two sides, self-mailer or carrier if required.
- 8 ½ x 11 four pages, self mailer or carrier if required.
- 8 ½ x 11 six pages with single two-sided insert, self-mailer or carrier required.
- 8 ½ x 11 eight pages, self-mailer or carrier required.
- Other options include one-, two-, or four-color inks.
- Glossy or dull coated paper stocks and weights are available.
- A current cost list for all options will be kept in the PR & Marketing Office (PRMO).

NOTE: A standard, customizable newsletter masthead and layout designs will be provided at no cost to the department. The masthead will provide the department with an opportunity to name the newsletter and provide department-specific information, while maintaining the consistency of appearance and graphic standards that are required.

Mailing Lists: All mailings will be to a list of alumni and constituents that is extracted from the centralized database maintained by University Advancement. The PRMO and Alumni Services Office will work closely with the department to insure that all department alumni and other constituent groups are included in this database and appropriately coded for use by the department.

Mailing List Maintenance: The PRMO will process all mail returned by the post office for address corrections to assure that the centralized database is kept as current as possible. The department is also asked to inform the PRMO or Alumni Services Office of changes in addresses, other contact information, and job information changes so that the database will be updated and accurate.

Postage: It is recommended that bulk rate postage be used in order to minimize cost. It should be kept in mind that the post office does not guarantee a quick delivery when bulk rate mailings are sent. The department will determine whether it desires to send the newsletter bulk or first class. **NOTE:** 200 piece minimum is required to qualify for bulk rate.

Scheduling Process: The production and distribution process takes four weeks. The PRMO works with a plan that begins when the department provides ALL finished copy, photos, and graphics to the PRMO. **After all copy, photos and artwork have been submitted by the department the timeline is as follows:**

Week 1: (Monday) All newsletter copy and photos is sent to the PRMO for proofing. Proofed copy is forwarded to Campus Printing and Design Services (CPPDS) for layout. The Request for Mailing Labels is also sent to the Alumni Services Office or PRMO for mailing labels. A specific form is used for these requests and is to be completed by the department and submitted along with the newsletter copy. PRMO will forward the form to the Alumni Services office. Once labels are completed, they will be forwarded to CPDS.

Week 2: CPDS develops the layout and design and obtains a quote for the printing costs. Completed layout proof is sent to department for approval.

Week 3: (Monday) Department returns the approved layout with corrections. The corrected proof is then sent to the printer.

Week 4: Publication is printed, labeled and mailed.

NOTE: Incremental delays in this schedule will add to the final publication distribution date.

Distribution: Once the department has selected the newsletter masthead, format, and submitted a mailing list request, the PRMO will provide the additional services of scheduling and overseeing the newsletter's production and distribution. No costs for these services will be incurred other than those that would be normally experienced.

Costs: While the PRMO is providing editing, project management, production, and distribution services, there will be no charge for this assistance. The only costs to be charged to the department are those that the department would have experienced if it produced its newsletter in-house. Such charges will include, but are not limited to paper, printing, postage, and labels.

Fundraising Option: In order to coordinate with other University activities, departmental newsletters that contain a fundraising solicitation are to be coordinated with the University's Development Office. The Development Office will provide approved text and a timeline for the mailing of any newsletters that contain a fund solicitation. Newsletters that contain a solicitation are to be mailed in the last two weeks of April, and/or anytime during the months of June, July or December. Newsletters that do not contain appeals for contributions may be sent on whatever schedule is desired by the Department.