Staff Speaking to the Media

The Division of Student Life (DSL) receives numerous requests for information each week from the media. In some cases, complicated or time-consuming issues are misdirected to DSL when they would be more appropriately handled by the Provost's Office, Chancellor's Office, UW Police or another campus unit. At other times, requests are appropriately directed, but could benefit from a coordinated approach. Finally, some media requests provide an opportunity to highlight a program’s positive impact and could benefit from additional exposure. In response to this divisional and Central Leadership Teams are implementing a policy for all DSL professional and student staff. This policy applies to interviews being conducted within the context of their staff position.

In an effort to allow DSL to focus on its core mission of working with students, university communications will be the first point of contact for all DSL media inquiries in order to provide background material and facilitate the right contact for each request.

This policy:

- Covers all professional and student media outlets (TV, radio, newspaper, Internet, etc.)
- Covers class assignments that are likely to be broadcast or published
- Does not apply to class assignments that will not be published in any amateur or professional publication. If this is the case, staff members are asked to get confirmation in writing that no part of the interview will be made publicly available.
- Allows those who inquire to receive information in a timely and efficient way while being minimally intrusive to DSL staff members

DSL staff members are asked to direct such requests to the Darcy Wittberger, Director of Communications, at (608) 262-0925 or darcy.wittberger@wisc.edu. This will allow media inquiries to be tracked and referred to the appropriate DSL office/staff. If an issue sounds extremely urgent (such as a campus emergency, student death, or other crisis), staff should call Darcy at (608) 262-0925 and contact their associate dean by cell phone if necessary. The number is available via the main office or divisional directory on the intranet. In addition, university communications on-call staff may be reached 24/7 at (608) 206-0310.

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