

Fort Valley State University
Marketing and Communications
News Release Guidelines

What is the Office of Marketing and Communications? If you're a student faculty or staff member, you may know of Fort Valley State University's Office of Marketing and Communications only through our endless number of press releases, announcements and flyers that wind up in your e-mail box, daily.

Marketing and Communications can help you package your message and deliver it to a larger, broader, target audience on and off campus.

- How can we do this? We can help increase attendance at your event by publicizing it on and off campus and to the media.
- We can help you to develop a brand for your department
- We can get your organization more recognition by getting your name out there.

The following questions can help you learn more about what we do.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. **What is a press release?** Press releases are news articles about events on campus. These articles are almost like free publicity. Usually, these articles are often sent campus-wide to let the FVSU family, Middle Georgia community, local, state or national media know about the good things taking place on campus.
2. **What types of stories do we cover?** Marketing and Communications usually limits press releases to the following topics:
 - a. **Campus-Related Events:** FVSU-related faculty, staff or student event on or off campus.
 - b. **New Hires, Promotions or Appointments**
 - c. **New FVSU Facilities or Capitol Projects**
 - d. **New Programs or Changes in Existing Ones**
 - e. **Prestigious Awards or Appointments:** FVSU faculty members, staff or students being elected or awarded a prestigious campus, state, national or international appointment.
 - f. **Fundraisers:** An FVSU-related fundraiser for scholarships, etc.;
 - g. **Conferences:** A state or national conference held on campus
 - h. **Recaps** of major or important campus-related events
 - i. **Grants or New Funding:** Departments receiving grant money
 - j. **Reaccreditation or Accreditation Stories** of programs on and off campus
 - k. **Emergencies** that relate to the FVSU community.

3. Although we cover major events on campus, press releases are not distributed to the press for every event occurring on campus.
4. **What's the difference between a press release and an announcement?** A press release is usually a one-page news article about an event that is sent campus-wide and/or to the media. An announcement is a campus-wide article, usually one to two paragraphs, that is distributed to the university family (faculty, staff or students).
5. **How can I get Marketing and Communications to cover my event?** You should call our office, (478) 825-6319, at **least two weeks in advance**. One of our staff members will interview you for necessary information to write a story. *(Unless otherwise advised, Marketing and Communications does not cover stories from the College of Agriculture or the Athletics Department because they have their own press departments. The department does not cover entertainment and church-sponsored events that are not FVSU-sponsored.)*
 - a. Make sure that the information given about your event contains correct dates, times and places and correct spelling of any individual's names and their job titles.
 - b. To announce future events or to request photography services, please contact complete the online forms (<http://www.fvsu.edu/marketing>) at least **one week before the event happens**. Remember, like you, the Marketing and Communications maintains a busy schedule. We need adequate notice to:
 - 1) Ensure that our staff have no scheduling conflicts so they may cover your story
 - 2) Contact any photographers
 - 3) Send the release out to all necessary media before their deadlines. We cannot and will not guarantee coverage, if you contact us the day of an event.
6. **Can I call in story ideas?** Yes, we encourage ideas and suggestions. If you have a news tip, please contact our office at (478) 825-6319 or fvsu_pr@fvsu.edu
 - a. When submitting a news tip, please provide your contact information.
 - b. The Marketing and Communications director reserves the right to determine the newsworthiness of the story.
7. **Can I read my press release before it goes out to the media?** Yes, but only to ensure the details are accurate. We ask that you do not rewrite or restructure the release.
8. If you receive the courtesy of reading your press release, PLEASE READ IT OVER CAREFULLY! If you notice an error, we will make the correction. Once you approve it please email us back to say the article is fine. All correspondences remain on file. However, if an individual approves an article for campus or media release, and then later spots an error, please let us know.
9. **When will my press release go out?** Although Marketing and Communications strives to produce timely services, not every press release is finalized quickly. Much happens

behind the scenes of a newsroom. After the article is written, it undergoes an editing process to ensure it reads well and there are no errors.

a. Delays in releasing an article may occur in the following cases:

- 1) Fact-checking
- 2) Obtaining more information regarding the story
- 3) If the story needs to be rewritten to enhance its readability or quality.

10. Will my press release be sent to the media? Marketing and Communications sends news-worthy press releases to the local television and news stations. On occasion, we email student and faculty-related press releases to their hometown newspapers and television stations, if requested. If the story is deemed pertinent only to the FVSU family, we'll limit distribution to the campus.

11. Can I write my own press release and send it to you? Of course, you can. Our office appreciates your assistance. Remember to double-check all information like names of individuals, places or events. In addition, when you email your press release to our office, we will usually rewrite it to conform to [Associated Press Style Guidelines](#).