

2022 Annual Report to Faculty of Environment General Assembly

Rebecca Wickens, Director, Strategic Initiatives & Communications

Portfolio

The Director, Strategic Initiatives & Communications, working directly with the Dean's Leadership Team, is responsible for developing, executing, and sustaining strategic initiatives and special projects in the Faculty of Environment. The Director provides leadership, direction, and expertise in the development of integrated and long-term communications strategies that further the strategic objectives, plans and vision for the Faculty of Environment.

2022 Activities

I started with the Faculty on November 28, 2022, so the 2022 report will be brief. Highlights include:

- With the support of three Dean's Office colleagues, conducted a successful search for the Faculty's new Communications Manager. Chantal Vallis commenced work at the beginning of 2023.
- Prior to the Communications Manager's start, inventoried and managed communications on the Faculty's channels.
- Met with working group for proposed graduate and professional climate change programming to discuss roles, responsibilities, approvals processes and next steps.
- Attended meetings organized by the Director of Advancement to meet Faculty leadership and discuss strategic and fundraising priorities.
- Engaged with University partners, including University Relations, Faculty of Health, Office of Indigenous Relations, Provost's Office and IAP.
- Started to learn more about research and teaching in the Faculty by attending events, meeting faculty, staff and students, and gathering reference materials.

2022 Communications Results: Although my team does take credit for these results, we are happy to share the following information on the top four news releases by Faculty of Environment researchers since January 1, 2022 (according to University Relations):

1. [Climate change threatens future Winter Olympics](#)

Received over 1300 hits including: The Hill, Reuters, National Post, Daily mail, CTV, MSN, Montreal Gazette, The Star, The Japan Times, NBC, NPR, Smithsonian Magazine, The Weather Network, The Guardian, Yahoo! News UK, The Independent, MSN, AOL News, NBC, Daily Mail, Mail on Sunday, Kansas City Star, The Telegraph, Associated Press, ESPN, ABC, Huffington Post, Toronto Star, CNBC, Bloomberg, The Denver Post, Quartz, AP, Toronto Star, USA Today, ESPN, Los Angeles Times, New York Magazine, The Kansas City Star, Sports Illustrated, Canadian Press, Vox, Time Magazine, Fox News, South China Morning Post, CNN, Washington Post, New York Times, The Record, The Toronto Star, ABC, Scientific American

2. [Homes sell for 8.2 per cent less after catastrophic floods](#)

Received over 320 hits including: CTV, Virgin Radio, Canadian Press, Benzinga, Associated Press, Toronto Star, The Record, City News, MSN, Associated Press, Yahoo News! Canada, BNN Bloomberg, Financial Post, National Post, Yahoo! News, CBC, iPolitics

3. [The ultimate code red: Preparing Canada for extreme heat](#)

Received over 385 hits including: The Record, Toronto Star, Canadian Press, Associated Press, Toronto Sun, Financial Post, Global News, CTV, CBC

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4. [Canada's financial and accounting systems fail to recognize the financial value of nature](#)

Received over 130 hits including: Financial Post, Toronto Sun, Vancouver sun, National Post, AP, Canadian Press, Benzinga, Global News

Thank you for the hard work not only generating the research, but working with partners, communications teams and media to get the stories out, conduct interviews, and amplify through your channels.

2022 Strategic Initiatives Results: In addition to activities listed above, please see the Dean's Strategic Plan Progress Report for the year ended December 31, 2022.

2023 Plans

Communications: The primary activities for this year are:

- Assess all [communications channels](#) and establish short- and long-term priorities. Develop/review and monitor content on all channels for maximum positive impact.
- Develop and socialize a strategy for social media engagement. Track metrics and adjust strategy as necessary.
- Develop and socialize processes and templates for ENV communications channels.
- Working with content owners for pages on Environment's main website, clean up and reformat pages, and transition to WCMS3 before IST deadline of November 2023. (User experience testing and content revamp will follow clean-up and transition. Will likely begin at the end of 2023 or early 2024.)
- Have min. 12 high impact news stories published about Faculty of Environment research and achievements.
- Write and publish internal news stories to share successes and build community within the Faculty.
- Support executive communications when needed by creating presentations and writing reports, speaking notes and statements for the Dean.
- In collaboration with University Relations, identify and develop opportunities to secure more earned media attention for Faculty research.

Strategic Initiatives: Areas of focus include:

- Exploring frameworks for planning that dovetail with the University's evolving framework.
- Reviewing current strategic plan, achievement of goals by 2025, and metrics and sources of information for tracking progress.
- Supporting the launch of new graduate and professional programs in Climate Change.
- Exploring and facilitating cross-campus learning experiences and other partnerships.
- Facilitating the development of an Indigenization strategy for Environment.
- Exploring government relations opportunities.
- Researching international opportunities for partnership and recruitment.
- Providing support to Faculty leadership in other areas with projects, activities and decisions connected to University and Faculty strategic priorities.