

News Publicity Policy

Gettysburg College has a vital interest in reaching out to numerous audiences, and offers numerous ways to do so effectively, including posting on the homepage and other areas of our website, distribution to external media, and various internal-audience outlets.

This document is intended to assist academic departments, administrative offices, student clubs and organizations, and others in the College community who desire publicity for their events and activities. It is also intended to make the publicity process as efficient and transparent as possible.

What is news?

News is anything potentially of interest to a wide audience, from announcing a planned event to profiling an ongoing program to describing an important achievement, project, or activity after it has occurred.

For the College's purposes, news promotes Gettysburg's brand and communicates its key messages, which are described at http://www.gettysburg.edu/about/offices/ees/public_relations/brand_standards/brand_standards.1.dot.

A few headlines hint at the range of news stories:

- Gettysburg College's choral ensembles to perform Dec. 1
- Gettysburg College cancer awareness group wins state award
- 46th Annual Fortenbaugh Lecture Nov. 19 at Majestic Theater
- Gettysburg College students cook, serve food to those in need
- Students donate hair for cancer patient wigs
- Diwali Festival of Lights celebrated at Gettysburg College
- African Heritage Week planned Oct. 22-27
- Student, prof use laser to research 'space weather'

How to submit news

If your organization has news it would like to publicize, please send information to news@gettysburg.edu. For upcoming events, please send information as far in advance as possible. For the best chance of gaining publicity in outside media, news should be submitted at least three weeks in advance. Submissions should include:

- **Complete information** including full names and titles of participants and organizations, time, place, date(s), whether tickets are required and how to get them (in general, events should be open to the public), and background information that makes the event's importance clear. *Do not assume that readers share your background knowledge.*
- **A usable image**, preferably a jpg, the larger in size and higher in resolution the better. Most jpgs downloaded from the web will be too small in image size and too low in resolution. The minimum for the College website is about four by six inches at 150 dpi. If the image is smaller than that size, the dpi must be larger. Large group shots will not work on the College website due to the size at which images are displayed on the homepage. A bright, sharply focused color image with three or fewer people close together that instantly communicates the nature of the event is best for the website and the media. Communications & Public Relations will also consider requests for our office to take a picture, and can scan and return photographic prints.

Media coverage

If the news team decides that an item should be distributed to external media, the Office of Communications & Public Relations will create a release and send it to appropriate media outlets including local, regional, national, higher education, and specialty.

The College has no control over how the media use information, or whether it is used at all.

Decision-making

Decisions about publicity are made by the College news team, which comprises members of the Office of Communications & Public Relations and the Office of Web Communications. The team uses criteria including:

- Appeal to various audiences
- Timeliness
- The College's Strategic Directions
- Website usage data
- The mix of events and subjects currently being promoted

The news team reviews requests and other possible story topics and decides whether and how to publicize them. Possibilities include posting on the homepage or elsewhere on the College website,

distribution to external media, and other options including the College magazine.

The news team will gladly discuss possibilities with anyone who submits a publicity request.

All submissions are subject to rewriting for maximum impact and to conform to the College's style, needs of the media, and best professional practices.

Homepage, website, and other options

The College's homepage is aimed primarily at prospective students and their families. Other important audiences include alumni, donors, media, outside researchers, and the local community.

Because internal audiences are also vitally important, the homepage includes prominent links that lead internal groups to audience-specific landing pages. We are in the process of redesigning the College news landing page to provide additional space for prominent display of stories on the website.

If your story does not appear on the homepage, the following options are available for internal publicity:

- College's email Digest
- News area on office, department, or program's website
- Internal audience landing pages
- Posters/flyers/mailers

Story ideas and feedback

You need not be directly involved in something to suggest that the news team look into it as a potential news story. Also, your feedback on stories we have done is always welcome. You can submit a news tip or feedback in an informal message to news@gettysburg.edu.