



## Chancellor's Memorandum

### CM-48 – LSU Health Sciences Center New Orleans Public Information & Media Policy

**To:** Vice Chancellors, Deans, Administrative Staff, Department Heads, and Students.

**From:** LSU Health Sciences Center New Orleans Chancellor

October 16, 2001

#### General Policy

As a state-supported institution of higher learning, the LSU Health Sciences Center has a responsibility and a commitment to disseminate information about its programs and activities, and to be responsive to media and public queries. The University has an obligation to taxpayers of this community and beyond to keep them constantly and uniformly informed about significant events in which it is involved. It is therefore paramount that information about the Health Sciences Center be properly and accurately interpreted to the many constituents it serves.

It is of inestimable value to the Health Sciences Center to inform the public through the media of contributions of the Health Sciences Center to the education, health, and well-being of the people it serves. A successful relationship between the LSU Health Sciences Center and the media will only be established and maintained through a knowledgeably coordinated effort. The Office of Information Services is charged with the responsibility for releasing information about programs, emergencies, the official position on issues involving the Health Sciences Center, and other events to which the press has a reasonable claim. The Office of Information Services furthers this purpose by cogently explaining all the facts while assuring the Health Sciences Center's position is articulated to the community. In accomplishing this mandate, the Office of Information Services reaches as wide an audience as is feasible.

This policy specifically details the role of faculty and staff in public information dissemination. It sets forth how information about the Health Sciences Center is announced to the public, what the responsibility of each administrative officer is in media relations, the role of Information Services as the official media outlet for the Health Sciences Center, and the procedure for campus personnel speaking to the media. All units of the Health Sciences Center are expected to follow the guidelines as outlined.

The Public Information Policy ensures that the Health Sciences Center receives the most favorable publicity possible. This policy is designed to avoid multiple or conflicting positions as well as to facilitate a uniform and consistent Health Sciences Center voice.

Nothing in this policy is intended to affect the responsibility of faculty members for their scholarly publications and personal involvement in community activities; nor is it intended to affect an individual's right to express his or her personal views as long as those views are not attributed to the Health Sciences Center either directly or indirectly, presented on LSU Health Sciences Center letterhead, or from the LSU Health Sciences Center campus.

#### Procedures

To execute this general policy, the following procedures are established:

- LSU Health Sciences Center personnel shall not release information about programs, events and other activities to the media independent of the Office of Information Services.
- No one is authorized to speak to the media concerning Health Sciences Center policy or significant matters affecting the Center unless working in conjunction with the Office of Information Services and the Chancellor's Office.
- All media contacts to the campus must be directed to the Office of Information Services. Your cooperation will ensure that LSU speaks to the public it serves with clear and consistent language.
- The Office of Information Services is responsible for coordinating efforts of the Health Sciences Center to obtain coverage in the news media. Therefore, written details of programs, events, and requests for media coverage shall be sent to the Office of Information Services, Room 816 B, Resource Center, rather than directly to the media. Requests for routine coverage should reach the Office of Information Services at least two weeks before the date on which initial media contact or release is to be made, or at least four weeks before an event or activity is to occur for calendar and public service deadlines.
- Faculty and staff should make every effort to apprise the Office of Information Services of events which may be newsworthy. This could include research projects, grants, faculty and staff additions, special events, honors and awards, etc.
- Faculty and staff shall work with the Office of Information Services to "be available" to representatives of the news media when requested. The Office of Information Services will direct reporters to the proper representative for direct comment upon stories relevant to the Health Sciences Center. The best way to foster increased public awareness is through frequent and regular media exposure. Public awareness builds public support.
- Health Sciences Center personnel contacted for an interview by media representatives shall immediately inform the Office of Information Services.
- The Office of Information Services will conduct Media Training as necessary or requested, to prepare faculty, students and staff to deal effectively with media. Those who want to be spokespersons or who work in areas that will likely receive media exposure should avail themselves of this service.

Signed: Mary Ellas Sanders, M.D., Interim Chancellor of New Orleans