COVID-19 FAQ Builder

Preparing Advancement Frontline Staff to Answer Questions from Key Stakeholders

Advancement Forum
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Helping Frontline Staff Handle Difficult Questions

Answering questions about COVID-19 from external stakeholders can be difficult for university personnel who are not apart of day-to-day response and strategy conversations among leadership. To help frontline staff answer these difficult questions from external stakeholders, the Advancement Forum recommends developing a cheat sheet with key information and talking points.

The cheat sheet approach is beneficial because it equips staff with easily accessible information, provides ready-to-use scripting, and helps direct stakeholders to institutional next steps.

The format of such a cheat sheet is also easily tailored and updated for different teams within advancement.

When the cheat sheet is complete, save it as a PDF and email it to all staff members.

A Guide for Talking About COVID-19 with Stakeholders

COVID-19 FAQ
Sample Categories and Questions

Current Campus Status
Is the campus open? Are students on campus? Have there been furloughs or layoffs? How has the surrounding campus community been impacted?

Summer and Fall 2020
Will the campus remain remote for the summer? Are you planning to re-open in the fall? What safety measures will you take to protect the college community?

University Community COVID-19 Initiatives
What has the University done to help fight COVID-19 and those effected (research to fight COVID-19, new resources for students, faculty and staff, community impact initiatives – education through webinars etc.)

Events
What is the status of commencement, reunions, and homecoming? What is the plan moving into the summer and fall for athletic events?

Opportunities to Help
How can donors and alumni help? Can they be a panelist on a webinar? Send a note of encouragement to students? Fund a lifetime alumni association membership for a 2020 graduate?

How to Stay In the Loop
Who should this constituency contact for more information? What channels provide COVID-19 related information (social media, athletics pages)?

Benefits of the Cheat Sheet

- Provide ready-to-use, approved scripting for interactions with key constituents
- Prompt staff to pro-actively script answers to difficult questions
- Help direct stakeholders to institutional next steps and proper university resources
- Format is easily tailored and updated for different teams within advancement;
  - Frontline Fundraisers
  - Alumni Relations Staff
  - University Volunteers
Frontline Staff COVID-19 FAQ Template

**Purpose of the Tool**
Answering questions about COVID-19 from external stakeholders can be difficult for advancement staff who are not immersed in day-to-day strategy conversations. To help frontline staff answer difficult questions, use this template to develop a FAQ (or cheat sheet) with key information and talking points. When complete, ensure staff have the most up-to-date information by sending a notice each time the document is updated with new information.

**Six Essential Components for COVID-19 FAQs**

1. **Current Campus Status For Key Groups (Students, Faculty, Staff)**
   - Are there students on campus? Have there been furloughs or layoffs? How has the campus community been impacted?

2. **Summer and Fall 2020**
   - Will the institution remain remote for the summer? Are you planning to re-open in the fall? What safety measures will be taken to protect faculty, staff, students and the community? What events have been postponed or canceled?

3. **University Community COVID-19 Initiatives**
   - What has the University done to help fight COVID-19 and those effected (research to fight COVID-19, new resources for students, faculty and staff? community impact initiatives? education through webinars?)

4. **Events**
   - What is the status of commencement, reunions, and homecoming? What is the plan for athletic events in the next couple months for different teams?

5. **Opportunities to Help**
   - How can donors and alumni help? Can they be a panelist on a webinar? Send a note of encouragement to students? Fund a lifetime alumni association membership for a 2020 graduate?

6. **How to Stay In The Loop**
   - Who should this constituency contact for more information? What channels provide COVID-19 related information; i.e. social media or athletics pages?