

Campus Public Affairs Policy

When a government official visits the campus it is strongly suggested that the Chancellor's Office be notified. The Chancellor's Office will do everything possible to assure the visitor and the host have a positive experience. Different types of visits and visitors require varying responses.

Certain officials require a more "red-carpet" treatment than individual faculty or staff might realize. Some 20 years ago when John Ashcroft was the Governor he initiated a program that he hoped to promote throughout the state. It was called the "Show-me Games". Governor Ashcroft chose our campus for a major press conference to kick-off the games. His staff contacted our athletic department and asked the secretary to reserve the Mark Twain Gym at 10:00 on Tuesday morning. She did this and nothing else. When Governor Ashcroft arrived with a large entourage and press from throughout the state, he encountered an empty gym. Needless to say, the Chancellor, who knew nothing about the visit, was embarrassed and neither the Governor nor his staff was happy. I believe that is the last time that Mr. Ashcroft visited our campus.

Because no one wanted a repeat of this circumstance the campus instituted a system of "red alerts". A "red alert" occurs when the campus expects a visitor whose stature or importance requires an audience. When the Chancellor determines a "red alert" is necessary, his staff will call or email administrative offices on the campus asking that available personnel help create the necessary crowd.

It is suggested that Vice Chancellors and Deans make their faculty and staff aware of this possibility. This program is RARELY activated so that when people hear of it they will respond with urgency. Since Chancellor George has been in office we have not had a "red alert" nor have we discussed this policy with the Vice-Chancellors and Deans. Many of the new administrators may not be aware of this protocol.

Most of the time, no involvement by the administration is necessary. However, if the visitor is a candidate as well as an elected official and the visit could be construed as a campaign activity, certain rules must be followed. We will help the host understand those rules.

I would suggest the matter be addressed at Cabinet and members be asked to communicate the policy to their units. Again, let me emphasize that no one wants to control or interfere or discourage individual relationships with government officials, in fact, just the opposite; we highly encourage interactions with the public sector and hope that collectively we will all further campus and individual agenda more effectively.

System Government Relations and Public Affairs

In 2003, President Elson Floyd and the University Board of Curators recognized the importance of government relations in his administration by creating the office of Government Relations at the System level. Steve Knorr is the Vice-President for Government Relations. All official advocacy on behalf of the University of Missouri System is to be conducted through this office.

In the new arrangement, Molly Tallarico formerly of UMSL's Office of Public Affairs became a member of the system's government relation's staff with the title of Director of Government Relations, reporting to Vice-President Knorr. Ms Tallarico's office continues to be on our campus, 426 Woods Hall. This allows Molly to be informed first hand about issues of concern to the campus.

During the legislative session Ms. Tallarico spends most of her time in Jefferson City dealing daily with the legislative session.

Betty Van Uum, Assistant to the Chancellor for Public Affairs and Economic Development continues to function as part of the Chancellor's Office providing guidance and support to campus units in their interaction with the public sector and maintaining positive relations for the campus. The Office of Public Affairs also manages the logistics for any official government meeting that takes place on the campus.

Betty and Molly are in regular contact about campus issues and events.