The Office of Creative and Visual Services

A proposal in response to OSC Proposal 19:
Consolidation of Printing Services, Publications and Graphics and Photographic Services
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Proposal for the Creation of
The Office of Creative and Visual Services

Executive Summary

As part of the Middle Tennessee State University Positioning the University for the Future Initiative Final Report, MTSU President Sidney A. McPhee approved a recommendation to “combine the administrative oversight of Printing Services, Publications and Graphics, and Photographic Services” (NASU-Section A, OSC Proposal 19, p. 23). This proposal, developed by the Associate Vice President for Marketing and Communications, in consultation with the Vice President for Development and University Relations, seeks to outline how this recommendation can be implemented to achieve the goals of the University as it repositions itself for future growth and success.

Currently, the areas recommended for consolidation operate as three separate units, each with its own director. They function under the auspices of the Division of Development and University Relations and report directly to the Associate Vice President for Marketing and Communications. Consolidating the general management and administrative oversight of these areas into one new office, has the potential to yield the following benefits:

- It will streamline the day-to-day management of the three areas, helping to increase productivity and the level of customer service provided;
- It will reduce the duplication of job functions and allow for more strategic utilization of the strengths and skill sets of existing personnel;
- It will provide a one-stop shop for publications, photographic, and printing projects, offering internal constituents a more clear pathway for initiating the development and production of creative materials that represent the institution;
- It will increase the capability of the unit to take advantage of new and existing opportunities to generate revenue to support its operations; and
- It will provide a foundation for the implementation of other related proposals that are part of the Positioning the University for the Future Initiative, including OCS Proposal 9 (NASU-Section A), which recommends supporting the use of campus print services for the production of printed materials to be used on campus or by campus entities.

In order to realize the abovementioned benefits, it is proposed that Printing Services, Publications and Graphics, and Photographic Services be consolidated into a newly structured unit called The Office of Creative and Visual Services. The following proposal has been submitted per the request of the President, with implementation expected as soon as possible following his approval.
What is Proposed
In response to the President’s approval of a recommendation to combine the administrative oversight of Printing Services, Publications and Graphics, and Photographic Services, the Associate Vice President for Marketing and Communications has proposed the development of the **Office of Creative and Visual Services**. To support the reorganization of these areas into one effective unit, existing positions will be reevaluated and restructured to ensure a greater focus and commitment to the goals of:

- Demonstrating continued excellence in creative development,
- Enhancing office productivity and efficiency,
- Ensuring continued compliance with institutional and TBR quality standards for all creative materials, and
- Increasing opportunities for profitable business development.

It is proposed that the administrative oversight of the newly consolidated office reflect two critical areas of operation—(1) creative development and (2) production and business management and cultivation. These areas of focus will help to ensure that there is no loss in quality in the primary function of the unit, which is the development of creative materials that reflect positively on the institution, and will address the need for more streamlined business practices in each of the areas, with enhance record keeping and a greater focus on revenue generation. In order to better understand the need for the proposed changes in administrative and organizational structure within these areas, an overview of the existing structure is provided below.

Current Administrative/Management Structure
Of the three areas that are proposed for consolidation, the administrative structure for only one, Photographic Services, seems to be working in such a way that the office is able to successfully balance its creative tasks with its daily business responsibilities. While Publications and Graphics has appropriate scheduling, creative, and business systems in place, the overwhelming load on the director as the overall creative supervisor, business manager and project approver, has hampered the area’s ability to achieve maximum productivity and focus on increased business development. In Printing Services, there is a significant need to address consistency in record keeping and the generation of additional revenue for the area.

Currently, the three offices have a total of 24 positions allocated among them, with only three being (3) vacant. Under the current structure, the directors of Publications and Graphics and Photographic Services report directly to the Associate Vice President for Marketing and Communications. The Director of Printing Services has traditionally reported to the Director of Publications and Graphics, but since the director’s position in this area is currently vacant, the Printing Services Director is currently reporting to the AVP. The following provides an overview of the existing positions and administrative structure in the areas proposed for consolidation.
Publications and Graphics (P&G)
The Office of Publications and Graphics, located in LRC 107, is generally staffed by 11 employees. Currently, two positions have been left vacant in anticipation of plans to consolidate and restructure the area. The following positions are currently on the books for P&G:

- Director (1-vacant)
- Assistant Director (1)
- Secretary (1)
- Customer Service Representative (1)
- Computer Operations Specialist (1)
- Senior Graphic Designer (1)
- Graphic Designer (2)
- Senior Editor/Writer (1)
- Editor/Marketing Coordinator (1-vacant)
- Compositor

It has been determined that the two vacant positions in this area will need to be maintained, though in a different form, for successful implementation of the consolidation. Temporary help is currently being utilized to fulfill some of the responsibilities associated with the vacant positions.

Photographic Services
The Office of Photographic Services, located in LRC 239, maintains five (5) positions, all of which are currently filled. These include:

- Director (1)
- Secretary (2)*
- Photographers (2)

It is important to note that while two individuals within this office are listed as secretaries, their job roles and responsibilities are significantly different, one has a primary responsibility for providing clerical and scheduling assistance for the office while the other maintains accurate records of the offices job requests and invoicing.

Printing Services
Located in the Printing Services Building, the Printing Services Office has traditionally maintained a staff of eight (8) individuals. Only one position is currently vacant in this area. When the office is consolidated, billing and accounting for the area will become centralized within the unit. Current positions in Printing Services include:

- Director (1)
- Account Clerk (1-vacant)
- Lead Worker (2)
- Offset Press Operator 1 (4)
Proposed Administrative/Management Structure:
The proposed new Office of Creative and Visual Services calls for a significant change in the management structure of the combined areas and requires some restructuring of the roles and responsibilities of some of the existing positions. This proposal requires the following organizational changes for successful implementation (descriptions of job responsibilities are also provided where necessary):

- **The establishment of positions for a Creative Director and Director of Business Services and Development** (Both positions will be created from existing positions. A search will be conducted for the creative director; the Director of Business Services and Development position can be filled internally.)

  **Creative Director**—Responsible for: managing day-to-day publication design and development; providing direct supervision of graphic designers, editors, writers, and the Creative and Visual Services secretary (this includes approving leave requests for these staff members along with the assistant/associate creative director); and ensuring institutional compliance with Board and institutional print/publication standards. **Reports to the Associate Vice President for Marketing and Communications** .

  **Traffic Manager**— Responsible for serving as the general receptionist for the Office; directing telephone calls and walk-in traffic; providing secretarial assistance to the creative director. **Reports to the Creative Director**

  **Assistant Director for Editorial Content**—Responsible for overseeing the office editorial staff, including freelance writers, and coordinating the development of institutional magazines and publications with extensive editorial content; will be responsible for ensuring that institutional publications stay on schedule and meet all University and TBR standards. **Reports to the Creative Director**.

  **Marketing Designer**—Responsible for working directly with the Office of Marketing & Communications on the development of creative materials designed to promote the University and its programs and activities; will be responsible for working with the creative director on concepts and creative materials used in the overall marketing campaigns of the University as well as special marketing projects; will also assist with general office creative/design projects as needed. **Reports to the Creative director with a dotted line report to the Vice President for Marketing and Communications**.

- **Director of Business Services and Development** (or Director of Business and Client Services)— Responsible for: coordinating all business services, processes, and fee structures for the Office of Creative and Visual Services in cooperation with the Creative Director; develop, implement and maintain a centralized process for managing invoices, customer service, and other business practices of the office; responsible for ensuring consistency in technology acquisition and use throughout the office; approve all P-card and other budget-related purchases for the Office; supervising and approving leave for the account specialists and Printing Services Director along with overseeing the general business operations of Printing Services; increasing opportunities for revenue generation as it relates to publication development, photographic services, and printing services; will
maintain day-to-day oversight of photographers and photographic business services and operations. Reports to the Associate Vice President for Marketing and Communications

- **Assistant Director of Business Service Development and Computer Operations**—Responsible for: assisting the Business Services Director as assigned; responsible for coordinating activities related to bid specs; and responsible for matters related to general computer operations and the acquisition and maintenance of computer hardware and software for the office. Reports to the Director of Business Services

- **Secretary for the Director of Business Services and Development**—Responsible for: serving the clerical needs of the Director for Business Services and Development; will also assist with the customer service needs as it relates to billing and scheduling. Reports to the Director of Business Services and Development

- **Account Specialists (2)**—Responsible for: Receiving and processing all Creative Services work requests, invoices and other business forms and documents as outlined by the Director of Business Services. Also responsible for providing appropriate account information to offices and campus personnel related to their accounts as well as quotes/estimates for possible projects. Reports to Director of Business Services and Development

- **Printing Services Director**—Responsible for: coordinating the day-to-day operations of the printing services team and printing facility/equipment as well as supervising personnel working in this area (this includes approving leave for printing services staff.)—Reports to Director of Business Services and Development

**Other Positions**—All staff level positions in Printing Services will be maintained in their existing format. In Photographic Services, the photographer positions will be maintained as is, but the remaining positions, which include the director and secretarial positions, will be restructured to fit the needs of the newly organized Creative and Visual Services Office. It is expected that all positions in the Publications and Graphics area will remain, however, they are subject to restructuring based on the needs of the newly consolidated office. It is anticipated that all graphic designer positions and editor positions will remain as is. Other job roles in the area may be restructured.

**Implementation**

It is proposed that implementation of this plan begin immediately upon the completion of any revisions recommended by the Vice President for Development and University Relations and the President and the subsequent acceptance of the proposal by the President. Upon approval, the following actions should be taken to help facilitate implementation:

- Conduct a joint meeting of the employees of the three areas to provide an overview of the consolidation plan; outline the changes in roles and responsibilities, reporting structures, etc.; and present the expectations of the
new area. (Individuals responsible: AVP Marketing and Communications/VP of Development and University Relations)

- Facilitate the transition of existing employees into their new roles so that they can begin the process of implementing the various components of the proposal more fully. (Individual responsible: AVP Marketing and Communications)

- Post position notices with the appropriate jobs descriptions so that they can be filled as soon as possible (Individual responsible: AVP Marketing and Communications). Work with key managers in the newly combined area to develop the appropriate consolidated/centralized management and business processes and procedures and outline a plan for informing the campus community of changes in the area. (Individuals responsible: AVP Marketing and Communications, Creative Director/Assistant Creative Director, Business Services Director.)

It is proposed that the newly consolidated office transition to the new titles and management structure as soon as possible and begin functioning with transition complete and the implementation of consolidated processes by July 1, 2010. Having the office structure in place, with individuals functioning in their restructured capacities, will help provide a solid foundation for operations prior to personnel changes that might result from the University’s pending voluntary buy-out process. Since we will know if any employees plan to take advantage of the buy-out by January 15, 2010, we will have ample time to prepare for personnel needs for July 1, 2010.

Cost Savings/Efficiencies/Revenue Generation
This proposal for consolidation has the potential to provide several opportunities for cost savings and enhanced efficiency. In addition, with a renewed focus on developing new accounts and maintaining existing ones, significant enhancements in revenue generation are also expected. The following outlines two primary ways in which the area will realize savings and experience efficiencies:

- The restructuring of positions to more efficiently and effectively serve the needs of the combined offices and the campus community. By realigning the nature of several positions, developing policies and procedures that will work for all three areas, and separating the business operations from the creative process, the unit will be better able to increase productivity in the development of its publications and have greater success in its efforts to develop and maintain its business relationships.

- An increased focus on production and business management and development. By separating the business functions from the creative functions, personnel in the newly consolidated area will be better able to focus on their respective responsibilities, reducing the amount of time devoted to balancing multiple roles that reduce productivity. Additionally, increased focus in this area will yield a greater number of completed projects, improved customer service and additional opportunities to generate revenue.
Conclusion
The Office of Marketing and Communications is excited about the opportunity to transition three of its very critical areas into one more effective and efficient unit. While the addition of a new creative leader is essential to the overall success of this newly proposed area, it is believed that the existing personnel are highly capable of supporting this effort for change such that it achieves the overall goal of better positioning the University for the future. Employees in this area have indicated their awareness of and support for the anticipated changes and should be readily able to make the necessary adjustments shortly after a proposal is approved and other details related to the transition are finalized.