TOMBRAS SCHOOL

Strategic
VISION

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Vision

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The future of the University of Tennessee's College of Communication and Information lies in innovative learning, scholarship, and societal engagement. The primary aspiration of the college can be summarized in a single word: excellence. The college and its individual units will become recognized for their excellence internationally, nationally and regionally and for the caliber of their research and creative activity, teaching and service. Collaboration across the units will maximize our contributions to the university and society.

Aligned with this vision, the School of Advertising and Public Relations is one excellent School with two strong majors, a minor, three Master's concentrations, and a Ph.D. program that equip students with the tools needed for success in dynamic communication landscapes.

Values

The College and the School are committed to diversity and fosters a sense of collegiate and social community. The culture of the College and the School includes an emphasis on the ethical responsibilities of access to information and the exercise of freedom of expression. The College and the School promotes new knowledge creation through research and creative activities. The College and the School believes in and cultivates the following values.
• Intellectual curiosity and critical thinking
• Leadership
• Global and intercultural engagement
• Freedom of expression, independent media and democracy
• Diversity and inclusion
• Ethics, honesty and integrity
• Innovation and creativity
• Service, community responsibility and engagement
• Integration of theory, practice and knowledge
• Transdisciplinary and relationship building

School Programs

Advertising - Advertising is the business of creative. It's analytical and creative people working together to create strategic messages that will have impact and change minds. What does it take to be an ad major? First of all, willingness to think and explore. You know research-driven numbers and analytics are your friend and a major step toward creativity. You love creative problem solving. You work well in a team or alone. You like to have fun and work hard. You can't wait for the thrill of seeing the work your team has created appear on television or in a magazine or on the internet or to see how many shares your viral ad generated. Yes, advertising needs creative people and artists, but it also needs business people, researchers, strategists, media experts, computer experts, gamers, and more. With advertising, you're not limited to just one path.

Public Relations - Public relations is the use of communication to negotiate mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics. Public relations professionals conduct research about publics, counsel organizational leaders on how to enact ethical business practices, and act as a mediator of organizational public relationships. Public relations functions at organizational, community, and societal levels. Our students want to contribute to both organizations and society. Public relations professionals take many paths in their careers and have the opportunity to work in the private sector, entertainment, sports, educational, non-profit, military, health, agencies and global organizations. Graduates of the public relations major at UTK are well prepared through internships, study abroad, PRSSA, and mentoring to enter any career path. They are strong writers who able to use research to develop a strategic plan to manage relationships between organizations and their publics.

Tombras School of Advertising and Public Relations Strategic Vision

GOAL 1: Provide high-quality, innovation, equitable, and accessible academic opportunities that re-imagine the land-grant mission by improving access to education, enhancing degree pathways, increasing enrollment, and promoting student success—where student success is the responsibility of all.

Strategy:	Measure Success By:	Metrics:
Launch ADPR classes in local high schools that carry college credit and provide scholarships.	Course evaluations of the experience of the course and how it engaged them to work in the fields.	•# Course Enrollment. •# who enroll in the course for UT credit •# who became major
Provide ADPR student mentors to high school students who are interested in majoring in the Tombras School.	Interest by both our students and the high school students in this mentoring relationship.	•#of total and underrepresented high school student mentors/students
Manage a list of all courses that used community non-profits and businesses as clients to demonstrate School contributions over the years and reveal any blind spots.	A representative list of service to the community that also enhances the student experience.	•# of real-world clients • Diversity of clients by mission/values
Partner with universities around the world for a more interactive student experience with accessible international learning such as 2+2 degree programs.	Increase participation from students in our School in these experiences and establish 2+2 degree programs.	•# new programs •# intl students
Localize DEI efforts to tackle structural inequality issues that are uniquely present within the context of Tennessee, as opposed to be driven by national conversations.	Increase in enrollments of in-state minority students across the spectrum; increase ranking/rating of UT/Tombras' campus climate index.	•# minority students enrolled •Campus climate index data.
Conduct high School Summer Camps with agency visits.	Positive student experience evaluations.	•Feedback through client review.
Launch a creative portfolio program.	Survey results and student feedback on learning outcomes, career aspirations.	•#of students, hires, roles, locations.
Developing certificate programs or workshop, such as nonprofit PR/fundraising, ESG communication, or purpose communication certificate, and a social/digital media analytics boot camp.	Increasing the number of students participating in certificate programs, workshops, or bootcamps	# of enrolled students participating in such certificate, workshop, and bootcamps
Increasing students' global experience through either study abroad and COIL/virtual engagement programs.	Increasing the number of students/classes participating in global engagement programs, such as study abroad and COIL.	• Scholarship amounts •# of scholarships • # of class/students participating in global engagement.

GOAL 2- Raise the Tombras School's national/international scholarly profile through high-impact disciplinary and interdisciplinary research, scholarship, and creative work that creates a more just, prosperous, and sustainable future.		
Strategy:	Measure Success By:	Metrics
Provide School summer funding to support research/creative work that directly contributes to "a more just, prosperous and sustainable future."	An increase in number of faculty who submit qualifying projects and in our scholarly profile in this area.	•# of faculty who submit proposals, articles, and research awards. • # of research outputs
Recruit/fund PhD students who do research in this area.	Identify PhD applications that express interest in working on research that contributes to this goal.	•# of PhD students recruited •# of PhD students who are funded for research in this area
Offer more opportunity and support for faculty to engage with other institutions.	Increase the number of partnerships during a given timeframe.	•# collaborations across institutions.
Create a research fellowship program centering the research on purpose (e.g., Purpose Fellowship) and cultivate a network of internal and external scholars.	Incentivize and produce research, scholarship, and creative work that embodies the land-grant mission & Purpose Center- through internal grants, faculty development funds, etc.	•# of publications and conference presentations acknowledging Tombras School's financial support
Create/promote "purpose center"—host a series of speakers, research sharing/conference, and sponsoring purpose-related research awards at major conferences (e.g., AEJMC, AAAs, ICA, and NCA).	Increasing the visibility of the center among academe and number of MS/PhD students interested in purpose communication, DEI, etc.	• # Funded publications • Requests for information
Produce and share research, scholarship and creative work around a college-wide theme that embodies the land-grant mission by developing the Tennessee Risk Literacy Project, which can be centered in the Tombras School of Advertising and Public Relations yet works collaboratively across CCI schools and other related UTK programs.	Increasing annual production of high-impact nationally recognized forms of scholarship related to risk.	• Track a joint academic-industry media-based communication platform (e.g., dashboard) to share and unify related researchers and private/public organizations. • Track citations and news coverage such as through *The Conversation*.
Goal 3: Progress and sustain a nurturing Tombras School culture where diversity, equity, inclusion, and community are enduring sources of strength and core tenets in developing the next generation of Vols.		
Recruit and support student mentors/ambassadors from the majors, especially those from under-represented populations for students interested in ADPR.	Interest by both our majors and incoming students.	•# of student mentors. • # of mentees.
Hold DEI project/assignment "brown bags" where faculty/graduate students/adjuncts share how they are implementing DEI in their courses.	Faculty, graduate students, and adjuncts' interest in participating.	• # of presenters and attendees

Establish a student-driven equity student council to serve as an advisory council of students and bring students' voices to the administration and faculty.	Increase in enrollment of diverse students and sense of belonging, lowering attrition and transfer rates.	• # of participants • track changes in composition of majors
Create a networking or speaker series that bring in underrepresented professionals working—especially in leadership roles—in ADPR.	Expanding alumni network and engagement with better representation .	• Keep database of all speakers and monitor for diversity.
Ensure teaching guidelines for all classes entail *intentional* discussion on DEI.	Have instructors offer topics to be engaged.	• Assessment rubrics for syllabi.
Leverage the Tombras professorship to attract, develop, and retain a diverse student body	Increasing undergraduate enrollment and retention of first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented students	• Racial composition of majors
Developing/revisiting/implementing ADPR diversity plan aligned with CCI DEI action plan.	Enhancing ADPR's diverse community of students, staff, and faculty; Increasing various DE-related school events; portraying diverse students on school website/social media	•Self-reported survey database reporting the number of DEI related events or posts.
Use Tombras and CCI resources to establish a post-doc pathway program for CCI doctoral candidates that enables Schools to mentor historically underrepresented scholars.	Enhancing CCI's diverse community of students, staff and faculty.	• Track placements and rank of underrepresented doctoral student alumni in academe.
GOAL 4 Empower and sustain a culture of collaboration, adaptability, and innovation across the Tombras School and with campus partners, disciplinary colleagues, and industry leaders.		
The Tombras School engages with the Tombras Agency via agency in-house educational opportunities to our faculty, graduate students, and adjuncts to provide a two-way educational relationship.	Tombras employee participation in creating workshops or other educational opportunities for our faculty, graduate students, adjuncts as well as faculty and student participation.	• # educational opportunities • # faculty participants
Creating a new "non-profit" or product so that students in research and/or analytics classes can utilize real-world ideas.	Students allocating actual budgets behind their ideas to run campaigns in the real world.	• Analytics/market tracking • Student evaluation of experience
Holding optional brownbag presentation sessions monthly or bi-monthly to encourage doctoral students and faculty members to present their published or ongoing work.	Increasing potential collaboration; cultivate research culture; prompt faculty and doctoral students to better know each others' scholarship.	• Track attendance • Collect survey feedback
Pursue joint degree programs with other academic units across the University, such as the upcoming one established with the future College of Music.	Identify related academic fields that can be combined with advertising and public relations and identify ways to work together to offer more student experience.	• New majors • New minors • New certificate programs launced

GOAL 5: Connect with Tennesseans and with industries and communities around the world, securing support for the Tombras School and inspiring future Volunteers to join our community.		
Hold a career day for high school and junior college students that showcases the profession by bringing in local, national and global speakers from our alumni.	Interest and participation of (UT-affiliated) industry leaders and Tombras students.	• # alumni who participate • # prospective students who participate and enroll
Create an industry-based mentoring and/or internship program for high school students their sophomore or junior years to expose them to our fields before they select a University.	Industry interest in providing these opportunities and sophomore and junior high school students' interest in this type of program.	• # alumni from our program • # of students, especially those from under-represented populations
Incentivize and promote community service and outreach serving our fellow Tennesseans.	Engage in service learning, teaching, and research especially in underrepresented populations.	• Track hours and organizations visited.
Identify diverse partners in the local community and beyond that can offer unique experiences to our students that can turn into recurring partnerships.	Engage in mutually beneficial relationships with diverse partners.	• Track and report nature of relationships with diverse partners.
Explore extending the reach of Social Media Week beyond Tombras School and CCI to local Tennessean community members/professionals and be virtually accessible to a global audience.	Increase of engagement from local community members and professionals; increase in prospective students and enrollment.	• Metrics demonstrating reach and engagement.
Leverage the Adam Brown Social Media Command Center to collaborate with local policy makers, government agencies, the ADPR industry, community leaders, and non-profits to generate research data on current issues that can inform legislature, dispute misinformation, informing Tennesseans of their living conditions in relation to a broad context.	Raising awareness; generating white paper reports or academic research, enhancing outreach.	• # of partnerships • Track issues examined and sentiment
Provide study abroad opportunities that pair ADPR students with students in another country.	Learning through international relationships.	• Track number of students, nature of work.
Work with another country's study abroad opportunities to set up an international ad/pr agency where are/they work together to promote a brand to multiple countries, in multiple languages, as well as cultural differences.	Running a semester long class that works with varied types of projects for brands/non-profits to promote collaboration, creativity.	• Study abroad collaboration, client and faculty feedback.
Strengthen relationships with alumni by managing alumni lists, hosting socials at top conferences, sharing the school and alumni updates on various school communication channels, and holding fundraising challenge events.	Increasing efforts to connect with ADPR alumni.	• # of alumni reconnected through the efforts • Amount of annual giving/major gifts