

Communications Career Ladder

The Communications Career Ladder at UAB establishes a dynamic progression for professionals dedicated to advancing the university's voice, visibility, and engagement through innovative and strategic marketing and communications. Spanning roles from Communications Specialist to Assistant Vice President–Communications, this ladder cultivates growth in messaging strategy, content creation, digital platforms, and institutional branding. At its foundation, communications professionals collaborate on marketing initiatives and internal messaging, contributing to multi-platform content development and stakeholder engagement. As professionals rise through managerial and directorial levels, they take on broader responsibilities including strategic planning, leadership of communication teams, budget oversight, policy development, and institutional advisement. At its highest tier, this ladder reflects senior leadership roles entrusted with stewarding UAB's communications philosophy, ensuring brand consistency, and aligning messaging with university-wide priorities.



Click on a job title above for additional information.

Communications Specialist

The Communications Specialist supports the creation and delivery of clear, accurate, and engaging communications; produces written, digital, and visual content across a variety of platforms; and ensures alignment with institutional brand standards. The role requires strong writing, editing, and organizational skills, and the ability to manage multiple projects in a deadline-driven environment.

**EDUCATION/
EXPERIENCE:** Bachelor's degree in communications, English, journalism, marketing, public relations or a related field. Work experience may NOT substitute for education requirement.

GRADE: W.G340

FLSA STATUS: Exempt

REMOTE/HYBRID: Eligible

CAREER LEVEL: Individual Contributor

Senior Communications Specialist

The Senior Communications Specialist develops and executes communication projects with minimal supervision. Building on strong writing and digital expertise, this role proactively identifies opportunities to advance the unit's reputation through storytelling and multi-channel touchpoints, manages complex assignments, and ensures content strategies align with both unit and institutional priorities.

**EDUCATION/
EXPERIENCE:** Bachelor's degree in communications, English, journalism, marketing, public relations or a related field, and two (2) years of related experience required. Demonstrated experience in marketing and/or communications, including, but not limited to social media, video, web, writing, editing and content creation preferred. Work experience may NOT substitute for the education requirement.

GRADE: W.G350

FLSA STATUS: Exempt

REMOTE/HYBRID: Eligible

CAREER LEVEL: Individual Contributor

Manager-Communications

The Communications Manager develops and manages communication strategies for a unit. This role translates unit priorities into clear, compelling messaging; manages projects from planning through execution; ensures that communication efforts are consistent with institutional brand standards; and may provide guidance or coordination for others supporting communication activities.

EDUCATION/ EXPERIENCE:	Bachelor's degree in communications, English, journalism, marketing, public relations or a related field, and four (4) years of related experience required. Work experience may NOT substitute for the education requirement.
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GRADE:	W.G365
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FLSA STATUS:	Exempt
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REMOTE/HYBRID:	Eligible
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CAREER LEVEL:	Functional Manager
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Senior Manager-Communications

The Senior Communications Manager provides leadership for communications strategy and execution for a unit. This role translates unit priorities into clear, compelling messaging; manages projects from planning through execution; and ensures that content and initiatives are aligned with brand standards and institutional priorities while effectively reaching intended audiences.

EDUCATION/ EXPERIENCE:	Bachelor's degree in communications, English, journalism, marketing, public relations or a related field and six (6) years of related experience required. Work experience may NOT substitute for the education requirement.
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GRADE:	W.G380
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FLSA STATUS:	Exempt
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REMOTE/HYBRID:	Eligible
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CAREER LEVEL:	Functional Manager
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Assistant Director-Communications

The Assistant Director of Communications supports the leadership of a large unit by developing and executing communication strategies that advance institutional and unit priorities. This role oversees day-to-day communications operations, manages complex projects, and ensures that content and initiatives are aligned with brand standards and institutional priorities while effectively reaching intended audiences.

**EDUCATION/
EXPERIENCE:** Bachelor's degree in communications, English, journalism, marketing, public relations or a related field, and seven (7) years of related experience required. Work experience may NOT substitute for the education requirement.

GRADE: W.G390

FLSA STATUS: Exempt

REMOTE/HYBRID: Eligible

CAREER LEVEL: Functional Manager

Director-Communications

The Director of Communications provides strategic leadership for a large unit, develops and oversees comprehensive communication plans, manages budgets and resources, and serves as a senior advisor to executive leadership. This role ensures that communications advance both unit and institutional priorities, maintain brand integrity, and achieve measurable outcomes across audiences and platforms.

**EDUCATION/
EXPERIENCE:** Bachelor's degree in communications, English, journalism, marketing, public relations or a related field and ten (10) years of related experience required. Advanced degree preferred. Work experience may NOT substitute for the education requirement.

GRADE: W.G410

FLSA STATUS: Exempt

REMOTE/HYBRID: Eligible

CAREER LEVEL: Functional Director

Senior Director-Communications

The Senior Director of Communications provides strategic direction for communications for a large unit. As a member of the unit's leadership team, they oversee a communications staff, develop comprehensive strategies, and advise senior leadership on communications opportunities and risks. This role ensures the unit's messaging aligns with institutional priorities, brand standards, and long-term reputation goals.

EDUCATION/ EXPERIENCE:	Bachelor's degree in communications, English, journalism, marketing, public relations or a related field, and ten (10) years of related experience required. Advanced degree preferred. Work experience may NOT substitute for the education requirement.
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GRADE:	W.G420
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FLSA STATUS:	Exempt
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REMOTE/HYBRID:	Eligible
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CAREER LEVEL:	Functional Director
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Executive Director-Communications

The Executive Director of Communications leads a large, multi-tiered communications team within a unit. As a senior member of the unit's leadership team, they provide vision and direction for all communications activities. This role manages budgets and resources, advises leadership on issues and crisis communications, and ensures communications strategies advance both unit and institutional priorities.

EDUCATION/ EXPERIENCE:	Bachelor's degree in communications, English, journalism, marketing, public relations or a related field and ten (10) years of related experience required. Advanced degree preferred. Work experience may NOT substitute for the education requirement.
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GRADE:	W.G435
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FLSA STATUS:	Exempt
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REMOTE/HYBRID:	Eligible
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CAREER LEVEL:	Functional Director
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Senior Executive Director-Communications

The Senior Executive Director of Communications is the top communications leader for a large unit. As a core member of the unit's leadership team, this role directs a broad communications staff, manages complex resources, and provides executive-level counsel to executive leadership. The Senior Executive Director sets long-term communications vision and policies for the unit and ensures integration with institutional strategy.

EDUCATION/ EXPERIENCE:	Bachelor's degree in communications, English, journalism, marketing, public relations or a related field, and ten (10) years of related experience required. Advanced degree preferred. Work experience may NOT substitute for the education requirement.
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GRADE:	W.G445
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FLSA STATUS:	Exempt
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REMOTE/HYBRID:	Eligible
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CAREER LEVEL:	Functional Director
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Assistant Vice President-Communications

The Assistant Vice President (AVP) of Communications provides university-wide leadership for communications strategy, policy, and alignment. As a senior leader in the central Office of Marketing and Communications, the AVP ensures consistency of institutional messaging, sets best practices, and supports the reputation of the university at the local, national, and global level. This role advises on strategic priorities, oversees enterprise-level initiatives, and ensures that all departments and divisions communicate in a manner that reflects and advances the institution's mission, brand, and values.

EDUCATION/ EXPERIENCE:	Bachelor's degree in communications, English, journalism, marketing, public relations or a related field and ten (10) years of related experience. Advanced degree preferred. Work experience may NOT substitute for the education requirement.
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GRADE:	W.G802
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FLSA STATUS:	Exempt
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REMOTE/HYBRID:	Eligible
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CAREER LEVEL:	Organizational Leader
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