



AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY

**PAMPLIN COLLEGE OF ARTS,
HUMANITIES, AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

Communication

Mini Communication Audit

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Background

The communication degree is offered through the school of liberal arts. In order to receive the degree students will be put through the communication departments classes. This includes a wide variety of topics that help enhance the students' knowledge of the real world and what it takes to be a communications major. The various topics include public relations, sports media, and broadcasting. These are just some of the many they have to offer.

Mission and Goals

On the website "A degree in communication is all about effectively sharing real stories and messages to impact others." The goal for the communication major in simpler terms is to pursue your passion along with collecting stories and messages to help show people what you are passionate about. The communication major as a whole seems to be lacking in the club's concepts. Their mission states to pursue their passions but there are limited clubs for kids majoring in communication to pursue that involve communication. This was the only detail that didn't align with what they are trying to persuade the average viewer.

Analyzing the Communication Department-SWOT Breakdown

Strength

The Communication department is known for its strong focus on scholarships as well as student opportunities and engagement, whilst providing numerous opportunities for students to obtain and be encouraged to find financial support. There is a high level of promotion for student engagement and resources forming events that engage faculty and students alike in a professional but not super formal occasion like trivia days and take-a-break-Thursdays. Allowing students to branch out and connect with the appropriate faculty members to explore their interests. Both faculty and staff are actively involved in teaching and research, contributing to a deeper dive into student's educational and academic careers. STUDENT ENGAGEMENT, Active social media, investment in students

Weaknesses

The university has a communication degree but other universities are creating concentrations inside of their communication degree. This helps students focus on what they really want rather than forcing material onto communication students who don't want to learn about that. The website as a whole is solid and easy to look at. One issue with the website though is how updated the information is on it. There are a few scenarios where the website presents either an old outdated YouTube video or faculty members who aren't here anymore. There is also nothing on the website for financial aid options which most students take advantage of.

Opportunities

One of Augusta University's objectives is to raise the enrolled student population to 16,000 by 2030. With proper marketing and engagement, the Communication Department could see growth through Caleb Bohn, Max Shaffer, Jaxon Garner, and Jordan Jones
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increased interest from incoming freshmen. With this in mind the communication will grow under the university growing. "Take a Break Thursdays" and other communication meetings present an opportunity to connect with Communication students and inform them about scholarship opportunities. Scholarships could be communicated to students in a similar way to how internship opportunities are shared. By saying this we hope that people harp on scholarships as much as internships and the importance of them for students. Lastly, we can collab with other departments for events like take a break Thursdays creating an environment under the Pamplin College of Liberal Arts.

Threats

USC Aiken is creating multiple majors inside their communication department. This is an immediate threat to Augusta because of size. They are very similar in size and are now offering more options to students for their communication. They are also in close proximity for kids that are choosing between Augusta and Aiken. Surrounding schools also have a lot more funding for example like Georgia. A school closer to our size with more funding is one like Kennesaw State who has more students but the areas of growth. Lastly our alumni relationships are very weak and could help change a lot for students experience if they could see people succeeding outside of our communication department.

Pamplin College Communication Department Strategic Planning

The Communication Department of Pamplin College at Augusta University lacks a communication/strategic plan pdf but in place of that on their website offers a multitude of links to direct students, alumni, and faculty to navigate its different branches whilst establishing their goals for the department concerning students and the growth, they are likely to experience in the near future in regards to the Augusta University Strategic plan. The communication department seeks to not only provide students with skillsets to make them more competitive in the workforce but also establish connections and the ability to network with individuals regardless of where they go so that they may establish themselves. Whilst doing this encouraging returning to the university and giving back to the community and discussing first-hand accounts of what types of opportunities and skills students gained upon leaving the university.

According to the Communication department's website, the Department awards as many as 12 scholarships for each academic year from a total of six different scholarship funds. These six include the W. Keith Cowling Scholarship, Jenny York Scholarship, Elaine Solomon Hirsch Scholarship, Connie Vance Memorial Scholarship, Brian Rykken Scholarship, Matthew Miklas Scholarship. If students follow the process of application for a scholarship that interests them after they've researched it, then they may become eligible to receive it if they meet all other criteria such as GPA and making it through an application selection process.

To have scholarships funding is needed first, most of the funding for the scholarships comes from the alumni and community and the interest gained from donations that are gathered at events hosted by

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the Communication department and the college as a whole to get alumni to remain engaged but also give back in a way to future generations of students.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Scholarship Communication at Augusta University

Clear and effective communication plays a crucial role in engaging students and promoting important opportunities such as scholarships. At Augusta University, while efforts are being made, there are several areas where communication can be improved to better inform students and build stronger connections. Below is an evaluation of the current state of scholarship communication, focusing on message quality, delivery, relationship building, and audience interaction.

Message Quality

Currently, students face challenges in easily finding information about available scholarships. Much of the information that is needed is buried, requiring significant effort to find. To maximize engagement, scholarship opportunities need to be communicated more proactively, ensuring students are aware of them without the need for extensive research. Simplifying this process could lead to higher application rates and greater student success.

Message Delivery

The methods used to deliver scholarship information are limited, with most communication happening through word of mouth or specific events hosted by the communications department. There is a clear opportunity to enhance delivery by leveraging digital platforms, particularly social media, and improving the presence of scholarship information on the university's website. This would provide a wider reach and more consistent messaging to the student body.

Relationship Quality

Augusta University enjoys a positive relationship with its wider audience, including students, staff, alumni, and the surrounding community. However, the connection between students and the communication department can be inconsistent. Some students report meaningful interactions, while others experience minimal engagement. For those looking for scholarships, the relationship tends to be one-sided. A more consistent approach to communication could improve these relationships and build trust.

Audience Communication and Interaction

In analyzing social media engagement, Augusta University shows potential but has room to grow. A comparison of Instagram activity between Augusta University and Valdosta State University, which has a similar enrollment size, reveals competitive engagement levels, although Valdosta State tends to achieve higher peaks in interaction. By creating more engaging content, such as interactive posts or regular scholarship announcements, Augusta University could significantly increase its social media presence and further engage its audience.

Recommendations

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Augusta University does a good job at reaching students, faculty, and alumni in terms of scholarships, but there are some recommendations to make those numbers increase. The first recommendations are updating the website to make it easier to navigate when looking at and for scholarships (*See appendix A, B, C and D*). This will allow students a smoother way to get to where the scholarships are located and help them apply faster. Other Universities have this type of format that allows smooth access to, and we believe this encourages students to apply for scholarships because of the simpleness of the process (*See appendix E and F*). Social media is one of the most popular forms of media today and most students, faculty, and alumni today. The communication's social media department needs to cover more scholarships when they go live and throughout the rest of the semester until they are due. This will allow students to get updated on these scholarships regularly to remind them what is coming up and when to apply. When looking at social media, a recommendation that the communication department could use is making an account specifically tied to scholarships. This will allow another way for students to see upcoming scholarships and this information won't be lost in other information on the page because it is specifically for scholarships. Another recommendation for the Communication department is doing a better job at when the scholarships get released to send more emails out and tell the students about it. They do a good job already, but we believe that the mark is still being missed for some students. These continuous emails every week would keep students updated with not only what's going on but new scholarships for students to look at and apply for.

Appendix A:



Appendix B:

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Sports Media Scholarship Group

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the Augusta University website with links for CURRENT STUDENTS, ALUMNI, COMMUNITY, FACULTY & STAFF, MILITARY, PATIENTS, and Resources. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with links for Admissions, Academics, About, Student Life, Athletics, Research, Health, and Giving. The main header for the Financial Aid section includes links for Policies & Procedures, How to Apply, Forms, Types of Aid, Health Sciences, and About. The content area features a breadcrumb trail (Augusta University / Financial Aid), a title 'Financial Aid', and a paragraph explaining the university's support for students. A contact information box on the right lists the Financial Aid office's location, phone number, email, and mailing address. A 'Want to chat?' button is visible in the bottom right corner. A small video player titled 'Finding and Researching Scholarships' is embedded in the page.

Augusta University / Financial Aid

Financial Aid

We know that financing your education can be a challenging process.

We are here to assist you through this process by providing you with information about federal, state, and institutional loans, grants, scholarships, and work study programs. Our office encourages all current or prospective students to explore their financial options at Augusta University.

If you have any questions or concerns about financial aid, we encourage you to contact us at 706-737-1524 or email us at osfa@augusta.edu.

[GAFUTURES](#) [2023-2024 FAFSA](#) [2024-2025 FAFSA](#)

[POUNCE](#) [Applying for Financial Aid](#)

Contact Us

Financial Aid

Summerville Campus
Fanning Hall
706-737-1524
osfa@augusta.edu

Mailing Address:
1120 15th Street, Fanning Hall,
Augusta GA 30912
2500 Walton Way, Augusta GA,
30904

[Want to chat?](#)

Open "https://www.augusta.edu/financial/apply/scholarships.php" in a new tab

Appendix C:

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the Augusta University website with links for CURRENT STUDENTS, ALUMNI, COMMUNITY, FACULTY & STAFF, MILITARY, PATIENTS, and Resources. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with links for Admissions, Academics, About, Student Life, Athletics, Research, Health, and Giving. The main header for the Scholarships section includes links for Policies & Procedures, How to Apply, Forms, Types of Aid, Health Sciences, and About. The content area features a breadcrumb trail (Augusta University / Financial Aid / Scholarships), a title 'Scholarships', and a video player titled 'Finding and Researching Scholarships'. Below the video, a paragraph explains the Scholarship Universe (SU) system and the deadline for institutional scholarships. A 'Want to chat?' button is visible in the bottom right corner.

Augusta University / Financial Aid / Scholarships

Scholarships

Finding and Researching Scholarships

Augusta University utilizes Scholarship Universe (SU) to assist students in applying for scholarships. Through SU, students are matched to a variety of institutional and external organizations scholarship opportunities. Scholarships are based on need, merit, and/or talent. In order to qualify for need-based scholarships, students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Most institutional scholarships have a deadline of **February 1st** for the upcoming academic year (ex: February 1, 2022 is the deadline for Fall 2022/Spring 2023). Scholarships offered through our departments/colleges may have different deadlines. Please consult your area of study for more information.

[Want to chat?](#)

Appendix D:

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The screenshot shows the ScholarshipUniverse website. The header includes a search bar and a user profile for 'Maxwell'. The left sidebar contains navigation links: Dashboard, Questions, Scholarships (selected), Applications, Awards, My Docs, and Feedback. The main content area is titled 'Scholarships' and has a 'Sort: School Scholarships First' dropdown. Below this are tabs for 'Matches', 'Pinned', 'Partial Matches', 'Application Submitted', 'Non-Matches', and 'Not Interested'. The 'Matches' tab is active, displaying a list of four scholarships:

Amount	Organization	Apply Between	Status
\$1,000	Simeone & Miller, LLP Scholarship External Scholarship	9/15/2024 - 10/31/2024	Open
Varies	Foreclosure.com Scholarship External Scholarship	3/1/2024 - 12/15/2024	Open
\$1,000	BlankStyle Scholarship Fund External Scholarship	4/1/2024 - 12/31/2024	Open
Varies	RentHop: College & University Scholarship External Scholarship	4/30/2024 - 4/30/2025	Open

Each scholarship entry includes an 'Apply' button and a 'View' button. The interface also features a sidebar with icons for various user actions and a search bar at the top.

Appendix E:

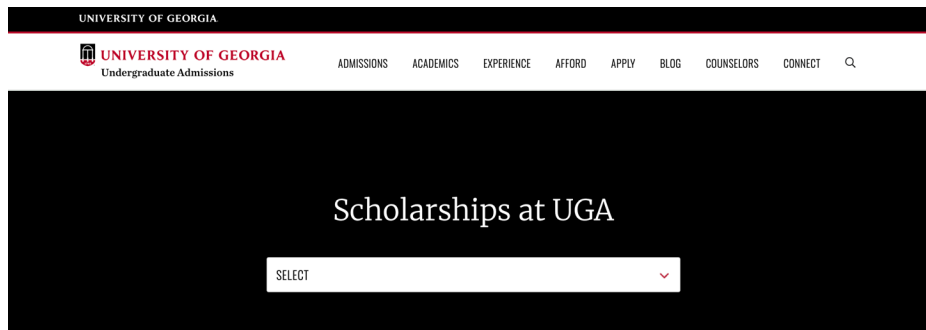
The screenshot shows the University of Georgia's website, specifically the 'Afford' section. The header includes the University of Georgia logo and navigation links: ADMISSIONS, ACADEMICS, EXPERIENCE, AFFORD (selected), APPLY, BLOG, COUNSELORS, and CONNECT. The main content area features a large image of a student with the text 'COMMIT TO GEORGIA'. To the right of the image is a sidebar with the text 'FINANCIAL AID', 'GEORGIA RESIDENCY', and 'SCHOLARSHIPS'. Below the image is a 'Request more information' button with the text 'Get additional details on the UGA Admissions Process' and a 'LEARN MORE' link. The footer of the section includes the text 'Dawgs on Top' and a small URL link.

Appendix F:

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Academic Scholarships

Last year, UGA awarded **more than \$4.6 million** in scholarships and awards from University funds to undergraduate students. Most academic (merit-based) scholarships for first-year students are awarded during the Admissions process. This process is usually finalized by early April for all admitted first-year students.

Additionally, scholarships available through individual academic departments are typically awarded to upperclassmen, but prospective students should consult the websites of their intended department for more information. Some scholarships for first-year students require an additional application. Please consult the following list for more information as well as this supplemental list of scholarships.

International and F-1 visa applicants can qualify for many of these merit-based scholarships.

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