Reputational Risk

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Why it matters

• Brand damage and expense

In November 2011 the U. of California at Davis faced scathing criticism after a campus police officer used pepper spray to disperse protesters. Five years later the university has drawn renewed criticism for hiring public relations firms to bury online references to the incident. The controversy is a case study in the hazards of such tactics.
Reputational Risk

- Crisis Communications
  - Response to active incident

- Issue Management
  - Preparing in advance
Crisis Communications

- Emergency Management Team (EMT)
  - University-wide representatives
  - Emergency Communications
  - WMPD/University Comms Partnership
Crisis Communications

- Emergency Communications Protocol
  - Immediate communications
    - WMPD/EMT/University Communications
  - Active incident communications
    - Public Communications within EMT
      - Media Relations
      - Media Monitoring
Media Monitoring

• Routine monitoring
  – University Communications
    • News & Media Team/Social Media Coordinator

• Active-incident monitoring
  – University-wide trained team
  – Social media, traditional media
  – Direct line to PIO
Issue Management

– Constant issues monitoring
  • Over prepare
    – National trends/higher education issues
    – Advance research/preparation
    – Media prep
  • Executive Leadership Team weekly discussions
Issue Management

• Media Tracking
  – Traditional media
  – Social media
  – Media outreach
    • Corrections
    • Responses
  – Networks
Issue Management

- Challenging News Cycles
  - Proactive approach
  - Own the narrative
  - Context is critical
- Ex: U.S. News Rankings
- W&M News story
- Advance briefings for leadership/communicators
- Quick response to errors
Issue Management

• Offense v. Defense
  – Targeted pitches
    • Mellon grant/Lemon Project
    • Sustainability/IIC
    • Coaching U
    • Bone marrow donor
Reputational Risk

Questions?