



# Working with the **news** media

OFFICE OF NEWS AND COMMUNICATIONS, DUKE UNIVERSITY

As a member of the Duke faculty, you are on the forefront of advancing knowledge in the service of society, one of President Brodhead's primary goals. You do this in many ways, through research, teaching and other professional activities. Duke's Office of News and Communications (ONC) can help you extend your expertise – by sharing your ideas with the public through the news media. In the following pages, we will help you make the most of these interactions.

# What's news? What's not?

*what the media look for*



*Duke faculty experts appear frequently in the media, commenting on topics from medical advances to politics and popular culture.*

## What is news?

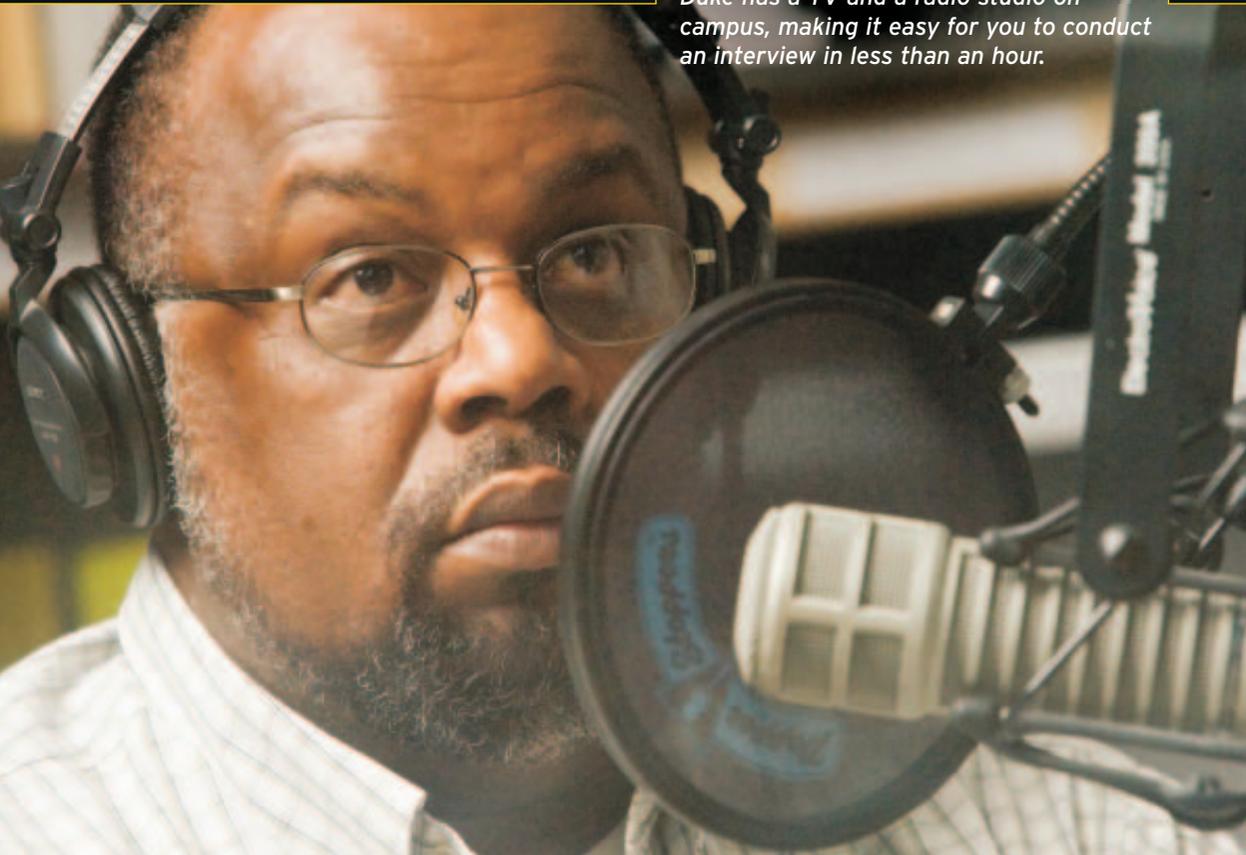
- An explanation that frames the world in a new way
- Research challenging old assumptions
- Conflict/drama/controversy
- Trends and social issues
- Stories about real people

## On the other hand, what (usually) ISN'T news?

- Individual grants and fellowships
- Conferences
- Books
- New programs, centers, institutes, etc.
- Building dedications
- Most academic honors and awards

# What should you do if a **reporter** calls?

*Duke has a TV and a radio studio on campus, making it easy for you to conduct an interview in less than an hour.*



## INTERVIEW TIPS

**If you need assistance - ask.** If you have questions about how to respond to a reporter, contact ONC at 684-2823.

**Identify the reporter.** Write down the reporter's name, media outlet and contact information.

**Don't feel rushed.** If a reporter calls unexpectedly, ask to call back so you can gather your thoughts. You must respond quickly; ask how soon the reporter needs to speak with you.

**Decide what you want to say.** Before you begin, decide what two or three key points you want to make. Have an interesting fact and human anecdote ready to illustrate each point. Try to bring up these points even if the reporter doesn't ask about them.

**Provide background information.** You can help the reporter – and minimize errors – by offering to provide background information. This can include material from other sources.

**Prepare for difficult questions.** Anticipate difficult questions and prepare responses to them. Never say “no comment.” Instead, explain why you can't or won't answer the question, then shift to a topic you are willing to discuss.

**Give simple, direct answers.** Be brief. Reporters use short quotes or sound bites. Avoid jargon and flippant or joking comments that may be taken out of context.

**Nothing is “off the record.”** Don't say anything you don't want in the story, even when the formal interview has ended and you seem to be just chatting.

**Ask questions.** Reporters are unlikely to let you review a story, but they may let you verify specific information or quotes.

**Give feedback.** If a reporter makes a major mistake, ask for a correction. If the mistake is minor, it may be better to let it go. Let reporters know if their stories are well done, too.

**Differences between ONC and the Duke Medicine news office.** As a general practice, reporters do not need to contact ONC before calling you. Faculty who are members of the School of Medicine or Nursing or who work closely with Duke Medicine are asked to consult the Duke Medicine news office (684-4148) before responding to media requests.



# Connecting Duke faculty with reporters

*getting the word out*

Duke has a strong record of placing its faculty experts in major news stories. Here are some of the ways it accomplishes this:

**News releases.** Duke's news offices distribute releases electronically to reporters and wire services, and posts them online. (See URLs on the back page.)

**News tips.** Duke's news offices may quickly prepare a "news tip" inviting reporters to contact faculty experts about breaking news.

**Op-ed pieces.** ONC provides editing and placement assistance with opinion articles.

**Experts lists.**

**Direct pitches to reporters.**

**Videos and multimedia features.** ONC posts these on the Duke News website and sites such as YouTube and iTunes U.

**Consulting.** ONC works with faculty members, administrators and others to plan media strategies and respond to crises.

**Call us – EARLY.** Let us know when you're doing something interesting. We can assist you in developing an effective communications strategy. Don't assume we already know about your work.

**Left:** *ONC offers media training to faculty. Here, faculty members get tips on how to write an effective opinion article. Please contact ONC for more information.*

## Phone numbers

**ONC:** 684-2823; after-hours, 812-6603    **Duke Medicine news office:** 684-4148

## Helpful Web addresses

**Office of News and Communications:** [www.dukenews.duke.edu](http://www.dukenews.duke.edu)

**Duke Medicine news office:** [www.dukemednews.org/home](http://www.dukemednews.org/home)

**Other Duke communicators:** [www.dukenews.duke.edu/aboutus/index.html](http://www.dukenews.duke.edu/aboutus/index.html)

*(If your unit does not have a communicator, contact ONC at 684-2823  
or e-mail [keith.lawrence@duke.edu](mailto:keith.lawrence@duke.edu).)*

**TV/Radio services:** [www.dukenews.duke.edu/duke\\_community/tvradioservices.html](http://www.dukenews.duke.edu/duke_community/tvradioservices.html)

**Op-ed article advice:** [www.dukenews.duke.edu/duke\\_community/oped.html](http://www.dukenews.duke.edu/duke_community/oped.html)

**Faculty media training:** [www.dukenews.duke.edu/duke\\_community/mediatraining.html](http://www.dukenews.duke.edu/duke_community/mediatraining.html)

**Experts list:** [www.dukenews.duke.edu/resources/experts/index.html](http://www.dukenews.duke.edu/resources/experts/index.html)

**University Photography:** [www.dukephoto.duke.edu](http://www.dukephoto.duke.edu)

## Publications

**Duke Today** (daily online news for Duke community): [www.duke.edu/today](http://www.duke.edu/today)

**Duke Research:** <http://research.duke.edu>

**Working at Duke (information for employees):** [www.hr.duke.edu/workingatduke](http://www.hr.duke.edu/workingatduke)

**INSIDE (Duke Medicine employees):** [www.inside.duke.edu](http://www.inside.duke.edu)

**The Chronicle (student newspaper):** [www.dukechronicle.com](http://www.dukechronicle.com)