

## What Matters to Alumni? Conversational Voice, Openness, and Public Engagement Handout

### Purpose

- Explore aspects of alumni engagement
- Investigate how universities could build relationships with alumni
- Examine what contributes to alumni engagement

### Our Study

- **H1:** conversational voice → alumni affective/communicative /instrumental engagement behavior (+)
- **H2:** openness → alumni affective/communicative /instrumental engagement behavior (+)
- **H3:** assurance of legitimacy → alumni affective/communicative /instrumental engagement behavior (+)
- Online survey with a random sample of a university department's alumni (N = 511)
- 5-pt Likert type questions
- Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and hierarchical linear regression analysis were performed.

### Our Findings

- Three-dimensional **alumni engagement:** affective, communicative, instrumental engagement. Cronbach's  $\alpha = .92$  (affective engagement),  $.72$  (instrumental engagement), and  $.86$  (communicative engagement).
- **H1: partially supported:** use of **conversational voice** was conducive to alumni's communicative engagement behavior (beta =  $.25$ ,  $p < .00$ ) but detrimental to affective engagement behaviors (beta =  $-.37$ ,  $p < .00$ ).
- **H2: partially supported: openness** could lead to alumni's communicative engagement behaviors (beta =  $.13$ ,  $p < .05$ )
- **H3: not supported: assurance of legitimacy** did not exert significant impact on any of the three dimensions of public engagement

These findings indicated that to encourage alumni publics to share their feedback with an organization, a good way is to be a humorous and responsive communicator who does not hold back. Also, alumni publics' engagement is manifested not only instrumentally, such as internship supervision, guest speaking, mentoring, and networking, but also communicatively and affectively.

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