Brand Development Project Overview

Dr. Joseph Brennan

The Office of Communications and Marketing has selected Maguire Associates to conduct a comprehensive study to assess UAlbany’s current brand and marketplace position. Quantitative and qualitative methods will be employed to understand how several important audiences view the institution, including: faculty, staff and current students; alumni and donors; parents; prospective students; students who were admitted but didn’t enroll; and influential persons in the region.

The findings will inform the development of strategies for strengthening the institutional brand and position in order to support student recruitment, deepen ties with alumni, increase community engagement, and build pride and morale on campus.

OCM will share these insights in multiple discussions leading to a shared platform of institution-wide messaging. The project will also inform the creation of new or updated marketing materials, especially those intended to help recruit new students.

Maguire’s research will be the most comprehensive study of UAlbany’s brand and position in recent history. The last such project was conducted by Stamats in 2007, primarily for the purpose of supporting undergraduate student recruitment. Maguire’s work will coincide with other focused efforts to understand perceptions, including qualitative interviews of major donors recently undertaken by the Development Office as part of planning for a major fundraising campaign. Additional data sources that can complement the brand study include the annual SUNY Student Opinion Survey, College Board analyses, and other recent survey research on prospects and current students.

The Vice President for Communications and Marketing, Joseph Brennan, is sponsoring this project and will work very closely with the selected firm throughout the process on research design, data collection, analysis and reporting. Dr. Brennan will lead campus conversations about the findings in order to build consensus around core messaging and institutional identity and to develop support for effective brand and marketing strategies. Jennifer Carron, Director of Marketing, will serve as project director.

Success measures:

- Understanding how we are perceived by our key audiences
- Clarifying how we want to be perceived
- Distinguishing clearly and concisely what's different/unique about UAlbany
- Uniting various voices of the university under a well-defined core position for greater awareness and impact
- Bringing together internal and external stakeholders toward a common identity and sense of purpose
- Guiding efforts to position ourselves in key markets, especially for student recruitment
- Establishing benchmarks to help measure success
- Creating a plan for ongoing assessment
- Supporting university leaders as they make strategic decisions

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