

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE 9/14/2021

**OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF VISITORS
Marketing Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday, October 8, 2020**

MINUTES

A meeting of the Marketing Subcommittee of the Old Dominion University Board of Visitors was held on Thursday, October 8, 2020, at 10:00 A.M. The meeting was held electronically using the Zoom application pursuant to § 4-0.01(g) of Chapter 1289 of the 2020 Acts of Assembly.

Present from the committee were:

Toykea S. Jones, Chair
Jerri F. Dickseski, Vice Chair
Unwanna B. Dabney
Lisa B. Smith
Armistead D. Williams Jr.

Absent from the Committee: Alton (Jay) Harris

Also, in attendance from the Board: Kay A. Kemper, Rector
P. Murry Pitts

Also present were: John R. Broderick, President
Austin Agho
Alonzo Brandon
Andy Casiello
Caitlin Chandler
Greg DuBois
Giovanna Genard
Casey Kohler
Donna Meeks
Annie Morris
R. Earl Nance
Tom Odom
Maite Wilson

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Toykea Jones called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon a motion made by Dr. Williams and seconded by Dr. Dabney, the minutes of the November 18, 2019 meeting were approved by roll-call vote (*Aye: Dabney, Dickseski, Kemper, Jones, Smith, Williams; Nay: None; Absent: Harris*)

III. OVERVIEW OF THE ROLE OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE

President John R. Broderick spoke of the desire to have the presence of executive officers during committee meetings. Unfortunately, neither he nor Provost Agho was able to attend the previously scheduled committee meeting, which led to its rescheduling. Going forward, it is essential for the committee to ensure the presence of an executive officer at meetings. President Broderick stressed the importance of knowing there are several distinctions on how Old Dominion University and other higher education institutions allocate funds for marketing. There are two distinct avenues for marketing, the first being enrollment advertisement, which is less about mainstream advertising and more about peer-to-peer constituent advertisements. These advertisements mainly target high school students. The second avenue is what is known as reputational advertisement, in the Chronicle of Higher Education or Virginia Business, which tells a broader story of the school's reputation. President Broderick finished by saying that any additional investment the University makes involves creating a return on investment plan. Those goals should be measured accordingly, based on data.

Ms. Dickseski mentioned that based on her experience, a return of investment plan is a fair assessment. Data can now be measured more easily, via analytics, than previously and Ms. Giovanna Genard, assistant vice president for strategic communication and marketing, is already tracking said analytics.

IV. COVID-19: CAMPUS COMMUNICATIONS AND #REIGNRESPONSIBLY CAMPAIGN

Ms. Genard provided a series of updates on the Office of Strategic Communication & Marketing (StratComm). This office serves as the central public relations and marketing division. When there is a crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, StratComm works closely with University leaders and plays a key role in providing guidance and developing communication strategies to navigate through potential and emerging issues.

As the University transitioned from fully online in the spring and summer to a combination of in-person and online instruction this fall, StratComm created the Blueprint for Fall 2020 Reopening website. The website included an overall reopening plan, which provided guidance for faculty/staff and students' return to campus. The Blueprint also included a plan for academic success and student involvement. In addition to the Blueprint website, a COVID-19 website houses all of the University's official letters and communicates facts, key messages, and an extensive Q & A, which is constantly getting updated based on information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Virginia

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Department of Health. It also – and links to the Rise to the Challenge Fund, an initiative led by Mr. Alonzo Brandon, vice president for university advancement, which helps secure funding for students or employees impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Throughout the pandemic, StratComm mobilized to share information quickly and accurately to internal and external audiences, in an open and transparent way. This was accomplished through a series of letters to campus, social media posts, and a series of town halls. During the various town halls, members of the Executive Policy Team met with the University community and talked through the Fall 2020 reopening guidance, the University's spring and summer move to an online environment, social justice, budget challenges and housing updates. In addition, StratComm created an "ODU at Home" series to promote learning, overall wellbeing, and increased community engagement.

Unfortunately, because of the pandemic, spring commencement could not be held in person this year. Instead the University launched a new innovative tradition for students and their families to safely celebrate this momentous occasion--a virtual celebration that was expanded over a week.

One of the major initiatives launched was the #ReignResponsibly campaign, which encourages members of the ODU community to follow best practices for stopping the spread of COVID-19, in an effort to keep themselves and others healthy and safe. This campaign has four tenets – stay informed, follow guidelines, care for yourself and care for others. The campaign encourages people to adhere to the tenets, follow CDC guidelines, submit daily wellness check-ins, and observe campus guidance related to operational changes.

Ms. Genard concluded this part of the presentation by discussing the campus signage project, which promoted #REIGNRESPONSIBLY by following safety recommendations and guidelines. More than 35 types of signs were created and more than 16,000 installed across campus.

V. UPDATE ON MARKETING SPEND

Ms. Genard discussed the increased marketing competition from fellow large public institutions – including the University of Maryland, Penn State, Virginia Tech and George Mason—in Hampton Roads. Academic Affairs conducted an audit of marketing spending across ODU for central and non-central functions. The audit showed an average of approximately \$8.7 million per year. The three units that accounted for nearly 70% of the spending were Distance Learning (38%), StratComm (21%) and SEES (10%). The audit was then broken down, further, by type. Marketing and advertising represented 82% of the total spend, promotional 11% and printing 7%. Marketing and advertising were broken down into three parts, digital media was 37% of spend, Online Virginia Network (OVN) was 10% and

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other was 35%. The latest study presented at a recent American Marketing Association meeting on spending across higher education was also examined. According to the 2019 State of Higher Ed Marketing report by Simpson Scarborough, the median annual marketing budget for a doctoral university is \$3.4 million. On the extreme high end of marketing spend, *Inside Higher Ed* reported on the University of Maryland Global Campus' plan to spend more than \$500 million over six years (\$83 million per year to expand its global brand). *Inside Higher Ed* also reported Southern New Hampshire invested \$132 million in marketing in 2017.

ODU has contacted EAB for comparison data regarding funding models for state and national marketing departments. EAB works through tailored partnerships with more than 1,700 schools across the nation, including ODU. It helps education leaders accelerate their programs and drive results in key areas. Academic Affairs is also reaching out to the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) and KANTAR for further spend analysis. KANTAR is a group that measures and collects estimates of expenditure based on local markets.

Ms. Genard concluded the presentation on marketing spending by noting for the past three years, the Office of Strategic Communication and Marketing, the University's "central" office responsible for marketing and branding the University, has received one-time funding of \$1.3 million annually. Distance Learning (ODUOnline) expended \$3.7 million of ledger 3 funds for FY19-20. Distance Learning, similar to Athletics, is a revenue-generating unit. It needs to make money to spend money.

Ms. Genard will update the committee on the results of comparison data during the spring meeting.

Ms. Smith stated that the average national spend of \$3.4 million for doctoral universities cited in the Simpson Scarborough report seemed low. Ms. Genard replied that is just the median amount spent purely on advertising and does not include the cost of salaries or other expenses.

Dr. Williams requested clarification on the difference between ledger 1 and ledger 3 funds. As well, are we able to see the return on the \$3.7 million investment? Mr. Casiello explained that the ledger 3 funds are generated through out-of-state activities versus ledger 1 funds provided by the state of Virginia. He shared that the revenue received by Distance Learning exceeds its marketing expenditure.

Ms. Genard noted that ODU avoided the national trend of a decline in enrollment and was actually up by 3% for fall. And as reported during the last subcommittee meeting,

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attendance at admissions events continues to grow, and students who apply for admission have higher SAT scores and GPAs. Those are also measures showing a return on investment.

VI. COORDINATION OF MARKETING ACTIVITIES ACROSS CAMPUS TO MAXIMIZE RESOURCES

Ms. Genard started by explaining that following typical models for large universities, StratComm, Distance Learning and Athletics have separate budgets and marketing departments. While StratComm drives University-wide branding and marketing strategy, marketing units retains the expertise of a variety of agencies, studios and vendors based on marketing goals or projects. This ensures the lowest cost and best quality. At ODU, Academic Affairs serves as the umbrella for both StratComm and Distance Learning. The Provost has been working to increase collaboration between the two departments. Ms. Genard and Mr. Casiello are proactively working to identify efficiencies that will maximize University resources and expand its reach. Ms. Genard concluded by mentioning that in an effort to increase communication and collaboration across campus, monthly campus communicator meetings and quarterly marketing committee meetings are being held.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 A.M.