

**OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF VISITORS  
Marketing Subcommittee Meeting  
Monday, November 18, 2019**

**MINUTES**

A meeting of the Marketing Subcommittee of the Old Dominion University Board of Visitors was held on Monday, November 18, 2019, at 1:30 p.m. in the Board Room of the Kate and John R. Broderick Dining Commons. Present from the committee were:

R. Bruce Bradley, Chair  
Jay Harris (via telephone)  
Toykea S. Jones  
Pamela C. Kirk

Absent from the Committee:

Jerri F. Dickseski, Vice Chair

Also, in attendance from the Board:

Lisa Smith, Rector  
Kay A. Kemper (via telephone)

Also present were:

Austin Agho  
Jane Dané  
Greg DuBois  
Giovanna Genard  
Donna Meeks  
Harry Minium  
Annie Morris  
Tom Odom  
Don Stansberry  
Maite Wilson

## **I. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. He acknowledged that this committee was commissioned by the Rector and will be advisory in nature. Ms. Kirk stated that she felt that the marketing budget was insufficient for a university of this size and hopes this subcommittee can advise the Board & Administrators appropriately. Mr. Bradley asked Ms. Genard to provide the subcommittee with the University's marketing budget.

The subcommittee agreed to meet in conjunction with the November and March meetings of the Executive Committee and to schedule additional meetings if needed.

## **II. 2019-2020 MARKETING CAMPAIGN**

Giovanna Genard, assistant vice president for strategic communication and marketing, briefed the committee on the 2019-2020 marketing campaign and strategy for the University. She reviewed the three main goals for the campaign – supporting institutional enrollment goals, building -wide brand endorsement and enhancing awareness.

She identified primary target audience segments – prospective first-year students, parents, and prospective military-affiliated students – and how to engage them in Hampton Roads, Northern Virginia and surrounding states. Published market research shows different factors impact messaging and levels of engagement for these audiences. For example, first-year students are heavy social media users (except they do not use Facebook) and are extremely engaged online. Ninety-three percent of prospective first-year students ranked majors/programs as a deciding factor, along with improved employment opportunities and learning more about their favorite topic/area of interest. Parents are heavy social media users (mostly on Facebook) but are not big on engagement. Parents look at university costs, location, and affinity for school, and almost 80% wish schools would put more of an effort into getting prospective students to visit campus. Military students are heavy social media users and enjoy streaming media and playing video games. Many will make decisions based on location (i.e., close to home or overseas) to facilitate family support. As well, Ms. Genard noted that Hampton Roads, due to its large military presence, has some of the nation's top digital engagement.

She explained how the University uses Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure the success of its campaigns. The campaign strategy is to get the right message (relevance) + the right audience (targeting) + the right media channels (relevance + target + credibility) = optimizing campaigns to final KPIs. The marketing funnel moves the various audience segments through the following actions: engage with the content, watch the video, schedule a tour, apply and enroll.

Ms. Genard provided an overview of the campaign calendar by quarters and audience and provided examples of ODU campaigns that build awareness and have a high reach, such as 30-second TV spots, mall displays and airport billboards. Tactics for campaigns that encourage students to apply or enroll at ODU include search engine optimization, digital ads, 15-second digital videos, geo-fencing, pre-roll behavioral target videos, YouTube TrueView and internet radio digital ads (Spotify/ Pandora). Campaigns with engagement or conversion goals include digital ads that follow the trajectory of prospective

students online until the target audience takes the desired action (such as attending an admissions event or applying), remarketing/capturing, paid search and retargeting.

Ms. Kirk asked how much of the campaign is invested in raising brand awareness. Ms. Genard replied that the annual media buy varies according to funds received every year. The largest portion of the buys are invested in ads that support institution's enrollment goals.

Ms. Genard concluded the presentation by sharing measures of success for the University's marketing campaigns. Over the years, ODU has seen an increase in first-year student campus visits, applications (including the quality of applicants) and enrollments. In the past two years, the University enrolled its largest freshman classes.

### **III. ENROLLMENT TRENDS**

Jane Dané, associate vice president for enrollment management, briefed the committee on enrollment trends through the fall of 2018, which is the latest report available from SCHEV. Ms. Dané prefaced her presentation stating that the number for high school graduates through 2030 is expected to grow less than 0.1%. Currently, Virginia has about 95,000 high school graduates and within the next seven years there will be a 5% decrease in this population, a reference to the 2025 cliff presented by Mr. DuBois in the Executive Board Meeting. Colleges are gearing up for this "cliff" and understand that they can no longer depend on high school grads as their primary source of income. They are looking to grow enrollment in online learning, especially for adult learners.

Ms. Dané explained that our largest competitor is Virginia Commonwealth University, followed by George Mason University, James Madison University, Virginia Tech and Radford University. Last year, 2018-2019, ODU had its largest freshman class. Virginia has seen a decrease in transfer students from feeder community colleges with the exception of George Mason, which saw an increase. ODU's main feeder community colleges are Tidewater Community College and Thomas Nelson Community College.

The number of graduate students has plateaued across colleges with the exception of Virginia Tech, which saw a decrease. ODU added over 1,100 new online students, for a total of 6,000 online students out of our 24,000 current students. Mr. Bradley asked Ms. Dané if there a cost difference between an online student and a traditional on campus student. She replied there is no substantial cost difference.

### **IV. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:54 p.m.