GLOBAL STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

2019-2020

From our founding as Beaver College in 1853 to the present day, Arcadia University continues a remarkable journey as a leading small private higher education institution. This Global Strategic Communications Plan was prepared by the Office of University Relations to outline a short-term and a long-term strategy to most effectively leverage Arcadia's strengths to generate greater publicity, strengthen the University's brand, and improve the efficiency of communicating with key constituents domestically and internationally.

Updated: August 2019

Arcadia University

Founded in 1853, Arcadia University is one of Philadelphia's premier small liberal arts universities offering bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees. Arcadia is a top-ranked private university known for its pioneering programs in international education with our main campus in Glenside PA, with centers, offices, and staff in eight countries in Europe, Africa, and Oceania. Arcadia's faculty and staff enrich the lives of 3,700 current undergraduate and graduate students, 3,000 study abroad students from other U.S. institutions, and more than 26,000 alumni around the globe.

Key Messaging

At present, Arcadia's key brand messaging supports the Arcadia Promise, which speaks to students individually, pledging they will have **A Distinctively Global, Integrative, Personal Learning Experience.**

> ### *Global: The Classroom and Beyond.*
> ***You will gain a global perspective.*** Arcadia University believes in building a community of learners committed to the high-impact learning that occurs with a global experience as part of a student's academic career. Arcadia's vision is that students—including many who are the first generation in their families to attend college—should have firsthand knowledge of other countries and cultures through programs like:
> - Preview [est. 1994] offers global experiences in one of more than 12 countries for credit.
> - The First-Year Study Abroad Experience (FYSAE) [est. 2003] offers two semesters in two countries.
> - The Second-Year Study Abroad Experience (SYSAE) allows students to study abroad at a select Arcadia center around the world during the fall semester of their sophomore year.
> - The College of Global Studies offers undergraduates across the nation access to international programs worldwide.
> - Arcadia's commitment to ensuring a global experience, whether around the world or here at home.
>
> The Institute of International Education (IIE) *Open Doors Report* has ranked Arcadia University #1 for the past nine years for the percentage of undergraduate students participating in a study abroad experience.
>
> ### *Integrative: Apply What You Learn.*
> ***You will integrate classroom learning with real-world experiences.*** Every Arcadia student gets numerous opportunities to integrate classroom learning with real-world issues. Connecting liberal arts and theory with professional skills and abilities prepares Arcadia graduates to contribute and prosper in a diverse and dynamic world.
>
> ### *Personal: You will Find Your Place at Arcadia as you work directly with world-class faculty.*
> Generation after generation of Arcadia alumni tell a similar story of the personal attention they received from a professor or staff member that inspired, helped, and guided them. It's the hallmark of an Arcadia education. Faculty and staff get to know students and work with them to achieve their educational goals. Students benefit from strong mentorships that foster advanced learning and development. Involvement in campus life broadens each student's circle of experiences.

Arcadia graduates get hired, accepted to graduate school, or enlist in the military after graduation.
95 percent of all eligible Arcadia graduates from the Class of 2018 surveyed are employed, enrolled in

graduate school, or serving the military within six months of graduation.

Our main campus in Glenside has a direct line to Philadelphia and the world.
Arcadia's suburban campus is a train ride away from Philadelphia, one of the nation's top cities. The Glenside train station is a walkable distance from campus and takes you to the regional Amtrak hub of 30th Street Train Station and the Philadelphia International Airport.

Arcadia University Strategic Plan Themes 2013-2018 (extended to 2019)

Theme 1 - Enhancing Academic Excellence
Theme 2 - Strengthening a People-Focused University Community
Theme 3 - Deepening the University's Engagement with External Communities
Theme 4 - Improving the University's Resources, Financial Processes, and Infrastructure
Theme 5 - Committing to Institutional Diversity and Global Engagement

The Office of University Relations (UR)

Our Mission

University Relations manages, protects, and strengthens the mission and brand of Arcadia University across the region, nation, and the world. We strategize communications to grow Arcadia's institutional reputation, build awareness, and strengthen the University's brand, engage the local and regional audiences, and strengthen our global community of current and prospective students, faculty, staff, scholars, alumni, donors, and friends.

Situational Analysis - 20/20 Vision - Entering an era of Strategic Planning

As Arcadia University enters a phase of strategic planning, we also will conduct market research, surveys, and interviews with institutional stakeholders including students, faculty, administrators, and trustees to begin a refresh of our value proposition. University Relations will focus on developing institutional brand messaging that boldly brings a fresh identity that aligns with the institution's priorities and focuses University communications on the following areas:

1. **Branding Initiative**—UR will lead a branding initiative that will align with the Strategic Planning process. Combining the internal process of strategic planning with external market research will develop a strong value proposition and authentic brand identity.
2. **Internal Communications**—Engaging community and developing the campus culture is a top priority for the coming year. UR will lead institutional initiatives to develop departments and enable them to take ownership of information sharing and value on regular communications sharing (i.e., email, socializing, announcements, group discussions, town hall meetings).
3. **Revenue Generation**—UR will develop a 3-year business model to build revenue and promote Arcadia as a destination in the region. Through space rental and summer initiatives, the unit will develop an exemplary revenue generating model for higher education.
4. **Scholarly Expertise**—Arcadia's scholarly expertise is relevant to world issues. UR will continue to strengthen Arcadia's reputation through building the brand narrative by sharing the important work of our community and connecting the expertise of our faculty with international connections.

University Strategic Planning - 2020
Arcadia University will embark on a strategic planning process that is a data-informed, action-oriented planning experience. Arcadia has already completed significant work in the beginning phases of

developing a strategic plan. This Strategic Communications plan for the Office of University Relations will cover goals and objectives aligned with the current strategic plan that was extended from 2018.

Goals of University Relations

1. **Recruitment and Retention** - Support efforts across the University.
2. **Information Sharing** - Engage critical constituencies on the stories and news of Arcadia.
3. **Brand Awareness** - Steward, protect, and promote the Arcadia brand around the region and the world.
4. **Revenue Generation** - Support efforts to diversify institutional revenue streams.

To achieve the unit's goals, University Relations will prioritize and assess our efforts to the following strategies. The unit will reevaluate after the University Strategic Plan in complete.

Strategy #1 - Lead University Brand Initiative - Laura Baldwin

Review and redefine a clear, unified brand identity in parallel with the Strategic Planning process to advance the messaging and identity of the University. Responsibility for the University's identity and reputation, continuing to monitor to ensure that a cohesive image is communicated to stakeholders.

1.1 Identify stakeholders
Identify stakeholders and create an Advisory group to introduce the multi-phased project, explaining the goals of the project, collecting brand stories, and generating buy-in for lasting impact.

1.2 Conduct Market Research
Analyze Arcadia's current position in the marketplace by compiling data from marketing communications (print, web, digital, social) that support recruitment and advancement and strategic planning documents, and any existing and relevant market research. Review insights gathered and optimize previous information, strategies, and data.

1.2 Benchmark Competitors
Perform a high-level assessment, benchmarking of 4-6 key competitors and developing market research of external audiences including employers, high school guidance counselors, community, and potential students and their families.

1.3 Build an Authentic Identity
Determine where Arcadia owns areas of strength, excellence, and/or differentiation and also serves to establish goals and objectives for a rebranding phase of work.

Strategy #2 - Expand University Communications - Dan DiPrinzio

Execute a robust media relations offensive designed to increase visibility for Arcadia University. Employee engagement is strategic in building community and climate of the institution. Responsibility for our community engagement in communications is based on a strategic communications plan. The implementation is carefully monitored and evaluated.

2.1 Increase News Releases, Media Alerts, Pitches
Research and identify newsworthy University developments, events, stories, and announcements to craft into news releases and media pitches and strategically distribute to the appropriate news outlets or reporters. Follow-up with phone calls or e-mail key reporters following pitches.

2.1.2 Expand Media Connections
Establish visits and meeting reporters aligned with travel. Connect to news bureaus in Philadelphia, New York, and Washington, D.C.

2.1.3 Expand Global Outlets
Build relationships with top key reporters relevant to Arcadia. Build connections with media and broadcast outlets that reach key audiences and pitch stories to them directly. Collaborate with The College of Global Studies to identify outlets and opportunities around Arcadia's global centers and to craft stories and pitches highlighting the work our faculty, staff, and students are conducting around the world. Incorporate The College of Global Studies in Arcadia-related international education stories for media outlets.

2.2 Increase Engagement across Social Media Platforms
Maintain the University's reach on social media outlets such as Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Snapchat. Keep key audiences connected to and engaged with Arcadia. Incorporate Twitter in our daily dissemination of news. Build a journalist list and follow the stories of key reporters, and interact with them when appropriate.

2.3 Develop Arcadia Expertise Inventory
Create a comprehensive faculty experts guide and post on arcadia.edu to help provide reporters with the range of experts on Arcadia's campus.

2.4 Elevate Executive Communications and Thought Leadership
Position Arcadia's president and executive leadership as part of the brand and leaders in their area of expertise in higher education locally, nationally, and globally.

2.5 Coordinate Messaging
Ensure a high standard for all presidential and official University communications. Manage across all stakeholder groups and platforms.

Strategy #3 - Lead Strong Internal Communications - Dan DiPrinzio
Provide internal audiences with modes to obtain updated and accurate information about new developments at Arcadia and encourage them to serve as positive spokespeople for the University. Goal is to establish high awareness and thought-leadership in our communication strategy.

3.1 Create Effective Internal Communications
Ensure that mass emails are meeting the criteria and understand the difference between modalities of communication. Whenever applicable, incorporate mass emails and announcements into the weekly News and Events Newsletter.

3.2 Arcadia Weekly News and Events Newsletter
Improve engagement in weekly online newsletter to Arcadia audiences (faculty, staff, students, families, friends). Provide recaps of Arcadia achievements (student, faculty, select alumni, etc.), include recent positive media hits, and feature university events for the next two weeks (tying into the University events calendar).

3.3 Develop Op-ed Suggestions and Drafts for University Leadership
Build plans for all Cabinet leadership with suggestions on trending topics and relevant to the industry. Develop editorial-opinion pieces on their areas of expertise to strategically target outlets that would be appropriate for the work.

3.3.1 Communications for Higher Education Thought Leadership
Higher education stories in major media outlets to senior leadership to keep them informed of news and trends impacting higher education.

3.4 Develop a Comprehensive Editorial Strategy for the Arcadia Magazine
A comprehensive editorial strategy includes assessment, accumulating data and results, researching the industry of higher education publications, and expanding a workable strategy to include all editorial content (written and visual) and raising the standards and efficiencies of the current process.

3.5 Facilitate an Education and Training Program
Anticipate communication needs of the University units and develop an educational program to help units better engage with their stakeholders. Be proactive and develop a process and proactive approach to information sharing on campus.

3.6 Lead Communications Advisory Group
Staff the Communications group to support the communications of the University. Identify, as a committee, the internal areas of the institution where there are gaps in communications and where the community is in need of information. Build a robust leadership plan to build committee structure that includes vital units. Plan a communications education plan to share: include best practices, template development, process for crisis, etc. Ensure consistency of messaging across all units of the University.

Strategy #4 - Develop an Integrative University Marketing Plan - Laura Baldwin, Colleen McHugh
Lead University Marketing efforts and build momentum with marketing and communications resources. Prioritize a website overhaul and content marketing initiative.

4.1 Website Overhaul Initiative - **Colleen McHugh**
Maintain the University's website content, functionality, backup, and quality control. The arcadia.edu Redesign Project adheres to a common process that will take the institution from project initialization to beta testing and launch. It will continue through maintenance and updates after launch.

4.1.1. Research and discovery
Send website satisfaction survey and review feedback and establish both a working group and a web design advisory team.

4.1.2 Information Architecture
Group content based on user tasks and information needs rather than the college's organizational structure. Specialty content not intended for prospective students will no longer reside on the homepage but will be accessed by clicking to audience webpages for current students, faculty and staff, business and community.

4.1.3 Content Audit and Development
Identify areas of growth and concern of the Arcadia website and work to strengthen the content of those areas including content development, SEO best practices, news, and social media communications integration.

4.1.4 Technical and design development Develop a technical plan to provide suitable environments for all content types that were accessed by users.

4.2 Arcadia Web Advisory Group
Convene a group of Arcadia trained community members as webmasters to share standards, access, branding policies, and website best practices.

4.3 Data Driven Assessment and Data Analytics - Use Web analytics to identify trends in visitors' use of the Arcadia public website, thus optimizing our content for our users' goals.

4.4 Develop an overall University Marketing Plan for 2020

        4.4.1. *Comprehensive Marketing Plan* to Map full marketing plan to support University.

        4.4.2. *Recruitment, enrollment, retention*

        4.4.3 *Brand Awareness*

        4.4.4 *Digital and Traditional Marketing Outlets*
        Social Media campaigns Explore how campus wide social media campaigns can have buy-in and participation across, students, faculty, alumni, and how that can spread beyond the campus community. Such a campaign tends to work better for a smaller-size institution, as you can more directly connect and work with the students.

Strategy #5 - Prepare Crisis Communications Plan - Dan DiPrinzio
Manage crisis situations as they occur and minimize negative media coverage for the University.

5.1 Crisis Communications Team
University Communications will immediately pull together the appropriate team, or be part of the team, that gathers facts and plans a crisis response. Examples of potential crises include crimes committed by or against a student or university community member, a threat or act of violence, a major fire or natural disaster, or a public personnel matter.

5.2 Emergency Communications
Implement Send Word Now (or similarly appropriate emergency communication vehicle) guidelines in conjunction with the Department of Public Safety for emergency communications, including text messages, website postings, and mass emails.

5.3 Develop University positioning statements
Identify emerging issues that could develop into situations that attract public scrutiny. Assemble the appropriate individuals to gather information about each issue and to develop the University's position. Develop positioning statements and Q&As that can be used to respond to inquiries from the media and other constituencies.

Strategy #6 - Generate Income from University Conference Services - Lisa Stephens
Develop a three-year business model that projects $1 million in University revenue from space rental and summer opportunities.

6.1 Maintain legacy and traditions
Create events that maintain the legacy and traditions of the institution, align with the mission of the University, and meet the liberal arts academic goals of Arcadia including: Undergraduate, Graduate, and DPT Commencements and Honors Convocation.

6.2 Foster unique connections
Plan major events of the highest standards that maintain a connection and provide a unique experience to our students including President's Picnic.

6.3 Generate revenue
Generate revenue and income through event and space rentals to individuals, groups, and

organizations.

6.4 Build institutional awareness
Publicize events as appropriate (mural lighting event, community Arts Festival, Opioids Symposium, Castle anniversary, etc.) to highlight Arcadia University to local and regional outlets and internal constituents (students, faculty, staff, alumni, donors, etc.) and expand our relationship with community members.

6.5 Foster internal communication
Host events that foster open internal communication within the Arcadia community, such as Town Hall meetings and Meet the President events.

FIVE-YEAR ASSESSMENT MODEL - University Relations Unit
We carefully monitor our communications, both in terms of quality and impact, and the data is used to drive continuous improvement. Each year, to comply with institutional effectiveness expectations, University Relations will:
- identify expected outcomes,
- assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and
- provide evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results

Year One
Overall Unit Evaluation and Self-Study
- Create a Self-Study to evaluate unit goals
- **Restructure University Relations - includes** position and compensation consideration
- **Revise Strategic Communications Plan to evaluation recommendations.**

Year Two
- **Establish indicators of success—include an outline for each strategy and goal to utilize benchmarks and metrics to measure on a weekly, monthly, and annual process.**
- Style and visual identity guide updates
- **Phase I: Institutional Market Research Report**
    - Collect and analyze key market research data about Arcadia and competitor brand associations regarding academic programs, academic quality, overall experience and image.
    - Including both qualitative and quantitative methods designed to inform the brand strategy (messaging, tone and personality, and desired associations).
- **Produce a University Relations Annual Report,** to be delivered at the close of the academic year, that aligns with the recommendations and units goals. The final report will look closely at how the Strategic Communications Plan increased positive media coverage—quantified by media impressions regionally, nationally, and internationally—and the dollar amount of ad value generated by that earned media. Include results for Integrated Marketing, Website traffic, Social Media, News site, Print Publications, Event Management.
- Position and compensation evaluations—includes career pathing and individual goals assessment.
- Client services surveys for conference services, events, website, branding, and communication services.
- Review and Summarize of Expected Outcomes

Year Three

- **Advocate for marketing plan commitment**
- **Unit goals with Strategic Planning Framework Pillars -** indicate which pillar all jobs are aligned with.
- **Position and compensation evaluations** - includes career pathing and individual goals assessment.
- **Client services surveys** for conferences services, events, website, branding, and communication services.
- **University Relations Annual Report**—To be delivered at the close of the academic year. The final report will look closely at how the Strategic Communications Plan increased positive media coverage, quantified by media impressions regionally, nationally, and internationally, and the dollar amount of ad value such earned media generated. Integrated Marketing, Website traffic, Social Media, News site, Print Publications, Event Management results.
- Review and Summarize of Expected Outcomes

Year Four
- Review and Summarize of Expected Outcomes
- **Align Unit goals with Strategic Planning Framework Pillars -** indicate which pillar all jobs are aligned with.
- **Position and compensation evaluations** - includes career pathing and individual goals assessment.
- **Client services surveys** for conferences services, events, website, branding, and communication services.
- **University Relations Annual Report**—To be delivered at the close of the academic year. The final report will look closely at how the Strategic Communications Plan increased positive media coverage, quantified by media impressions regionally, nationally, and internationally, and the dollar amount of ad value such earned media generated. Integrated Marketing, Website traffic, Social Media, News site, Print Publications, Event Management results.
- Review and Summarize of Expected Outcomes

Year Five - Unit Evaluation
- Create a Self-Study to evaluate unit goals
- **Overall Unit Evaluation and Self-Study**
- Develop recommendations and restructure unit
- **Revise Strategic Communications Plan to evaluation recommendations.**