



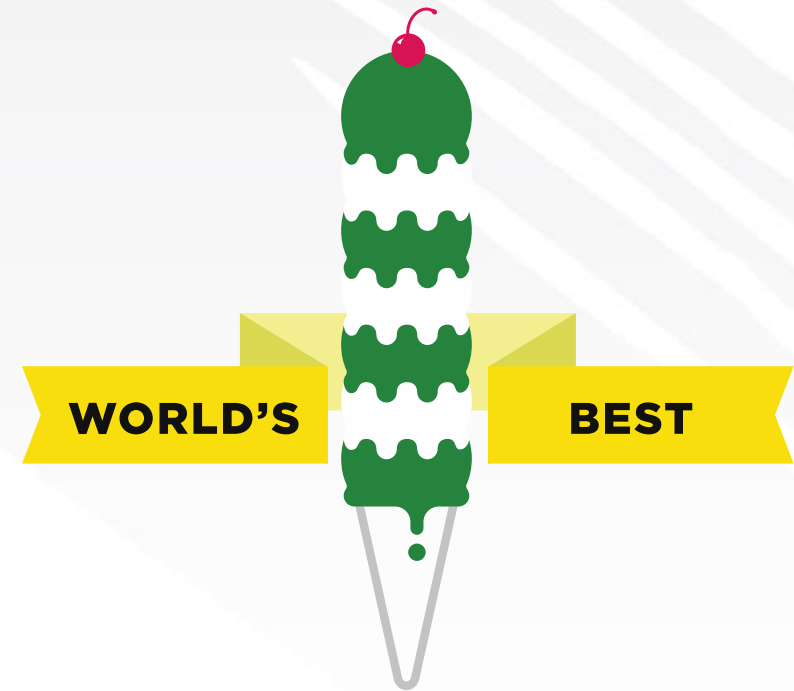
Identity Audit Research Phase Update

What is “brand” or identity?

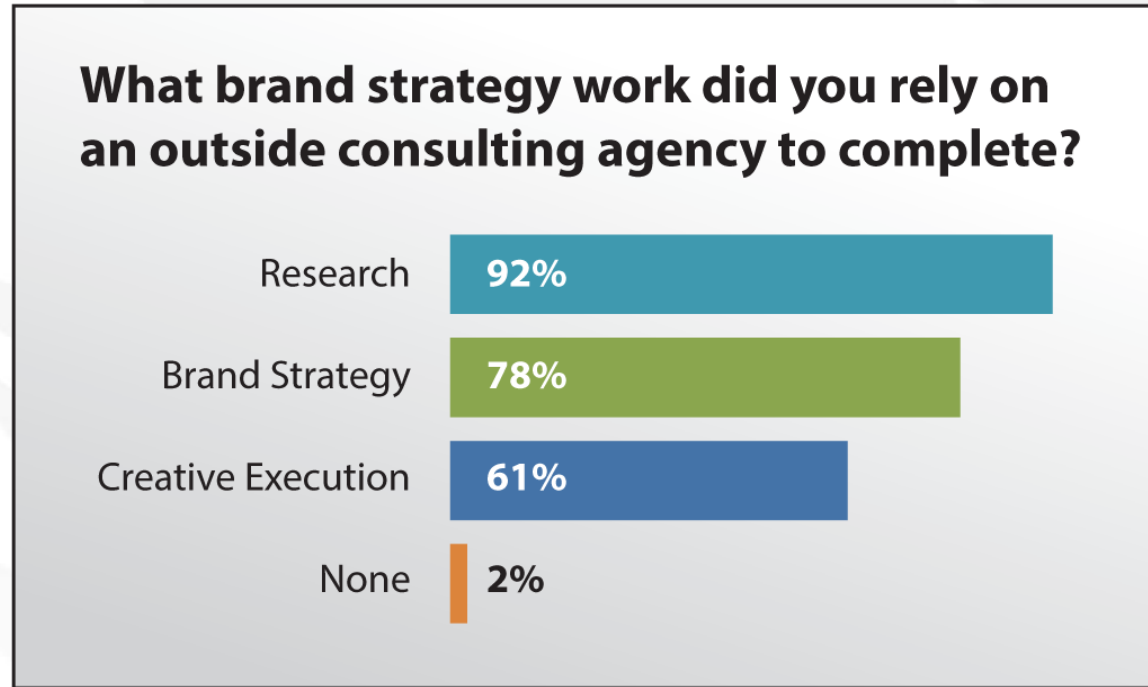
The sum total of the experiences people have with your organization, product or service, and what they believe about its value and relevance to their lives.

- Julie Peterson, Peterson Rudgers Group

The most valuable intangible asset any organization owns—our ability to distinguish ourselves from the other flavors out there.



National Trends in Identity Audits



42% of surveyed higher education institutions conducted identity audits in 2016.

(Source: "State of Higher Ed Branding: A Survey of Marketing Leaders, Deborah Maue & Tom Hayes, Ph.D)

Started with a Research Phase...

Research Objective:

- Benchmark for current perceptions of TU vs. peers & competitors
- Provide an informed approach to strategic brand development (identity distinction) and future decision-making.

Methodology:

- Phone interviews, email survey, workshops, focus groups

Audiences (approximately 2000 responses):

- Faculty, Staff, Students, Prospective Students, Donors, Alumni, Board Members, & General Population (Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, Ohio, Florida, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York media markets).

When looking at TU, our stakeholders also consider these institutions:

- University of Maryland, College Park
- University of Maryland, Baltimore County
- Salisbury University
- University of Delaware
- Penn State University Park
- Stevenson University
- James Madison University
- George Mason University

Research Highlights

The research revealed internal and external optimism as well as high levels of public awareness.

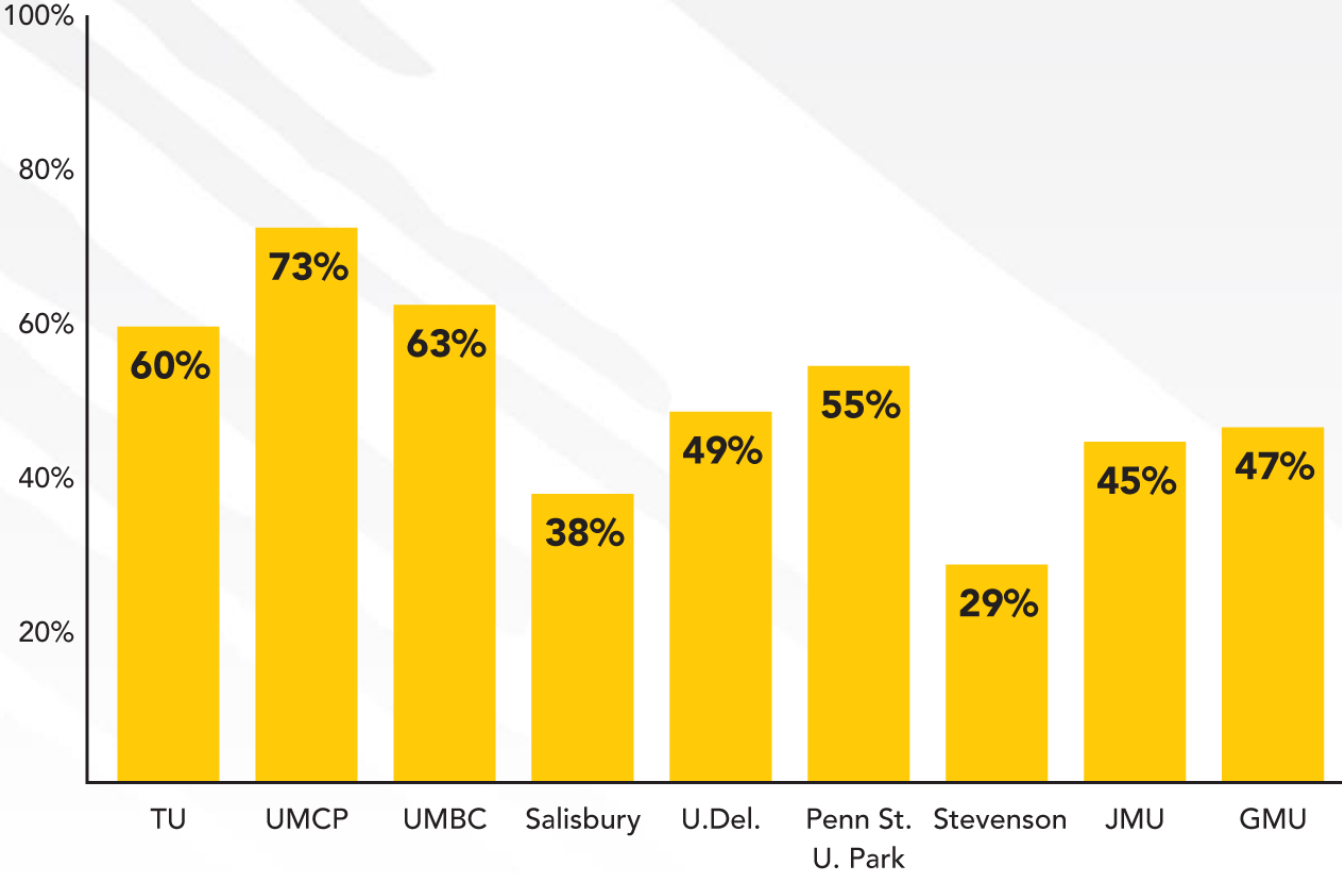
Diversity is a decision driver for TU's prospective students and TU delivers on this need.

It revealed great consensus around associations with qualities like “**value, warmth, inclusivity, and growing in the right direction.**”

Right now, Towson is not considered very unique or distinctive. In fact, this is one of the biggest challenges of the brand: it's considered by the general population to be more average and unknown.

Awareness

Respondents that were **somewhat** or **very familiar** with TU and other institutions



We're on their radar. The General Population knows about TU, and thus we're off to a good start.

Associations

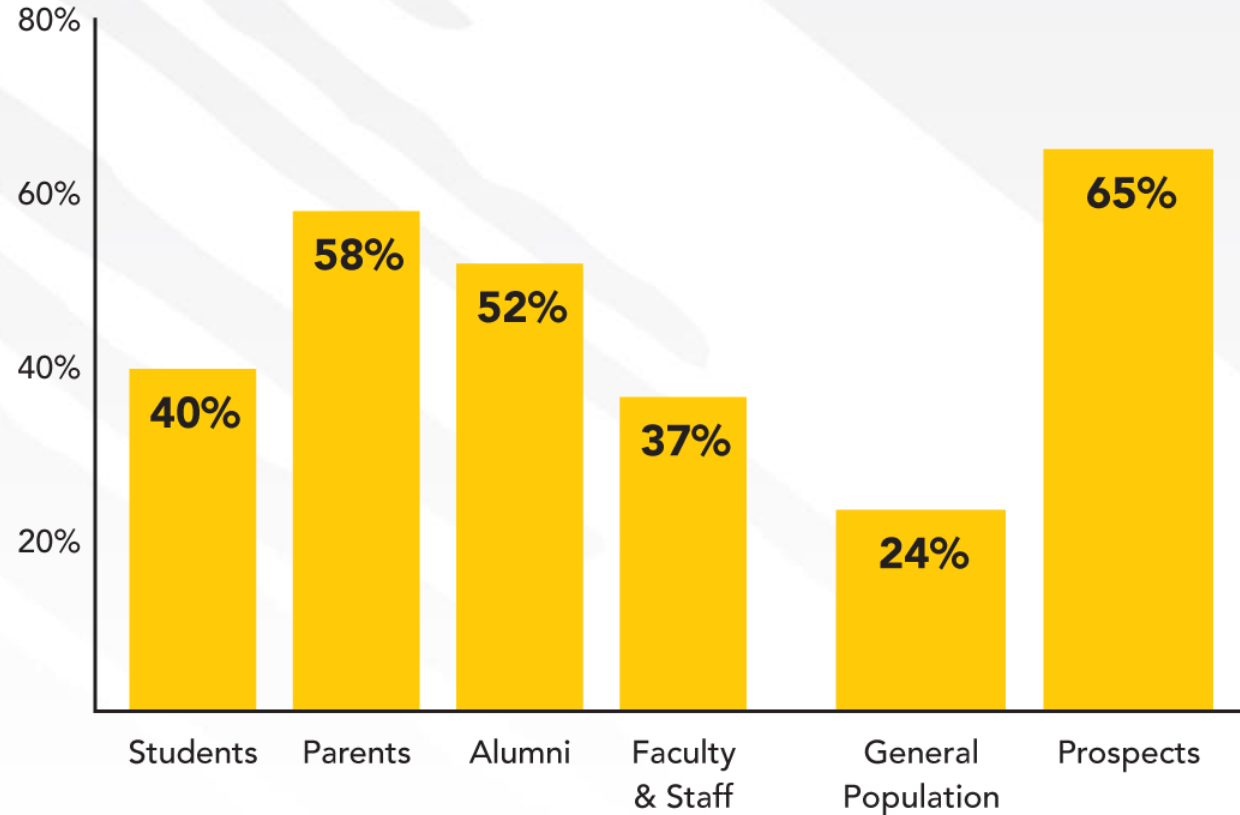
**Top 3 in ALL groups:
'Value,' 'Growing in the right direction'
and 'Nurturing and supportive'**

**Bottom 2 in ALL groups:
'Top-choice institution' and 'Academics'**

ALL Groups: Faculty & Staff;
Students; Parents; Alumni;
Prospective Students; General
Population

Reputation

Respondents that viewed Towson University as **somewhat** or **far superior** to the schools in the competitive set.



Internally, TU needs to develop a “culture of excellence” and value our own work.

Competitive Set: UMCP, UMBC, Salisbury, Delaware, Penn State, Stevenson, JMU, GMU

Distinction

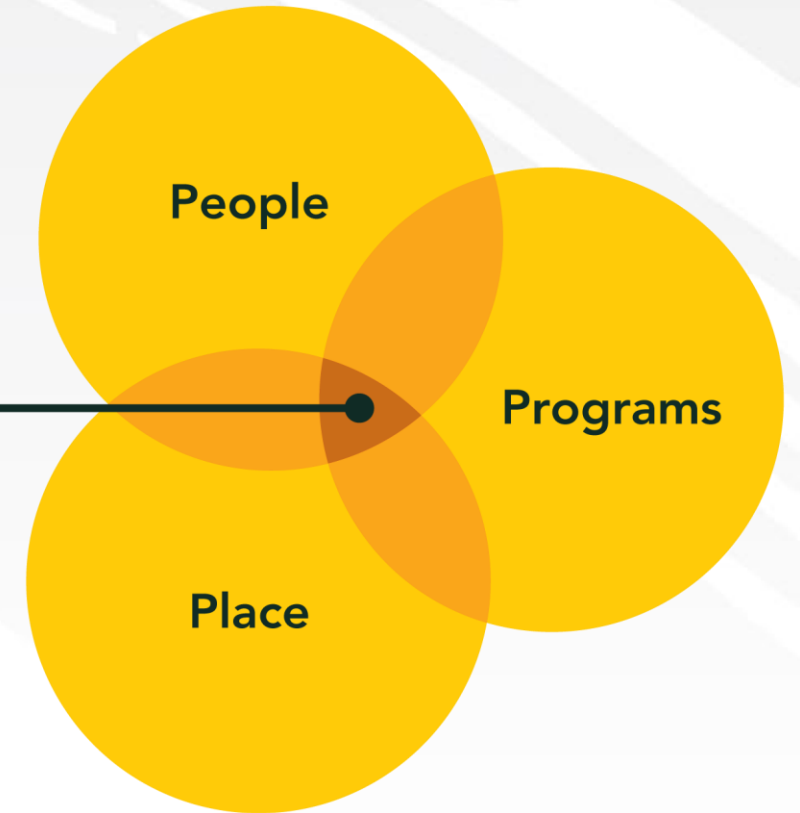
Where should we *begin to look* for TU's distinctive characteristics?

People: Warm, Inclusive, Talented.

Programs: High-Quality, Experiential

Place: Proximity to Metro Areas, Quality of Life

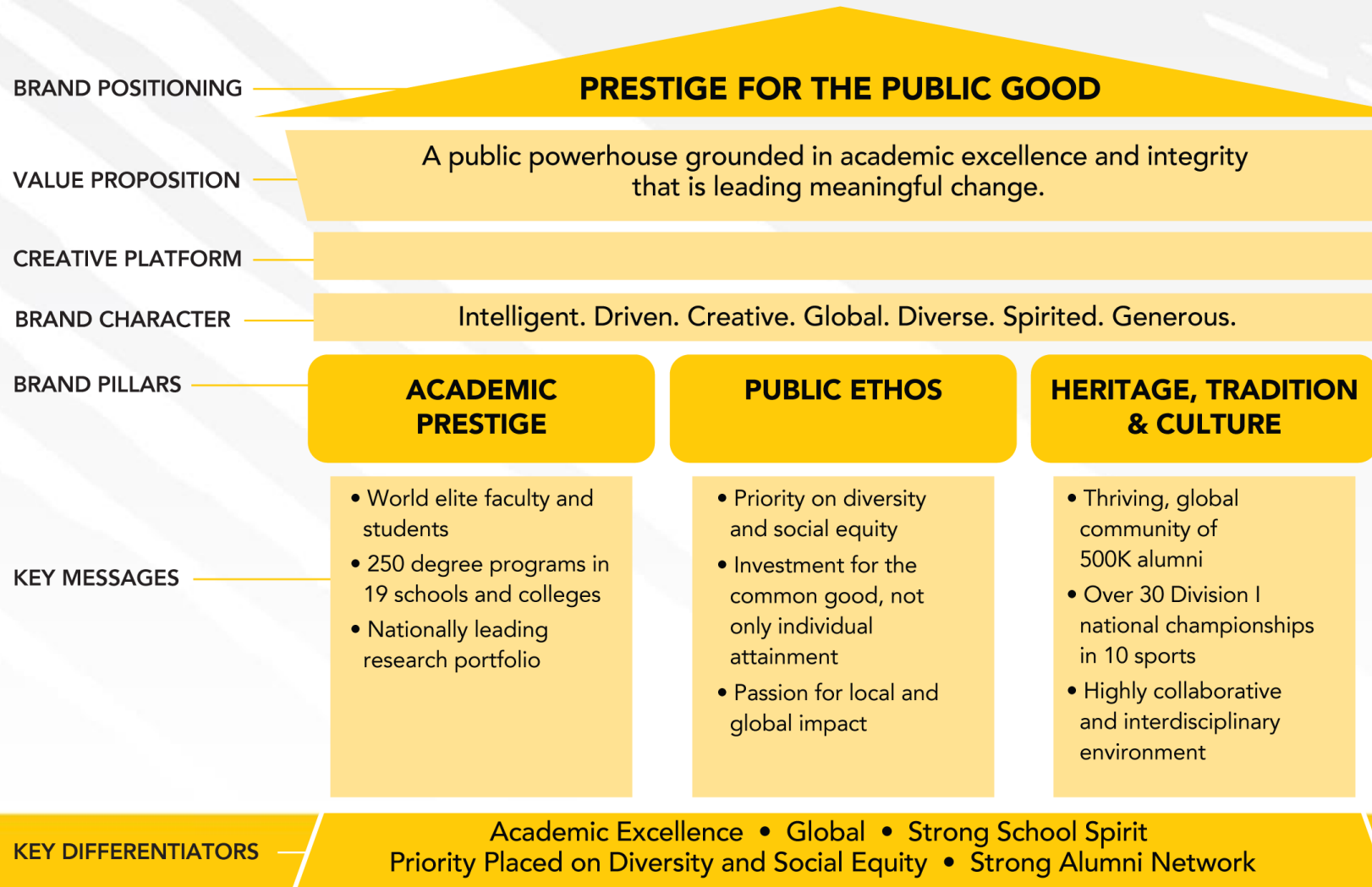
POSITIONING



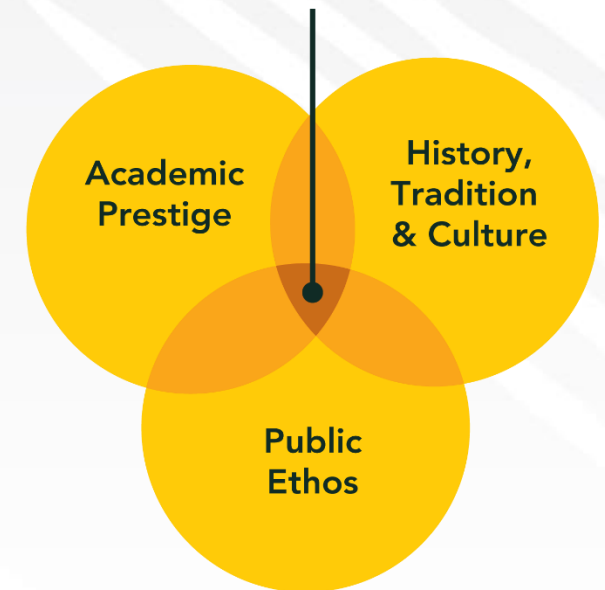
Major Research Takeaways

- ✓ Identify TU's distinctive qualities
- ✓ Embrace & recognize our work
- ✓ Empower the campus to be ambassadors in consistently conveying the Towson University experience (Cross-Campus Committee)
- ✓ Creatively express the contemporary TU experience.

Next Step: Develop Brand Platform: Michigan example



PRESTIGE FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD



What's Next for the Identity Audit?

Phase (1-5)	Timeline
I. Research & Share Findings	Fall 2016 – Spring 2017
II. Brand Platform & Strategy Development	Summer - Fall 2017
III. Creative Expression & Visual Identity	Fall 2017 - Winter 2018
IV. Implementation & Campus Workshops	Spring 2018
V. Audience Segmentation & Campaign Launch	Summer 2018 – Fall 2018