Designing The Future of America’s Environmental College

NW x UC
What Shop
HELLO AGAIN!

**KYSER**
MANAGING DIRECTOR

Kyser runs the team of strategists at Now What’s Soho HQ. In his 5+ years at Now What, he’s worked with Google, PepsiCo, ESPN, and Heineken. Most recently he positioned the inaugural College Football Playoff for ESPN and worked with NBCU to deconstruct today’s ‘Modern Man’ and position the Esquire Network for him.

**SETH**
FOUNDER EPIC DECADE

Seth is a leading design thinker and thought leader in catalyzing cultural and business transformation. He has worked with companies ranging from Apple to Oprah Winfrey and cultural organizations ranging from the City of Denver during 2008 DNC to the City of Liverpool. Seth has been featured in NY Times, Fast Company, and Wired Magazine.

**CARLA**
STRATEGY DIRECTOR

Carla has 10 years of experience in the strategy world across categories. She has repositioned brands like Mercedes-Benz, Nutella and ARDMS, while also tackling strategic challenges for Denny’s, Novartis and GoGo Squeez. Most recently, she helped a non-profit certification/testing organization, ARDMS, restructure + reimagine their portfolio architecture.

**DANNA**
STRATEGIST

Over the course of the last three years at Now What, Danna has created a niche for herself in brand strategy with a knack for crafting North Star positionings that help transform brands. She started her career at OgilvyEarth, exploring the intersection of sustainability and brands for the likes of SC Johnson, IKEA and Coke.

**MARGARET**
STRATEGIST

Margaret has a background in developing compelling brand strategies for a range of B2B, B2C and non-profit brands, such as Google, Goodyear and Heifer International. She is passionate about the higher education and sustainability space. You can find her spending time mentoring soon-to-be-graduates and at her local food co-op.
Plan For Today

- Bring strategic focus and organization to the thinking and conversations to-date
- Share our initial point of view on essential questions to inform a stronger SOW
- Align on guiding principles driving this inquiry + partnership
- Co-write and solidify the essential, guiding project question
Be the change you wish to see in the world.

MAHATMA GANDHI
### BRAND
- What does it mean to be America’s environmental college?
- What is our current positioning in the market today at the local, regional and national level?
- How do we become more “externally facing”?
- What are the perceptions of Unity in the market today of those who are aware and unaware of the brand?
- Who are our aspirational brands in and out of category?
- What does “Unity” mean today and what can it stand for in the future?

### CONSUMER
- What colleges are students choosing over Unity and why?
- How do we enhance positive perceptions of Unity amongst alumni, academic organizations, and other stakeholders organizations of influence?
- How do we address the disconnect between our students’ interests and our focus on sustainability?
- How do we attract students with higher academic standing?

### CATEGORY
- Who are we competing with today?
- What are the equities and awareness of Unity vs. competitive set?
- How effective is/are our current marketing strategy and assets?
- What are our key differentiators today?
- Which colleges are also focusing on sustainability/environmental education?
- How do we penetrate new markets and access touch points currently out of reach?

### CULTURE
- What are the ongoing and dynamic shifts within education?
- What is our POV and philosophy around sustainability/approach to education?
- How do we tap into the fact that we’re living in “the sustainability era?”
- To what extent do Unity’s core values align larger context and expectations of education and post-graduation opportunities?

### PRODUCT
- What is our product?
- How does our product change depending on the audience (students vs. market)?
- How should we reorganize our portfolio to address market demands?
- How do we add value to our product/programming so that when our seniors graduate they bring more value into the marketplace?
- Do we have the relevancy to remain America’s Environmental College?

### ORGANIZATION
- How do we shift from an academic mindset to a strategic, ‘business’ oriented mindset?
- How do we enhance enrollment and fundraising?
- How do we enhance our academic reputation and thought leadership?
- What benchmarks can we use to measure success?
- How do we align pedagogical + administrative + cultural models?

*Questions reflect a mix of inquiries found in the RFI and NW/Unity conversations.*
Framing + Reframing
Our Framework For Questioning

Foundational Questions

Essential Reframes

Guiding Principles
<table>
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<td>How do we transition from being a regional to a nationally recognized institution?</td>
<td>What are the equities we need to keep, shed and acquire in order to reshape who we are into a national brand?</td>
<td>Acknowledge and evolve Unity’s strengths as you build towards the future.</td>
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Foundational Question

How can we attract a more diverse range of students with high potential across all sustainability majors and stem the pull to competitive institutions?

Essential Reframe

How can we evolve values to align and reinforce a shared sense of identity between Unity College and our stakeholders (students, faculty, external partners, organizations, etc.)?

Guiding Principle

Build identity value by leveraging the strengths of a belief-driven organization.
Lens №3: Product

**Foundational Question**

What products and services do we need to develop as part of our portfolio to gain national relevance?

**Essential Reframe**

How can we rethink our knowledge system (products and services) to better equip the ultimate product: graduates?

**Guiding Principle**

Build a knowledge creation system for future leaders.
Foundational Question
How are we positioned relative to our competitive set today—and why are students choosing competitors over Unity?

Essential Reframe
Is there an opportunity to reframe our competitive set to include market players within and outside of the worlds of education and sustainability?

Guiding Principle
Disrupt higher education by broadening the space you occupy.
Lens №5: Culture

Foundational Question
How can we tap into the dynamic shifts within sustainability science and education?

Essential Reframe
How do we become a thought leader with a clear stance on the relationship between the environment, people and economy?

Guiding Principle
Create a new school of thought at the intersection of sustainability science and education.
### Foundational Question
How can we adopt a business-oriented mindset to enhance our reputation, enrollment and fundraising?

### Essential Reframe
How can we be financially sustainable while realizing our non-profit mission?

### Guiding Principle
Think like a business, live the cause.

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**Lens №6: Organization**
Putting It All Together
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Co-writing Our Guiding, Essential Project Question
Thinking through our beacon question...

How can Unity redefine higher education to create the future leaders of the green economy?

How do we reinvent higher education to solve the challenges of an increasingly green economy?

How can Unity become an incubator for the future stewards of a green economy?

How can Unity prepare the next generation of leaders for the green economy?

What is the future of higher education and what is Unity’s role in that space?

How do we reinvent higher education for relevance in an increasingly green economy?

What does it mean to be America’s environmental college and how can Unity credibly own that space?
PROJECT BEACON:

How can Unity redefine higher education to create the future leaders of the green economy?
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The brand’s role
How we create change; our frame of reference for this inquiry
The impact we strive to create in the world
Unity’s POV on where the world is headed in the future; the context through which we will investigate education
Next Steps

+ Now What to begin developing SOW

+ Co-writing session on Wednesday 2/3 (TBC)
Thanks!