

**SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST? THE REBRANDING
OF WEST VIRGINIA HIGHER EDUCATION**

**EXCERPT: CHAPTER NINE RETAINING AN INSTITUTIONAL BRAND:
A CASE STUDY OF THE ALLEGHENY BRAND**

James Martin Owston, EdD
Marshall University
College of Education and Human Services

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
Marshall University Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirement for the degree of

Doctor of Education
in
Educational Leadership

Committee Chair, Barbara L. Nicholson, PhD
Powell E. Toth, PhD
H. Keith Spears, EdD
Charles H. Polk, EdD

Huntington, West Virginia, 2007

Keywords: Higher education, rebranding, brand identity, college-to-university

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CHAPTER NINE RETAINING AN INSTITUTIONAL BRAND: A CASE STUDY OF THE ALLEGHENY BRAND

“A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches” – King Solomon, Proverbs 22:1 (AV).
“Confusion will be my epitaph” – King Crimson (Fripp, McDonald, Lake, Giles, & Sinfield, 1969).

The location’s very name conjures up an image of a dimly lit castle. In the distance, the calls of several large gray wolves echo across the primeval marshland. Your host, a distinguished looking gentleman of an undetermined age, responds in his characteristic Slavic tinged accent: “Listen to them. Children of the night. What music they make” (Browning, 1931). Only one location in the world can conjure up such imagery . . . and that place is named “Transylvania.”

That was Hallmark Cards’ opinion as it looked for a new product for its 1987 Halloween promotional campaign. Because college shirts and novelty items both had the potential to generate sales, Hallmark artists combined the ideas and designed a T-shirt that represented a fictitious alma mater for Count Dracula: “Transylvania University” (see Figure 9.1). Appearing very similar to an actual college shirt, the black T was emblazoned with the name “Transylvania University” in white block letters oozing what appeared to be drops of blood. At its center, the university’s seal displayed a cross-eyed bat with the caption “Our Founder.” Contained in the seal’s circumference, the shirt listed two institutional mottos: “E Pluribus Bitum!” and “We Go for the Throat!” (“Bat T-Shirt,” 1987; Kaiser, 1987; “No Fangs,” 1987; “Yes, Hallmark,” 1987).

Although Hallmark could not estimate how many shirts they eventually sold, the products sold out in certain locations including Lexington, Kentucky. According to Gene Sageser, owner of Eastland Hallmark, “The T-shirts have been a hot item in Lexington stores. No Hallmark retailer in town has been able to keep them in stock. I wish I had

100 of 'em right now" (Kaiser, 1987, B1). While Lexington consumers and Hallmark store owners appeared satisfied with the novelty item, the administrators at the real Transylvania University across town were not amused. The legitimate Transylvania University notified Hallmark immediately about this issue. Worried that its brand was being compromised, Transylvania asked that the T-shirts be pulled from Hallmark's shelves as they conflicted with a name they had used for 207 years. Ironically, *sans* the blood, the bat, and the slogans, the Hallmark version bore a strange similarity to actual Transylvania University apparel ("Yes Hallmark," 4A).

Student government president Paul Hillenmeyer confessed, "Students have grown accustomed to Transylvania jokes;" the name, however, was no laughing matter to Transy administrators ("Bat T-shirt," 1987, p. 6A). With such negative connotations and the overwhelming connection to the infamous Dracula, why would any institution choose such a name like "Transylvania" in the first place? Transylvania, however, had its trademark identity long before Transylvanian region of Romania was associated with the "creatures of the night."

Founded in 1780, when Kentucky was a part of Virginia, the Transylvania name was applied to the school immediately and without hesitation. From Latin for "across the woods," Daniel Boone was credited with giving this name to Kentucky County, Virginia. Although Romania's province of the same etymological derivation had largely been associated with Dracula and vampirism, Transylvania University began using the brand nearly 150 years before Bela Lugosi first donned a cape, and over 100 years before Bram Stoker wrote his first sentence for his now famous novel (Owston, 1998). In an official apology, Hallmark's Manager of Product Development, Diane Wall, admitted that this

issue occurred innocently: “No [Hallmark] product is created with the intention of harming anyone,” and “[We] hadn't realized there was a real Transylvania University” (“Yes Hallmark,” 1987, p. 4A).

Figure 9.1

The offending Hallmark T-shirt and the 1988 Transylvania University Crimson Yearbook.



Amicably handled, Hallmark quickly agreed to stop production immediately and attempted to recall the existing product from its retail locations. The situation was rapidly diffused and damage control was minimal because Hallmark understood Transylvania’s position on its brand. Although some negative issues arose initially, several positive results emanated from this experience. Transylvania University experienced a sales increase of its own institutional T-shirts and the incident raised the national awareness of the Kentucky based liberal arts college (Kaiser, 1987; “No Fangs,” 1987; “Yes, Hallmark,” 1987).

Additionally, Transylvania and Hallmark developed a relationship. As for the T-shirt issue, Transylvania had the final word in May 1988 when Hallmark's president, Irvine Hockaday, spoke at the school's annual alumni weekend. During Hockaday's address, a Transylvania University curator presented the Hallmark CEO with a new T-shirt, as two students modeled the mock-ups for the audience. Capitalizing on Hallmark's own marketing slogan, the shirt's front read, "When you care enough to send to the very best . . ." to which the back responded, "Send your child to Transylvania" (Transylvania University, 1988; Wiljanen, 1988, p. B1).

Branding and Higher Education

Most branding issues do not end as quickly and as cordially as the Transylvania/Hallmark case. Some drag on for years resulting in lengthy court battles. Some end in a compromise that is less than satisfactory for one or both parties, and others are never resolved. Two unresolved issues in 2007 included disputes over institutional logos belonging to North Carolina State and the University of Wisconsin.

Trademark Infringement

North Carolina State University contended that University of Nevada at Reno had infringed on one the Wolfpack's secondary sports logos known as "Toughie" or "Mr. Wuf." Looking at both logos, the similarities were astonishing. In fact, the Nevada Wolf Pack logo, called "Top Hat Wolf," was a mirror image of the same character used by North Carolina State. The images were identical with three exceptions: a) the wolves faced in opposite directions; b) N.C. State's version was black and red, while Nevada's was monochromatic blue; and c) the wolves wore different hats. The N.C. State wolf had

a beanie with NCSU and the Nevada wolf sported a top hat with a large N (Clark, 2007; King, 2007; “NC State Trademarks,” n.d.; Shaffer, 2007).

While the snarling wolf was listed as one of two N.C. State secondary sports logos, it was not listed among the acceptable logos in Nevada’s *Graphical Standard System Manual* (2007). While it does not appear that the “Top Hat Wolf” was a current logo, the University of Nevada at Reno sold at least five items using the snarling wolf. These included a cookie jar, a doormat, a chair, and two different flags (“Nevada Wolf Pack,” 2007). While Nevada has claimed to have used the logo since the 1980s, North Carolina State asserted that it began using their logo in 1965. N.C. State registered the wolf as one of their institutional trademarks in 2005.

What concerned North Carolina State was that institutional merchandising was big business for the school. During the 2006-07 academic year, North Carolina State received \$841,000 from the sale of licensed items bearing the N.C. State name and its logos. As part of the licensing agreement, retailers selling trademarked items were required to submit 80% of the proceeds to the institution (Clark, 2007; King, 2007; Shaffer, 2007). At this writing, the issue is unresolved.

While N.C. State contended with the University of Nevada at Reno, the University of Wisconsin had issues with numerous secondary schools. In 2006, Wisconsin’s staff discovered that Waukee Community High School in Iowa was using a logo that was very similar to Wisconsin’s trademarked “Motion W.” To avoid infringement issues, the university asked the high school to phase out the logo and begin finding a substitute. Although the University of Wisconsin did not want to make the school district change immediately, community leaders thought it best to prevent a possible lawsuit and they

complied immediately. Waukee superintendent, David Wilkerson, explained, “We contacted our school attorneys. I knew that in our little corner of the world this would be a big deal. We decided it would be best not to fight it and develop a new ‘W’ that was acceptable” (Kovach, 2007, ¶ 17).

When Waukee resident and Wisconsin graduate Michael Hughes saw a Texas high school football team on television with the same logo, he was incensed. Hansen, upset that his alma mater picked on Waukee, began a campaign of identifying other high schools across the nation using similar logos. In all, he submitted a list of 36 schools in 20 states, including two West Virginia schools: Westside High School (Wyoming County) and Weir High School in the Hancock County portion of Weirton (Hansen, 2006; Hoeftmhoeft, 2007; “Two Schools,” 2006). While Hughes was not desiring to cause issues for these other schools, he was hoping to overwhelm University of Wisconsin’s officials to the point that they would stop the trademark violation process. Unfortunately, this did not happen and the University of Wisconsin began issuing cease and desist orders to these schools. Wisconsin, not wanting to sue the various high schools, gave the offending institutions a five year window in which to modify their logos (Kovach, 2007; “Two Schools,” 2006). According to University of Wisconsin’s director of licensing, Cindy Van Matre, “We need to protect the ‘W’ so it doesn’t become generic. The ‘motion W’ is an original design that is distinct from any other font” (Hoeftmhoeft, 2007, p. 6C). While some schools have complied, others have ignored Wisconsin’s request.

Branding Fundamentals

Branding goes beyond licensing and logos; it includes a number of complex attributes. Lloyd defined five criteria of a leading brand: a) “your brand is the sum of the

experiences that your customers have”; b) “you control your brand”; c) “your brand is consistent”; d) “your brand is working”; and e) “your brand is successful” (Sevier, 2002a, p. 51). Kotler and Fox added, “The products and services of an educational institution can be branded – that is, given a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or some combination that identifies them with the institution and differentiates them from competitor’s offerings” (1985, p. 225). This differentiation can be associated with brand equity and the perceived quality associated with this equity for an educational brand. If a brand is known, consumers (students) will be willing enroll in a new program based on the institution’s brand strength (Toma, Dubrow, & Hartley, 2005). Brands can also have distinct personalities that are based upon consumer perception. Brand personality, as Aaker suggested, “can create a stronger brand” (Aaker, 1996, p. 85). A college or university’s brand includes a school’s products, services, mission, reputation, awareness, slogans or tag lines, and its very name (Sevier, 2002a; Toma, Dubrow, & Hartley, 2005).

This study, dealing with institutional name changes, centers on the name attribute of an institution’s brand. While the majority (85.04%) of the colleges that became universities from 1996 to 2001, retained their original brand. Nearly half of these institutions just substituted “university” for “college” in their name. Only 15 of the 103 colleges that became universities during this period reinvented their branding. Occasionally, an institution chose a name that was already in use at another school. While in some cases a lawsuit ensued, confusion was a normal experience.

Brand Name Duplication

Since 2000, there have been three issues regarding West Virginia institutions and conflicting brands. Only one resulted in a lawsuit. When The College of West Virginia

transitioned to Mountain State University in 2001, Mountain State College in Parkersburg, West Virginia complained. Because of Mountain State College's smaller size, national accreditation, and limited mission, Mountain State University was unaware that the institution even existed. Following 14 months of litigation, the issue was settled prior to going to trial (*Mountain State University v. Mountain State College*, 2002). This particular case was discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five.

Figure 9.2

The old and the new – New River Community Colleges.



When the State of West Virginia began transitioning its community colleges for independent status in 2003, a new institution in Beckley was created. New River Community and Technical College was formed from the community college components of Glenville State College and Bluefield State College. Less than 100 miles from three of the four New River campus locations, the Commonwealth of Virginia already had a New

River Community College in Dublin, Virginia. According to Mark Rowh, Vice President for Planning and Development at the Virginia institution, “We learned of this plan a short time (just a week or two, I believe) before the WV legislature approved it in 2003. Our president [Dr. Jack M. Lewis] sent an e-mail to Senator [Robert] Plymale [chair of the Senate education committee] and Dr. [J. Michael] Mullen [Chancellor of the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission] that this could cause problems and was requesting consideration of a different name . . . I believe Dr. Mullen and Dr. Lewis subsequently had a brief phone conversation in follow-up to the e-mail but nothing changed. Since that time we have had a number of annoying instances of folks confusing the institutions” (personal communication, June 5, 2007). During the summer of 2007, WV’s New River CTC registered the newriver.edu Internet domain. Jeremy Ball, LAN Specialist at New River CTC explained, “the main reason for changing the name was for [institutional] branding” (Personal communication, October 6, 2007). Marc Rowh believes that “It will probably add further confusion” between the two schools with similar names (Personal communication, October 15, 2007).

In 2006, the Community and Technical College (CTC) of Shepherd asked the West Virginia legislature for a name change. This request was multifaceted as it signified the following: the CTC’s move from the Shepherd University campus in Shepherdstown to the Blue Ridge Outlet Complex in Martinsburg in 2001, the institution’s accreditation in 2005 by the North Central Association, and a decreased reliance upon its parent institution Shepherd (Blue Ridge CTC, 2006). The administration selected the name Blue Ridge Community and Technical College. Slightly over 100 miles south on Interstate 81, Virginia had its own Blue Ridge Community College located in Weyers Cave. Further

south in Flat Rock, North Carolina, there was yet another Blue Ridge Community College.

Different from what had occurred with the New River situation, the Virginia school's president, Dr. James Perkins, admitted, "We did not object to use of the name [by the West Virginia school]" (personal communication, May 29, 2007). Likewise, the Flat Rock, North Carolina institution had no objections to the name change either; however, it has experienced some issues with the West Virginia school. According to Executive Assistant Brenda Conner, "The only problem we have experienced with the Blue Ridge Community College in West Virginia has been with vendors billing the wrong institution. We have had some remarks of individuals looking at the West Virginia website and mistaking that for our website" (personal communication, June 12, 2007).

Confusion regarding institutional names is rampant. A check of the *2007 HEP Higher Education Directory* reveals at least five American Academies, four American Colleges, three American Universities, and a host of other names using American as the primary brand identity. Lutheran schools from a variety of synods have used the Concordia brand. There are three Concordia Colleges, eight Concordia Universities, a Concordia Seminary, and a Concordia Theological Seminary. The Franciscans have a St. Francis College, Saint Francis Medical Center College of Nursing, Saint Francis Seminary, Saint Francis University, University of St. Francis, and a University of Saint Francis. Twenty schools have Southwestern as their primary identifier including two Southwestern Community Colleges and five Southwestern Colleges. There are countless other examples of the confusion that has been in existence for over a century. One of the

better-known illustrations of a historical duplication of names is Boston University and Boston College where both schools are located in the same city (Burke, 2006).

Figure 9.3

Boston University and Boston College – two schools along the Green Line of the T.



Although name similarities have coexisted over time, one Allegheny College administrator advised that this does not lessen the confusion between the schools.

There are confusions that are historic and those are inconvenient and are a real minus. But at least one can understand it, as each of these places have had their identities for decades and they are not going to change it to avoid the confusion. There is Cornell College and Cornell University. There are three or four Westminster Colleges. There are Loyola Colleges and Universities. Those are subject to confusion. They live with it; they do the best they can with it, but they did create it when they didn't have to create it . . . Why do it? Maybe they just didn't think of it and got themselves down the road too far.

Another Allegheny College administrator pointed to some of the inherent problems with having a brand that was similar to an existing institution's. "I still wonder to what benefit potential confusion adds . . . There's going to be confusion. There's going to be inefficiencies. There's going to be disservice to the public. Why, if those things are predictable and knowable, would you make the change?"

Why Allegheny?

Because this project concentrates on West Virginia colleges that became universities, the inclusion of Allegheny College and the Allegheny brand may not appear on the surface as being germane to this study. There were two pertinent issues present: the West Virginia location and the "college-to-university" change. While West Virginia institutions were the main subject of this study, data were culled from institutions located in 10 of the 13 states that contain portions of Appalachia. All 10 of the Allegheny branded institutions discussed in this chapter were from five of these states: Maryland, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. With the exception of Allegheny University of Health Sciences' Philadelphia operations, all of the institutions were located within counties designated as part of Appalachia. This included Allegheny University of Health Sciences' Pittsburgh headquarters and its Western Pennsylvania clinical sites.

Two historic Allegheny branded institutions were located in West Virginia. Both defunct institutions have a loose historical connection to a current institution: Alderson Broaddus College in Philippi, West Virginia (Alderson, 1946). Although Allegheny College is not in West Virginia, the institution does have a West Virginia connection. Francis H. Pierpont, stylized as the father of West Virginia, was one of Allegheny's many distinguished alumni. Governor Pierpont, an 1839 graduate, was also the namesake of

one of West Virginia's recent rebranded institutions: Pierpont Community and Technical College (see Chapter 1) (Smith, E.A., 1916; Smith, E.C., 1927). In relation to West Virginia, additional exposition from administrators at Concord University, Mountain State University, Shepherd University, and West Liberty State College were also added to this chapter to illustrate particular concepts.

Finally, the Allegheny name has a historical connection to West Virginia. During the proposed state's first constitutional convention in 1861, "Allegheny" or "Alleghany" (the spellings were used interchangeably), "Augusta," "Columbia," "Kanawha," "New Virginia," "Western Virginia," and "West Virginia" all were proposed as the name for the new state. Receiving 30 of the 44 votes, West Virginia was the desired choice of the delegates ("What's in a Name?," 2007).

In addition to the inclusion of a chapter about the Allegheny brand name, there remains the issue regarding rebranding. While the "college-to-university" change is a focus to this overall study, other college name changes have been used to illustrate similar nomenclature and branding principles. Of the six recent institutions using the Allegheny brand, four underwent name changes, albeit none from "college-to-university." Although remaining a college, Allegheny College provided a unique perspective. While having the rights to the "Allegheny University" name through the consent agreement with Allegheny University of Health Sciences, Allegheny College has no plans to move in this direction. One Allegheny College administrator explained the "college" distinction:

I hope we never become a university. I hope, like Dartmouth, Williams, Amherst, and Swarthmore have seen fit to keep this very distinctive name "college," that we'll be able to do that. There are absolutely no plans to

become a university. We haven't speculated about it. We haven't considered it. All I am saying is this is a college that is going to be here for the next hundred years, two hundred years, and I hope much longer than that. No one can predict what happens to the name "college," that word may fall out of use altogether. As more and more colleges change their name to universities, that very well may happen . . . In 10, 20, or 30 years it may be totally obsolete. I hope not. I hope that the best colleges in the country like us keep that name proudly.

As more schools adopt the university designation, some liberal arts colleges have avoided this practice in an effort to remain focused on their core missions. An Allegheny College administrator added,

The ones who are considered the best liberal arts colleges have kept the name "college" because "university" tends to imply that they have had mission drift. They've started to get professional schools, graduate programs, part-time education, adult education, [and] Internet based education. There's something about the name "university" – even if you look more like a college and you're small, it gives you cachet. And so hanging on to it is a statement. We are who we are. We are proud of who we are, and we're one of the best four-year colleges in the country. And boy, I just think that should hold and I hope it always does hold. I think it may become one of our distinctions. It may put us in a league that may distinguish us from the others that had a mission change.

With this position, why include an institutional focus on Allegheny College in a study about the “college-to-university” change? Allegheny’s argument concerning the university designation can be an option for other institutions to consider. A college contemplating university status can play the devil’s advocate and ask, “Is the ‘university’ designation worth pursuing?” “Should we make this change?” Whether a school seeks university status or remains a college, an institution’s answering these questions can at least justify their own actions and position, whatever they decide.

Like Allegheny, other schools have retained the college identification. Wendy Duncan-Hewitt, a dean at St. Louis College of Pharmacy, explained, “There’s a feeling that goes along with the idea of a college. It gives a sense of being student-focused” (Kumar, 2007, ¶ 15 & 16). Rob Crouse, public relations director at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri added, “I think that is a part of what is making us more unique” (Kumar, 2007, ¶ 18).

Several West Virginia institutions have faced this same question of retaining the college identity. Concord College, who was the least aggressive of the four West Virginia institutions that sought and received university status in 2004, wrestled with this decision as one administrator confessed,

I was not crusading for a name change. In fact, over the years here, we talked about the value of being a “college,” what it means to be a “college,” and the traditions whence colleges come, as opposed to universities. So it’s not something that I sought. In fact, we . . . were aware of pretty solid institutions around the country who were determined to keep the name “college”: Boston College, the College of William and

Mary, Dartmouth College, and so on . . . We were still going to be who we were . . . We had watched other institutions that changed their names and I think some did it for strategic purposes and some thought they would buy into the prestige when they did it . . . So, it wasn't something we aggressively sought.

Likewise, Shepherd College, somewhat more aggressive in the pursuit of university status, realized the value of remaining a college, but recognized the practicality for it specifically to become Shepherd University. Shepherd's administration had to answer similar questions posed by the institution's stakeholders and the local community.

A lot of people said, "The College of William and Mary is held in regard. Dartmouth is a great college. There is Williams College and Boston College. Why does Shepherd, now that everybody and their brother is becoming a university, want to do this? There's a certain elitism and prestige in being a college." And I said, "You're right. The problem is the places, like you just named, established their national if not international reputations long ago. Everybody knows what they are. Shepherd doesn't have that national or international recognition, and they don't know what or who we are and think we are a community college – no one's going to think that the College of William and Mary or Dartmouth College are community colleges" . . . We wanted to be one thing or the other – we could have promoted either, but we can promote "university" a lot easier to the high school population. To highly educated adults, they had no problem with the name "college." They understand that you can have a

high quality college and you can have some pretty mediocre universities. It's the strength of your faculty, your programs, your facility, and the quality of your student body that determines how good the institution is – not its name. I think we are moving in the right direction with the name change and I'm happy with it. I wouldn't want to go back, people would think we've got demoted.

Two schools, Central University of Iowa and Blackburn University in Carlinville, Illinois, however, did just that. In the 1990s, both schools dropped the “university” moniker in favor of the “college” identity. Although chartered as a university, Central University of Iowa became commonly known as Central College. In 1994, administration made the name change official. Blackburn University, while retaining its legal name, has ceased using “university” in deference to “college.” According to Blackburn President, Miriam Pride, “The perception of ‘larger and more complex is better’ is pretty prevalent in our society, so it's not unusual that people want to identify themselves that way. That doesn't happen to be our model” (Kumar, 2007, ¶ 20; Lively, 1997).

Similarly, West Liberty State College as it plans a future transition to West Liberty University, has had some questions from stakeholders regarding the level of service which will be provided. One administrator explained,

One caveat or one concern has been, “Will we lose the intimacy of a college? Will we lose what a traditional college represents with a strong teacher student relationship with what that core teacher/learning environment represents? Will we now become, if there is that next level, something different than the intimacy and the personalized component

that's at a college . . . or will we evolve into something else?" That has been in a minority. It has by no means been in a majority of thinking, but that is some thinking that is present on campus.

While West Liberty is wrestling with these questions on their movement toward university status, Concord and Shepherd analyzed this issue and became universities. Allegheny College, however, continues with the "college" designation with no desire to change. An institution that works through this process should have a better understanding of its own identity and its branding. Despite Allegheny's desire to remain a "college," it was probably the best example of brand retention and protection of any institution in the United States. Although covered by the media when Allegheny's brand was challenged, there was a dearth in the literature concerning this institution's brand conviction.

Additionally, Allegheny College administrators felt that by participating in this study some positive benefits could be realized by other institutions who are seeking to change their identities.

If your work can do anything, it might alert places to think about it ahead of time – *think about it ahead of time*. Do searches and find out what names are being used. What are the possible infringements and what are the possible confusions. Even if you think you might win a legal case, why would you want the confusion? Why would you do it?

Organization and Data Collection

While focused on Allegheny College, its brand identity and its resultant struggles, this chapter examined a number of items. First, an exhaustive analysis of the Allegheny

educational brand name was included. This chapter discussed the historical application of the Allegheny name by four institutions in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Second, Allegheny College's history and unique character were studied. Third, the chapter examined five contemporary institutions using the Allegheny name, which included institutional histories, an outline of any branding issues with Allegheny College, and a quantitative and/or qualitative analysis of the institutions' branding decisions and their results. Last, Allegheny College's brand dominance was quantified and analyzed. Despite not adopting the university designation, Allegheny's struggles and successes are worth consideration in any discussion of brand identity – an identity that the school has proudly defended four times in the last 40 years.

To gather material for this chapter, an interview was conducted on May 4, 2007 with two Allegheny College administrators. In addition to other documentation regarding Allegheny College, additional information was sought from administrators from the Community College of Allegheny County, Allegany College of Maryland, Penn State Greater Allegheny, and Allegheny Wesleyan College. While one individual at Allegany College of Maryland provided a limited amount of information, it would prove that some information was not entirely accurate as records were accessed. Email requests to campus administration were unanswered. Because of the lack of direct information from this institution, other agencies that interfaced with Allegany College of Maryland were contacted. These organizations provided the necessary answers to specific questions.

Likewise, attempts to contact administration, faculty, staff, and student government at Penn State Greater Allegheny were unfruitful. Only one individual responded, a student who promised to answer specific questions regarding the

institution's name change; however, this individual did not respond to further requests and she supplied no additional information. A visit to the campus on August 9, 2007 provided insights from two administrators. Email messages to Allegheny Wesleyan College's administration failed due to problems with that school's email system.

To compensate for a lack of direct information, historical research, media reports, and institutional documentation provided key details and data. The institutional documentation included minutes from meetings, press releases, school publications, web documents, legal proceedings, and other miscellaneous records. In addition, other institutions related to issues presented in this chapter were contacted. Some responded while others did not. Other source material was also consulted as necessary.

In studying the brand name "Allegheny" in its entirety (including non-educational usage), there were numerous renditions of the name. While the spelling "Allegheny" was used most often, two other versions had frequent usage: "Allegany" and "Alleghany." Other variations also existed: the adjectival forms of "Alleghenian" and "Alleghanian" and the Latinized "Alleghenia." When discussing specific names, the actual spelling was used. For generic and holistic representations of the name, the "Allegheny" spelling was chosen to discuss larger applications of the name despite specific usage.

Fossils from the Alleghenian Age

The Allegheny name has had multiple usages throughout the last 250 years including usage in higher education. In the recent past, six institutions can be identified by the Allegheny brand in some fashion. Each of these institutions will be discussed in further detail later in this chapter; however, the use of the Allegheny name by colleges

was not limited to these six institutions. In the past, at least four additional colleges have employed the brand; only one of these exists to the present, and it does so under another name.

Allegheny Theological Seminary (1825-1914)

While the name Allegheny has faded from its appellation, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary was a direct descendant of Allegheny Theological Seminary (ATS) founded in 1825 by the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church of America. The institution took its name from its location: Allegheny City, PA. When the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church and the Associate Presbyterian Church merged in 1858, ATS came under the control of the newly formed denomination: the United Presbyterian Church of North America.

Following the annexation of Allegheny City into Pittsburgh, Allegheny Theological Seminary renamed itself in 1914 as Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. In 1930, the school merged with Xenia Theological Seminary (founded in 1794 as Service Seminary) to become Pittsburgh-Xenia Theological Seminary. During the summer of 1954, the school moved across the Allegheny River to Pittsburgh's Highland Park neighborhood (Mary Ellen Scott, personal correspondence, July 9, 2007).

After the 1958 merger of the United Presbyterian Church with the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (PCUSA), Pittsburgh-Xenia Theological Seminary merged with a PCUSA's Western Theological Seminary. This school also was founded in 1825 at Allegheny, PA. The merger of the two schools was consummated on December 17, 1959 and the institution returned to the previous name of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and

occupied the Highland Park campus (Cook, J. 1972; Pittsburgh Board of Public Education, 1931; Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, n.d.; “Writer’s Program,” 1941; Mary Ellen Scott, personal communication, July 9, 2007).

Figure 9.4
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary – lineal descendant of Allegheny Theological Seminary.



It was interesting to note that the institution’s account of its historical lineage never mentions Allegheny Theological Seminary by name. Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (PTS) prefers to trace its lineal descent primarily from Xenia Theological Seminary (nee Service Seminary), as it was the oldest of the three institutions in its history; however, when tracing the physical location of PTS and the institution’s continuous history, the lineal descent naturally occurs from Allegheny Theological Seminary and not directly from Xenia Theological Seminary. Xenia and Western Theological Seminaries both merged into what was Allegheny Theological Seminary

(“Catalog 2006-2007,” 2006; Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, n.d.; “Writer’s Program,” 1941).

Figure 9.5

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary’s Highland Park campus location.



Alleghany College (1859-1861)

Three other non-existent schools also shared the Alleghany variation of the name. In 1859, the Western Baptist Association of Virginia purchased 50 acres of land in Blue Sulphur Springs in Greenbrier County, Virginia (now West Virginia) for \$44,000.00. Initially, the school started as a secondary school known as Alleghany High School; however, the Commonwealth of Virginia refused to grant a high school charter. Although not chartered, it opened as a high school to 80 scholars in October 1859. Within six months, Virginia’s General Assembly approved Alleghany College’s charter (as a

college) on March 20, 1860 (“Catalogue of Alleghany College,” 1860; “Chapter 261,” 1860; Donnelly, 1967; Donnelly, 1974; Shearer, 1959; Swope, 1974).

Of its origins, its maiden catalog emphasized, “Nearly all the academies and colleges of Virginia, and the University, are located in an angle embracing not more than one-third of the State, leaving Western Virginia almost totally unfurnished with literary institutions of high grade. It was believed that many of the youth in this large and important section would remain uneducated, unless the requisite facilities were afforded at home” (“Catalogue of Alleghany College,” 1860, p. 2). Although the school was established to meet the needs of students in Western Virginia, a large percentage came from the eastern portion of the state. An analysis of the 92 students listed in its catalog shows that 38 (41%) were from eastern counties. Of the others, 33 were from counties that would become part of West Virginia, 18 were from other Western Virginia counties, and one was from out of state. Two additional students were listed without being associated to any location; however, a search of the 1860 census indicated that these two individuals also came from Western Virginia (“Catalogue of Alleghany College,” 1860; “Eighth Census of the United States,” 1860). With the exception of one Eastern Virginian, all of the institution’s trustees were from the western portion of the state with 11 of the 21 hailing from what would become West Virginia (“Catalogue of Alleghany College,” 1860).

While other institutions of higher education existed in Western Virginia, the National Almanac and Annual Record for the Year 1863 only recognized two: Bethany College in the Northern Panhandle and Alleghany College in south. According to its

catalog, the school did not offer degrees but rather diplomas of completion in a variety of subjects.

“This institution, though chartered as a college . . . does not adopt the usual college curriculum, but graduates pupils on separate departments when they evince a thorough knowledge of the subjects taught in the Department on which they offer for graduation. It is designed to prepare young men for the University of Virginia, for professional study, or for the business of life. When graduate on any department, a student receives a diploma on that Department” (“Catalogue of Alleghany College,” 1860, p. 11).

Diplomas were available in seven areas: a) English language and literature; b) ancient languages and literature; c) modern languages and literature; d) moral and intellectual philosophy; e) natural science; f) ancient and modern history; and g) mathematics. Those completing all seven areas of study qualified for a full diploma stating that the individual was a “Graduate of Alleghany College” (“Catalogue of Alleghany College,” 1860). Emma Alderson, a daughter of one of the school’s trustees recalled, “This school did a marvelous work during the few years it was in session, and turned out more jurists and D.D.’s [sic] than any school known in the same time” (1946, p. 129). One of Alleghany College’s more prestigious alumni was Henry Mason Matthews, West Virginia’s governor from 1877 to 1881 (Donnelly, 1959b).

Although Alleghany College appeared to have had a good reputation and its initial college enrollment included 130 young men, it was doomed to failure due to a variety of circumstances (Donnelly, 1974; Shearer, 1959). In September 1860, the main building, the former hotel of the Blue Sulphur Springs Resort, was destroyed by fire. While a

portion of the building was quickly rebuilt in anticipation of larger enrollments for the next academic year, this did not occur. When the Civil War erupted in April 1861, there was an exodus of a majority of the students and faculty to join the Confederate Army and the institution was forced to close down in the interim (Crookshanks, 2003; McCauley, 1902; National Park Service, 1992; “Trustees of Alleghany College,” 1908).

Traversing the one-lane, serpentine Blue Sulphur Springs Road today, one would hardly believe that it was once the location of an opulent resort located along a main thoroughfare to Lewisburg. Because of its strategic location along the Blue Sulphur Springs-Lewisburg Turnpike that connected to roads leading to the Kanawha and the Guyandotte River valleys, both Union and Confederate forces used the campus as a bivouac and hospital during the war. Any hopes of returning the site to an institution of learning were thwarted in October 1864 when the 91st Ohio Volunteer Infantry burned down all of the buildings to prevent occupancy by Confederate troops who were scouted at a distance of two miles from Blue Sulphur Springs (Alderson, 1946; Pollard, 1870; “Trustees of Alleghany College,” 1908).

One building (see Figure 9.6) survived the carnage and stands today: the Greek revival pavilion that predated the college’s founding (National Park Service, 1992). An original resort structure, its center contained a five foot marble basin that collected the blue opalescent tinged, cool spring water used for medicinal purposes (Donnelly, 1959a). The school’s catalog promoted the spring as a value added benefit as students had the opportunity to bathe in the sulfur waters of the former resort: “Nothing if the kind can be more inviting or beautiful than this elegant pool of water” (“Catalogue of Alleghany College,” 1860, p. 19). Originally connected via pipes to a bathhouse, medicinal baths

were available to the students at a “modest cost” (“Catalogue of Alleghany College,” 1860, p. 19).

Figure 9.6

The spring pavilion: the only remnant of Alleghany College at Blue Sulphur Springs, WV.



Of the spring’s housing, Pollard (1870) described the pavilion as “an imposing temple which covers the spring, and rises in the centre of an extensive and beautiful lawn” (p. 247). The structure, while still imposing, sits alone in the middle of a swampy, unkempt field. While the pediment of the structure is a replacement, Swope (1974) provided an early photograph of the original that bore a resemblance to the Parthenon. Although listed on the National Historic Register, the existing structure is in dire need of maintenance (National Park Service, 1992).

In 1906, the surviving trustees of Alleghany College filed a claim based on the Tucker Act of 1887 for a Civil War related property loss claim of \$30,000. Since the

claim had exceeded the statute of limitations of the act, Congress ruled against the school's trustees and granted no war relief funds. The last surviving descendant of an Alleghany College trustee, Emma C. Alderson, continued to lobby Congress for war reparations. Alderson, who had taught at Alleghany Collegiate Institute (WV) and later started Alderson Junior College, was told in 1937 that the Committee on War Claims had refused to pursue her claim in Congress. All hopes for a settlement were extinguished (Alderson, 1946; Callahan, 1913; Crookshanks, 2003; National Park Service, 1992; "Trustees of Alleghany College," 1908).

Alleghany Collegiate Institute (WV) (1888-1925)

Located nine miles from the former Alleghany College in Blue Sulphur Springs, members of Methodist Episcopal Church, South (the Southern Methodists) established Alleghany Collegiate Institute (ACI) in Alderson, WV. Situated in the Monroe County side of town, the school catered to a wide variety of students: primary, secondary, and college. Founded in September 1888, ACI first offered a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1897. In 1899, the school came under control of the Lewisburg District of the M.E. Church, South and the District announced that only Methodists could be members of the faculty. Although promised by the principal that the change would not jeopardize her position, this action prompted ACI instructor Emma C. Alderson, a Baptist, to resign and to establish Alderson Baptist Academy in 1901. This school would eventually become Alderson Junior College. In 1932, Alderson Junior College merged with Broadus College to form Alderson-Broadus College (Alderson, 1946; Ambler, 1945; Barnhart, 1957; National Park Service, 1990).

Figure 9.7

Alleghany Collegiate Institute's dorm – the school's only surviving structure.



In 1906, Alleghany Collegiate Institute was permitted to become affiliated with another Southern Methodist school: Morris Harvey College (now known as the University of Charleston) under certain conditions. The Lewisburg District of the Methodist-Episcopal Church, South offered the deed of ACI to Morris Harvey College for the sum of \$2,750 and the promise that the school remained a Southern Methodist affiliated school and if it continued to be located within the Lewisburg District (Anderson & Burrows, 1999; Miller, 1907). This affiliation, however, never came to fruition and the Lewisburg District sold ACI in 1908 to Southern Seminary (now Southern Virginia University) in Buena Vista, Virginia. ACI would operate as one of the Southern Seminary System of Schools with Edgar H. Rowe and John S. Engle listed as owners.

The deed contained a proviso required by the Lewisburg District that the school must retain its Methodist affiliation (Barnhart, 1957; Thirteenth Census of the U.S., 1910).

By 1912, Rowe and Engle complained at a district meeting that they were losing money from ACI's operation and lobbied for the Methodist proviso to be removed. They reasoned that, for the school to succeed, it needed to become independent from any denominational affiliation. No action was taken at this meeting. Although another party revisited this request during the 1917 Lewisburg District meeting, the committee was charged to "'to carry into effect' that earlier agreement, relating to the 'conditional clause' in the ACI deed" (Barnhart, 1957, p. 197). At the 1920 District meeting, the question of the proviso was revisited and acted upon in the owners' favor, but little changed in the institutional mission or structure. Rowe and Engle's (who died in 1917) heirs worked to find a solution to the worsening financial situation at ACI. To help, the Lewisburg District loaned funds to Rowe to expend for educational purposes (Barnhart, 1957). It apparently was not enough to sustain the institution and closure became imminent.

While ACI's last commencement was held in May 1923, advertisements for the school continued throughout the summer of 1924 and promised "experienced instructors, small classes, [and] individual attention" ("Allegheny Collegiate Institute," 1924, p. 11). The 1924-1925 academic year proved to be Allegheny Collegiate Institute's last year in business. Although a six-page pamphlet for the 1925-1926 school year was published, Rowe and the Engle heirs sold the school's property and buildings and ACI ceased to exist on August 25, 1925 (Barnhart, 1957). Only one of the institution's buildings, the dormitory, remains (see Figure 9.7). It currently houses the Alderson Hospitality House that provides temporary housing to individuals visiting inmates at the Federal Prison

Camp for Women at Alderson (“The Mission,” n.d.). Although the school has no lineal descendant, ACI and Alleghany College both share a loose collateral relationship with Alderson-Broaddus College (Alderson, 1946).

Figure 9.8

Entrance to Alderson-Broaddus College at Philippi, West Virginia.



Alleghany Collegiate Institute (NC)

The third defunct Allegheny branded school was also named as the Alleghany Collegiate Institute. The school was mentioned in the Alleghany County, North Carolina Directory of 1883 as being located in Sparta and was under the supervision of S.W. Brown. It was additionally referenced as the Collegiate Institute in the 1867-8 and 1890 directories. Nothing further is known about this institution (“Branson’s,” 1867, 1883, 1890). While five institutions in the 19th century were named as Allegheny or Alleghany,

only one of these schools retains the Allegheny brand today: Allegheny College located in Meadville, PA.

An Allegheny Power: Allegheny College

Although the Allegheny brand demonstrates extensive institutional usage, could any single institution claim ownership of a designation so ingrained in U.S. culture?

Allegheny College believes so, at least in regard to the field of higher education, as one administrator explained:

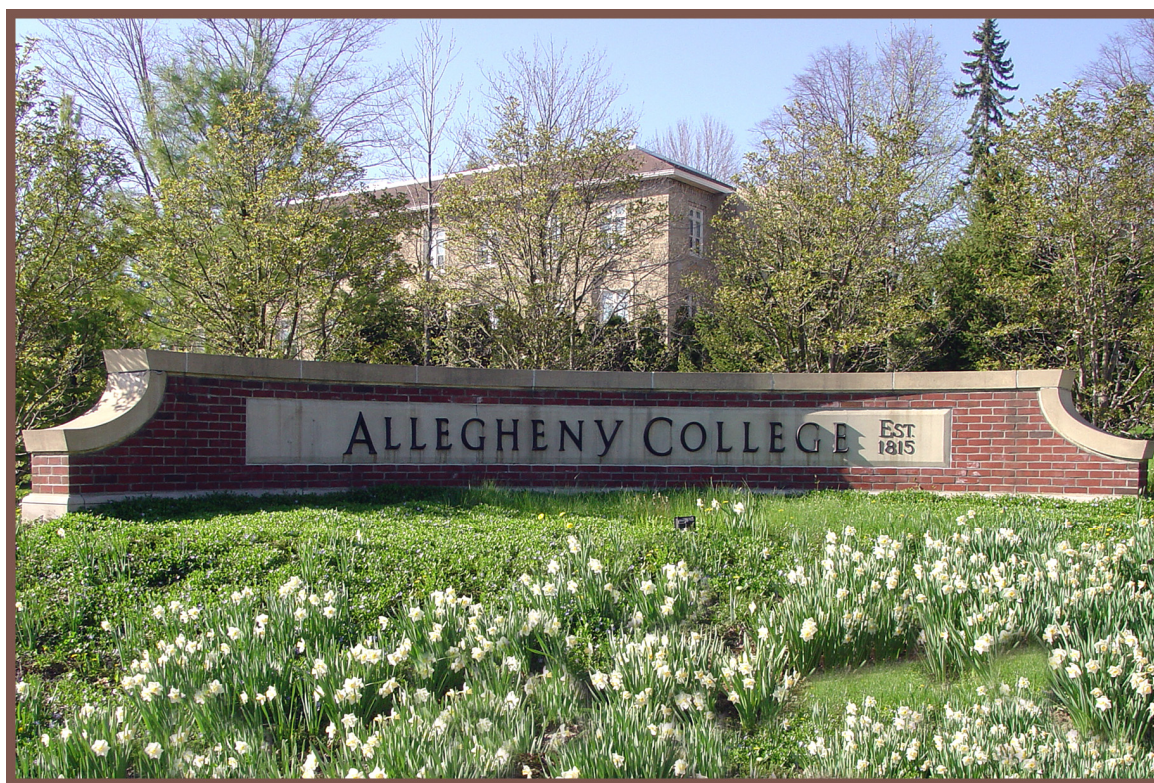
Allegheny . . . is a very widespread term – it’s connected with the mountains, the river, the county, towns, and so we don’t claim that we own the name Allegheny because you can look in the Pittsburgh phone book and you can find listings for dozens and dozens of things called “Allegheny” from drycleaners to cab services or whatever. [However,] we do, in the higher education realm, own the name Allegheny, and that has been our position. That is our identity. We’ve used it first and have used it all of these years.

This same affinity toward the Allegheny identity has existed for decades. In 1921, an alumnus retorted, “To us, the sons and daughters of Allegheny College . . . [Allegheny] means Alma Mater, the college we love . . . the struggle of the early founder, and the men who have slowly and patiently raised the college to its present pinnacle of success, it is the embodiment of determination, courage, sacrifice, and love” (Stephens, 1921, p. 19).

Allegheny College is situated in northwestern Pennsylvania’s City of Meadville. Located on French Creek, one of the larger tributaries of the Allegheny River, Meadville

was established in 1788 within the boundaries of Pitt Township and the newly established Allegheny County. At that time, the county and township included territory well beyond Allegheny County, Pennsylvania's present borders. Allegheny County's original area stretched westward to the state line and northward to Lake Erie. In 1800, the Commonwealth formed eight new counties out of Allegheny including Crawford County with Meadville as the county seat ("Allegheny County," 1896; "History of Crawford County," 1885).

Figure 9.9
Allegheny College's primary sign.



Institutional History

While Meadville was still a village of approximately 100 inhabitants, Allegheny College was established in 1815 through the efforts of Harvard graduate and Presbyterian minister Timothy Alden. Alden, the institution's first president, was successful by

initially raising \$9,788.30 for the establishment of a college. While the first contribution was from former president John Adams, the greater portion of the support came directly from the residents of Meadville. Students were admitted in 1816 and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania granted a charter to the school in 1817 (Stephens, 1921).

When selecting the college's name, its incorporators chose "Alleghany, because the great part of the region . . . is watered by numerous streams, which in the aggregate make the Alleghany River" (Smith, 1916, E.A., p. 15). Although period maps identify the river with seven different spellings, there was an indication that during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, while phonetically similar, the geographic designation's orthography was in a state of flux. In addition to the three current spellings, other alternatives included Alleganey, Allegeny, Allegheni, and Allequeni (Cramer, 2007). The institutional name eventually converted from the "Alleghany" spelling of its 1815 founding to the more conventional Pennsylvania rendition of Allegheny in 1833 (Smith, E.A., 1916).

While it was not the oldest institution west of the Alleghenies (that distinction belongs to Lexington, KY's Transylvania University), Stephens credits Allegheny College as the third oldest west of the range (Owston, 1998; Stephens, 1921). As one administrator explained, Allegheny College is the oldest institution west of the Alleghenies that has continued since its establishment with the same identity and the same mission.

It has been Allegheny College since its founding. We're approximately the 32nd oldest college in the country. It's quite rare for an institution to be founded as a college and to maintain its same name through its whole, long history – almost 200 years. We are the oldest "college" west of the

Alleghenies that has retained its original name. Quite a few institutions that claim early founding dates were preparatory schools, they were merged [into other institutions], they had name changes, [and/or] they had mission changes. But this [school] was founded as a liberal arts college, it's remained a liberal arts college, and it maintained the same name ever since. So, this is our identity.

Attracted to its mission, Allegheny's roster of alumni was a veritable who's who of 19th and 20th century America. Some of Allegheny's best-known former students included President William McKinley; Clarence Darrow, the defendant of John T. Scopes in the famed "Scopes Monkey Trial"; and investigative journalist Ida M. Tarbell whose exposé of John D. Rockefeller and Standard Oil alerted America to the monopoly's questionable business practices (Helmreich, 2005).

Allegheny Gators

Also somewhat distinctive is Allegheny College's athletic mascot. While schools with adjectival names like Marshall's Thundering Herd, Notre Dame's Fighting Irish, Alabama's Crimson Tide, and Wake Forest's Demon Deacons are unique, Allegheny's "Gators" distinguish the institution from a menagerie of the more common Lions, Tigers, and Bears. Institutional promotional materials cite only two other NCAA schools with this mascot: the University of Florida, which gave its name to Gatorade, and San Francisco State University, who's "Golden Gator" was a pun based on region's Golden Gate and the formidable alligator ("A History of SF State," 2000; "Allegheny Tennis," 2006).

While Allegheny College alludes to only two other NCAA schools with the Gator mascot, there are four additional NCAA schools using the same name: College of Notre Dame of Maryland, Baltimore, MD; Pine Manor College, Chestnut Hill, MA; Russell Sage College, Troy, NY; and University of Houston-Downtown, Houston, TX (Smargon, 2007). The second of the seven schools to use the nickname, the name originated with a student humor publication named the *Allegheny Alligator* in 1925.

Figure 9.10
Allegheny Gators – Fan Memorabilia.



In its maiden issue, the editors of the *Allegheny Alligator* explained the name choice. “The name, Alligator, was selected not because the alligator is known for its sense of humor, nor because the haunts of the above mentioned critter are located in this vicinity, but purely and simply because of the 99.44% alliterative value of its orthography” (“Allegheny Tennis,” 2006, p. 9). Although the swamp reptile was the

source of the name, it was not known if Western Pennsylvania's Allegheny alligator (the Eastern hellbender -- *Cryptobranchus alleganiensis alleganiensis*) had any influence on the alliterative choice of names (Blumer, 2006; Lamey, 2005). During 1926, the Go-Get-Em Gator Club was formed and, according to Franks (1982), "The group became quite vocal at athletic events, and you guessed it, the coaches liked the name so well, it was grabbed by the intercollegiate program" (p. 24). In time, the name was shortened from the Alligators to the Gators. Allegheny College's current costumed mascot is known as "Chompers" ("Allegheny Tennis," 2006).

An Education with Innovation

As well known as it is by its unique name and its mascot identification, Allegheny College is probably best known for being a pioneer in higher education. As an innovative liberal arts college, Allegheny College instituted practices that are standard fare at most colleges and universities today. In 1816, President Alden created an institutional publication: *Alleghany Magazine* [the school's original spelling for 16 years]. Although only one issue was published, it is a source for much valuable information concerning the fledgling institution (Haskins & Hull, 1902). The year 1870 saw the admission of the institution's first group of female students (Stephens, 1921). Far before most institutions in the U.S., Allegheny received regional accreditation. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education has consistently reaffirmed this status since 1921 (Statement of Accreditation Status: Allegheny College, 2004).

Allegheny has applied the same innovation to curricular issues. To assess a student's ability and his or her progress, Allegheny College initiated an innovative assessment program in 1938. Based on graduate record examinations given at Harvard,

Princeton, and Yale, the student inventory exams were created to reduce the number of undergraduate student failures (Tolley, 1938). The next year, similar exams served as placement indicators for prospective students (“Allegheny Plans,” 1939). In 1956, the college instituted a freshman seminar that promoted student cognition and critical thinking and was “designed to get students to think for themselves and to develop an awareness of why they think the way they do” (“Education News,” 1956, p. E9). Beginning in 1964, the Ford Foundation provided a grant to initiate a “college without classes” program at Allegheny and two other institutions. Twenty-five students from each school were chosen to “work with a faculty advisor and . . . have access to visiting scholars, lecturers, and artists . . . [and were] examined by outside educators on their basic liberal education at the end of their second year, and on their major fields at the end of the fourth year” (“75 Students will Test,” 1964, p. 35).

In recent years, Allegheny has been on the cutting edge of academic technology. In 2005, the school began offering a weekly podcast to help promote its activities. According to host Mike Richwalsky, “Allegheny is one of the first colleges to use podcasting in this way. Other schools may use it for specific departments or programs, but Allegheny is employing it as a way to keep people connected with the college as a whole” (“Allegheny Launches,” 2005).

In 2006, Allegheny took another bold promotional move and created its own social networking site on MySpace. Richwalsky added, “Campus officials worried that if they didn’t lock up the ‘alleghenycollege’ login name, someone else would create an unofficial (and less flattering) profile for the college” (Read, 2006, ¶ 3). In less than one week of setting up the profile, Allegheny had 630 friends that networked to Allegheny’s

MySpace site (Karleen, 2006). According to Richwalsky, MySpace can be an important promotional tool. “The big key I think will be getting our name out to prospective students and letting them get a very quick idea of what Allegheny is and what we look for in our students” (Karleen, 2006, ¶ 7). One alumnus, Rosemary Feal, responded to this bold move, “I’m glad that my alma mater is taking the lead in connecting students and alumni with those interested in Allegheny College through electronic means. Allegheny has always had an active person-to-person network, and it makes sense to meet students where they are now—cyberspace” (Read, 2006, “Comments” section).

Wonderfully Weird and a Wonderful Experience

The students that Allegheny attracts are unique in their own right. In a 2007 podcast, W. Scott Friedhoff, Allegheny College’s Vice President for Enrollment, spoke to the distinctive characteristics of the student body that is attracted to Allegheny. “It’s the combinations of interests and skills and talents that students have that is, well, unusual or ‘wonderfully weird’ even. It’s the kind of student for example . . . a pre-med student that is majoring in biology, but instead of the typical chemistry minor, students here might be minoring in philosophy or economics or art for example” (“Allegheny College – Wonderfully Weird,” 2007). Included in *Princeton Review’s* (2005), *Colleges with a Conscience: 81 Great Schools with Outstanding Community Involvement*, the volume characterizes Allegheny as offering “an amazing variety and number of opportunities. The college strives to make service-learning fit into any schedule and any set of interests” (p. 36). One student added, “No matter who you are, Allegheny is going to pull you into some kind of activism role – be it community service, civic engagement, or leadership” (*Princeton Review*, 2005, p. 36).

Because of its uniqueness, Allegheny's identity has continued to be one of distinction. One student, in *Colleges That Change Lives: 40 Schools That Will Change The Way You Think About Colleges*, characterized his educational experience: "Allegheny . . . showed me that college is not always about living out your dreams; sometimes it is about finding them first" (Pope, 2006, p. 30). An alumnus added, "Allegheny is more than just a college, it's a community where students, administrators, and professors work in concert with each other to procure excellence in all aspects of campus life" (Pope). Another student expressed, "Allegheny College motivates me to be the best student I can be" (Pope).

Allegheny College has continued to receive high marks from those who rate colleges and universities. Ranked at 82, *U.S. News and World Report* (2007) identified Allegheny College as one of the top liberal arts colleges in the country. In the guidebooks that address the rigor and results of an institution's educational programs, Allegheny was often prominently featured. In addition to the guidebooks, Allegheny ranks in the top 7% of all liberal arts colleges in the number of graduates who eventually earn Ph.D.s. In the National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE), Allegheny College scored in the top 10 percent of U.S. colleges in the level of academic challenge and in faculty-student interaction (Keller, 2007). According to Allegheny President, Richard J. Cook (2002), "These results place us at the top of colleges and universities, supporting our long-held belief that the hallmark of an Allegheny education is a strong academic program coupled with unusually close student-faculty interaction and solid support for our students" (§ 5).

On the web site promoting *Colleges That Change Lives*, Loren Pope summarized, "Allegheny . . . is a shining example of what . . . exciting colleges . . . are doing to prepare

students for a new kind of world, things that make most of the prestigious institutions look stodgy. It has a long and distinguished record of producing not only future scientists and scholars, but business leaders as well” (2004, ¶ 1). It was little wonder that *The New York Times* reiterated former president William P. Tolley’s characterization that Allegheny College was the “Harvard in the Wilderness” (“Allegheny 125 Years Old,” 1940, p. 40). Because of this reputation, Allegheny College is passionate about its name and identity.

A Foothold in the Allegheny Foothills: Community College of Allegheny County

Although buried in the “Business and Finance” section of a Tuesday edition of *The New York Times*, there it was in bold print: “Allegheny Dean Appointed” (1966, p. 62). While the article had nothing to do with Allegheny College in Meadville, it characterized the confusion that was destined to occur regarding the Allegheny brand over the next several decades. Probably the first recorded misidentification of the name, the 57-word article announced the appointment of Brandeis University dean of students, Kermit C. Morrissey, to the presidential post at the Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC), a new school that was slated to open six months later on September 26, 1966 (“Allegheny Dean Appointed,” 1966; “CCAC 40th Anniversary,” 2006).

A College for the Community

When CCAC opened its doors to 1,516 students, it initially had two sites: the Boyce Campus in Monroeville and the Allegheny Campus on Pittsburgh’s North Side (the former Allegheny City). The South Campus was added in 1967 and the North Campus in

1973. Nine additional centers were created over the next several decades including one in Washington County, PA (“CCAC History,” n.d.).

With expansion to several locations, CCAC was able to promote itself easily during the information age because it was not saddled with a lengthy Internet domain as were most community colleges. Having registered the ccac.edu domain on October 10, 1993, the Community College of Allegheny County secured the domain name when the .edu top level extension was available for any educational institution despite classification (“Who is – ccac.edu,” 2007). Beginning in 1993, .edu registrations began to be limited to graduate schools and four-year colleges and universities located within the United States (Postel, 1994). Because of this, community colleges registered under the .us domain system that required a web address to include the school’s identifier, “cc” for community college, the state’s two-letter postal abbreviation, and “.us” (Cooper & Postel, 1993). For example, the Community College of Beaver County once used ccbc.cc.pa.us (now ccbc.edu), Westmoreland County Community College employed westmoreland.cc.pa.us (now wccc-pa.edu), and Butler County Community College continues to use bc3.cc.pa.us in addition to bc3.edu (“Internet Archive of Member Colleges,” 2001; “Member colleges,” 2005). Many community colleges added the .edu domain when the regulation of .edu domain passed to Educause on October 29, 2001. Under the administration of Educause (n.d.), any institution with accreditation recognized by the U.S. Department of Education is eligible for registration of an .edu domain. Some schools, such as Butler County Community College, continue to use the .us domain designation along with an .edu domain, while others have retired the .us domain in deference to the .edu address.

In addition to a constant Internet presence, the institution's name has remained the same since its 1966 founding. It was possible that more confusion could have occurred if the school's name were Allegheny Community College. Of the fourteen community college systems in Pennsylvania, 11 follow a naming convention with the location name first. The former Williamsport Area College (now Pennsylvania College of Technology) also had the location listed first. Only CCAC, the Community College of Beaver County, and the Community College of Philadelphia have the community college designation before the location name ("Member Colleges," 2005).

Figure 9.11

Community College of Allegheny County, Boyce Campus (not an "Allegheny" in sight).



Confusion to a Minimum

Even with the Community College designation, misunderstandings were bound to occur. Both Allegheny College and the Community College of Allegheny County agreed

to keep any confusion to a minimum. As one administrator explained, “I know that there was confusion, and there was, I believe, some sort of informal agreement and might be a formal one. I just don’t know. It goes back so far. [An agreement] was reached to call it the ‘Community College of Allegheny County’ or ‘CCAC.’”

Figure 9.12

Community College of Allegheny County – Allegheny Campus.



A May 4, 2007 visit to the Boyce Campus location produced a cursory observation that the entrance signage, banners, flags, and main building signs did not include the word Allegheny. From an examination of the signage at this particular branch, the school appeared to prefer the CCAC nomenclature as its primary identification. A July 28, 2007 analysis of the signage of the CCAC Allegheny branch campus, on Pittsburgh’s North Side, confirmed that this campus location used the Allegheny name frequently. This was evidenced by the display of the full campus name, the branch campus name, and the

institutional seal containing the full institutional name. “CCAC,” however, was the largest brand identifier used on any of the primary campus signs. A visit to the South campus located in West Mifflin, PA on August 11, 2007 revealed that, although, the “Allegheny” name was used on the campus flags, its presence was at the bare minimum at this location.

Even more surprising than the Allegheny Community College or the Allegheny County Community College misidentifications, was a name that suggested that CCAC was an arm of Allegheny College. From 1968 to 2005, at least 131 references had the school listed as the “Community College of Allegheny College.” The majority of these references were from Pittsburgh area newspapers including the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, the *Pittsburgh Tribune Review*, and the *North Hills News Record*. Additional references may exist as the Google News Archives has only a limited repository of publications (“Google News Archives Search of ‘Community College of Allegheny College,’” 2007).

Although referring to itself as CCAC, the news media often misidentify the school. The most frequent error was to call the school Allegheny Community College. This appellation was so widespread that a search of the limited number of newspapers documented in Google’s News Archives resulted in 591 articles that referenced CCAC in that manner. To prevent confusion with Allegany College of Maryland which was noted in an initial search as occasionally being misspelled as Allegheny, the terms “Cumberland” and “Maryland” were eliminated by using Boolean operators (“Google News Archives Search of ‘Allegheny Community College,’” 2007). A similar search of “Allegheny County Community College” yielded 479 results (“Google News Archives Search of ‘Allegheny County Community College,’” 2007).

Figure 9.13

The South campus of CCAC at West Mifflin, PA.



Although various misidentifications occur in the press, the school only refers to itself as the Community College of Allegheny County or CCAC. As one Allegheny College official noted, “I have never once seen anyone from that institution or in any of their publications to vary from that. They have been absolutely rock solid. I know that people informally refer to it as Allegheny Community College and I always correct them, but that’s not people from that institution.”

An Allegheny Front: Allegany College of Maryland

Only the Beginning

During the summer of 1961, the Allegany County (Maryland) Board of Education set out to provide community college education for the county’s residents. Dr. Robert S.

Zimmer, dean of the evening credits program at Montgomery Junior College, was hired to be the institution's president and, in late August, he began securing faculty and facilities for Allegany Community College (ACC). When classes officially commenced in September 1961, ACC had 32 fulltime and 70 part-time students. According to Zimmer, "The community college must be to the county to what the university is to the state. We feel we made some impact" ("College's Founding," 2006, p. 4).

In 1965, the institution moved from the auspices of the Allegany County Board of Education to its own Board of Trustees ("College's Founding," 2006). That same year, the Middle States Commission of Higher Education accredited Allegany Community College to offer Associate's degrees and certificates ("Statement of Accreditation Status: Allegany College of Maryland," 2007). In 1969, the school moved from its temporary downtown Cumberland location, to its permanent location on 370 acres of land on Willowbrook Road outside of the Cumberland city limits ("College's Founding," 2006).

While operating in Maryland and known as Allegany Community College, the school posed little threat to Allegheny College. This would change with three events: the entry into Pennsylvania, the change of institutional names, and the registration of a new Internet domain. The first of these issues occurred when Allegany Community College crossed the Mason-Dixon Line into Pennsylvania. In 1989 and 1990 respectively, ACC began offering evening classes in Somerset and Bedford counties, Pennsylvania. ACC moved into permanent facilities in both counties and began offering day classes at these sites in 1994 (Allegany College of Maryland, 2007a & 2007b). ACC eventually rebranded itself as Allegany College of Maryland (2007a & 2007b). One Allegheny

College administrator outlined the problems regarding the similar names of the two institutions:

There was an agreement with them and the previous president that, yes they could change their name The previous president, I think, reluctantly agreed to that with certain restrictions and we would not fight them on that. We learned that [agreeing with such restrictions] is not a practical solution and we continue [to have issues] to this day, and I have right now an unanswered communication with the president of that institution: one among several I've had to write over the years. There continues to be confusion. They've been very good about trying to use the acronym or the full name, but they don't have control over what others do. And so for example, there's a sports conference that shortens the name. You can imagine the headaches involved in something like a sports jersey [or] a sweatshirt in a bookstore. Think about every time they use the name. Are they going to use the full name Allegany College of Maryland? No, that won't happen. Either they'll use ACM or shorten it to Allegany College. And that's where the trouble is and that's why it's a bad idea to take on the name Allegheny even if it's [spelled] different.

What's Your Name; Was It One Change Or Two?

Allegany Community College's name change to Allegany College of Maryland is shrouded in mystery. On the institutional website, only two easily accessible references to the name change exist and both were located on the historical pages for the Bedford and Somerset campuses. Both of these pages have a timeline with 1997 listed as the year of the name change to Allegany College of Maryland (Allegheny College of Maryland, 2007a & 2007b). A third reference to the name change occurs buried within the site and was discovered by doing a Google site specific search on the institution's original Internet domain: <http://www.ac.cc.md.us>. The page, which appears to be a copy of a press release, was discovered among alumni newsletters for the dental hygiene program and was dated January 1997. This document indicated that the name change occurred in 1996 and stated, "In a recent ceremony that recalled its proud past, Allegany Community College used the occasion of its 35th anniversary to outline an even more promising future as Allegany College" ("ACC Celebrates Past," 1997, ¶ 1). The document referred to the institution as ACC – once; Allegany Community College – once; Allegany College – once; Allegany College of Maryland – twice; and Allegany – five references.

In addition, several other publications indicated a preference for the "Allegany College" moniker. The *1997 HEP Higher Education Directory* (with data collected during 1996) identifies a change "from Allegany Community College to Allegany College" (Rodenhouse, 1997, p. xxii). The same edition lists "Allegany College" as the institutional name for the school's main listing. Likewise, the 1998 directory identified the institution as "Allegany College" (Rodenhouse, 1998). It was not until the 1999 directory that the name Allegany College of Maryland was introduced. In the "Name

Change” section, a rebranding “from Allegany College to Allegany College of Maryland” was noted (Rodenhouse, 1999, p. xxv).

Email to Allegany College of Maryland’s administration requesting information regarding whether it was one name change or two, and the specific date of the change(s) were unanswered. A call to the institutional development office yielded information that there was only one name change and that was to “Allegany College of Maryland.” According to Brenda Wiland of the Allegany College of Maryland Foundation, the rebranding to Allegany College of Maryland officially occurred on September 1, 1996 (personal communication, May 29, 2007). Since the 1997 press release indicated that the name occurred during the school’s 35th anniversary, the September 1996 date agrees with the press release’s chronology (“ACC Celebrates Past,” 1997).

While archived web pages from 1997 use the current institutional name, the original page’s copyright information (dated 1996) referenced the school solely as “Allegany College” (“Internet Archive of College Overview,” 1997). By late 1998, the “Allegany College” reference was replaced with the institution’s current full name (“Internet Archive of College Overview,” 1998). Although archived web pages and the *HEP Higher Education Directory* citations indicated two name changes, this could not be ascertained from the current institutional web site, school catalogs, or even by communicating with ACM.

Since rebranding data were not readily accessible from the institution, the following other agencies were contacted for information: the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, the Maryland Association of Community Colleges, the Maryland Higher Education Commission, and the Maryland Secretary of State. The Secretary of

State's office was the only one that did not respond. According to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, two name changes occurred. No date information was available for the initial change from ACC to Allegany College; however, the name change from Allegany College to Allegany College of Maryland occurred in July 1998 ("Allegany College of Maryland Institutional History," 2007). Middle States' executive assistant, Margaret Robbins, stated, "Changing an institution's name has no effect on its accreditation (in 99% of cases), which is why we don't have a lot of information on name changes" (personal communication, May 30, 2007).

The Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC) supplied dates that conflicted with other sources. According to MACC records, the name change from Allegany Community College to Allegany College occurred during September 1995. According to Research Director Barbara Ash, the purpose of the initial name change was "to reflect the restructuring of the programs within the college, to provide each with an individual identity (e.g. Academy of Arts and Humanities, Academy of Allied Health Professionals, etc.), and to help promote these educational services to the regional market" (personal communication, May 30, 2007). In an October 4, 1995 letter from Patricia S. Florestano, Maryland Secretary of the Education, to Allegheny Community College Chair, Ivan Hall, the following was documented: "The Board of Trustees of Allegany Community College requested the Maryland Higher Education Commission to approve its institutional designation to Allegany College. The College indicated that this change would help the College maintain the critical mass of students that is necessary to serve the people in that county. This is to inform you that on September 28, 1995, the

Commission acted to affirm the name change for Allegany Community College to Allegany College.”

While it appears that initial name change was approved in September 1995, it was nearly a year before it went into effect on September 1, 1996. When pressed concerning the conflicting dates for the name changes, Ash suggested, “It is possible that the 9/1995 date was when the Maryland Higher Education Commission approved the first name change. I do not have any documentation of the 9/1/1996 name change” (Barbara Ash, personal communication, May 30, 2007). She further added, “the Maryland Association of Community Colleges is a non-profit organization created by the community colleges in our state. We are not affiliated with the Maryland Higher Education Commission, although, we do serve the colleges at times by acting as a liaison. We do not have or wish to have the authority to review or approve such matters as name changes by our member institutions” (Barbara Ash, personal communication, 2007).

In order for a college or university in Maryland to change its name, it must have the approval of the Maryland Higher Education Commission. According to the Code of Maryland Regulations, “A degree-granting institution may not change its institutional designation without the approval of the Commission” (“Institutional Names,” n.d.). Special Assistant to Maryland’s Secretary of Education, Cheryl V. Edwards (personal communication, May 30, 2007) outlined the procedure: “Institutions in the state must notify and provide justification or demonstrate the need for a name change to the Maryland Higher Education Commission. Justifications may include, but are not limited to the following: expanding to meet the increasing needs of a particular region or the

needs of students; when reexamining visions and missions some institutions may see the need for a name change.”

Ash indicated that the change from Allegany College to Allegany College of Maryland occurred in October 1997 “to avoid legal action by Allegheny College of Meadville [sic], Pennsylvania for infringement of the name, and [to] ensure consumers were clear of the distinction between the Pennsylvania and Maryland institutions” (Barbara Ash, personal communication, May 30, 2007). Although requested earlier in the year, the Maryland Higher Education Commission did not act upon the decision until October 14, 1997. The minutes read as follows:

On May 16, 1997, the Commission requested the College to clarify the change in its title to Allegany College of Maryland. Dr. Donald Alexander, President of Allegany College, stated that the name change is necessary and appropriate given the close proximity of Allegany [sic] College in Meadville [sic], Pennsylvania. Dr. Alexander further stated that at the time of the first name change, the president of Allegany [sic] College, Meadville [sic], Pennsylvania, requested the College use “of Maryland” after its name and more recently sent a terse letter threatening legal action if the College did not use “of Maryland” after its name. Commissioner Saunders reported that the Education Policy Committee recommended that the Commission approve Allegany College’s request to change its name to Allegany College of Maryland. Commissioner Saunders moved for approval of the recommendation. Commissioner Lierman seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously

(Maryland Higher Education Commission, 1997, “Allegany College name change” section).

The Name Game: How about Allegany?

Although the school’s logo had “of Maryland” and the name “Allegany College of Maryland” was in use during the Allegany College period, it was not the primary identification used by the college. Even after the official name change to “Allegany College of Maryland,” the school’s brand preference was simply “Allegany College.” This can be chronicled by counting the various names and acronyms used in the institution’s official catalogs. An exhaustive tally of the various brands utilized by ACM provides insight on how the institution identified itself from 1995 to 2007.

Figure 9.14

One of two Allegany College of Maryland signs at the campus main entrance.

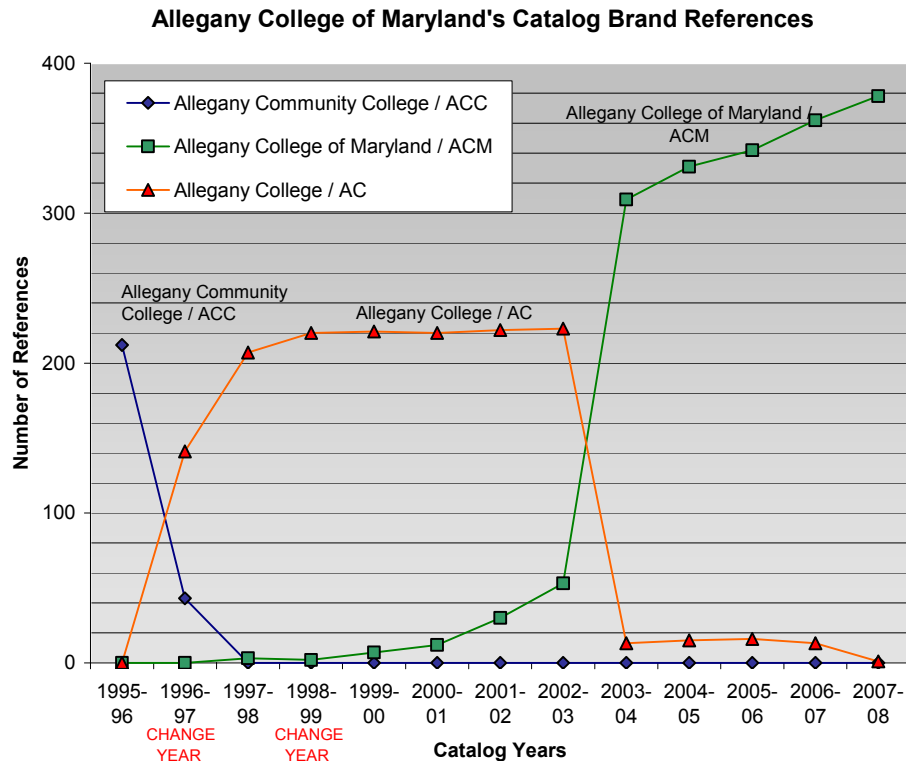


While still Allegany Community College, the 1995-1996 catalog equally (106 references each) identified the school as Allegany Community College and ACC; no other brand was used. During the year of the change, the 1996-1997 catalog was titled “The Community’s College: Allegany” (1996, p. i). This publication indicates that the institution may have been divorcing itself from the “Allegany Community College” brand as part of its history. The identification “ACC” was limited to five references while “Allegany Community College” was used 38 times. Of these 38 references, 36 were used in the faculty and staff directory as the degree granting institution for its employees; only two references were located outside of this section and both probably appear due to a oversight.

The 1996-1997 edition was the last catalog to use the previous name; all references to the institution’s history in subsequent catalogs omitted the former identification (“The Community’s College,” 1996; Allegany College of Maryland Catalogs, 1997-2007). Although “Allegany Community College” is listed on 10 pages of the ACM web site, three of the pages were alumni newsletters, one was an alumni showcase page, one was a page from 1996, and one was an instructor’s personal page (“Altavista Host Specific Search of allegany.edu,” 2007; “Google Site Specific Search of Allegany.edu,” 2007). Although both the Bedford and Somerset Campus pages cite the change from Allegany Community College (with an incorrect year), the institution’s primary history page omitted all references to ACC (Allegheny College of Maryland, 2007a & 2007b). According to the “About Allegany College of Maryland” (2007, ¶ 1) web page, “Allegany College of Maryland was founded in August of 1961 by a resolution passed by the Allegany County Board of Education and approved by the Allegany County

Commissioners. The College, which now has separate governance under a Board of Trustees, is an example of the rapid growth in the development of Maryland’s community college system.”

Figure 9.15
Comparison of brand identities used in Allegany College of Maryland catalogs.



In addition to divesting itself of the former brand, the 1996-1997 catalog also began a trend that continued until the 2003-2004 edition. These publications primarily identified the school as “Allegany College” (see Table 9.1 and Figure 9.15); however, beginning with the 1997-1998 catalog, the cover of this catalog and all subsequent editions clearly identify the institution as “Allegany College of Maryland.” Starting with the 2003-2004 edition, the primary brand identifier switched from “Allegany College” to

“Allegany College of Maryland” (“The Community’s College,” 1996; Allegany College of Maryland, 1998-2007).

Table 9.1

Percentage of brand identities used in Allegany College of Maryland catalogs.

| BRAND REFERENCE | CATALOG YEARS | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 1996-97 | 1997-98 | 1998-99 | 1999-00 |
| Allegany Community College / ACC | 23.37% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| Allegany College / AC | 76.63% | 98.57% | 99.10% | 96.93% |
| Allegany College of Maryland / ACM | 0.00% | 1.43% | 0.90% | 3.07% |

| BRAND REFERENCE | CATALOG YEARS | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2000-01 | 2001-02 | 2002-03 | 2003-04 |
| Allegany Community College / ACC | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| Allegany College / AC | 94.83% | 88.10% | 80.80% | 4.04% |
| Allegany College of Maryland / ACM | 5.17% | 11.90% | 19.20% | 95.96% |

| BRAND REFERENCE | CATALOG YEARS | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 | 2007-08 |
| Allegany Community College / ACC | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| Allegany College / AC | 4.34% | 4.47% | 3.47% | 0.26% |
| Allegany College of Maryland / ACM | 95.66% | 95.53% | 96.53% | 99.74% |

The inconsistency in identification and the continued use of the name “Allegany College” by ACM has contributed to the brand identity confusion. Additionally, the news media have misidentified the school as well. While one may concur that a simple misspelling of the name as Allegheny would be the greatest cause of confusion, this was not the case. A Google News Archive Search of “Allegheny College of Maryland” (2007) only produced 20 results. A search of Allegany College sans “of Maryland” produced 432 references in newspapers (“Google News Archive Search of Allegany College,” 2007). One Allegheny College administrator emphasized the confusion factor regarding the names: “We see Allegany College of Maryland and the newspapers refer to it as Allegany. When there’s a baseball game, a start of a new academic program, or whatever, this really does create some confusion.” Part of the issue with this confusion

was the very difference between the missions of Allegheny College and Allegany College of Maryland. An Allegheny College administrator noted,

I think it's so important that the mission of this place [Allegheny College] has been so consistent and distinctive in the marketplace for nearly 200 years as a traditional, residential, liberal arts college. That to create any confusion with that mission just does a tremendous disservice to the institution and to those who are looking at going to college.

Institutional confusions do occur due to similar names. At West Liberty State College, the following example occurred shortly after the school began transitioning its Internet domain name from wlsc.edu to westliberty.edu in the anticipation of becoming West Liberty University in the future. One administrator explained,

We had a female athlete that inquired by email. It was obvious from her message that she was actually interested in Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia and not West Liberty State College. Our admissions department realized this and they alerted the student to her mistake and provided a link to Liberty. After viewing our web site and having further conversations with our staff, she decided upon West Liberty rather than Liberty University, as she preferred a smaller campus setting.

While the example of the West Liberty/Liberty misidentification actually benefited the student, this was not generally the case. One Allegheny College administrator explained,

I think of the inefficiencies and the cost factor. We still get a number of students who call or write and ask for information about Allegany College. We send them materials, and at some point, maybe several months later, they may inform us “don’t bother.” Usually they don’t. So again, there’s a cost issue. We still get applications for admissions. I feel so sorry for these kids who spent all this time working on our application and they are applying at other schools . . . Our application is quite a bit different than what is at Allegany College of Maryland. So, it’s the time they put into completing it, the time wasted, [and] the time we process it. We don’t even read it for another a couple of months. When they are waiting for a decision that might be turned around in days or weeks at other colleges. I think of that the disservice that [brand] confusion can cause [and] not just to the colleges, but to the general public.

Not only does the confusion affect students, as one Allegheny College administrator recalled, it affects alumni. “Let me add that alumni have a lot at stake on this too. Twenty-four thousand of them identify with this place and they don’t like it when they are confused with another place.” Another Allegheny administrator added, “Especially with a place that it is so different and [they realize this] when they hear, ‘oh you went to Allegheny, you’ve got a great med tech program.’” These issues escalate in geographic areas near the Allegany College of Maryland service area, as one administrator explained:

If you get into suburban Washington, DC, and we’ve got quite a few alums over there, they continue to tell us how confused people are about

Allegany College of Maryland because western Maryland draws a lot of their students from that suburban Washington, DC area. We've got the former chair of the board of trustees over there whose son goes here. He's constantly being confused, "Oh, he's at Allegany College of Maryland." That happens a lot over there.

The confusion may have been extended to the Internet. When permitted to apply for an .edu domain, ACM registered allegany.edu on January 14, 2002 ("Who is – allegany.edu," 2007). Since allegany.edu and Allegheny College's domain of allegheny.edu are phonetically identical, this could be a source of added confusion. Even if Allegany College of Maryland wanted to register the most likely alternative domain, acm.edu, it had already been registered by the Associated Colleges of the Midwest since 1996 ("Who is – acm.edu," 2007). Additionally, Allegany College of Maryland still operates the ac.cc.md.us domain, which links to the same web site as allegany.edu.

Although Allegany College of Maryland has lessened its usage of "Allegany College," the confusion continues. One Allegheny College administrator revealed, "Ironically, last week I received in the mail an invitation to an event that was sent to this Allegheny College, at this address, with their [Allegany College of Maryland] president's name on it . . . It was sent to this Allegheny College with our name the way it is spelled with Donald Alexander's name as 'President Donald Alexander, Allegheny College, Meadville, PA.'" One Allegheny College administrator concluded that this sort of chaos continued to be an issue, "This isn't something that you just solve it and then walk away. Allegany College of Maryland is a perfect example of that. Constantly, you're trying to put the horse back into the barn."

An Allegheny Uprising: Allegheny University of the Health Sciences

At the same time as the Allegheny College of Maryland name change, a newly named institution emerged from a medical/educational conglomerate. With an ancestry tracing back in to the 19th century, Allegheny University of the Health Sciences (AUHS) would become Allegheny College's most arduous challenger for the Allegheny educational brand. Both institutions claimed a significant connection to the name and both were correct; however, only one had a historic *educational* tie to the name Allegheny, and that was Allegheny College.

The Rise of an Empire

The beginnings of Allegheny University of the Health Sciences can be traced to three separate Pennsylvania organizations established during the 19th century. Two of these were medical schools and the remaining one a hospital. The oldest of the schools, Hahnemann University, was founded in 1848 as Homeopathic College of Pennsylvania. In 1869, the school was rechristened as the Hahnemann Medical College in honor of Samuel Hahnemann, a pioneer in the field of homeopathic practice. In 1982, the school became Hahnemann University ("History of the Drexel," 2007). Also established in Philadelphia, the Female Medical College of Pennsylvania began in 1850. In 1867, it transitioned to the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania. By 1970, the school simply became the Medical College of Pennsylvania ("History of the Drexel," 2007). The youngest entity was established in 1886 in Allegheny City, Pennsylvania (now Pittsburgh's North Side) and was appropriately named after its location as Allegheny General Hospital. In time, the parent company of the hospital would become Allegheny Health Services ("Lifeline for an Institution," 2007).

The impetus that brought these three organizations (as well as other hospitals) under one fold was the threat of a change in governmental regulations. By 1986, according to Massey (1999, ¶ 3-4), “it had become accepted wisdom that, in order to better control Medicare and Medicaid expenditures, the government would soon move to require that subsidized hospital residency programs — something AGH [Allegheny General Hospital] had had for decades — go through an academic institution. For Allegheny General, that meant one thing: It would have to go shopping for a medical school.” Because Allegheny General did not want a partner that would directly compete with its hospital and it did not desire to search outside of Pennsylvania, it began looking toward Philadelphia (Massey, 1999c).

Figure 9.16

Allegheny General Hospital – parent of Allegheny University of Health Sciences.



Deep in debt, the Medical College of Pennsylvania (MCP) appeared to be the most likely candidate. Talks began in 1987 and the acquisition was announced on April 27, 1988 (Massey, 1999c). MCP held regional accreditation through the Middle States Commission on Higher Education since June 24, 1984 and held specialized accreditation from the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists, the American Medical Association, and the American Psychological Association (Margaret Robbins, personal communication, May 30, 2007; Torregrosa, 1991). The marriage between the two organizations was a win-win situation. MCP could continue its mission and Allegheny General Hospital had secured a coveted medical school within the Allegheny Health Services fold (Massey, 1999c). By 1992, Allegheny Health Services was renamed the Allegheny Health, Education, and Research Foundation [AHERF] (“Lifeline for an Institution,” 2007).

In addition to a number of Philadelphia hospitals that joined AHERF in the early 1990s, Hahnemann University became part of the network and merged with MCP in November 1993 (Margaret Robbins, personal communication, May 30, 2007; “Lifeline for an Institution,” 2007). Regionally accredited by Middle States, Hahnemann held accreditation from the National League for Nursing, the American Medical Association (for Medical Lab Tech, Medical Terminology, and Radiography), and the American Physical Therapy Association (Torregrosa, 1991). As a result of the merger, AHERF owned “one of the largest hospital systems in the state, [and] one of the largest medical schools in the country” (Massey, 1999b, ¶ 1).

Operating under the name of MCP Hahnemann University, the arrangement brought together two schools with different foci. According to Massey (1999b), “MCP’s

focus was more on basic research, the sort of arcane scientific experimentation that can lead to medical breakthroughs. Hahnemann was more clinical — its doctors had their own practices and brought in both patients and industry-funded research. And it performed more open-heart surgeries than any other Philadelphia hospital by far” (§ 25 & 26). By 1996, AHERF renamed several of its holdings with the corporate brand of “Allegheny University Hospitals.” MCP Hahnemann University officially became Allegheny University for Health Sciences (AUHS) on June 20, 1996 (“Allegheny University of the Health Sciences 1997-98,” 1997). With the change of the school name, “Hahnemann Hospital has been renamed Allegheny University Hospital, Center City; and the Medical College of Pennsylvania’s hospital has been renamed Allegheny University Hospital, East Falls” (Gaynor, 1996, ¶ 4).

Within weeks, the media sensed there were going to be problems. A July 9, 1996 editorial in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* spoke candidly concerning AUHS’s spread in the Sunday edition two days previous. “The ad contained an intriguing footnote that speaks volumes about the sensitivity of educational institutions: ‘Not affiliated with Allegheny College, Meadville, PA.’ Allegheny College is a private liberal arts college, not to be confused - though it probably has been - with the Community College of Allegheny County, also known as CCAC. Students at Allegheny College, who are known (after their sports teams) as Gators, might want to snap their jaws at this new Allegheny” (“Another Allegheny,” 1996, p. A-6).

The Philistines Have Invaded

True to the *Post-Gazette*’s prediction, the name change of MCP Hahnemann University to Allegheny University of the Health Sciences became a source of contention

with Allegheny College as AUHS began referring to itself simply as Allegheny University. One of the arguments that Allegheny College set forth was that AHERF's use of the Allegheny University name would prevent Allegheny College from ever becoming a university should that need and desire arise (Hensley, 1997). One Allegheny College administrator elucidated:

Part of our reasoning was, even though our name was different, Allegheny College, we said that many, many colleges are changing their names to universities . . . and we shouldn't be precluded from making that name change in the future. That was an important piece of this. How do we maintain an identity that is the essence of this place? – a place of integrity and high academic standards. Everything that we do is tied up with that name and our identity.

In addition to the name change, AHERF registered the Internet domain of allegheny.edu. While Allegheny College could have had the allegheny.edu domain, it had already registered another domain name: alleg.edu. This registration occurred on April 5, 1989, which was far earlier than most other institutions. This shortened version of Allegheny opened the door for AHERF to register allegheny.edu in 1996 (“Who is – alleg.edu,” 2007).

Because of the similarities between Allegheny College and Allegheny University, a whole litany of the confusion began.

The National Science Foundation registered a grant proposal by a faculty member of AU under AC.

Prentice Hall, a publishing house, sent AC a confirmation for a book order placed by AU (Buchanan, 1997, D-1).

The state of Delaware sent scholarship proceeds to the wrong school.

ABC-TV's "Nightline" tried to interview an Allegheny College professor by calling Allegheny University repeatedly.

Newsday misidentified an Allegheny University professor as an Allegheny College professor.

Penn State University asked the wrong school to verify enrollment of a former student.

Many prospective students phoned and e-mailed wrong institutions requesting information, and some tied up representatives of the wrong school at college fairs (Blood & Guerriero, 1997, ¶ 5).

Even AHERF was seeing problems internally with its own name changes as *The Philadelphia Inquirer* reported,

It seems people couldn't quite make the connection that Allegheny University Hospitals, Center City, was the facility long known as Hahnemann University Hospital. Nor, for that matter, that Allegheny University Hospitals, East Falls, was the new name of Medical College of Pennsylvania Hospital. Now, the two hospitals are known as Allegheny University Hospitals, Hahnemann and Allegheny University Hospital, MCP (Uhlman, 1997, p. C1).

One Allegheny College administrator recalled the issues regarding the confusion and their effects:

We had mail coming in the wrong directions, we had reimbursement checks coming from the government, we had tuition checks, we had enrollment confusion, [and] we had registration applications coming in here. Likewise, they were forwarding us things that were coming to them. We sometimes had angry communication with people who confused us. Philadelphia was incensed with what Allegheny University of Health Sciences was doing over there and they confused us – in ways that were clear to us. The confusion and the ill will was because AUHS was known as being pretty ruthless in buying up hospitals and medical schools, firing staff, and spending a lot of money. And so, it was clearly beginning to damage our reputation.

While previous administrators had been dealing with the issue, it was necessary for Allegheny College to become more aggressive in the matter. One administrator recalled,

When I realized how serious this was, the board of trustees and I decided to move on it. We met with their legal counsel, their public affairs people, and others and laid out where our concerns were. We really didn't get a hearing. It was pretty clear that we were small potatoes and they were just dismissing our concerns [saying], "There was no confusion and no room for confusion."

One of the original terms of the negotiation was that AUHS could use the Allegheny University name on the condition that a \$1 million dollar scholarship fund was to be set up at Allegheny College by AHERF. When Allegheny College learned AHERF's plan to use the Allegheny University name more extensively and that AUHS also issued bachelor's degrees, Allegheny College was "no longer willing to negotiate compensation" (Hensley, 1997; Strosnider, 1997 ¶ 10). One Allegheny College administrator chronicled the situation:

And so, I met with their Chief Executive Officer [Sherif Abdelhak], who was quite notorious in the state, and I told him our concerns and he told me flat out that the one thing they would not do is change the name. And I said, "that's unacceptable to us and my board and we'll have to go through legal channels." He lamented that and said, "We can outspend you." I knew that to be correct, but that's what happened with that. They were willing to make some small compromises with regard to clarifications or whatever, but all of their indications earlier had been for naught. We had seen Allegheny University emphasized on the television with the banners they were using at the [Pittsburgh] Penguins' game or the Philadelphia Flyers' game. That's what everybody saw "Allegheny University."

David v. Goliath

Although Allegheny College filed the initial complaint of trademark infringement in Federal District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania on September 13, 1996, action in the case did not begin until January 1997. Allegheny College would take on a

corporation characterized as the “Fort Knox of the hospital business” (Allegheny College v. Allegheny University, 1997; Massey, 1999a, ¶ 1; Strosnider, 1997). In the counterclaim filed by the Allegheny University of Health Sciences, the medical school argued,

For more than 100 years, Allegheny General Hospital has been located a few blocks from the Allegheny River in Allegheny County, near the foothills of the Allegheny Mountains. Because of a strong regional and geographical identification with the word “Allegheny,” the hospital has co-existed throughout its history with literally hundreds of other organizations in western Pennsylvania which bear the name “Allegheny” (Allegheny College v. Allegheny University, 1997).

The issue, however, was beyond just any usage of the “Allegheny” brand. “The concern of Allegheny College is another institution that was also offering baccalaureate degrees operated under a similar name” (“Allegheny College Sues,” 1997, ¶ 2).

As stipulations, Allegheny College desired the following: the discontinuation of the Allegheny University name, financial compensation, and punitive damages. One Allegheny College administrator explained the initial process:

We filed through a firm that specializes in trademarks and intellectual property out of Cleveland . . . We went on through a deposition phase. We were spending money [and] they were spending five to 10 times more money on legal help talent. We thought that, as things unfolded, this was going to be very expensive; but even if we won the judgment, they could

appeal. And they could with what they were spending; they had a huge war chest.

With Allegheny College unable to outspend AUHS, it changed strategies. The adjustment proved successful as one Allegheny College administrator recalled:

So we took another tactic, we took a strategy that involved saying Allegheny College has a great reputation. We've been around a long, long time. We're smaller than they are – let's do David vs. Goliath. We put our good name out there and we began to get press attention. Not that we really started trying to [do this], but the press picked it up, and that's when we really were starting to get some sort of indication that they were willing to make some compromises. We ended up, to make a long story short, with a federal district court order consent agreement that they limit how they used the name. They would use the full name or the initials, they had to emphasize the full name not Allegheny University, [and] they had agreed to pay us several tens of thousands of dollars so that we could do some educational correction – follow up with counselors from high schools and things like this . . . [As] part of that consent agreement, we got the rights to Allegheny University.

With most provisions of the suit settled on March 17, 1997, AUHS additionally agreed to design a new corporate logo (see Figure 9.17) and to surrender the allegheny.edu Internet domain name. AUHS moved their web presence to auhs.edu (now owned by the American University of the Health Sciences), and Allegheny College

subsequently registered the allegheny.edu domain on September 17, 1998. Further stipulations and the proviso that Allegheny University of Health Sciences forfeit any right to appeal was approved and the case was officially closed on June 23, 1997 (Allegheny College v. Allegheny University, 1997; “Internet Archive of ahus.edu,” 1998; Strosnider, 1997; “Who is – allegheny.edu, 2007).

Figure 9.17

Allegheny University of the Health Sciences’ shield logos before and after the lawsuit.



The Fall of a Dynasty

During 1997, AHERF began developing problems far greater than its legal battle with Allegheny College. Some of the issues that surfaced included the dismissal of 1,200 employees, the closing of a hospital, a loss of \$60 million in its physician practices, and the filing of complaints by creditors about not being paid (Dennis & Hamway, 2001). For some time, AHERF officials were also raiding the restricted endowment funds from their

various operations and were funneling these resources elsewhere (Massey, 1999d). In dire financial straits and debts calculated at \$1.5 million, AHREF declared bankruptcy on June 21, 1998 and became “the largest nonprofit health care system failure in history” (Massey, 1999d, ¶ 66; “Terminated of Tenured,” 2000).

By Fall 1998, the Allegheny University of Health Sciences identity was a memory. The AUHS assets were transferred to a new non-profit corporation and the MCP Hahnemann University name was resurrected. Drexel University agreed to manage the operations of the reconstituted entity. In 2002, MCP Hahnemann was merged into Drexel University and operates under the Drexel brand today (“History of the Drexel,” 2007).

Additionally, Drexel University, the heir to AUHS, has relationships with both Allegheny College and Allegany College of Maryland. While Allegheny College’s connection is minimal, it consists of a linkage program that allows two students early admission into Drexel’s College of Medicine if the students have met certain criteria (“Pre-professional Programs,” 2004). Drexel, however, has a more vigorous affiliation with Allegany College of Maryland. In this arrangement, Drexel offers six 2+2 online bachelor’s programs and an online RN to BSN degree to Allegany College of Maryland’s associate degree graduates (“Allegany College of Maryland and Drexel University,” 2007). While programmatically different, the affiliations may cause further confusion among the three schools.

Although Allegheny University of Health Sciences operated under this name for only slightly over two years, the Allegheny appellation was a serious “bone of contention” for several months. As the underdog, Allegheny College was successful in

demonstrating its right to the Allegheny brand. An Allegheny College official concluded, “That was a long expensive process, but it turned out to be right process.” With this victory, it was doubtful that any other institution of higher of education would ever attempt to use the name “Allegheny.”

An Allegheny Passage: Penn State Greater Allegheny

On September 18, 2006, Pennsylvania’s flagship institution of higher education issued a press release that stated, “Penn State’s presence in the Pittsburgh suburb of McKeesport will be taking on a new name: Penn State Allegheny. Approved September 15 by the University’s Board of Trustees, the name change is intended to support the campus’ regional presence, facilitate an expanded vision and evolving mission for the campus, and raise general awareness of the campus” (The Pennsylvania State University, 2006, ¶ 1-2).

Although a date was not set for the planned change, the administration at Allegheny College learned about the proposed name from media reports: “When the Penn State – McKeesport issue came along, it took us totally by surprise. We hadn’t been informed of it and became aware of it through an article in the press. Our reaction was immediate and fierce But, to insist on that name [Allegheny] as a new name, it just didn’t make sense to us because we had been so familiar with the confusion in the last cases. It was almost like here we go again.”

Here in McKeesport, this Valley, this Valley of Fire

Laying claim to the Allegheny name because the campus is located in Allegheny County, Penn State’s presence in the Mon-Yough Valley began in 1934 when it began

offering technical courses in Pittsburgh and suburban McKeesport (Penn State Greater Allegheny, 2007). Located 15 miles upstream from Pittsburgh at the confluence of the Monongahela and Youghiogheny rivers, McKeesport was the former home of the U.S. Steel National Tube Works and the headquarters for the G.C. Murphy Company. When operating at peak production, National Tube had the distinction of being the world's largest producer of seamless pipe (City of McKeesport, n.d.; G.C. Murphy Foundation, 2004; "National Tube Works Waymark," 2007).

When McKeesport's large blast furnaces were belching out smoke and sulfur dioxide 24 hours a day, an eerie reddish-orange glow emanated from the "Tube City's" nighttime skies. Scenes like this no doubt contributed to poet Andrew Kovaly's (n.d.) description: "Here in McKeesport, this valley, this valley of fire." Despite the obvious pollution issues, the industrial growth of Allegheny County's second largest city made it a prime choice for an educational center, as Penn State was prone to establish campus sites "in smaller metropolitan, non-metropolitan, or suburban areas of larger population concentrations" (Phillips & Tysiac, 2005; The Pennsylvania State University, 2005, ¶ 4).

With the end of the Second World War, Penn State set up its McKeesport Center in 1948 in order to provide training for returned veterans. Originally located across the "Mon River" in Dravosburg, the center moved to McKeesport proper in 1952 and began offering associate's degree programs. Following a large donation of land from the Buck family, Penn State McKeesport moved into its current location in 1957 (Penn State Greater Allegheny, 2007). By 2003, Penn State began loosely marketing five Western Pennsylvania campuses (*sans* Erie) under the brand "Penn State Pittsburgh Region." While not officially a combined campus, Penn State Pittsburgh Region included the

following sites: Beaver, Fayette, McKeesport, New Kensington, and Shenango (Internet Archive of Penn State Pittsburgh Region; 2007). In time, the Shenango Campus was dropped from the Pittsburgh Region designation (Penn State Pittsburgh Region, 2007).

Winds of Change

Although Penn State had dissolved its two combined campuses (Berks-Lehigh Valley College and the Capitol College) in 2005, there was a suggestion that Penn State formally merge the operations of the McKeesport and New Kensington locations under the name “Penn State Pittsburgh” (The Pennsylvania State University, 2005; Senate Committee on University Planning, 2005). This was the first inkling that a new identity for the McKeesport campus could be on the horizon. At the December 2005 meeting of the faculty senate, McKeesport associate professor Delia Conti directed a question toward university president Graham Spanier:

I want to say Penn State Allegheny, and that is part of my question. I have a high school senior, Penn State is her first choice, and due to circumstances beyond my control, I have a houseful of seniors, and they talk about Penn State UP [University Park] or Penn State Erie. They never talk about Penn State McKeesport, Penn State New Kensington, Penn State Beaver, [or] Penn State Fayette. They go to Erie, not because of the beautiful city or the weather, but because there are four thousand students. Why not make the bold move and have a Penn State Pittsburgh. I know it would take a lot but it is not hard to figure out why students are picking UP and Erie, and not McKeesport (“Comments by the President,” 2005, “Questions” section).

In his response, President Spanier minimized the chance for a forthcoming name change:

It has been mentioned as a possibility before. We do not actually have a campus in Pittsburgh. I think two of those three campuses are actually in Allegheny County, but one is not, so even Penn State Allegheny does not quite capture it. It is not one spot anyway, it is three. Is Fayette part of that or not? Well, no, but some people might say they are just a little bit down the road too. We are looking very broadly at all of those kinds of questions . . . What is the future of our campuses? What should their mission be? I suppose what should we call them and how should they be organized? We are not contemplating any dramatic changes at the moment, but we know we really need to think ahead on some of these questions. What you're suggesting is conceptually consistent with the kinds of issues that are on the table. I do not want to say more than that because we are not really thinking about changing anybody's name right now. I do not want to get people nervous about that. We are looking at these kinds of issues that center around the question that you're raising. How do we get high school students out there to think about all of our campuses, in their own right, as being very important? ("Comments by the President," 2005, "Questions" section).

During the Spring 2006 semester, students in Penn State McKeesport's (PSM) Public Relations Media Methods class began analyzing the references of the City of

McKeesport in several local newspapers. The goal was to determine whether McKeesport was viewed positively or negatively. If negative, a proposal would be presented to President Spanier via the faculty senate to change the name (Farino, 2006). Since McKeesport has been in decline since the late 1980s closings of National Tube and G.C. Murphy, an increase in local crime might be enough to warrant the suggestion of a new name. Blogger Jason Togyer, who opposed the name change and had acknowledged a recent wave of crime in the city, observed: “the argument for renaming the campus goes like this: If the name ‘McKeesport’ is associated with decline and crime, then prospective students will be less likely to consider PSM” (2006, “Blue & White” section).

According to Farino, the initial decision was in the hands of the student body. “Penn State McKeesport could very well be giving way to Penn State Allegheny or some similar name. Same campus, different name. It sounds simple, but when you take a closer look, there is a lot of work that goes into the name changing process, and a little part of that work is being done by some of your fellow students” (Farino, 2006, p. 7). Penn State Allegheny was only one of the names that the PSM family was considering. Dr. Conti reported to President Spanier during the March 14, 2006 faculty senate meeting, “I am from Penn State McKeesport, but we would like to change that.” Spanier jokingly replied, “What have you named your campus now? Just so I am informed if I am asked.” After some banter, Conti continued, “This was unanimously passed. The Faculty Senate of the McKeesport Campus recommends that serious consideration be given to the renaming of the McKeesport campus. One possible name could be Penn State Greater Pittsburgh.” Conti promised that Spanier would receive a tee shirt bearing that name (“Comments by the President,” 2006, “Questions” section).

Over the next several months, stakeholders were surveyed and a variety of organizations voted on changing the name and contributed to the decision of a new name. Only about 50% of PSM's student body of 800, however, participated in the process. Robert Dietz, student representative for the Southwest Campus Caucus (including McKeesport), reported, "Most students passed on taking the survey but the students who did take it were more for a name change" (Council of Commonwealth Student Governments, 2006a, "Southwest" section). The local faculty senate, the McKeesport Alumni Society, the campus chancellor, and the McKeesport Advisory Board additionally approved the name (The Pennsylvania State University, 2006; Whipkey, 2006a). The advisory board's decision was not unanimous. McKeesport Mayor Jim Brewster and McKeesport Area School District solicitor Jay Skezas both casts votes against the decision. Additionally, advisory board member D. James Heatherington, the board chair of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center – McKeesport, recused himself from the vote (Cloonan, 2006b). Mayor Brewster resigned from the organization in protest (Belser, 2006a; "Brewster Resigns," 2006; Council of Commonwealth Student Governments, 2006c).

Smokescreen: Stated Reasons for the Name Change

Most of the campus was in White Oak. While the McKeesport's mayor and city council openly opposed a rebranding, Penn State officials provided a variety of reasons for the change (Belser, 2006a). One reason, as McKeesport Chancellor Curtiss Porter argued, was based on the actual location of the campus. While some of the campus was situated in McKeesport, the majority (90%) was located in neighboring White Oak

Borough. According to Porter, the McKeesport name created a “perception of the campus . . . being limited to McKeesport” (Belser, 2006a, ¶ 10; Slagle, 2007a).

The argument for change based upon campus location was tenuous at best. White Oak is the second largest in population of the five municipalities in the McKeesport Area School District (n.d.) and has been associated with the city for decades. The Penn State campus in McKeesport is also within a very short walking distance from both the McKeesport Area High School and the McKeesport Area Technology Center (McKeesport Area Schools, n.d.). One student expressed that she felt that “Penn State McKeesport is like an ‘extension of McKeesport [Area] High School,’ and acts as an easy transitional tool from high school to college for McKeesport area students” (Scripp, 2006, p. 1).

Figure 9.18

Penn State Greater Allegheny’s entrance 30 yards from the White Oak corporation limits.



In addition, both McKeesport and White Oak are members of the Twin Rivers Council of Governments (2006) and share certain resources. Although White Oak is a separate municipality within the district and has a unique zip code (15132), the U.S. Postal Service “search by city” service (2005) discouraged the locality identifier as White Oak, PA for correspondence and returned the database result: “WHITE OAK, PA IS NOT ACCEPTABLE - USE MCKEESPORT.” When a McKeesport campus student suggested to President Graham B. Spanier that the campus name should become “Penn State White Oak,” Spanier realistically countered that “White Oak is a ‘much smaller dot’ than McKeesport” (Scripp, 2006, p. 1). Slightly larger in area than McKeesport, White Oak Borough has about one-third the population (“Community Profile: McKeesport,” 2007; “Community Profile: White Oak,” 2007).

County names are used for Penn State campus sites. Chancellor Porter also argued that a number of the Penn State campus locations are named for the county and not the municipality. In the Greater Pittsburgh area, Porter cited, “there’s Penn State Beaver and Penn State Fayette” (Belser, 2006a, ¶ 7). While five (21%) campuses were named for their counties, 11 (46%) of the Penn State campuses were named for the specific municipalities they served and not for their counties of location (see Figure 9.19 and Table 9.2).

There also appeared to be a misconception that more campuses in the southwest region used the county identification than in reality. When questioned about the McKeesport name change, Jerry Livingston, president of the Council of Commonwealth Student Governments (2006a, “Open forum” section), expressed that “some of the campuses take the name of the county . . . that this especially goes for the south west [sic].” In

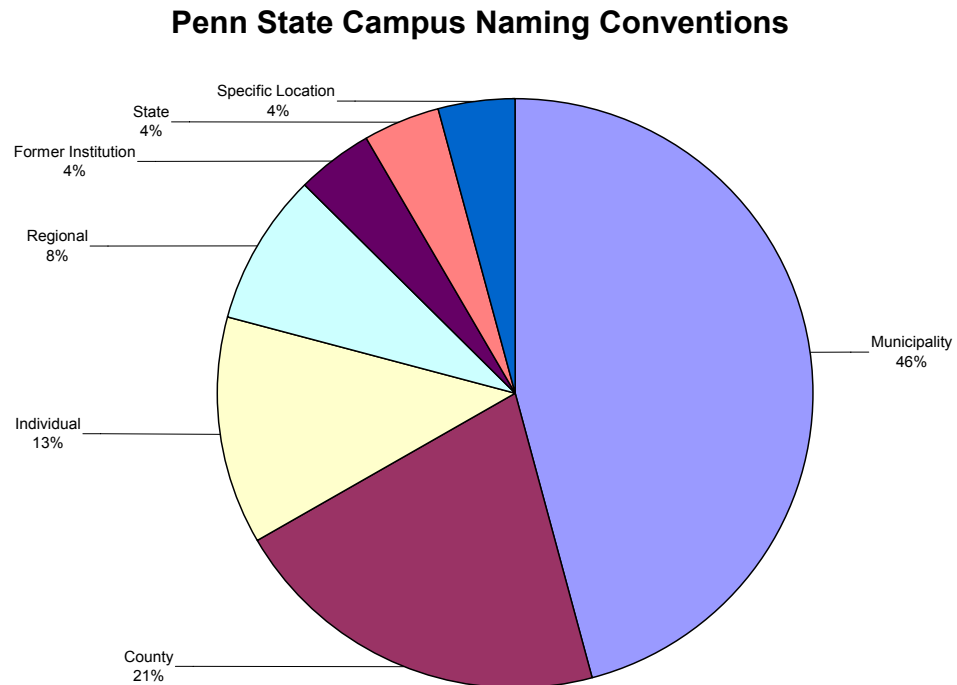
reality, half of the Southwest Caucus of Campuses were named for the county and half were named for the city. For all of western Pennsylvania, three were named for the municipality, two for the county, and one for a geographic region.

Table 9.2
Penn State campuses and primary name types.

| PENN STATE CAMPUSES | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Current Common Name | Primary Name Type |
| Penn State Abington | Municipality |
| Penn State Altoona | Municipality |
| Penn State Beaver | County |
| Penn State Berks | County |
| Penn State Delaware County | County |
| Penn State Dubois | Municipality |
| Penn State Erie: The Berhend College | Municipality |
| Penn State Fayette: The Eberly Campus | County |
| Penn State Harrisburg | Municipality |
| Penn State Hazelton | Municipality |
| Penn State Lehigh Valley | Regional |
| Penn State Mont Alto | Municipality |
| Penn State New Kensington | Municipality |
| Penn State Schuylkill | County |
| Penn State Shenango | Regional |
| Penn State Wilkes-Barre | Municipality |
| Penn State Worthington Scranton | Individual |
| Penn State York | Municipality |
| PENN STATE SPECIAL MISSION PHYSICAL CAMPUSES | |
| Current Common Name | Primary Name Type |
| Penn State Great Valley Graduate Center | Specific Location |
| Penn State Milton S. Hershey College of Medicine | Individual |
| Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center | Individual |
| Pennsylvania College of Technology (AKA Penn College) | State |
| Penn State Dickenson School of Law | Former Institution |

Figure 9.19

Penn State campus naming conventions prior to the McKeesport change.



While the county naming convention was the second largest in number at 21%, only two schools previously changed names from municipal to county identifiers, and both schools did so when each respective campus moved to another location. The first occurred in 1967 when Penn State Pottsville moved to Schuylkill Haven, PA and adopted the name Penn State Schuylkill (Kahler, 2003). When Penn State Wyomissing moved in 1972 to Spring Township (with a Reading mailing address), the name of the institution became Penn State Berks (2005). The university employed the county naming convention for the Penn State Beaver (2005) and Penn State Fayette (2005) campus sites from their respective establishments in 1965.

Chancellor Porter indicated that there is possibility that other Penn State branch campuses would divest themselves of the municipality name in favor of a county designation (Whipkey, 2006a). In addition to Penn State McKeesport's municipality

name, another southwest Pennsylvania campus bears the name of its locale. Penn State New Kensington chancellor, Larry Pollack, emphasized that there were no plans to change the name of the New Kensington campus. According to Pollack (2006, ¶ 5 & 6),

We are proud of our New Kensington heritage as we enter as fifth decade of service to the citizens of southwestern Pennsylvania. We have no plans to regionalize our name. There are no discussions, going on now or in the planning stages, at the campus or University Park on a name change for the campus. We will continue to be known by the city of our birthplace. We are . . . “Penn State New Kensington.”

Only slight changes were made in the identities of two additional county-named sites. Penn State Delaware, founded in 1967, was rechristened as Penn State Delaware County in 1968 (Helene Bludman, personal communication, May 25, 2007). To honor a benefactor, Penn State Fayette (2005) became Penn State Fayette, the Eberly Campus in 2004. Despite the Eberly addition to the Fayette campus name, the two most recent name changes at Penn State Campuses occurred in the 1990s: Penn State Abington and Penn State Lehigh Valley.

In 1995, Penn State Ogontz began to transition from the name of its predecessor institution: the “Ogontz School for Girls.” At that time, the campus became known as Abington-Ogontz to reflect its location in Abington, PA. This joined the location name to a name that honored its institutional heritage. With the restructuring of Penn State’s Commonwealth Campuses, the school first became a “college” within the system in July 1997 and the university shortened the name to Penn State Abington in September 1997

(Smith, T., 2003). This name change identified the school's municipality and not its Montgomery County location.

Name changes occur frequently at the campus level. In *The Daily News*' initial report of the proposed rebranding, Porter argued that "Name changes happen quite frequently at this level" (Whipkey, 2006a, p. A1). Although the statement appears quite nebulous out of context, the article indicated that Porter was referring to campus name changes. An analysis (see Appendix A) of college and university name changes during the years 1996 through 2005 indicated that 17.52% of the regionally accredited institutions in the United States changed names during this period. While Porter's assertion was correct, neither one his two illustrations were adequate to support the change at Penn State McKeesport.

With his claim, Porter cited Penn State's 1953 change from Pennsylvania State College to Pennsylvania State University (Whipkey, 2006a). Unlike the change at Penn State McKeesport, Penn State's 1953 change was to indicate the institution's change in status from a college to a university. PSM did not experience a similar status change. McKeesport resident Michael Joyce (2006) indicated that Porter's reason was fallacious: "The supposition that the name change in 1953 from Pennsylvania State College . . . to Penn State University is analogous to the proposed deletion of the name McKeesport is erroneous. It has no bearing on location" (p. A6).

Porter's second comparison did not fare better. According to Porter, "Carnegie Mellon was at first named Carnegie Tech" (Whipkey, 2006a, p. A4). Unfortunately, Carnegie Mellon University's name change was the result of a merger of Carnegie Institute of Technology and the Mellon Institute (Carnegie Mellon, n.d.). The school

retained the Carnegie Institute of Technology (n.d.) brand as the name of its college of engineering. Penn State McKeesport was not merging with another school and it would not be retaining the former brand name in any fashion. Even *The Daily News* wondered about this justification and theorized, “should we start asking questions about a merger with Community College of *Allegheny* County” (“Why a Name Change,” 2006, p. A6)?

“The Names of Penn State Campuses are not sacred.” Penn State McKeesport Chancellor, Curtiss Porter, illustrated the other 1997 change as evidence that “the names used by Penn State are not sacred. In 1997, Penn State Allentown became Penn State Lehigh Valley” (Belser, 2006a, ¶ 13). The name change of this campus, unlike what would occur at McKeesport, was multifaceted as it included a move and a merger.

Although continuing to use the Penn State Allentown name, the campus had moved from Allentown to suburban Fogelsville in 1977. In 1997, Penn State restructured its campus system and combined Penn State Berks and Penn State Allentown into a multi-campus college named Penn State Berks-Lehigh Valley. With the change, the Allentown campus became known as Penn State Lehigh Valley – an established regional name. Penn State Berks-Lehigh Valley college was dissolved in 2005 and the two campuses returned to self-governing status (The Pennsylvania State University, 2005; Penn State Lehigh Valley, 2005).

Four additional name changes occurred within the system, two of which represented the absorption of schools into Penn State. In 1989, the former Williamsport Area Community College joined the Penn State family as the Pennsylvania College of Technology (nicknamed Penn College) (2007). In 2000, Penn State acquired Dickenson School of Law and merged the two brands as The Penn State Dickenson School of Law

(2007). The remaining two examples were related to campus relocations. When Penn State Scranton moved from Scranton to Dunmore, the campus retained Scranton in its name, but added the name Worthington in honor of a local business entrepreneur: Worthington Scranton (Penn State Worthington Scranton, 2005). Finally, Penn State King of Prussia utilized the most specific name of a Penn State campus when it moved to the Great Valley Corporate Center in Malvern, PA. The School did not utilize a county or municipality identification; it adopted instead the name of the specific complex that became its home as Penn State Great Valley (n.d.). The Great Valley name was also one of regional importance as it designates an area that spans seven Pennsylvania counties as “a very broad lowland that lies south of Blue Mountain in southeastern Pennsylvania” (Pennsylvania Division of Conservation and Natural Resources, n.d., ¶ 1). From the institutional web site, it appears that the campus was named for the center and not for the overall region.

The change of Penn State McKeesport to Penn State Allegheny would have been unlike any other change within the Penn State system. Most name changes occurred in tandem with a campus move – something that had not occurred at PSM since 1957. Other rebrandings resulted because of campus mergers. This was not the case with the McKeesport campus either. While the Allegheny designation was the preferred name for the McKeesport campus, the five existing county-named Penn State campuses had locations near to the geographic center of their respective counties. McKeesport did not.

Sphere of influence beyond McKeesport. Located in the southeast section of Allegheny County, McKeesport is in close proximity to Westmoreland and Washington counties. This fourth argument for the change had more credence. Because the

McKeesport campus attracted many students outside of the McKeesport area, the school boasted a student draw from 31 school districts from this three county region. According to university relations spokesperson Annemarie Mountz, “Our mission has evolved over the years. Even though we serve McKeesport, we were never limited to just that specific area” (Slagle, 2007a, ¶ 4). Some students commuted as much an hour to attend classes at the McKeesport campus, and President Spanier said that a name change would “create a ‘broader degree of appeal’” (Scripp, 2006, p. 1).

Over the years, PSM expanded its outreach. Spanier added, “The mission of this campus has evolved. Although never limited to serving the city of McKeesport, the campus is now involved much more in the Pittsburgh region and in Allegheny County” (Cloonan, 2006c, p. A1). Although Chancellor Porter expressed to Allegheny College that Penn State McKeesport now served all of Allegheny County, this claim was unlikely. While it was entirely possible that PSM served all of Allegheny County, it was not very probable. Two other Penn State campuses (New Kensington and Beaver) served the western or northeastern sectors of the county. With traffic issues in and around Pittsburgh, it is doubtful that a student residing in the western and northern ends of Allegheny County would attend PSM when another Penn State campus was more easily accessible, albeit located in another county.

Porter also argued that the change would “broaden PSM’s scope from the Mon Valley to all of Southwestern Pennsylvania” (Whipkey, 2006a, p. A1). Porter added, “Our largest representation of students come from Allegheny and Westmoreland counties” (Whipkey, 2006a, p. A1). Because of this, the McKeesport name would be limiting in scope; however, the Allegheny and Greater Allegheny names also limit the

service area to one specific county and not to the entire Southwestern Pennsylvania region. Pittman (2006) feared that “the name Allegheny may just convolute both the identification of the institution, as well as its location” (p. A6).

In addition to identity confusion, one White Oak resident considered that the idea of changing the McKeesport campus name would be an exercise in futility:

From its beginning, PSM always had students from a broader region under the present name and the mission hasn’t changed. Students have voiced interests in the programs, activities offered, and in the size of the school. Many students are not interested in large schools. Changing the name does not change the student’s reasons for selecting the school. No matter what the name is, it is still located in McKeesport, and it has a McKeesport mailing address. It would seem to me emphasis should be on marketing its programs and activities (Shaw, 2006, p. A6).

The name change would result in increased enrollment. PSM chancellor Curtiss Porter also believed that the name change would bring about the added benefit of increased enrollment at the McKeesport campus and therefore an economic impact to the region (Whipkey, 2006a). Since none of Penn State’s Commonwealth Campuses recently rebranded from a municipality designation to the county name, adequate data are unavailable. The two most recent significant name changes occurred in 1997 at Penn State Lehigh Valley (municipality to a regional name) and Penn State Abington (former school name to a municipality name).

Table 9.3

Enrollment trends at Penn State Commonwealth Campuses for 1997 and 2002 compared.

| Campus | Gain/Loss | Percentage |
|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Berks | 516 | 28.46% |
| Fayette | 197 | 21.16% |
| Erie | 501 | 15.62% |
| Lehigh Valley | 87 | 14.26% |
| Worthington Scranton | 190 | 13.39% |
| Schuylkill | 104 | 10.53% |
| Altoona | 348 | 10.01% |
| New Kensington | 82 | 9.06% |
| McKeesport | 59 | 6.61% |
| Wilkes-Barre | 45 | 5.58% |
| Delaware County | 82 | 5.23% |
| Abington | -83 | -2.54% |
| Hazleton | -38 | -2.73% |
| Dubois | -32 | -3.09% |
| Mont Alto | -41 | -3.40% |
| Beaver | -27 | -3.44% |
| Shenango | -48 | -4.65% |
| Harrisburg | -178 | -5.21% |
| York | -125 | -6.01% |

In analyzing enrollment numbers from 1997 and five years later in 2002, there does not appear to be any correlation between changing a Penn State campus name with an increase in enrollment (see Table 9.3). While Penn State Lehigh Valley experienced an enrollment growth of 14.26%, three other campuses had higher enrollment percentages and a total of six had larger aggregate increases than Lehigh Valley without changing names. Penn State Abington actually lost students following its change from Penn State Ogontz. The campus posted a 2.54% decrease in enrollment over the six year period.

While some movement occurred at most of the 19 campus sites, enrollment trends for the entire six year period remained flat. Penn State McKeesport had overall growth of 59 students during the same period and achieved a 6.61% increase in students. Additionally, Ernst (2006) reported that PSM's "fall 2006 registration has increased roughly 35 percent since the spring semester" (p. A6). Both increases occurred without

changing the name of the campus. While referencing the recent 35% increase in enrollment, Dennis Pittman, McKeesport City Administrator, reasoned that “it connotes that deleting the name McKeesport from its association with Penn State statistically appears to be an unwise oxymoron” (2006, p. A6). Jim Brewster, mayor of McKeesport, concluded that changing the name “is a very radical move for a very unpredictable result” (Cloonan, 2006a, p. A1).

In addition to its unpredictability, the literature does not support the claim of increased enrollment based on institutional name changes. While Koku (1997) observed significant increases at certain institutions experiencing a strategic name change, he concluded that there was no statistically significant correlation between a strategic name change and an increase in enrollment. McKeesport mayor, Jim Brewster added, “I don’t see the value of changing the name from Penn State McKeesport. I don’t think that this will increase enrollment at the campus” (Whipkey, 2006a, p. A4). Additionally, Brewster had not seen any research to substantiate Porter’s position (Whipkey, 2006a).

The name would provide ownership to Penn State alumni. In Penn State’s official press release about the name change decision, the University said the Allegheny name would appeal to a large group of Penn State alumni. “The new moniker also is expected to give a sense of ownership to campus alumni and Penn Staters living in Allegheny County, and reinforce the campus’ position as the only Penn State location in the county. More than 22,000 Penn State alumni live in Allegheny County – the largest concentration of alumni residing in any one county in the nation – and approximately 4,000 Penn State students hail from the county” (The Pennsylvania State University, 2006, ¶ 3). With the campus alumni society approving the name, former Penn State

McKeesport students appeared to already have a sense of ownership with the local campus.

It is questionable, however, that alumni of other branch campuses or of the main campus in University Park would have any loyalty to a campus that they never attended. Mercatoris (2006) discovered a number of factors individually spawned alumni support and loyalty. These dynamics included dorm life (at an nominal level), developing relationships while a student at the campus, an awareness and appreciation of the financial needs of the institution, a sense of pride toward and bonding with the campus, and the opinion that the institution made a difference in the alumnus' life and could do the same for future students. In each case, a personal connection with the campus location was required. Therefore, it is unlikely that any non-McKeesport campus Penn State alumni would be drawn toward a campus site with which they had no personal connection whatsoever.

Even Penn State McKeesport alumni may not have the loyalty to the local campus that they might with the University Park main campus. Mountain State University was aware of this issue with a number of its Beckley College alumni. When the school was a junior college, it acted as feeder school to Concord, Bluefield State, Morris Harvey, Marshall, WVU, and other four-year institutions. One Mountain State administrator observed, "While we have some very loyal Beckley College alumni, we find the vast majority of these folks have a stronger connection to the institution where they earned their four-year degree and not to our school."

As with a number of the branch campuses in the Penn State system, many students would take their first two years of study at the local campus and transfer during their

junior year to the main campus. It is reasonable to assume that alumni who obtained their four-year degrees at University Park might have a stronger connection to that particular campus of Penn State rather than to any branch campus. Another draw for alumni loyalty is athletics. While the McKeesport campus boasts of men's and women's basketball, men's baseball, women's softball, men's soccer, women's volleyball, and golf, these sports cannot compare with alumni loyalty generated by Joe Paterno and Nittany Lion football ("Athletics and Fitness," 2005). In any case, the name might not make a difference whether a person was loyal to the particular branch campus.

In some instances, as with the University of Mary Washington, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, California State University – East Bay, and Case-Western Reserve, the institutions disenfranchised many alumni by the very rebranding process ("New Name," 2003; Okoben, 2007; Tisdell, 2003; "Yes to CSUH," n.d.). One alumnus expressed, "I was disappointed when I heard about it [the name change]. It felt like the school was denying its history, its roots in the community" (Wilkinson, 2007). A Westmoreland County alumnus responded, "It is my belief that changing the name of the Penn State campus in McKeesport would be wrong" (Davis, 2006, p. A6). Joyce (2006) added, "My recollection is there has been no groundswell from the alumni or the taxpayers to change the name from Penn State – McKeesport Campus to something more generic. Similarly, it would be a travesty to forego over half a century of graduates who proudly called Penn State MCKEESPORT their university" (p. A6).

Fuel to the Fire: Stated Reasons vs. the Real Reason

While Penn State was determined to build a case for its actions, one McKeesport resident opined, "Any reason given for the change by P[enn] S[tate] is superfluous, since

you don't see them rushing to change the name of any of its other satellite schools” (Cheryl in McKeesport, 2007a, ¶ 3). In short, while Penn State believed that their aforementioned explanations justified changing the name of the campus, these stated reasons, were perceived to have camouflaged the real reason: Penn State wanted to disassociate itself from McKeesport’s bad reputation. Although Penn State did not communicate this directly to the press, internally it appeared to be the deciding factor. A year prior to the name change, students had already begun to analyze the perception of McKeesport in three area newspapers in an effort to determine if the campus should have a new name (Farino, 2006). The students actually discovered a number of neutral references to the city. In the analysis, McKeesport was portrayed badly in the media because the reporting of “crime made up a huge percent of the total articles”; to which the students concluded, “Most of the negative things that have happened in McKeesport within the past year were blown way out of proportion because of the media” (Bell, DeZorzi, & Farino, 2006, p. 3).

When reporting on the reasons for the name change, the Council of Commonwealth Student Governments (2006a, “Open forum” section) President Jerry Livingston stated, “McKeesport isn’t the hottest spot in Pittsburg[h] right now.” At the next meeting, Robert Dietz, the Southwest Campus Caucus Representative explained, “the town and the district were having problems. They [Penn State] also didn’t want it [the McKeesport campus] to have a bad name/rep. They wanted a more community name to reach out to a broader basis” (Council of Commonwealth Student Governments, 2006b, “Southwest report” section). One McKeesport student observed, “After so many talks of the name change, we have come to realize that regardless of the crime rates, hearsay, and bad

reputation – McKeesport is not the happening city it once was . . . At what point did everyone become embarrassed of it?” (Michna, 2006, p. 3). One resident explained, “The name was changed because McKeesport is a poor and struggling city with a significant minority population and a crime rate higher than the surrounding suburban areas, and Penn State doesn't . . . [want] to be too closely identified with our rep. They are struggling to attract more people to its campus and thought a name change would further distance it from the area” (Cheryl in McKeesport, 2007a, ¶ 2).

When President Spanier visited the McKeesport campus on November 9, 2006, he quizzed McKeesport students about the negative reputation of the city. One corporate communications major responded, “It may be because of the crime that occurs around the area” (Scripp, 2006, p. 1). Another student added, “our crime rate here [on campus] is virtually 0%, despite the negativity that is sometimes associated with [the area] out[side of the] campus” (Scripp, 2006, p. 1). Spanier concluded that the new name would help “‘minimize negative perceptions’ of the McKeesport campus” (Scripp, 2006, p. 1).

Although the university president acknowledged the issue, Chancellor Porter attempted to negate what most stakeholders either knew or suspected. An editorial in McKeesport’s local paper, *The Daily News*, indicated, “Porter denied that a change is prompted by all the weird news generated recently in this area.” To which the paper retorted, “We are skeptical about that” (“Why a name change?” 2006, p. A6).

Here in McKeesport, This Valley, This Valley of Ire

Whatever the reason, City of McKeesport officials and residents reacted emotionally to the abandonment of the McKeesport identity. McKeesport city officers

passed a resolution in early September 2006 requesting that the Penn State board not rename the campus (Cloonan, 2006b). Mayor Jim Brewster contacted Penn State president Graham Spanier for a meeting to discuss the name change possibility. The personal audience was not granted and Spanier replied in writing: “We are giving this matter serious thought and appreciate your feedback. Curtiss Porter will keep you informed. Meanwhile, thanks for you and city council’s thinking on this matter” (Cloonan, 2006b, p. A1). State senator Sean Logan, whose district included both the McKeesport and New Kensington campuses, urged President Spanier to reconsider, “Changing the name of the branch campus would send the wrong message at this crucial time. The city of McKeesport and the Mon Valley deserve the support of the Penn State University as it continues to rebound from the collapse of the steel industry” (Cloonan, 2006d, p. A3). Even Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell expressed that he was not consulted and “did not understand the reasoning for the move” (Cloonan, 2006d, p. A6).

With the amount of negative publicity and the lack of movement on the part of Penn State, it became obvious that the decision had already been made and that the concerns of McKeesport and state political leaders were being ignored both at the local level and at University Park. One official was quoted as saying, “It’s a slap at the city” (Belser, 2006a, ¶ 8). Upset with the university’s decision, city administrator Dennis Pittman responded, “Penn State is a very, very prestigious university. To have the name of that university associated with your city, if you're interested in promoting and changing and reinventing yourself in the 21st century, I think that's important” (Chute, 2006, ¶ 5). Councilman Paul Shelly, Jr., a PSM alumnus, disclosed that he was “very offended” while councilman and PSM baseball coach Michael Cherepko admitted that “this is just

absolutely ridiculous” (Cloonan, 2006a, pp. A1 & A4). One administrator admitted that the decision was unwise. “The name change only seemed to benefit one person: the campus’ chief executive officer. I can’t understand it. He’s from here. He went to school here, yet, he has managed to cause bad blood between the city and us.” Furthermore, this administrator questioned Porter’s earlier decision to remove the Buck name from the student union building. “If I were a Buck family member, I would be greatly upset. They donated the land for this campus.”

Figure 9.20

McKeesport’s International Village banner – two blocks from the campus.



City council vice president Darryl Segina, who chairs McKeesport’s annual International Village festival, promised to block Penn State’s participation at the three day event held every August in Renziehausen Park. For years, Penn State sold its famous ice cream at the park adjacent to the Penn State campus (Belser, 2006b). During 2006’s

event, the Penn State McKeesport Alumni Society raised \$4,798 of which \$3,000 was earmarked for endowed scholarships (“PSM Alumni,” 2006). True to the city’s word, Penn State was not granted a booth space at the 48th Annual International Village held August 14, 15, and 15, 2007. An administrator guessed that “a lot of people will miss the ice cream this year.”

In addition to losing its space at International Village, Councilman Dale R. McCall recommended renaming the access road into the campus from University Drive to McKeesport Drive or McKeesport Boulevard (Belser, 2006a). Additionally, City Council asked the solicitor to research the conveyances of the Buck family property to Penn State to see if any caveats regarding the campus’ name were specified in the deed transfer (Belser, 2006a). Furthermore, all in-kind services once provided by the city to Penn State were being discontinued and the university would need to find other providers (“Brewster Resigns,” 2006). McKeesport would no longer provide Penn State with free rentals at Renziehausen Park and its Helen Richey (Baseball) Field for campus activities. McKeesport’s large city park borders the campus’ property (Cloonan, 2006d). One administrator admitted that Penn State was required to pay \$500 per term when previously McKeesport did not charge Penn State for usage. In August 2007, one Penn State Greater Allegheny administrator revealed that the city was also holding up building permits for a loading dock project that was to begin the previous May.

In addition to city council’s disapproval, the mayor’s office reacted negatively to the name change idea. Mayor Jim Brewster promised that the city would remove the Penn State campus from tours it conducts with prospective business partners (Slagle 2007b). The name change became a source of embarrassment for the city as Mayor

Brewster added, “When businesses ask why they've dropped the name – and I've been asked – there's really no good answer” (Slagle, 2007a, ¶ 10). Brewster vowed to seek partnerships with other institutions in the region whereas Penn State McKeesport was previously the institution of first choice (Slagle, 2007a), which, Chancellor Porter responded, “I think more partnerships with more universities are cool” (Slagle, 2007a ¶ 13).

In addition, McKeesport's mayor surveyed municipal leaders from a number of the surrounding communities and only one favored the change: the mayor of White Oak Borough (Cheryl in McKeesport, 2007b). Support for keeping the McKeesport name came from the elected officials of the nearby cities of Clariton and Duquesne, and the boroughs of Dravosburg, Port Vue, and Versailles (Shaw, 2006). Duquesne mayor Phil Krivacek announced that his city was “staunchly against Penn State changing the name of Penn State McKeesport” and that “We support Mayor James Brewster and their opposition of the name change” (Whipkey, 2006b). Brewster added, “I have yet to have one person agree with this decision anywhere except for a handful of people on the advisory board, most of whom are not McKeesporters . . . There is going to be more negativity coming out this than they can imagine” (Cloonan, 2006b, p. A4). Mayor Brewster concluded, “My continued reaction to this is that it is a sad day for Penn State University and for the City of McKeesport. It seems to me like [Penn State] abandoned McKeesport” (Slagle, 2007a, ¶ 8).

In addition to local officials, residents were polarized on the issue. Of the 10 letters concerning the issue and printed in *The Daily News*' editorial section, only two favored the name change. Both supporters were White Oak residents and included Ron

Massung (2006), a White Oak Borough Council member, and Hugh Coughanour (2006), a former PSM campus advisory board member. In addition to these supporters, Allegheny County Executive, Dan Onorato, appeared to have a neutral stance concerning the issue. “Regardless what the name is, it is a major institution anchored in McKeesport and White Oak . . . I am more concerned that they keep a presence in the region” (Cloonan, 2006d, p. A3).

The populace of McKeesport, however, disliked the change. One McKeesport resident commented, “As a native and current McKeesporter, to put it bluntly, I am annoyed. As a city, we feel insulted by the name change” (Cheryl in McKeesport, 2007a, ¶ 1). Liberty Borough resident Raymond Zajicek reasoned, “Penn State wants to shed what it perceives as a negative when attaching its name to the city of McKeesport, which has been a good neighbor to the university for 50 years. I dare say that if the school was Penn State Fox Chapel or Penn State Mt. Lebanon [two affluent Pittsburgh suburbs], there would be no name change” (2006, p. A6). Melissa Ernst (2006, p. A3) of McKeesport added, “My son is only 10 years old and would like [someday] to attend PSU . . . Is it fair that someone like him is proud to attend Penn State in McKeesport, when Penn State is not proud to be IN McKeesport?” McKeesporter Glenn F. Sievern advised Penn State to “Leave well enough alone” (2006, p. A6). One PSU alumnus equated the abandonment of the McKeesport name akin to the loss of the steel industry in the 1980s: “Although the campus is not leaving, once again this community must bear the shame of not being good enough” (Garvin, 2006). Another resident observed,

If this change were part of a change at *all* Penn State campuses – let’s say

Penn State New Kensington was going to become “Penn State

Westmoreland,” and Penn State Altoona was going to become “Penn State Blair” – then I think McKeesporters would grumble and move on. This change, however, only seems to be targeting Our Fair City, and I suspect that's why it's leaving a bad taste in the mouths of McKeesporters. Their offense is understandable (Togyer, 2006, ¶ 14 & 15).

From the very beginning, McKeesport's local paper, *The Daily News*, did not support this decision. The editor expressed the following, “If he [Porter] and his advisors want to slap the faces of alumni who have supported PSM for decades, they will succeed” (“Why a name change?” 2006, p. 6). In addition, the editor prompted action upon the part of his readers, “If you share our angst, let some people know” and he provided the addresses of Penn State's board chair and vice chair and the email address of President Spanier (“Why a name change?” 2006, p. 6). Finally, he concluded, “More than half a century of tradition is at stake” (“Why a name change?” 2006, p. 6).

The Smelting Process and a Name in Flux

Although McKeesport's protests and pleas to President Spanier and Chancellor Porter were unsuccessful in persuading the university to keep the current name, a challenger 112 miles to the north would have some success in modifying the Penn State Allegheny moniker. Allegheny College began mounting a defense for the fourth time. Allegheny president Richard J. Cook warned, “Introducing a name of an already existing institution is setting up [both institutions] for problems” (Porter, 2006, ¶ 2). Cook further explained, “When one refers to Allegheny in higher education, it's widely recognized that they are referring to Allegheny College. It's our brand, if you will, and Allegheny has

had that name and this distinction since 1815. We've worked hard for it" (Schackner, 2006, ¶ 3).

While Allegheny College took issue with Penn State Allegheny, the Community College of Allegheny County, even though it once had a presence in McKeesport, did not have a problem with the new name. When CCAC's South Campus opened in 1967, it was first located in McKeesport. Following the 1972 completion of the South Campus' permanent location, CCAC continued serving the community with a small center in McKeesport. To meet community demands, an expanded Mon Valley Center opened in January 2000. Operating continuously in McKeesport until 2004, CCAC closed the center when enrollment dwindled to 24 students. CCAC credited the drop in enrollment to a lack of free parking and available daycare facilities – amenities available at the South Campus location across the river (Community College of Allegheny County, 2000; Elizabeth, 2004).

Although no longer operating a center in McKeesport, CCAC has two campuses and one center located in close proximity to the city. CCAC Assistant to the President Bonita L. Richardson explained the institution's laissez faire attitude toward the Penn State Allegheny name, "While our South and Boyce Campuses and our Braddock Hills center are located nearby, we believe there is a clear distinction between CCAC and Penn State University's branch campus" (personal communication, June 4, 2007). Apparently, Penn State assumed that this was the case with Allegheny College. It was not, and according to one Allegheny College administrator, Penn State dismissed all causes for concern: "I immediately began to mobilize the people including the senior staff. I alerted them. I started to have conversations with board members . . . I remember having

conversations with Curtiss Porter, the chancellor of Penn State McKeesport, over the phone. He appeared to be taken by surprise by our objection and gave me a lot of reasons why it wasn't a problem." Porter would provide Allegheny College the same line of reasoning as he had previous given the media. An Allegheny College administrator remembered the arguments' including the following:

The great difference in the missions of the institutions, the size of the institution, [and] the location of the institution. [These were] all the justifications of why they had done that [made the name change], including really not even being located in McKeesport but in White Oak. They served a wider audience than in McKeesport, in fact all of Allegheny County. They wanted to broaden their reach and their identity. It [the name Allegheny] is more appropriate. The satellite campuses often use the county name, and there is just no room for confusion or the shock. They hadn't even thought that there would be a problem that's why they hadn't contacted us. It just hadn't occurred to them. I simply tried the best I could to convince them him why this was a bad idea.

Chancellor Porter saw no branding conflicts with the proposed name; however, he promised to contact the appropriate individuals at University Park. Allegheny College began making calls as well.

He said that he would contact the vice president (John J. Romano) from the central campus because that was the person who had the authority and so forth. So apparently he did that, but in the meantime, I also contacted that vice president. I contacted the public affairs office. I made a lot of calls

and it was pretty clear that I was just getting the same kind of response – all of the reasons this wasn’t a problem for us. But also the vice president assured me that he would talk to President Spanier . . . He did and I got back a letter . . . It talked about all the reasons this was not a problem for us. It sounded a lot like what I had heard before.

Branding Double Standard.

What frustrated Allegheny College the most, regarding Penn State’s dismissal of the name change as being an actual issue, was that Penn State had fiercely protected their own brand when it appeared to be under attack. One Allegheny College administrator explained,

I know that if Penn State has any kind of threat to their name they pull out all the stops. In fact, we had an example. There was a place that called themselves “University Orthopedics.” Penn State sued them. Can you imagine? That’s not even close to what we were opposed to and they guarded their name and identity so much that they filed an action against a small private company that couldn’t possibly be confused with a university in terms of its mission. What they were worried about was some association with the university.

The issues between Penn State and University Orthopedics existed from 1991 to 1999 and included a contractual agreement, a lawsuit, an appeal, and an eventual settlement. In August 1991, a group of orthopedic physicians set up practice and named it University Orthopedics. Like other businesses in the area, the practice used “University”

in their name. Penn State claimed that the business was hoping to profit through “associating themselves with the prestige and reputation of Penn State University” (Strout, 1995, ¶ 7). In 1992, both sides agreed to cooperate under the condition that University Orthopedics use a disclaimer that they were not affiliated with Penn State. Due to omission of the disclaimers in three specific advertisements, Penn State filed suit on December 29, 1995 for trademark infringement and breach of contract (Cheng, 1996; Strout, 1995). In addition, Penn State claimed that the name caused confusion between the private business and the Penn State Center for Sports Medicine that the university operated (Alaya, 1996). Legal counsel for University Orthopedics argued, “Several businesses in the State College area use ‘university’ in their names, such as University Realty, University Book Center, University Terrace Apartments, and University Park Nursing Home, but have never been sued by Penn State” (Alaya, 1996, p. 1A).

In June 1996, Centre County Judge David Grine ruled in favor of the practice citing “while ‘Penn State University’ is a registered trademark, the word ‘university’ is a generic term that belongs to the public, thereby rejecting the claim that the word ‘university’ in the company's name violates Penn State’s rights and the federal Trademark Act of 1946. ‘Under Pennsylvania and federal law, descriptive, geographical and generic words, as well as words of common or general usage, belong to the public and are not capable of exclusive appropriation by anyone’” (Alaya, 1996, p. 1A). Immediately the institution filed an appeal. Penn State’s Director of Public Information, Bill Mahon, responded, “We're not claiming any exclusive rights to the word ‘university.’ Rather, Penn State’s concern has always been that patients and the public understand that

physicians who practice under the name University Orthopedics are not employed by or affiliated with Penn State” (Cheng, 1996, p. 1A).

The suit was finally settled in 1999 when Penn State agreed to allow “the fair use of the term ‘university’ while requiring the company, which specializes in bone and joint injuries, to use a disclaimer when promoting or communicating its services to the public” (“University Orthopedics,” 1999, p. 5A). With the illustration of the “University Orthopedics” case, Allegheny College administrators countered, “Our point is made. We rest our case. People should guard their institution’s name rigorously and Penn State guards their name like mad, and so should we.”

Unlike Penn State’s claim that University Orthopedics was attempting to benefit by adopting the name “university,” Allegheny College officials did not believe that this was intentional.

We never asserted that McKeesport was attempting to trade on our good name. I don’t have any reason to believe that they did it on purpose. On the other hand, we have a very good name. Confusion with us in virtually any setting would cause a problem. We have a name that is golden on the national scene. When I told the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania (AICUP), an 85 member association and I was on the board, I mentioned to them that this was coming along. Everyone around the table, every board member, immediately got what I was talking about. Nobody said, “Well that doesn’t really seem like that is going to be.” They said, “Why would they do that?” They were just stunned and they said, “Why in the world would they do that?” They

voted immediately to write a letter in our support. I didn't have to make the case, they volunteered to do that. I said, "I'm not asking you to do that." "We want to do it." They understand what that name means. They instantly got it. Why wouldn't a Penn State branch campus or satellite campus understand that? I don't know. I do know that if they didn't think of it, they should have. If they did think of it and just overwrote us, they did something very wrong because they didn't bother to talk with us.

An Understanding of the Issue

In addition to not notifying Allegheny College about the change, the issue was a last minute addition to the September 15, 2006 meeting agenda and gave the appearance that this decision was rushed through the full board (Cloonan, 2006b). While Penn State appeared to consider any issues regarding branding as being a non issue, Allegheny College persistently lobbied for change. As one administrator recalled,

So we used all of the connections we could with our state legislators, people in the governor's office, and so on to try and get some attention. I also contacted a member or two of the board at Penn State and found out that this thing had passed through there almost as a nominal issue. There was really not much discussion. There was no consideration. When they heard what the concerns were, they said this should have had a better airing and so let's see what we can do. That led eventually to a meeting between President Spanier; Justice Cynthia Baldwin of the State Supreme Court, who is the Chair of the Penn State board; Jane Earll, a state

legislator who was on our board; and Tom Frampton, an attorney in Pittsburgh who is a former member of our board. We sat in Pittsburgh and had a lunch meeting and a long thorough discussion.

One of Penn State's representatives, Justice Baldwin, may have had a personal interest in the issue as she was a McKeesport native, a resident of White Oak, a member of the Executive Committee of the McKeesport Campus Advisory Board, as well as chair of Penn State's full board ("Governor Rendell," 2006: "The Honorable Cynthia A. Baldwin," 2006). Unlike the talks with Allegheny University of Health Sciences a decade earlier, the Allegheny College team felt that at least their issues were being heard and understood, as one administrator recalled:

I think that was the first time that President Spanier fully realized what the issues were for us. He and Justice Baldwin both said at the end of that meeting that they had a much better understanding. President Spanier promised me that he would take this back for further consideration. It was going to be difficult because this had been through a long process of groups on the McKeesport campus, the central campus, a lot of arrangements, and a lot of consultations with faculty and alumni; but he said he would take our concerns back and see if we could reach some sort of solution to this.

Forging a Compromise

The result of this discussion was a compromise by Penn State to name the campus as Penn State Greater Allegheny. Although Allegheny College wanted Allegheny out of

the name completely, it agreed to the proposed change. As one administrator remembered,

Now we preferred that the name Allegheny be taken out altogether. He [Spanier] did really indicate to us that that would be difficult because of all of the conversations that had taken place and that [name] was a very popular decision. We did suggest a couple of alternates and one that we particularly liked, and that was Penn State Three Rivers, which is regional, which would eliminate any confusion at all, and we were hopeful that that might work. In fact, I saw President Spanier write it down. So, I had further hope. He promised me that it would take several weeks and that he would get back to me before a certain date and to his word he did.

While Allegheny College was not entirely pleased with the end result, they did acknowledge that President Spanier had taken it upon himself to attempt to resolve the issue even though the compromise name continued to include “Allegheny.” An administrator explained,

Then I received a letter from him that was quite extensive in detail about the process he had gone back through and all the people that he consulted. I had every reason to believe that he had a personal hand in this and spent some time with this. I appreciated that and I was quite impressed that he himself would see this through and I thought that probably he was the only person that could do it. What was given to us was really something that had gone through the process again and there it was as a given. That there was no question “would this be acceptable to you?” “This is what we

decided, and we hope and trust that this will eliminate confusion and that was [the name] Penn State – Greater Allegheny”. . . So it was movement, it was an effort of compromise, and we realized that Greater Allegheny wouldn’t be as likely to be confused. The board and I accepted this. I would say we accepted it reluctantly, but from a tactical perspective, we thought we had to.

Significance or lack thereof of “Greater” Allegheny. On Friday, January 19, 2007, the Penn State board of trustees approved the new name of Greater Allegheny for the McKeesport campus and the signs were unveiled the same afternoon (Pefferman, 2007; “Trustees Approve,” 2007). The relative speed with which this specific name change occurred was notable. When the original name change to Penn State Allegheny was announced, the university indicated that the change would go into effect at some unknown future date. According to the release, “As there are many details to work out regarding the changeover, a firm date has not been set yet” (The Pennsylvania State University, 2006, ¶ 7).

The official record, however, did specify a target date. The board minutes from the September 15, 2006 meeting approving the name change stated that the new name would become effective on July 1, 2007 (The Pennsylvania State University Board of Trustees, 2006). When the board approved the compromise name on January 19, 2007, the change from Penn State Allegheny to Penn State Greater Allegheny went into effect immediately (The Pennsylvania State University Board of Trustees, 2007). One may speculate that Penn State may have acted with swiftness to suppress any additional debates concerning the campus’ identification. With all the negative publicity concerning

the name, students began to question its legitimacy soon after the initial announcement in the fall (DeZorzi, 2006; Sackett, 2006).

Figure 9.21

Something old, something new, something borrowed, some in Penn State blue.



As early as September 2006, McKeesport Student Government President, Courtney Ely-Denberg, reported, “students’ feelings on the name change are split 50/50 and [the decision] had also upset some members of the Campus Advisory Board” (Dietz, 2006, p. 4). One student also indicated that, “She and her friends felt the campus was pretending to be something it wasn’t. The attraction for most of them to the campus . . . was first and foremost that it is a Penn State campus and second that it was close to home. The name simply identified it as the campus that is located in McKeesport” (Wilkinson, 2007). An administrator revealed, “most of our students were apathetic toward the

change. Only our local students seemed to care if the name was changed and they were not for it.”

With or without student support, the campus was officially Penn State Greater Allegheny. According to Penn State spokesperson Annemarie Mounts, “the new name better marks the campus’ regional presence” (Slagle, 2007a, ¶ 5). While Penn State Allegheny was Penn State’s initial choice for the McKeesport campus, the compromise name of “Greater Allegheny” had no precedence of usage in the area as an established regional name. One resident complained, “This just makes me shake my head and groan. The name change was going to offend McKeesporters no matter what – but at least ‘Penn State Allegheny’ was ‘short and sweet.’ ‘Penn State Greater Allegheny’ is just *clunky*. No one refers to Allegheny County or the Pittsburgh metropolitan area as ‘Greater Allegheny’” (Togyer, 2007, ¶ 6). Another resident added, “Greater Allegheny sounds silly” (Cheryl in McKeesport, 2007a, ¶ 3). Even one administrator conceded that, “‘Greater Pittsburgh’ as a campus name would have made more sense.”

To illustrate the lack of usage as a regional identifier, a search of the name “Greater Allegheny” produced three businesses and one athletic conference that represented the bulk of the local references using “Greater Allegheny” as a name (“Google Search of ‘Greater Allegheny,’” 2007; “Switchboard Search of ‘Greater Allegheny,’” 2007). While only one of the businesses was near to McKeesport, two of the entities identified as “Greater Allegheny” were closer to other Penn State campuses. One business, the Greater Allegheny Financial Group in Aliquippa, was located in Beaver and not Allegheny County and was only four miles from Penn State Beaver.

Figure 9.22

The compromise name: Penn State Greater Allegheny.



An additional use of the “Greater Allegheny” name was applied to the Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League’s (2006) Greater Allegheny Conference, which contains seven AAA high schools in the area. While two of the schools were closer to the McKeesport campus (and one of these considerably close), most were located in closer proximity to Penn State New Kensington than to McKeesport (see Table 9.4). On average, the Greater Allegheny Conference high schools were closer to New Kensington than to any other Penn State Campus in the region. Ultimately closer to New Kensington, two of the high schools were closer to Penn State Beaver than to McKeesport.

Table 9.4

Greater Allegheny References and Mileage Distance from Penn State Campuses.

| Greater Allegheny Entity | McKeesport | New Kensington | Beaver |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Greater Allegheny Housing Corporation | 13 | 17 | 43 |
| Greater Allegheny Kiski Board of Realtors | 33 | 5 | 42 |
| Greater Allegheny Financial Group, LLC | 45 | 43 | 4 |
| Greater Allegheny Conference High Schools | AV 31 | AV 22 | AV 40 |
| Franklin Regional High School | 16 | 15 | 44 |
| Hampton High School | 20 | 21 | 26 |
| Highlands High School | 33 | 5 | 42 |
| Indiana High School | 56 | 53 | 88 |
| Keystone Oaks High School | 14 | 24 | 34 |
| Knoch High School | 45 | 19 | 29 |
| Pine-Richland High School | 34 | 20 | 20 |

As stated previously, one of the arguments for the change to “Allegheny” and then eventually to “Greater Allegheny” was to reflect the campus’ regional presence. Besides Penn State Greater Allegheny, two other Penn State locations adopted a regional naming schema: Penn State Shenango and Penn State Lehigh Valley. In both cases, the campuses were identified by the campus location’s primary watershed: the Shenango and Lehigh Rivers.

Regarding McKeesport, the Allegheny River is not the watershed of this portion of Allegheny County. Additionally, three names referencing the Monongahela and Youghiogheny Rivers are currently in use for the region surrounding and including McKeesport. These included two established names, “Mon-Yough” and “Mon Valley” and a more recent identification as “Twin Rivers.” Within a 50-mile radius of McKeesport, Switchboard (2007) identified 68 businesses using “Mon Valley,” 19 using “Mon-Yough,” and two using “Twin Rivers.” As one McKeesport native expressed, “We folks from the Mon Valley do not see us as [being] from Greater Allegheny” (Boyd, 2007). A Penn State McKeesport alumnus added that the name “sounds like it was

decided upon by a committee. ‘Penn State Allegheny’ made more sense than ‘Penn State Greater Allegheny.’ I don't care for either of them” (Wilkinson, 2007).

At least one variation of “Greater Allegheny” was attributed to McKeesport and that was for its geographic location along the “Great Allegheny Passage.” Completed in 2006, the “Great Allegheny Passage” (2007, ¶ 1) is “a system of biking and trails that link Cumberland, MD (the home of Allegany College of Maryland) to Pittsburgh” (the home of the Community College of Allegheny County) via McKeesport (the home of Penn State Greater Allegheny).

Putting out Fires: Continuing Issues

Although agreeing to the compromise name of “Greater Allegheny,” Allegheny College still feared confusion, as one administrator admitted: “The change is fresh, months old. I really worry about the media and how the institution is covered and referred to and if it evolves into an Allegheny reference. Then, there’s going to be tremendous confusion and we’re going to have to do some additional work, although I don’t know what that is going to entail.”

Possible campus misidentification. One of the problems that Allegheny College noticed in their own region was confusion regarding the identification of the Penn State campus in Erie. Both the local media and the campus itself represented the institution inconsistently. While Penn State Erie uses the municipality identifier as part of its identity, Erie is not officially in college’s name. When the institution started in 1948, it was named for the philanthropic support of the Behrend family. According to director of marketing and communication, Dewayne Wright, “The official name of Penn State,

Behrend hasn't changed much in sixty years (4 times), all in accordance with either University reorganization of the campus, or the campus achieving an elevated status" (personal communication, May 18, 2007). Wright outlines the evolution of the official name:

- 1948:** The Behrend Center of the Pennsylvania State College
(campus named in honor of Behrend family gift).
- 1953:** The Behrend Center of the Pennsylvania State University
(Penn State goes from College to University in name).
- 1959:** The Behrend Campus of the Pennsylvania State University
(University reorganizes and Behrend becomes a campus instead of center).
- 1979:** The Behrend College of the Pennsylvania State University
(Penn State Behrend elevated to a College with authority to grant baccalaureate degrees) (Dewayne Wright, personal communication, May 18, 2007).

Over time, The Behrend College of the Pennsylvania State University has referred to itself in a variety of ways including, but not limited to, the following: Penn State Erie; Penn State Behrend; and Penn State Erie, The Behrend College. It appears that Penn State Erie, The Behrend College was the official campus name because of its primary use in its own marketing materials. A cursory check of the institution's web site, however, produces numerous examples of pages using several variations of the name (even

expressed differently within the same document) that gave an appearance of brand schizophrenia (Penn State Erie, 2007). The administration at Allegheny College, 30 miles to the south, was well aware of Penn State Erie's identity chaos: "What we haven't been able to get across in most of these cases is that the institution itself has little control over what it's called. Despite the reassurances we had that Penn State Erie is the name of the campus of the name up the road from here in Erie, we've pulled numerous examples from the newspapers and also from the university itself that called itself 'Behrend' or 'Penn State – Behrend.'"

The possibility of Penn State McKeesport's new name creating similar problems by the media's calling the school simply "Allegheny" has Allegheny College concerned:

The press and the public will call them what they will call them and so if they decide to call Penn State – Greater Allegheny, [solely as] Allegheny, they will do it and there won't be much if anything the university can do about it. There's no question. I suspect that Penn State developed that name that they're so proud of now and should be – it probably got created by the general public. They weren't going to call it The Pennsylvania State University – they called it Penn State, and now it's part of their identity. It's a great part of their identity: "We are Penn State." That's their tagline. Behrend will be called Behrend – probably forever. I don't care how often they redo the stationary and call it Penn State Erie – that's what it's going to be called.

Another administrator half jokingly added, “That’s what I would imagine with Penn State Greater Allegheny. The first employee that is convicted of embezzlement [and the story is announced] in the newspaper – what’s the headline? Is it ‘Penn State Greater Allegheny Employee?’ The papers don’t have room for that. Who knows what it’s [the name is] going to evolve into.”

To allay some of the fears, Penn State assured that there would be no confusion between the institutions. Having experienced this issue in the past, Allegheny College officials were skeptical.

We were given all sorts of reassurances, particularly by the vice president of Penn State, about the lack of confusion. He pointed to Penn State Delaware County. There’s a Penn State Delaware County, there’s a Delaware County Community College, and there’s a third college over there [Delaware Valley College]. “They are within a few miles of each other and there’s no confusion.”

Even though Penn State promised that no confusion would exist, its own promotional materials detailed the issues between Penn State Delaware County and Delaware County Community College. Both schools were founded in September 1967 in the midst of local conflict. These differences started when a portion of the Delaware County Commission wanted Penn State to establish a branch in Delaware County. Other commissioners desired a local community college and worked toward that end with a school funded by local school districts (Penn State Delaware County, 2005). It was not known if the 1968 name change from Penn State Delaware to Penn State Delaware County exacerbated the issues between the institutions. According to an Allegheny

College administrator, the picture in Delaware County was not as rosy as Penn State depicted it:

Now, I was at a conference and was practically embraced by the president of one of these institutions who said, “I see you’ve been fighting this. We are considering changing our name.” I think it was the Delaware County Community College’s president – and he said, “We’ve just got a mess.” So reassurances don’t mean that much to us. We’ve been through this enough times to know what the confusion is, and our name is who we are.

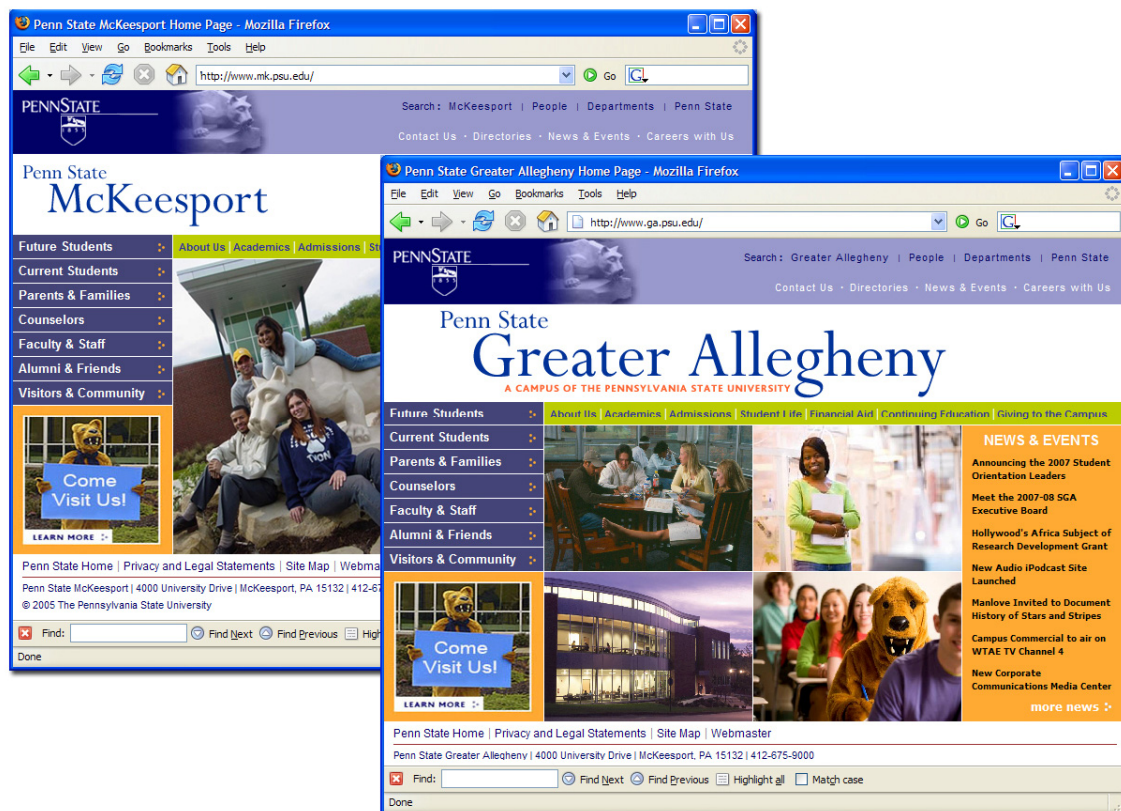
Current marketing concerns. Since the name change, Allegheny College has had some continuing issues regarding Penn State Greater Allegheny’s marketing of the campus. One administrator explained,

There has [sic] been some further concerns that I have been in touch with President Spanier about, including the representation of the name on the web site, and on signage. We were assured, with no doubt, that Penn State was the label that was going to be associated with this branch campus. That it is their identity. That is how people identify them and the Greater Allegheny was a specific locator. When one looks at the web site perhaps even to this day, Greater Allegheny receives the greater billing (see Figure 9.23). I did let President Spanier know and I said, “if you will give us advance notice and a look at things, our people could help work with your people so we can avoid these [issues]. I know that once these things are out and released it’s a very difficult thing to reverse. Would you please ask them to work with us in advance so we could settle these things?” He

gave me that reassurance. He said he had similar concerns as he looked. He was taken by surprise as well. But, I think those things don't change overnight and unless we keep on this – and that's the problem – this isn't something that you just solve it and then walk away.

Figure 9.23

Penn State McKeesport/Greater Allegheny web site before and after the name change.



In addition to the prominence of the name, Allegheny College officials cited that both institutions' web sites used similar fonts and both used blue and gold. In regard to the font faces, Allegheny College used Goudy Trajan – a typeface that has small caps and which was based on Frederick W. Goudy's drawings of the ordinals found on the Trajan Column ("Goudy Trajan," 2003). In addition, professional graphic designer John Sellards observed some intentional compression of the font when it was used in

Allegheny College's logo (personal communication, May 22, 2007). Penn State Greater Allegheny, as with all of the Penn State web sites, utilized the Perpetua typeface that included both upper and lower case characters. Although there was a similarity as both were serif fonts, viewing the typefaces side-by-side also illustrate the differences (see Figure 9.24).

Figure 9.24

Font comparison: Greater Allegheny (Perpetua) and Allegheny College (Goudy Trajan).



Greater Allegheny
ALLEGHENY COLLEGE

In addition to the serif font face, Allegheny College took issue with the prominence of blue and gold on the Penn State Greater Allegheny web site. While Penn State's official colors have been blue and white since 1890, there is a fair amount of gold used on most of the branch campus web sites including the one for Penn State Greater Allegheny ("Blue and White," n.d.). After blue and white, the web site used gold next in frequency as an accent color. Since Allegheny College's official colors are blue and gold, they were concerned about the color combination. Figure 9.25 illustrates the similarities and differences in hues for blue and gold used on both institutions' home pages. Since the name change, Allegheny College has notified President Spanier of these and other concerns to consider.

Figure 9.25

Allegheny College and Penn State Greater Allegheny web site color comparison.

| | ALLEGHENY COLLEGE | PSU GREATER ALLEGHENY |
|------|--|--|
| BLUE | RGB 10, 61, 104 HEXADECIMAL #0A3D68 PANTONE 7463 C | RGB 0, 51, 153 HEXADECIMAL #003399 PANTONE 661 C |
| GOLD | RGB 251, 196, 39 HEXADECIMAL #FBC527 PANTONE 123 C | RGB 255, 170, 51 HEXADECIMAL #FFA935 PANTONE 143 C |

Unlike the Allegheny University of Health Sciences experience that required legal action, Allegheny College deemed that route as unnecessary. “We also thought that we could go through a long, extensive legal battle and it would do us little good and Penn State little good. In this case, we thought that some of our concerns had been answered, and that there was a spirit of compromise that could be shown on their side. That was unlike the Allegheny University case where there was very little movement at all.” Another Allegheny College administrator added, “I remember having those conversations and how frustrating it was having to deal with reality that it was going to be too expensive to challenge it legally. Especially when I hear the ongoing challenges we’re going to be faced with . . . this will be an ongoing problem.”

Even though they expect further issues and the fact that the “Greater Allegheny” identification was a compromise name, Allegheny College officials were pleased with Penn State’s cooperation.

We are grateful that we got some hearing and we got some movement. I have a lot of respect for how Graham Spanier went back and reversed that

wheel. He didn't have to do it. *He didn't have to do it.* He could have fought us, and we judged and our legal counsel judged that we would spend a lot of money and we may not win the case. We may not prevail. So we accepted the compromise, were grateful for the compromise, but a better solution would have been not to have taken the name in the first place. The second best solution would have been to take that name out completely, and we remain convinced to this day and that's the case.

West of the Alleghenies: Allegheny Wesleyan College

One additional institution has utilized the Allegheny name – and because of its history, size, tuition costs, accreditation, and mission – its adoption of the Allegheny moniker occurred underneath Allegheny College's radar. When questioned about any issues with Allegheny Wesleyan College's (AWC) use of the Allegheny brand, an administrator at Allegheny College responded, "I don't think I have ever heard of Allegheny Wesleyan College, so I am unaware of any problems with them. Is it a four-year college?" (personal communication, May 10, 2007). While Meadville is home to two churches within the Allegheny Wesleyan Methodist Connection, it was not unusual that Allegheny College was unfamiliar with this four-year bible college ("Directory of Churches," 2003).

History and Position

The furthest west of all of the institutions that have used the Allegheny name, Allegheny Wesleyan College (AWC) was founded in Salem, Ohio as 1956 as Salem Bible Institute. In 1961, the name was altered to Salem Bible College and Academy. When

school came under the auspices of the Allegheny Wesleyan Methodist Connection on June 13, 1973, it became Allegheny Wesleyan College (“Alumni,” 2006; Allegheny Wesleyan College, 2006).

Figure 9.26
Allegheny Wesleyan College’s campus entrance.



While both Allegheny College and Allegheny Wesleyan College share a common Methodist heritage, the similarities end there. In 1833, Allegheny College came under the control of the Methodist Episcopal denomination. Its current affiliation is with the M.E. Church’s successor: the United Methodist Church. Exhibiting an ecumenical spirit, the United Methodist Church was formed by a series of several mergers. The first of these occurred in 1939 when the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church – South, and the Methodist Protestant Church recombined to form the Methodist Church. In 1968, the United Methodist Church originated when the Methodist Church merged

with the Evangelical United Brethren – a denomination that had formed in 1946 by the merger of the Evangelical Association and the Church of the United Brethren in Christ (Mead, Hill, & Atwood, 2001). While providing scholarships to United Methodist Church students, the denomination no longer directly supports the institution (Cook, R. 1997).

Conversely, the parent organization of Allegheny Wesleyan College is a separatist group. The original body which spawned the Allegheny Wesleyan Methodist Churches, the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America, originated by a withdrawal from the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1843. Further separation was evident in the 20th century. As part of this movement, churches of the Allegheny Conference disapproved of several proposed mergers with other religious bodies, albeit with denominations that had similar traditions, histories, and doctrines. The large membership of the Allegheny Conference was successful in blocking a planned merger of the Wesleyan Methodist Church and the Free Methodist Church in 1955. When a merger with the Pilgrim Holiness Church was suggested in 1963, the Allegheny Conference churches opposed the idea. During the 1966 conference, this merger was accomplished only by refusing to seat delegates from the Allegheny Conference. In 1968, the Conference's churches withdrew from the newly named Wesleyan Church and took upon the official identity of the Allegheny Wesleyan Methodist Connection (Original Allegheny Conference) ("Discipline," n.d.).

The denominational differences between the Allegheny Wesleyan Methodist Connection and the United Methodist Church are characterized in the spirit of each institution. While Allegheny Wesleyan College does not require a specific denominational affiliation, it does require students to have doctrinal agreement: "The

theological statement to which Allegheny Wesleyan College subscribes and to which it expects all students to affirm their allegiance, is of the conservative Wesleyan-Arminian position” (Allegheny Wesleyan College, 2006, p. 6). Allegheny College, however, has a broader perspective:

We are ecumenical and nonsectarian in practice and outlook. . . .

Allegheny's campus ministry . . . employs a model of religious pluralism in which the traditions and beliefs of each religious group on campus are accepted and the differences are acknowledged. From there, individuals and groups engage in discussions and develop mutual respect, with students learning from each other in impressive ways. And in addition to our historic Judeo-Christian heritage and Islam, Hinduism and other Eastern traditions have a presence on campus as well (Cook, R. 1997, ¶ 6 & 8).

Additionally, *Colleges that Encourage Character Development* outlines the spiritual nature of Allegheny College:

Students . . . have the opportunity to learn much about the root beliefs of their own religious traditions. In turn, they are encouraged to think creatively about ways in which their self-understanding can make them better community and world citizens. At Allegheny, religious faith is understood as a dynamic, life changing influence that should be felt far beyond the campus boundaries (The John Templeton Foundation, 1999, p. 154).

Size and Tuition

In addition to differences in spiritual perspectives, there was no comparison based upon size – neither denominationally nor institutionally. The membership of the Allegheny Wesleyan Methodist Connection was estimated at under 3,000 for the entire country, whereas, the United Methodist Church boasts a membership of over 8.2 million, which makes it the third largest denominational body in the United States (“World Religions: Religion Statistics,” n.d.). This size also corresponds with the number of students enrolled at Allegheny Wesleyan, which was 65. Allegheny College boasted 2,053 students (Burke, 2007). Likewise, yearly tuition costs were not comparable. Allegheny Wesleyan College charged \$4,000 annually in 2006-2007 while Allegheny College’s per annum tuition and fees were \$28,300 for the same period (Burke, 2007). An institution with brand equity and perceived quality has the opportunity to charge premium prices for their programs and services (Sevier, 2002a).

Accreditation

The two schools also differ in regard to accreditation. Allegheny College has had regional accreditation through Middle States Commission on Higher Education since 1921 (“Statement of Accreditation Status: Allegheny College,” 2007). Allegheny Wesleyan College has faith-based accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of the Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE). According to Carol Dibble, Director of Communication and Information Systems at the ABHE, Allegheny Wesleyan College was first accredited in 2004 and will be assessed for reaffirmation in February 2009 (personal communication, May 18, 2007). Because the ABHE is an agency that the Department of Education recognizes, students at this institution can receive federal

financial aid. National accreditation agencies like the ABHE, however, are considered to have a lower status than the six regional accreditation bodies. In addition, students from a nationally accredited institution generally have more difficulty transferring credits than those who attend a regionally accredited school (CHEA, 2003 & 2006; Eaton, n.d.; Lederman, 2007). During the time of the name change to Allegheny Wesleyan College in 1973 and for 31 years thereafter, the institution was not accredited.

Academics and Mission

While Allegheny College has both major and minor fields in religious studies, it no longer trains Methodist ministers as it had the past (Allegheny College, 2004; Bridgeman, 2005). Allegheny Wesleyan College has three majors at the baccalaureate level: pastoral ministries, Christian missions, and Christian teacher education. Additionally, it offers a minor in church music ministry (“Academics,” 2006). The institutional mission speaks to the school’s specific purpose: “Allegheny Wesleyan College exists to glorify God, serve the Church, and develop disciplined soldiers of Jesus Christ: committed servants who lead Spirit-filled lives, interpret the Bible accurately, and proclaim the message of Scriptural holiness throughout the world.” Its branding tagline, “Where God is first,” speaks to this specific mission (“Welcome,” 2006, “Mission” section).

The tagline for Allegheny College represents its unique character: “A national liberal arts college where 2,100 students with unusual combinations of interests, skills, and talents excel” (Allegheny College, 2006). Allegheny has 19 major field areas and three interdisciplinary studies majors, as well a host of concentrations and minor fields (“Majors,” 2004; “Minors,” 2004). Even though the two schools share a similar name, the vast differences in mission should not create any confusion. It is not likely that a

person seeking to be a Christian worker within the confines of the Allegheny Wesleyan Methodist Church or another conservative holiness denomination would consider Allegheny College as an alternate choice (“Discipline,” n.d.; Sidwell, 2000). The Allegheny Wesleyan denomination’s strong creationist position also may be at odds with a school that counts Clarence Darrow, the defender of Darwin, as one of its most famous alumni; and the denomination’s conservative position on alternative lifestyles may be incongruent with a institution that offers a minor in gay and lesbian studies (all4him, 2007; Allegheny Wesleyan College, 2006; “Discipline,” n.d.; Helmreich, 2005; “Minors,” 2004). Likewise, a student choosing the unique educational experience at Allegheny College would probably not consider attending school with such a narrow mission as Allegheny Wesleyan.

Marketing and Student Recruitment

It is also unlikely that the schools would be recruiting the same students. From analyzing the schedules of Allegheny Wesleyan’s two public relations teams, the Proclaim Quartet (2007) and the AWC Choir (2007) travel extensively throughout the United States to churches, religious schools, and conventions. Forty-eight percent of their performances occurred at Allegheny Wesleyan Methodist Connection churches and venues. The remaining 52% were scheduled at facilities of other conservative holiness denominations. These included, but were not limited to the following minor denominations: God’s Missionary Church, Pilgrim Holiness Church of New York, Pilgrim Nazarene Church, Church of God (Holiness), Wesleyan Methodist Church, Bible Methodist Church, Bible Wesleyan Church, and the Lower Light Church. Some of these groups are in fellowship with the Allegheny Wesleyan Methodist Connection as

participants in the Interchurch Holiness Convention, while others do not belong to this loose fellowship of churches (Sidwell, 2000). Since there is such a strong commitment to promote the school in churches, it would be highly unlikely that AWC would be recruiting students in the same manner or identical venues as Allegheny College.

As far as the potential of confusion between the two institutions, it is doubtful that any would occur. The very fact that Allegheny College was unaware that AWC existed gives indication that no known confusion has occurred in the past. It would be extremely unlikely for it to transpire in the future.

An Allegheny Plateau: Allegheny College and Brand Dominance

While Allegheny Wesleyan College does not appear to be any threat to Allegheny College's position and the Allegheny University of Health Sciences issue is moot, it is not known what other challenges to the Allegheny brand may arise in the future. Although the Community College of Allegheny College has cooperated with Allegheny College, there remains media coverage issues with this school. CCAC has no control over these problems. While the situation with Allegany College of Maryland has improved over time, the name continues to cause confusion. With the recent changes at the Penn State McKeesport campus name to "Greater Allegheny," it remains to be seen what further issues may develop as the school continues under the compromise name. Although Allegheny College has won the battles, have they won the branding war?

The Allegheny College Brand

To judge Allegheny College's brand dominance, a series of Internet searches were conducted to analyze the relative position of Allegheny College and its ownership of the

educational brand name. Since this study deals with branding issues related to the school's name, only the brand was searched. All other searches, which would indicate the school's relative position in regard to programs, sports, or any other parameter, were not conducted as these were beyond the scope and purpose this study.

On June 16, 2007, several Internet search engines were consulted to analyze how often the terms "Allegheny" and "College" referenced Allegheny College or one of the other institutions that have Allegheny or Allegany in their name. To replicate an actual student search, only the top search engines were utilized. These were ascertained by consulting Alexa as to the top rated sites for Internet traffic and individual site load speed. The Alexa search also occurred on June 16, 2007. Only three English language search engines were listed in the top 100 web sites. Additionally, all three were in the top 10 and one was listed twice under two domain names. These included the following sites: Yahoo (yahoo.com) – number one, Microsoft Network (msn.com) – number two, Google (google.com) – number three, and Windows Live (live.com) – number five. MSN and Windows Live use the same search feature and are considered equal ("Top Sites," 2007). Alexis estimates that on a weekly basis each of these four Internet sites catered to a large segment of the global Internet activity and were represented by the following figures:

- Yahoo – 25.06%
- Microsoft Network – 27.27%
- Google – 23.95%
- Windows Live – 17.25% ("Traffic Details – Yahoo," "Microsoft Network," Google, "Windows Live," 2007).

Although an optimal search would treat the name as a phrase by encasing Allegheny College within quotation marks (e.g., “Allegheny College”), the average person searches by simply typing the words into a search engine’s search window (Crispen, 2004). No Boolean operatives were used in the search and the words “Allegheny” and “College” were treated as individual words and not as a part of an overall phrase. The three top search engines were consulted on June 16, 2007 and the top 50 returns were analyzed. All references to the schools, despite the ownership of the site, were charted. In the top 50 of each site, all pages referenced one of the schools as depicted in Table 9.5.

Table 9.5

Analysis of the top 50 returns of a search of “Allegheny” “College.”

| Number of References to Schools in a Top 50 Search for "Allegheny" "College" | | | | | |
|---|--------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------|
| School / Entity | Yahoo | MSN/Live | Google | Total | Percentage |
| Allegheny College | 43 | 47 | 46 | 136 | 90.67% |
| Community College of Allegheny College | 4 | 2 | 2 | 8 | 5.33% |
| Allegany College of Maryland | 1 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 2.00% |
| Penn State Greater Allegheny | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.00% |
| Allegheny Wesleyan College | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1.33% |
| Multiple School References | 1* | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.67% |

*This one reference is a news article detailing the complaint by Allegheny College in regard to the Penn State Allegheny name change.

With this search, Allegheny College reaped the lion’s share of the returns at 136 of the 150 sites, which computes to nearly 91% of the 150 possible search returns. Although the Community College of Allegheny was in second place, it only returned eight pages (5.33% of the total). With a school’s relative position closer to the top of the list being extremely important, Crispen (2004) suggested that individuals may not go beyond the first 10 returns in their search.

Table 9.6

Analysis of the top 500 returns of a search of "Allegheny" "College."

| Position of Institutional References in a Top 500 Search of "Allegheny" "College" | | | | |
|--|--------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|
| School | Yahoo | MSN/Live | Google | Score |
| Allegheny College | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1,500 |
| Community College of Allegheny College | 12 | 32 | 11 | 1,448 |
| Allegheny Wesleyan College | 42 | 5 | NONE | 955 |
| Allegheny College of Maryland | 27 | 235 | NONE | 740 |
| Penn State Greater Allegheny | NONE | 168 | 115 | 719 |

To determine the position of the schools using Allegheny in their name, a search of "Allegheny" and "College" was conducted across the three top search engines on June 16, 2007. The first official reference for each of the schools was noted by extending the search to the top 500 returns from all three sites. A score then was assigned to each school based on the position of the first official reference of that school. Position number one was assigned 500 points for each search engine; 1,500 points were possible (see Table 9.6).

Allegheny College attained the highest position on each search engine site. Only one other school had a top 10 return: Allegheny Wesleyan College returned the fifth highest position on the MSN/Windows Live search feature. CCAC was in second place with one top 40 and two top 20 listings. MSN.com rated the allegheny.edu URL at the number one slot; Google and Yahoo charted the alleg.edu domain, which resolves to the same web page, at the number one position. While the reason Google returns alleg.edu rather than allegheny.edu was unknown, Yahoo's returns may be the result of the school registering the older domain with Yahoo when it was solely a directory site. At that time, Yahoo's search feature accessed sites listed in its directory and did not search the Internet proper. In October 2002, Yahoo added a Google based web crawler mechanism in

addition to its directory search (Sullivan, 2003). Both domains were registered with all three sites, but it appears that Yahoo and Google treat the domains equally.

Ownership of the “Allegheny” Brand

Since Allegheny College has fervently protected its identity, it was necessary to determine how the several schools using the Allegheny name fared when a search was conducted by just using “Allegheny” as a search term. This search was conducted on June 16, 2007. While the majority of references were for non higher educational sites, two institutions were returned in the top 50 searches. Allegheny College was found in 12 search returns in a possible 150. The other institution, the Community College of Allegheny County had only two hits out of the possible 150. No other schools were in the top 50 from the three search engine results (see Table 9.7).

Table 9.7

Analysis of schools listed in the top 50 returns of a search of “Allegheny.”

| Number of References to Schools in a Top 50 Search for "Allegheny" | | | | | |
|---|--------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------|
| School / Entity | Yahoo | MSN/Live | Google | Total | Percentage |
| Allegheny College | 4 | 5 | 3 | 12 | 8.00% |
| Community College of Allegheny College | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1.33% |
| Allegheny College of Maryland | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.00% |
| Penn State Greater Allegheny | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.00% |
| Allegheny Wesleyan College | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.00% |
| Multiple School References | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.00% |
| Other Non College Sites | 46 | 44 | 46 | 136 | 90.67% |

By expanding the search of “Allegheny” to the top 500 results (also conducted on June 16, 2007), the overall ranking of the highest reference to a particular school could be ascertained. As constructed in a previous search, each of the three top search engines were queried and a score was assigned based on reverse order, e.g., position 1 = 500 points, position 2 = 499 points, position 500 = 1 point, and so forth. Schools not appearing in the top 500 were referenced by the designation “NONE” and were assigned a

zero for that particular search engine. The scores from all three search engine sites were combined to provide a possible score of 1,500. In each case, Allegheny College ranked at the number one position and garnered the maximum score of 1,500 points (see Table 9.8). Alleghany College of Maryland returned no results within the top 500. This may be due to the spelling “Alleghany” as opposed to “Allegheny.”

Table 9.8

Analysis of schools listed in the top 500 returns of a search of “Allegheny.”

| Earliest Official Institutional References in a Top 500 Search of "Allegheny" | | | | |
|--|--------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|
| School | Yahoo | MSN/Live | Google | Score |
| Allegheny College | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1,500 |
| Community College of Allegheny College | 193* | 33 | 19 | 1,258 |
| Penn State Greater Allegheny | 223 | 108 | 76 | 1,096 |
| Allegheny Wesleyan College | NONE** | 317 | NONE | 184 |
| Alleghany College of Maryland | NONE | NONE | NONE | 0 |

*a non institutional page referring to CCAC was at 94; if used, score would be 1,357.

**a non institutional page referring to AWC was at 326; if used, score would be 359.

In addition to the number one slot, Allegheny College had two pages in the top ten returns at Google and Yahoo when conducting a simple search of “Allegheny.” In both cases, the Allegheny Sports and Recreation (2007) page was the other top 10 result. This particular page was ranked at number two on Google and at number seven on Yahoo. To show the fluid nature of site rankings, a search of the MSN/Live.com search engine was consulted 10 days later on June 26, 2007 and the Allegheny Sports & Recreation page, which did not appear previously in its top 10, was ranked at number 2. A check of Google showed no change, however, the sports page moved from seven to eight on Yahoo. Several changes had occurred within Yahoo’s top 10. While all of the same sites were returned in Yahoo’s top 10, these sites were rearranged in order. Allegheny’s Sports and Recreation page was displaced by “The Free Dictionary’s” definition of “Allegheny.” The school’s homepage remained at the number one slot on all three major search engines.

While the major search engines provided favorable results for Allegheny College, numerous minor search engines were also consulted. These search engines included the following: a) ask.com; b) AltaVista; c) Excite.com; d) All the Web; e) Mamma; f) LookSmart; g) Findit-Quick; h) WiseNut; i) Galaxy; and j) Alexa. The remaining minor search engines were not consulted because they used the same architecture as another site and produced identical results. For example, the following search engines were exempted because they produced the same returns: AOL Search and Netscape Search were identical to Google; Lycos and Hotbot mirrored Ask.com; Overture and Go.com equated to Yahoo; and Webcrawler uses Excite.com's search mechanism. Meta search engines were not employed as they also provided a synthesized version of the major (and some minor) search engine results.

Table 9.9

Analysis of Allegheny College's position at minor search engines.

| Search Engine | Search Engine Alexa Rank | allegheny.edu Position | alleg.edu Position |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Ask.com | 180 | 2 | 1 |
| AltaVista | 217 | | 1 |
| Excite.com | 742 | 6 | 5 |
| All the Web | 1,328 | | 1 |
| Mamma | 2,444 | 2 | 1 |
| LookSmart | 3,995 | | 9 |
| Findit-Quick | 44,488 | 1 | 11 |
| WiseNut | 48,499 | | 2 |
| Galaxy | 170,893 | | 2 |
| Alexa | Not Ranked | 1 | |

As with previous searches, the query term was simply "Allegheny." All searches were conducted on June 18, 2007. Some of the search engines treated the allegheny.edu and alleg.edu domains as identical, while others returned the same pages from these separate domains as unique sites. In all 10 searches, Allegheny College placed within the top 10 (see Table 9.9). In some searches, both addresses for the Allegheny College home

page returned top 10 results. Ask.com had both in the number one and two slots with Allegheny's academic page rated at number three. Mamma returned both addresses for the home page at numbers one and two. While Allegheny College had a lower score for both addresses at five and six on Excite.com, other educational institutions were absent from the top four slots. At Findit-Quick, the allegheny.edu version garnered the top slot and the alleg.edu version placed at 11.

As for sites that treat the two domains as equal, Allegheny College placed in the number one slot on Altavista, All the Web, and Alexa. In addition, these search returns contained other Allegheny College pages within the top ten. The Allegheny Sports and Recreation page placed sixth on All the Web and seventh at AltaVista. Alexa returned The Allegheny Review (<http://review.allegheny.edu>) at the number two slot; however, this page was actually missing and returned a 404 error. The last archive of this page at Internet Archive's Wayback Machine provides the most recent snapshot of the page from April 24, 2006. The Allegheny Review was described as "a national journal of undergraduate literature" ("Internet Archive – Allegheny Review," 2006). From analyzing the archive, it appears that this most recent issue was published on or before February 12, 2003. Additionally, the Allegheny College Bookstore placed ninth at Alexa.

On two search engine sites, Allegheny College's home page placed second. WiseNut placed the page following the official site for Allegheny County, PA and Galaxy had the home page following the web site for Allegheny Industrial Sales. Galaxy also placed Allegheny College's admission's page at number three.

While still in the top 10, Allegheny College fared the worst at ninth place on LookSmart. This was the only example where another institution placed higher than

Allegheny College. The Community College of Allegheny College held down the top two LookSmart spots. CCAC also appeared, albeit lower than Allegheny College, in the top 50 on the following sites: Mamma at sixth, Ask.com at eighth, Alexa at 13th, and Excite.com at 22nd. Penn State Greater Allegheny was the only other of the Allegheny branded institutions that appeared in the top 50 of any of the minor search engines. Ask.com ranked Penn State Greater Allegheny's older domain (www.mk.psu.edu) at 32.

Are Allegheny College's Search Engine Ranks Typical?

To determine if Allegheny College's search engine rankings were typical when a geographic name search was conducted, a search of 15 other geographic regions were searched via Google, MSN.com, Yahoo. Three regional names were arbitrarily selected: Appalachian, Blue Ridge, and New River. Four city names of Boston, Miami, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh were queried. Eight state names were also chosen: Delaware, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and West Virginia. While the geographic names were selected arbitrarily, critical case sampling occurred with the selection based on geographical names that were a part of several institutions' brands.

Table 9.10 details the results by listing the top ranked institution and its position at Google, MSN.com, Yahoo, as well as an average score. The institutions were listed by average search engine rank, the "Geographic Returns" column shows the number of total sites estimated by all three search engines. Figures are in millions.

Table 9.10
Geographic search returns.

| Geographical | | Schools | | Top Returned Schools | | | | | |
|----------------|---------|---------|----------|-----------------------------------|--------|-----|-------|---------|--------|
| Query | Returns | Total | Returned | Name | Google | MSN | Yahoo | Average | FTE |
| Allegheny | 16.9m | 4* | 2 | Allegheny College | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.00 | 2,053 |
| Appalachian | 25.4m | 4 | 4 | Appalachian State University | 2 | 5 | 1 | 2.67 | 14,653 |
| West Virginia | 190.9m | 19 | 3 | West Virginia University | 4 | 1 | 6 | 3.67 | 26,051 |
| Ohio | 554.5m | 30 | 2 | Ohio University | 5 | 2 | 5 | 4.00 | 19,725 |
| Pittsburgh | 195.0m | 10 | 1 | University of Pittsburgh | 3 | 5 | 5 | 4.33 | 26,559 |
| Pennsylvania | 410.2m | 50 | 3 | University of Pennsylvania | 6 | 3 | 5 | 4.67 | 23,704 |
| North Carolina | 369.9m | 12 | 7 | UNC at Chapel Hill | 5 | 6 | 8 | 6.33 | 27,276 |
| Georgia | 637.0m | 21 | 4 | University of Georgia | 12 | 6 | 5 | 7.67 | 33,660 |
| Tennessee | 336.0m | 13 | 3 | University of Tennessee System | 11 | 7 | 5 | 7.67 | DNA |
| New River | 6.4m | 2 | 1 | New River Community College (VA) | 2 | 18 | 5 | 8.33 | 3,987 |
| Kentucky | 310.0m | 11 | 2 | University of Kentucky | 5 | 7 | 14 | 8.67 | 25,672 |
| Delaware | 258.8m | 10 | 1 | University of Delaware | 4 | 20 | 7 | 10.33 | 20,982 |
| Miami | 390.3m | 9 | 2 | Miami University of Ohio | 13 | 9 | 9 | 10.33 | 15,611 |
| Boston | 538.3m | 10 | 3 | Boston University | 7 | 14 | 19 | 13.33 | 31,697 |
| Blue Ridge | 14.0m | 3 | 3 | Blue Ridge Community College (NC) | 34 | 6 | 30 | 23.33 | 2,069 |
| Philadelphia | 341.5m | 5 | 1 | Philadelphia University | 27 | 46 | 49 | 40.67 | 3,193 |

*Due to spelling, this number does not include Allegany College of Maryland.

The Allegheny name, with an estimated number of 16.9 million page returns, returned considerably fewer sites than did a search of the city and state identifications. Although identifying a geographical name that was comparable to Allegheny proved difficult, it was most similar to the Appalachian (at 24.5 million) and Blue Ridge (at 14.0 million) regions in total number of returns. The New River region was much smaller at 6.4 million and represented the smallest number of schools. Only two community colleges have this geographical designation as part of their names. Blue Ridge has its differences as well. This regional name was in use by only three community colleges and not by any four-year institutions.

The “Schools Total” column represents the number of schools and higher educational systems using the brand. Therefore, possible Ohio schools would be Ohio University, The Ohio State University, Northeastern Ohio Universities College of

Medicine, Mercy College of Northwest Ohio, and others. Pennsylvania had an unusually large number (50) of schools with the Pennsylvania name, including all of the Penn State branch campuses officially known as part of The Pennsylvania State University.

Additionally, all of the schools in the State University system have Pennsylvania as part of their names. Of these schools, only Indiana University of Pennsylvania was returned in the top 50 results for “Pennsylvania.”

Institutional names were selected from listings in the *2007 HEP Higher Education Directory* (Burke, 2006) and any campus listing, including branch campuses were rated. Systems and Board of Regents listings were also included as these have individualized listings in the directory. One system, the University of Tennessee system site, had better rankings for Tennessee than its individual campuses. This may have occurred because the Internet domain was tennessee.edu.

Schools were not segregated due to accreditation status. The *HEP Higher Education Directories* lists all schools that have accreditation recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, including specialized accreditation and lesser status national accreditation. In searches conducted on June 29, 2007 of the three major search engines, the top 50 results returned only three entities not regionally accredited: the University of Tennessee System, Appalachian School of Law, and Appalachian Technical College. While the individual campuses in the University of Tennessee System were regionally accredited through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the system itself was not accredited. Appalachian School of Law holds program-specific accreditation through the American Bar Association. The Council on Occupational Education accredits Georgia’s Appalachian Technical College (Burke, 2006).

The number of institutions that appeared in the top 50 returns was listed in the “Schools Returned” column. Institutional Full Time Equivalent enrollments were listed in the “FTE” column. While the institutions with the largest enrollment generally ranked higher, this was not always the case. In addition to the University of Tennessee System that has no enrollments *per se*, Ohio University had a better ranking position than Ohio State, which has over twice as many students. The University of Pennsylvania scored higher than Penn State while having almost half as many students. Blue Ridge Community College (of North Carolina) fared better than the slightly larger school of the same name in Virginia.

In regard to the placement of the schools, only two appeared in the number one slot. Yahoo ranked Appalachian State University first in a search of “Appalachian” and West Virginia University appeared at number one on an MSN/Live search of “West Virginia.” Only two regions returned all of the schools with their respective names in the top 50 results. “Appalachian” returned in order of appearance Appalachian State, Appalachian School of Law, Appalachian Technical College, and Appalachian Bible College. All three community colleges with the “Blue Ridge” name appeared under that search. North Carolina, with seven of the 12 “North Carolina” branded institutions, returned the largest number of different schools. In the 15 geographic categories, the top three rated schools were Appalachian State (2.67), West Virginia University (3.67), and Ohio University (4.00).

The results of this analysis have implications for Allegheny College. None of the aforementioned geographic searches produced one institution that had consistent top ranked searches. In addition, Allegheny College does not have the largest enrollments of

the Allegheny branded institutions. Counting Allegany College of Maryland (at an FTE of 3,666), Allegheny College is third at 2,053 FTE students. The Community College of Allegheny County has nearly nine times the number of students with 18,283 FTE. Both Penn State Greater Allegheny (682) and Allegheny Wesleyan (65) were much smaller institutions (Burke, 2007). With the variety of usages of the term “Allegheny,” Allegheny College’s consistent first place rank speaks to its ownership of the brand name.

An Allegheny Web Site Analysis

While ranking algorithms differ among the search engines, Crispin (2004) indicated that a number of parameters assist in site ranking placement. These include, but were not limited to, the following: the search term in the domain name, the number of times the search term appears in the text on the page, the page’s HTML meta tags that provide the page’s description and the keywords, the search term in the page’s title, and the number of sites linked to the page. While an analysis of these elements was beyond the scope of this study, a cursory check of the page’s rating and load time, as well as a look at the number of sites linked to the home page was performed (see Table 9.11).

Table 9.11
Analysis of Allegheny branded institutions’ web site ratings.

| Institution | Rank | Alexa Data | | Google | AltaVista | | |
|--|---|--------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------|--|--|
| | | Linked Sites | Load Time: Seconds | Linked Sites | Linked Sites | | |
| Allegheny College (allegheny.edu) | 174,857 | 324 | 0.6 | 467 | 14,200 | | |
| Allegheny College (alleg.edu) | | | | | 1,830 | | |
| Community College of Allegheny County (ccac.edu) | 308,920 | 209 | 1.0 | 534 | 2,110 | | |
| Allegany College of Maryland (allegany.edu) | 905,164 | 136 | 1.8 | 100 | 1,040 | | |
| Allegany College of Maryland (ac.cc.md.us) | | | | | 678 | | |
| Penn State Greater Allegheny (ga.psu.edu) | Cannot ascertain: All psu.edu sites were lumped together. | | | 43 | 628 | | |
| Penn State Greater Allegheny (mk.psu.edu) | | | | | 638 | | |
| Allegheny Wesleyan College (awc.edu) | No Data Available | | | 1 | 70 | | |

Data were gathered by conducting specific site analyses on all the various domain names associated with Allegheny branded institutions on June 16, 2007. As with each search engine return, various ranking statistics will vary from search engine to search engine and will fluctuate daily. With the exception of the Community College of Allegheny County and Allegheny Wesleyan College, all of the other schools had two domain names. These included Allegheny College's allegheny.edu and alleg.edu, Allegany College of Maryland's allegany.edu and ac.cc.md.us, and Penn State Greater Allegheny with ga.psu.edu and mk.psu.edu. At each institution, the domain names resolved to the same web site. While Alexa and Google treated the domains as equal, AltaVista distinguished between domain names. Linking data were based on the structure of the link from the other site. For example, a link from the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh to Penn State Greater Allegheny using the ga.psu.edu address was credited to that domain; likewise, the link from College Nicknames page using mk.psu.edu was applied to the older domain.

Alexa, an Internet information and tracking company, provided site data such as rank, linked sites, and server speed. In addition, Alexa listed the most often visited pages on the site. Since information was tracked by domain names, sub domains were collected as part of the main domain. Therefore, Penn State Greater Allegheny's web status cannot be judged, as its data were merged with data from the main campus and all other Penn State sites using the psu.edu domain. Additionally, Greater Allegheny's campus site was visited less than 1% of the time. Only a handful of Penn State's physical branch campuses' sites rank at 1% or above. These included the Hershey Medical Center and the campuses at Hazelton, Lehigh Valley, and Abington. The most often visited page on the

psu.edu domain was not the home page (7%) nor the student portal (12%), but rather the homepage of the College of Information Sciences and Technology which has a domain visitation rank of 28%. One other school, Allegheny Wesleyan College, has so few hits it is not ranked by Alexa.

Of the schools that have rated web sites, Allegheny College led the pack in rank and number of links. Additionally, the home page load time of 0.6 seconds was the fastest of all of the schools with the Allegheny brand. This included the primary server at Penn State, which was clocked at 0.8 seconds. Allegheny's home page was rated as being faster than 92% of the sites on the Internet. In addition, Allegheny College's home page was the most often visited page on their web site representing 40% of the visits.

Ranked next, the Community College of Allegheny County has a home page load time of one second making it faster than 81% of the sites on the Internet. Its most often visited page was the home page at 62% followed by its Blackboard learning management system portal at 28%. Of the sites that Alexa has rated, Allegany College of Maryland was at last place in all categories. The home page load time was rated at 1.8 seconds making it faster than only 50% of the sites on the Internet. ACM's home page was listed as being the top visited site holding the first and second largest percentages. Although the school has been using the allegany.edu domain since 2002, most visitors still access the home page via the old domain name of ac.cc.md.us. This address represented 75% of the school's web visits, while the allegany.edu home page represented 17% of the visits.

To provide an additional analysis of the number of sites linked to a particular domain, Google and AltaVista site links search criteria were used. Altavista provided numbers of pages linked to each specific domain name. In both cases, internal links were

also reported and may not be a true picture of an accurate number of outside sites linking to the domain. While Google's link search provided more sites linked to the Community College of Allegheny County, Allegheny College had eight times the number of linked sites via AltaVista than its closest challenger: CCAC.

Summary

In summary, the overview of the site rankings indicated that Allegheny College has indeed the best position of any of the other Allegheny branded schools. Allegheny College's brand dominance was partly due to its passion and the fierce protection of a brand they have used for nearly 200 years. While other institutions considered that a usurping of their name as was a non-issue, Allegheny College defended what was rightfully theirs and would do so more fervently if it were financially possible, as one administrator expounded:

We are a school that has increasingly a national reach. So it's going to be important that people not only in Pittsburgh or Erie know who we are. It's going to be important that we are not getting confused [with someone else] whether the students are from Georgia or California. We've just have to protect it and protect it well. Unlike business and industry, we don't have a big legal war chest or a public affairs/marketing war chest. We put our money into this education, and we don't want to be spending our money defending our name. It's a disservice to the students and the college. I think that we would fight a lot more vigorously based on our passion and a real conviction that it's the right thing to do. Except we just can't rob those resources and take it away from the programs. I'm confident that we

would fight a lot harder in all of these cases. We would have and we would, if it didn't cost so much, because it's that important to us. It's that valuable. There is no overestimating the value of this name and our identity.

While most of Allegheny's brand challenges came primarily from two-year institutions, an Allegheny College administrator admitted that this doesn't lessen the threat. "One of our concerns is that they [the two-year programs/schools] tend to evolve into four-year programs and then the opportunities for confusion becomes greater because then they start being listed in the same directories . . . that we are. There is no guarantee that a two-year program won't evolve into a four-year." The record was clear and its success was evident. Whether a two-year institution or a professional school that offered bachelor's degrees, Allegheny College is winning the branding war.

These victories were evident in the changes that Allegheny has evoked at other institutions. Allegheny College was successful with one institution in keeping confusion to a minimum; that school, the Community College of Allegheny County, identifies itself primarily by its initials. It challenged the approved names of two other institutions and influenced both to alter their brands. Allegany College acquiesced and became Allegany College of Maryland. Penn State Allegheny, a branch of the 10th largest university system in the United States, retooled to become Penn State Greater Allegheny. In addition, Allegheny College took on one of the largest medical schools in the country and its parent corporation, the largest healthcare provider in Pennsylvania, and won. Allegheny University of the Health Sciences was required to market itself by its full name or initials and not just as Allegheny University. In addition, its logos changed and its administration

surrendered the allegheny.edu domain name. A domain name Allegheny College would come to own. All indications of a brand name dominance that sustained an institution.

In *Building Strong Brands*, Aaker emphasized, “The ultimate awareness level is brand name dominance where, in a recall task, most customers can only provide the name of a single brand” (1996, p. 15). With all the other uses of the Allegheny name as outlined in the beginning of this chapter, two pieces of evidentiary material confirm Allegheny College’s dominance of the brand name. First, Allegheny College has a historic precedence for using this name. It was first school to utilize Allegheny as an identifier, and it has used the name longer than any other institution. Second, the overwhelming connection of the Allegheny name to the Meadville based institution was revealed when a simple Internet search of word “Allegheny” was conducted. Even without the word “college” as part the search criteria, Allegheny was associated primarily with Allegheny College.

In the words of branding expert David Aaker, “A key to strong brands is to have consistency over time. A firm can maintain consistency by creating an identity and position that will endure, supporting it with brilliant execution, and resisting the powerful biases toward change” (1996, p. 358). The strength of Allegheny College’s association with the Allegheny brand, its longevity of its usage, and the consistency of this institution over time all indicate that the Allegheny brand unanimously belongs to Allegheny College.