



## Crafton Hills College

Perception Survey Results  
September 2021

### Introduction

Crafton Hills College has engaged HyattWard Advertising, Inc., to help invigorate the institution's brand. This will include new designs, voice, and the introduction of a tagline. To get a better picture of current perceptions of the brand, a survey was conducted among students as well as faculty and staff. The results are in and it's time to discuss what they are telling us and how that translates into concept development.

### The Crafton Hills Personality

In the survey we asked students along with faculty and staff to indicate which of 16 terms best describe the college.

Serious	Traditional
Casual	Aspirational
Optimistic	Imaginative
Lighthearted	Gregarious
Curious	Formal
Friendly	Helpful
Progressive	Enthusiastic
Fun	Leader

We asked them to check all that apply. Both groups generally agreed on the terms that were most applicable. Friendly was checked off in 11% of the Faculty and Staff voting and 12% in the student voting. Helpful finished a close 2<sup>nd</sup> in both groups.

<u>Faculty &amp; Staff</u>	<u>Students</u>
1- Friendly	1- Friendly
2- Helpful	2- Helpful
3- Optimistic	3- Casual
4- Casual	4- Optimistic
5- Aspirational	5- Progressive

## **Questions and Answers**

Why should a student enroll at Crafton Hills? This question was posed to Faculty and Staff in two different ways, as a direct question and as “What are the strengths of Crafton Hills College?” Answers to the 2<sup>nd</sup> question should reinforce many of the answers given in the first. They do.

We would expect Faculty to support themselves and the institution’s academics. Quality professors and a solid education are either specifically stated or implied in the answers. However, the Crafton Hills’ “beautiful campus” is cited more often.

Students were also asked for the reasons they chose to enroll.

The proximity of the campus was the most common reason cited, mentioned in 80% of the responses. Affordability was second, at 36%. Faculty and Staff were asked what students tell them are their reasons and their answers confirm proximity and price.

## **Weaknesses and Misconceptions**

Comments from both Faculty and Staff and students essentially underscore all the negative perceptions of community colleges in general. It is an extension of high school, not a serious place, Associate Degrees are meaningless, Crafton is a “fall back” school, not a real college, and so on. One comment refers to the misconception of Crafton as “Harvard on the hill.” Elitist and snobby. That’s 180° from “friendly and helpful,” but it’s not uncommon to find that kind of dichotomy when dealing with perception. A faculty member describes Crafton as “provincial not progressive,” while students select “progressive” as a top five word to describe the school. And one student says the school is “a bit TOO progressive.” They capped the adverb, which pretty much negates the word “bit.”

Many of the negative comments involve matters outside the influence of marketing. Marketing can’t increase the number of sports teams or improve parking. A more serious subject, a perceived lack of diversity, is alluded to in the questionnaire as well as the RP Group Report, Crafton Hills College Student Focus Group Findings 2019.

The report states that while the college features a welcoming campus environment that feels inclusive but lacks diversity. This perception seems at odds considering the ethnic and racial makeup of the student body and the faculty. This can be addressed in a variety of ways but must always reflect the reality.

We asked Faculty and Staff which community colleges they believe do a good job of advertising to students. The most often mentioned were Mt. San Jacinto, Mt. San Antonio, RCC and Chaffey. An interesting response refers to private trade schools as Crafton’s major competitors; West Coast University, American Career College, UEL and Summit Career College.

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## The Most Popular Taglines

Both groups selected the same four taglines as their favorites --- albeit in a slightly different order.

### Faculty & Staff

*Knowledge to go places.*

*Learning lives forever.*

*Minds move mountains.*

*Fulfilling the promise.*

### Students

*Knowledge to go places.*

*Fulfilling the promise.*

*Minds move mountains.*

*Learning lives forever.*

## The Direction

The survey has given us additional insight into the personality and perceptions of Crafton Hills College. Our path to design elements and a tagline has become better lit.

There is little doubt that Crafton offers a friendly and helpful environment; these attributes describe the school's personality. This tells us that design elements, especially photography should be warm and inviting. It tells us that the voice, the tone of the copy should be friendly and avoid all but the most benign sarcasm. Even on social media, snark should be avoided.

The literal voice of the school, the voice heard narrating video or on radio commercials, should be professional but friendly, approachable.

We will want to emphasize certain words (or their synonyms) for positioning purposes. "Leader" is 15<sup>th</sup> of the 16 words used to describe the school by students and only 9<sup>th</sup> for Faculty and Staff (who are inherently, campus leaders). Establishing a stronger perception of leadership can often impact market share for any business. It adds to credibility and smooths the acceptance of change.

Imaginative is another word we'd like to be associated with more frequently. It currently languishes somewhere in the middle of the pack. It was Einstein who told us, "Imagination is more important than knowledge." That quote isn't on the tips of potential students' tongues, but imagination is highly coveted in most industries and highly prized by individuals. Associating Crafton Hills with a beautiful campus is good. Associating it with beautiful minds is better.

Stylistically, we are encouraged by the selection of "Knowledge to go places," as the one that could best reflect Crafton. It actually reflects Colorado State. The phrase does manage to be about the school *and* the student. The knowledge is at the school, and the student who gets some will go places. There's an unlimited quality.

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