

# Mascot - 2 Methods



Name	College/University Evaluated	Previous Moniker/Mascot	New Moniker/Mascot	What Was Done Well	What Needs Improvement	Research Methods	How They Involve Community	Anything Else	Why Did They Change	
1	Uyen Mai	Valparaiso University	Crusaders	To be determined by new task force	After seeking the input of stakeholders across the university and receiving unanimous recommendation from various student, alumni and faculty groups, VU interim president Colette Irwin-Knott announced the school's teams will no longer be known as the Crusaders.	unknown	Not clear but they somehow gauged the opinions of stakeholders across campus including students, alumni and employees.	This university could serve as a model. They also had their share of angry responses even though the decision was unanimous. See the attached alumni response story.	Valparaiso got its identity from medieval Christians who waged war in an attempt to liberate the Middle East from Muslim rule, but has since become a catch-all term for any campaign of religious or moral origins. It's a nickname that has nothing to do with American history, and yet an American school is still retiring it.  This change, the school says, is a nod toward the people who imagine themselves at the point of the proverbial sword, rather than the hit.  But it's also, like Simon Fraser's retirement of the Clan nickname, an attempt to disassociate itself from any shred of a tie to the Confederacy and the campaign to maintain white supremacy in America.  "The task force determined the Crusader is not reflective of Valpo's mission to promote a welcoming and inclusive community," Irwin-Knott said.  "There has been growing concern on campus about how the Crusader mascot represents us as well as how it may impact prospective students' views of our university. We want to see Valpo take this important step and to retire this negative symbol and imagery from our university," student body president Kaitlyn Steinhilber said.	
2	Joe Jennum	Saddleback	Gauchos - a bandit riding a horse	TBA, 21 submitted from campus, one is mountaineer. Decision to be made soon.	Multiple zoom forums to allow discussion - whether to keep or retire mascot. Organized by speech faculty, ran very well. Handled respectfully. Work group facilitated process. Athletics had their own focus groups, top athletics vote will automatically be top 5.	Communicate with alumni better. Early and clear communication. Process took way to long, still going. Get complete plan organized and then roll out with good "what, why, when and how." Many complaints at board mtg. Work group didn't make decision. IR conducted focus groups and received over 330 submittals. That was narrowed to 21, eventually will be down to 5. Too big and let so many make decisions. Maybe hire an outside consultant.	Survey students, staff and administration, zoom meetings and focus groups.	Surveys, multiple forums and organized focus groups.	Third party graphic company will design logo once final decision is made. Transparency, many felt it was a rigged process and an agenda by administration. Control sessions... had many "bomb" sessions and undermined the processes. Very passionate folks out there that don't want the change and were embarrassing during the sessions.	Students felt it was a bad representation of a diverse campus population, complained to administration and signed petitions.
3	Marisa Fierro	Valparaiso University (Lutheran university)	Crusader	Undecided at this point - identifying a new mascot hasn't begun	Listened to the concerns of their community students, alumni as well as faculty and staff. This is the second mascot change for them, the first was in 1941, their mascot was thought it have an implied connection to Nazi Germany. This time around they surveyed the community and more of the identifiers is with the nickname of the college "Valpo" rather than the mascot itself. Most people think the mascot relates more to the athletics program.  They began pulling back on the Crusader mascot branding four years ago, using Valpo as a shield.	This change is happening under the term of an interim president, and although these conversations have been brewing for decades, opponents think someone in a temporary position is overstepping their bounds. Some (many) in the athletics program and alumni feel the decision was made outside of athletics - without them in mind.	Conducted a survey with 7,700 responses. The new president will assume his role next month and identify a committee to lead these efforts.	The survey went to students, alumni, faculty, staff.	Articles referenced:  <a href="https://www.mtlimes.com/sports/college/valparaiso-university/mascot-debate-at-valparaiso-has-proponents-and-opponents-just-as-it-does-the-time">https://www.mtlimes.com/sports/college/valparaiso-university/mascot-debate-at-valparaiso-has-proponents-and-opponents-just-as-it-does-the-time</a> <a href="https://www.mtlimes.com/sports/college/valparaiso-university/mascot-debate-at-valparaiso-has-proponents-and-opponents-just-as-it-does-the-time">https://www.mtlimes.com/sports/college/valparaiso-university/mascot-debate-at-valparaiso-has-proponents-and-opponents-just-as-it-does-the-time</a> <a href="https://www.cnn.com/2021/02/12/us/valparaiso-university-mascot/index.html">https://www.cnn.com/2021/02/12/us/valparaiso-university-mascot/index.html</a>  <a href="https://www.mtlimes.com/sports/college/valparaiso-university/valparaiso-alumni-resists-retiring-of-crusader-mascot-what-the-problem-with-changing-it-is">https://www.mtlimes.com/sports/college/valparaiso-university/valparaiso-alumni-resists-retiring-of-crusader-mascot-what-the-problem-with-changing-it-is</a> <a href="https://www.mtlimes.com/sports/college/valparaiso-university/valparaiso-alumni-resists-retiring-of-crusader-mascot-what-the-problem-with-changing-it-is">https://www.mtlimes.com/sports/college/valparaiso-university/valparaiso-alumni-resists-retiring-of-crusader-mascot-what-the-problem-with-changing-it-is</a>  Interesting/impactful response from a Muslim athlete alumnus:  Valparaiso alum and Chicago Bulls television play-by-play announcer Adam Amin is Muslim and he got his broadcasting career started by calling games for the Crusaders when he attended Valparaiso from 2005-09. He later worked for the university and called basketball games on the Horizon League Network before moving to ESPN and Fox Sports.  "I had a positive reaction to the news today, but then I had to ask myself why I had that reaction," Amin said. "When I signed up to go to Valpo, I knew what the mascot was. I also knew what the Crusaders were and I was well aware of the history involved. I didn't think this university chose the mascot, goofy looking as it was, out of some level of malice. "What I think now, observing the reaction that everyone is having, is it all depends on how important symbolism is to you. If the university is what it is because of the people that work there and the students that go there, then what does it matter what the mascot is? If the symbol that happens to represent the university makes people feel some sort of negative cognition, then change it. What's the problem with changing it?"  Quote from the athletics director:  The bigger concern for LaBarbera doesn't come from the nickname that is on the chest of the athletes who take the court for Valparaiso, but in the experience that is provided for the athletes when they arrive on campus.  "My first thought in all this is what are we really talking about," LaBarbera said. "Is the actual mascot the important thing, or is the experience and what we stand for the most important thing? The experience our athletes got in the 60s, 70s and 80s is the same that they are getting today, and we're hoping to make that experience a little better today. I still believe in the experience that we stand for. The Shield of Character is still very much part of our identity."	It had been a growing issue for decades, the summer of 2020 it swelled to a 2K Facebook group encouraging this change. The Crusades represent a period in Medieval history when Christians enacted violent expeditions against Muslims and Jews in the Holy Land. The decision to drop the image was made in mid-February 2021 - citing imagery connected to hate groups including the KKK.  The Crusader nickname has come under fire, and has been changed at several universities in recent years because of its connection to the Crusades, a series of religious wars that is estimated to have left millions of Muslims, Jews and other non-Christians massacred.
4	Greg MacDonald	University of Illinois	Chief Illiniwek	Kingfisher	They got students involved. In 2020, the belted kingfisher received a majority of student votes a possible new mascot.	What the decision faster. The Chief was retired in early 2007, and the new mascot was not endorsed by the University Senate until late 2020.	It sounds like the new mascot was born out of a necessity to fill a void left by the retired Chief.	Students voted on the proposed mascots.	After two decades of complaints that the logo and the mascot's ceremonial dance performed during halftime perpetuated stereotypes, the school finally made the decision to change.	
5	Greg MacDonald	Arkansas State	Indians	Red Wolves	The research and rollout were well planned, efficient, and timely	The school should've used its in-house art director and graphic designers, instead of hiring an outside vendor to produce logo options.	The decision came at the end of a two-hour meeting during which the Mascot Selection Steering Committee discussed the various mascot options and associated issues that might arise with each choice. The motion to recommend "Wolves" was discussed thoroughly before the vote. While some committee members expressed preference for "Red Wolves," Bill Stanley of Jonesboro, who voiced the motion to recommend "Wolves," said he preferred to give the character and the creative team as much latitude as possible with implementation. Potts responded that the process has been very complex and that he would appreciate this latitude in the final stages of development while he consults with the creative design team and various university constituencies.	The school used constituency groups to get input during the selection process.	Arkansas State's Mascot Review Committee unanimously approved a recommendation for Arkansas State to retire the "Indians" nickname and all Native American mascots and imagery. Chancellor Robert L. Potts promised a broad-based search to be guided by a Mascot Selection Steering Committee. The move for the name change came in response to the NCAA's 2005 ban on ethnically or racially derogatory mascots at championship events.	
6	Greg MacDonald	Dartmouth College	Indians	Keggy the Keg	Deciding to drop the Indians mascot.	Having an actual plan. There is no official mascot, so the students filled the void by voting on Keggy the Keg.	Completely student-run crowdsourcing. Dartmouth continued to be known by its nickname of "The Big Green," but, citing the ambiguity, lack of dynamism, and insignificance of having no mascot, the Dartmouth Student Assembly proposed a student poll in spring 2003 to decide upon a new mascot. While the Moose came in first in this poll, many students remained dissatisfied with the choice, and the moose lost a final poll to "no mascot." Chris Fietal and No. Duquette, students at the Jack-O-Lantern humor magazine, expressed interest in creating a mascot that "wasn't racist, biased or sexist, yet [was] entirely unacceptable." In an effort to force the administration to adopt a more interesting mascot, they created Keggy, an anthropomorphic keg that represents "the most obvious Dartmouth stereotype: the beer-swilling Animal House fraternity culture."	The students were the drivers on this, and that's how Keggy the Keg was born.	This is an example of why you don't want to open source the selection to just students. There needs to be guardrails against Keggy the Keglike.	Insensitive to the Native American people. The Indians were its unofficial mascot anyway, so it was easy for them to drop it altogether.
7	Andi Fejeran Sims	Cal State Long Beach	49ers / Pioneer Pete	Elibee / Shark	1) Associated Students' work on a resolution to move the Prospector Pete statue citing that Tongva Peoples were enslaved by colonial settlers to build missions in the LA area. 2) President Crowley's decision to remove the statue and work with Associated Students on a student referendum. 3) Appointment of Mascot Review Committee of inclusive stakeholders to develop new mascot options		Committee and voting.	<a href="https://www.csulb.edu/news/articles/students-select-the-shark-as-new-mascot">https://www.csulb.edu/news/articles/students-select-the-shark-as-new-mascot</a> <a href="https://www.csulb.edu/news/articles/csulb-unveils-new-shark-mascot">https://www.csulb.edu/news/articles/csulb-unveils-new-shark-mascot</a> <a href="https://www.mercurynews.com/2019/04/24/cal-state-mascot-voting-offers/">https://www.mercurynews.com/2019/04/24/cal-state-mascot-voting-offers/</a>	Criticism from students and community activists that "Prospector Pete" was offensive to indigenous people, and that it promoted racism on campus. Students have come to see the mascot not as a tribute to their founder or to California history, but rather as a representation of violence caused to Native Americans and others during California's Gold Rush era. Forenews was April 27, 2019.	

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Mary McGuire	Amherst College	Lord Jeff (unofficial)	The Mammoths	According to the college, the mascot committee "adopted four guiding principles to ensure the process focused on transparency, building community, maximizing participation and creating connections among students and alumni."		<p>From the Amherst College website:            In January of 2016, the Board of Trustees issued a statement announcing that Lord Jeffrey Amherst would no longer be used in any official capacity by the College. In his statement, Cullen Murphy '74, chair of the Board of Trustees, wrote the following: "The aim will be to generate as much engagement as possible, and to find something—something organically associated with Amherst, reflecting our collective history—that we can all rally around. That is what mascots are supposed to provide."            Who managed the selection process?            Following the Board Statement, the Board and President Biddy Martin asked the Executive Committee to convene a larger Mascot Committee to include students, faculty and staff. This Committee met several times in spring 2016. This Mascot Committee managed the process of selecting a new mascot with technical and administrative support from staff in the office of Alumni and Parent Programs. View the Mascot Committee members here.            Why did Amherst need to select a new mascot now?            A large contingent of students desired a mascot. In the absence of a process for deciding what a new mascot should be, another unofficial concept could readily emerge – but without the shared input of the entire college community. The Mascot Committee felt that it was important to move forward on the process, as it was the best way of ensuring that a mascot is properly vetted by the broader Amherst community and that a new mascot best unifies/represents it.            What were the goals of the mascot selection process?            The goals for the process were to:            ensure a transparent process and decision-making, maximize constituent participation and feedback, and advance community-building, particularly between students and alumni.            What was the timeline for mascot selection?            October 24-November 30 – an open call for mascot suggestions took place.            December/January – The Mascot Committee winnowed down hundreds of submissions to less than 30 semifinalists that best unify and represent the Amherst community using criteria.            February – The Mascot Committee sought input from a representative group of alumni and student Delegates who rated and ranked the remaining semifinalists according to criteria and alumni and student feedback. The Mascot Committee used the delegate ratings to identify the top 5 mascot ideas.            March/April – In an instant run-off election, the entire Amherst community had the opportunity to vote on the final mascot.            The winning mascot was announced on April 3, 2017.            The mascot visuals were formally introduced on October 20, 2017.            Who was able to submit mascot ideas?            The submission period concluded on Nov. 30. Amherst alumni, students, faculty and staff submitted suggestions for the new mascot.            What criteria were used to narrow down the submissions received?            The new mascot should:            Be unifying for the Amherst campus and larger Amherst community.            Represent positive qualities, ideals, or associations around which people can rally.            Be broadly relevant across the Amherst community, student body, and among generations of alumni.            Be representative of the Amherst experience or history, either generally or specifically.            Work equally well for women's and men's sports teams; and            Have the potential to translate in a visually pleasing manner.            When were initial submissions, semifinalists and finalists shared with the Amherst community?            The list of mascot suggestions received was made available after December 7.            The list of semifinalists was made available in early January.            The list of finalists was made available in mid-March.            See more at:  <a href="https://www.amherst.edu/amherst-story/amherst-pride/mascot.html">https://www.amherst.edu/amherst-story/amherst-pride/mascot.html</a></p>	<p>"In fall 2016, the wider College community contributed 2,045 mascot suggestions. In December, the Mascot Committee chose 30 semifinalists that best met the five-pronged criteria of being unifying, representing positive qualities, being broadly relevant and representative, working well for both male and female sports teams and having an ability to translate visually."            "In February 2017, the Mascot Committee used input from 441 student and alumni delegates—who rated the semifinalists according to the criteria and alumni feedback—to identify the top five mascot ideas."</p>	<p>Lord Jeffrey Amherst was a colonizer who advocated for the extermination of Native Americans. See NYTimes: <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/27/us/amherst-college-drops-lord-jeff-as-mascot.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/27/us/amherst-college-drops-lord-jeff-as-mascot.html</a></p>	