



Rebranding Mohave Community College to Mohave College

Executive Summary

Mohave Community College (MCC) is at a pivotal juncture in its history. With the State of Arizona and the MCC Board of Governors opening the door to allow bachelor's degree programs, it is an opportune moment to rebrand the institution as Mohave College. This change not only aligns with expanded academic offerings and the addition of NJCAA athletics, but also addresses long-standing perceptions associated with community colleges. Extensive research, including community meetings, surveys and focus groups reveals strong support for the name change, which is seen as a strategic move to bolster the college image, enhance appeal and reflect its evolving mission.

Why?

The higher education landscape is rapidly evolving, and institutions must adapt to remain relevant and competitive. Mohave Community College's decision to offer bachelor's degrees, along with other program expansions and additions, marks a significant evolution of the college beyond what many may view as a traditional 2-year "community college." Separating the word "community" from the college name is not taken lightly, however a rebrand with name Mohave College will help better reflect the breadth and depth of the college services and programmatic offerings. Rebranding to Mohave College is a strategic initiative designed to:

Reflect the New Academic Offerings

The introduction of bachelor's degree programs signifies a transformative step for MCC, aligning it more closely with traditional four-year institutions. The name "Mohave College" better represents this expanded academic horizon, signaling to prospective students, parents and the broader community that the institution offers a comprehensive higher education experience. This alignment is crucial for:

- Attracting students who may not have considered MCC due to preconceived notions about community colleges.
- More effectively communicating the value of its academic credit offerings, which hold the same value as 4-year institutions.
- Highlighting the college's commitment to providing advanced educational opportunities.



Enhance the College Image

The term "community college" often carries a stigma that can deter potential students and partners. By adopting the name Mohave College, the institution can project a more prestigious image, comparable to other four-year colleges and universities. This rebranding effort will help:

- Boost the college reputation locally, regionally and nationally.
- Increase the pool of potential faculty and employees.
- Increase regional partnerships.

Mitigate the Stigma Often Associated with Community Colleges

The rebranding to Mohave College will help mitigate the stigma often associated with community colleges, which can sometimes be perceived as offering a lesser educational experience compared to four-year institutions. This stigma can be a barrier to enrollment and partnerships. The new name will:

- Convey a sense of prestige and academic rigor.
- Attract a broader demographic of students, including those who might not have considered a traditional two-year college.
- Foster greater confidence among stakeholders about the quality of education provided.

Maintain Connection with the Community

Despite the name change, Mohave College will not lose its strong connection with the community. The college remains deeply committed to serving the educational needs of the region. The term "community" is inherent in the college values and mission, and this commitment will continue to be a cornerstone of its operations and outreach efforts. The college will:

- Continue to offer programs and services tailored to the needs of the local community.
- Maintain robust partnerships with local businesses, organizations, and schools.
- Ensure community engagement remains a priority, including offering community education programs and hosting events that bring the community together.
- Leverage the name change to enhance community pride, as the new name reflects the growth and progression of the institution while still honoring its foundational mission to serve the local population.



By rebranding to Mohave College, the institution embraces a name that reflects its expanded academic offerings and enhanced image while reaffirming its dedication to the community it serves. This strategic move ensures that the college continues to grow and evolve, meeting the needs of both current and future students and maintaining its vital role within the local community.

Strong Support from Stakeholders

Extensive research and stakeholder engagement have shown overwhelming support for the name change. Key findings include:

- **Survey Results:** A survey conducted among community leaders, students, employees, and community members revealed that 72% support the name change. This broad base of support underscores the community's readiness to embrace a new identity for the college.

Focus Groups and Meetings: 20 meetings and focus groups were held with various stakeholders, including students, alumni, employees and community members. The majority consensus from these discussions is: the name Mohave College maintains continuity, is not confusing and bolsters the college's image.

Research Findings

Surveys

Surveys were conducted to gauge support for the name change, and it included a diverse group of approximately 500 respondents representing Community Leaders, Current & Former Students, Employees, and Community Members. Overall, 72% are in favor of the college dropping the word "Community" from its name. Key insights include:

- **Community Leaders**
 - Recognize the strategic importance of the name change in enhancing the region's educational landscape.
- **Current & Former Students**
 - Feel that the new name better represents the academic rigor and opportunities available at the institution.
- **Employees**
 - Believe that the change will enhance their professional pride and the institution's standing.
- **Community Members**
 - Support the change as a reflection of the college's growth and evolution.



Feedback Meetings

18 feedback meetings were conducted with Community Leaders, Community Members, Students and Employees, which provided qualitative insights into the proposed name change. Key themes included:

- Continuity
 - The name Mohave College maintains a connection to the institution's history and regional identity while signaling growth and progression.
- Clarity
 - A new name, such as Mohave College, avoids confusion and helps communicate the expanded scope of academic offerings.
- Image Enhancement
 - Participants agreed such a rebranding would positively impact the college image and broaden the pool of potential students and partners.

Two-Year Institution Name Changes

Over the past twenty years, a significant number of community colleges across the country dropped the word "Community" from their names as they expanded their academic offerings and rebranded to reflect their evolving roles. The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) has noted that this trend is becoming more common as community colleges continue to evolve and expand their roles, and seek to better communicate the breadth of their educational programs. The shift in nomenclature reflects a broader trend of colleges striving to shed outdated perceptions and better communicate their value and offerings to prospective students, such as the addition of bachelor's degrees

Karen Stout, president and CEO of Achieving the Dream, noted in a 2022 interview with Technical Education Magazine that the push to offer baccalaureate degrees at community colleges is a significant factor in these name changes. More than two dozen states now allow community colleges to confer bachelor's degrees, which necessitates a name that better captures these institutions expanded their academic offerings.

As for the exact number of community colleges that have dropped "Community" from their names in the past twenty years, this specific data point isn't readily available in a single consolidated source. However, the trend is evident, with numerous colleges undergoing this rebranding process to align their names with their expanded roles and to attract a broader range of students and faculty. Here are ten examples:

1. Pikes Peak State College (formerly Pikes Peak Community College): The rebranding to Pikes Peak State College has helped attract more students and faculty. The change



signals the college's expanded offerings, including baccalaureate degrees, which better serve graduates and help in their job search.

2. Bellevue College (formerly Bellevue Community College): Since the name change in 2009, Bellevue College has expanded significantly. The rebranding aligns with its broader range of academic programs and helps in shedding the community college stigma.
3. Jackson College (formerly Jackson Community College): The transition to Jackson College in 2013 reflected its expanded offerings, including bachelor's degrees. The name change better represents its comprehensive educational programs and has been part of a broader rebranding effort that has been well-received.
4. Henry Ford College (formerly Henry Ford Community College): This rebranding aimed to better reflect the college's role as a stepping stone to four-year degrees and other expanded programs. The change has helped clarify its mission and attract more students .
5. Seattle Colleges (formerly Seattle Community Colleges): All three institutions in the district rebranded to better reflect their roles in higher education, including offering bachelor's degrees. This move has helped modernize their image and boost enrollment.
6. Madison College (formerly Madison Area Technical College): The rebranding has helped in highlighting its comprehensive educational offerings and has been instrumental in increasing student enrollment and enhancing the college's image.
7. St. Petersburg College (formerly St. Petersburg Junior College): Since dropping "junior" from its name, St. Petersburg College has seen a positive impact on enrollment and reputation, aligning with its expanded academic offerings.
8. Palm Beach State College (formerly Palm Beach Community College): The name change has supported the institution's broader academic mission, including the introduction of bachelor's programs, which has attracted more students and faculty.
9. Daytona State College (formerly Daytona Beach Community College): Rebranding has helped Daytona State College reflect its expanded curriculum and improved its image, contributing to increased enrollment and community support.
10. College of Central Florida (formerly Central Florida Community College): The change was part of a strategy to better reflect its expanded academic offerings and attract a broader student base.

Implementation Plan

The successful transition to the new name requires a comprehensive implementation plan, which would include:



- Brand Development
 - Redesigning the college logo, website and marketing materials to reflect the new name.
- Communication Strategy
 - Developing a robust communication plan to inform all stakeholders about the change, including current and prospective students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community partners.
- Marketing Campaign
 - Launching a marketing campaign to promote the new name and highlight the college’s expanded offerings and enhanced image.
- Operational Changes
 - Updating all legal and operational documents to reflect the new name.

To save costs on the implementation, the Office of College Communications will collaborate with facilities, campus and divisional leadership to align branding changes with the Facilities Master Plan and in coordination with the annual reordering of replacement and branded print materials, such as letterhead, recruitment materials, outdoor signage, etc. This would help ensure there are minimal to zero cost increases. Digital rebranding would have zero cost, except for employee time, which is not expected to be extensive.

The branding costs can be broken down into two categories: Campus Buildings Inside & Outdoor; and Marketing Collateral. Total cost estimate:

- Campus Buildings Inside & Outdoor \$35,000
 - Printed Marketing Collateral \$15,000
- \$50,000

Final Thoughts

Rebranding Mohave Community College to Mohave College is a strategic decision that aligns with the institution’s expanded academic offerings, student life offerings, as well as the addition of NJCAA athletics. It also greatly assists the college in efforts to enhance its image and signal to the community at large the significance of the positive changes happening at the college. With strong support from stakeholders and a clear plan for implementation, this change positions the college for a successful future, ensuring it continues to meet the evolving needs of its students and the community.