



## **Request for Proposal**

Submit proposals by March 11, 2016, to:

Dave Diehl  
Executive Director of Marketing and Communications  
Hood College  
[diehl@hood.edu](mailto:diehl@hood.edu)

Hood College, an independent liberal arts college in Frederick, Md., enrolling 1,277 undergraduates and 1,011 graduate students, invites you to submit a proposal for comprehensive market research services related to positioning.

### *ABOUT HOOD COLLEGE*

Hood College is an independent liberal arts college located on a striking and stunningly picturesque campus in the vibrant and historic central Maryland city of Frederick. The College's well-regarded faculty and caring support staff provide a quality education at the undergraduate and graduate levels in a small-college environment that integrates the liberal arts with professional studies and experiential learning. Hood's core values and traditions, and its commitment to continuous improvement, comparative excellence and exceeding student expectations, have made it a treasured institution to current students and to more than 23,000 graduates living in the United States and around the world.

For more about Hood College, see "Hood At a Glance," at <https://www.hood.edu/about-hood/hood-at-a-glance/index.html>.

The firm chosen to complete this project will work with the College's marketing research task force, comprised of faculty, staff, students, alumni and trustees, but most of all the Office of Marketing and Communications and the undergraduate and graduate enrollment management offices. The executive director of marketing and communications, Dave Diehl, oversees a staff of five: an assistant director; a director of creative services; a graphic designer; a web manager; and a marketing manager and website assistant. The office is responsible for institutional branding and identity; marketing and advertising; publications design and production, including Hood Magazine; crisis communications; leadership communications; development communications; media relations; website maintenance; and the College's social media.

### *THE HOOD COLLEGE MISSION AND VISION*

"Hood College prepares students to excel in meeting the personal, professional and global challenges of the future. Hood is committed to the integration of the liberal arts, the professions and technology, to the exploration of values, a sense of community and to the preparation of students for lives of responsibility, leadership and service.

Additionally, Hood is a contemporary liberal arts college that serves as a lifelong learning center where students can examine, evaluate and plan their lives. Uniquely designed programs, dedicated staff and a faculty carefully selected for its teaching excellence and concern for the development of the individual are hallmarks of a Hood education.

At the heart of the Hood College mission is a century-long commitment to the preparation of students for purposeful lives and careers. Hood believes that the best foundation for employment and further academic training is an education that is balanced between general liberal arts education and specialized career preparation.”

*-Hood College Mission and Vision 2016*

Hood College last conducted comprehensive research 14 years ago, when the College first began to admit male resident students. At that time the College introduced a new visual identity, including a new logo and an extensive three-year strategic marketing plan.

For more about the new logo and marketing plan, see the Fall 2003 Hood Magazine, at [http://www.hood.edu/uploadedFiles/Hood\\_College/Common/campus\\_services/documents/magazine\\_fall03.pdf](http://www.hood.edu/uploadedFiles/Hood_College/Common/campus_services/documents/magazine_fall03.pdf).

It is time now, again, for the College to begin a comprehensive marketing research study and comparative analysis. The findings of this research will be part of the College’s current strategic planning process and will give us a more accurate foundation on which to develop genuine and authentic messaging that resonates with the desired audiences.

#### *DELIVERABLES*

- Quantitative and qualitative research that identifies Hood College’s existing market position, including brand awareness in key target markets
- Analysis of effectiveness of existing enrollment and advancement strategies, for both undergraduate and graduate marketing communications
- Analysis of effectiveness of existing institutional advancement strategies.
- Identification of gaps between perceived and actual market positions
- Recommended positioning strategies (e.g. brand promise, differentiation points, marketing initiatives, etc.) to close the perception gap and strengthen brand identity
- Identification of Hood College’s differing marketing segments with spatial representation of the current segment
- Analysis of demographics to locate the geographic regions with the highest concentration/percentage of Hood College’s defined target market(s)
- Competitive analysis, both quantitative and qualitative
- Estimated timeline
- Estimated costs

## *TIMELINE*

We hope to have a firm selected by April 1, 2016, with work starting immediately after.

## *PROPOSALS MUST INCLUDE:*

- Information on your firm's capabilities, core competencies and leadership
- A description of the process your firm will follow to complete this project
- Names and biographical information of those who will be assigned to this project should we accept your proposal
- References from current and former clients relevant to this project
- Examples of successful research projects in higher education or closely related field
- Timeline
- Please submit cost estimates in a separate document directly to Dave Diehl, [diehl@hood.edu](mailto:diehl@hood.edu)

Direct questions to:

Dave Diehl  
Executive Director of Marketing and Communications  
Hood College  
[diehl@hood.edu](mailto:diehl@hood.edu), 301-696-3803