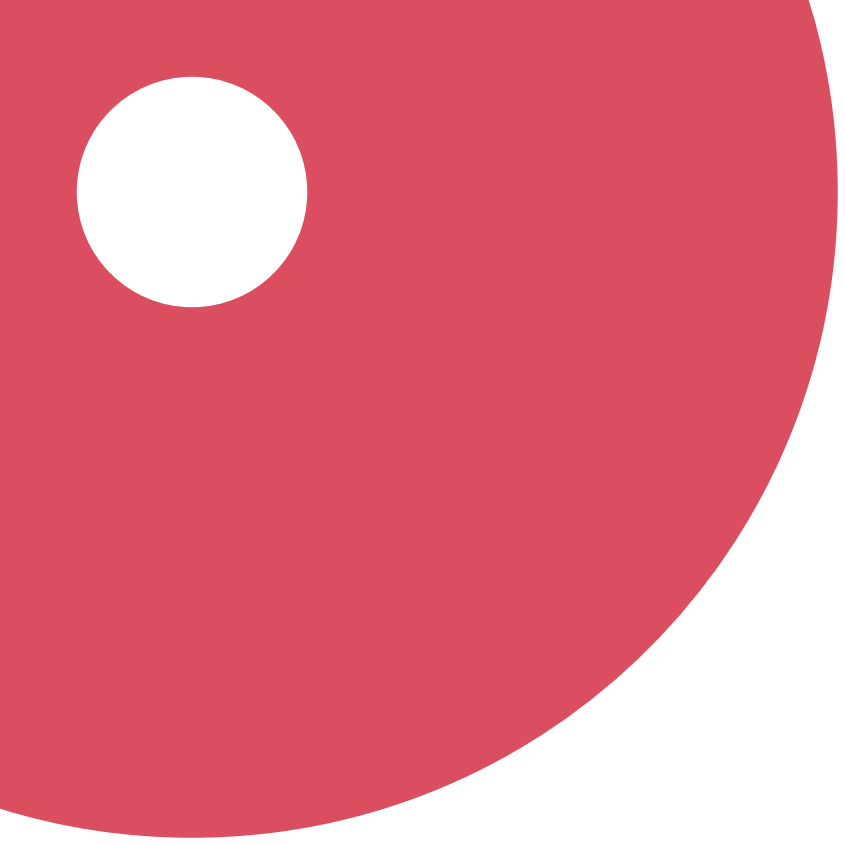




Elon's CREDE

The Center for Race, Ethnicity, and Diversity Education



BACKGROUND OVERVIEW

The Faculty of the Center for Race, Ethnicity, and Diversity Education (CREDE) approached us with the objective of enhancing their mission of advocacy and inclusion across Elon University’s campus. The CREDE seeks to establish itself as an open and welcoming environment for all students, while simultaneously preserving its role as a safe haven for minority students. Additionally, the CREDE aims to promote awareness of the significance of diversity education and foster meaningful dialogues among the student body.

Our campaign goals focused on humanizing the CREDE’s brand, its affiliated organizations, and the individuals who utilize its space. To ensure cultural sensitivity, we engaged in DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) training. We also prioritized understanding the client’s needs through ongoing communication, utilizing both email correspondence and in-person meetings.






Challenges Faced by Other Organizations

One of the primary challenges faced by the CREDE is attracting students to its location on campus. Unlike more centrally located centers, such as Numen Lumen, both the CREDE and El Centro are situated in less populated areas, making them harder to locate, especially for first-year students. While this positioning helps maintain the integrity and safety of these centers, it also limits their visibility and awareness among the broader student body.

Another significant challenge is that many students remain unfamiliar with the purpose and offerings of these centers, leading to minimal interest in their events, communications, or social media presence. Other organizations have established a stronger foothold on campus, benefiting from word-of-mouth referrals and visibility through important bulletins.

Moreover, the CREDE and El Centro's commitment to providing a safe space for minority students results in a distinct operational dynamic compared to other campus organizations. While the CREDE is open to all students, survey and focus group participants indicated that many feel uncomfortable intruding upon these spaces. This presents a unique challenge: how to engage the majority student body without compromising the sanctity of the environments specifically designed for minority students. Encouraging attendance at events can be difficult if students do not feel fully welcomed or able to participate.

A photograph of three young people sitting around a table outdoors, engaged in a study session. A young man in a red shirt is on the left, looking towards the center. A young woman with curly hair, wearing a beige tank top and a gold necklace, is in the center, resting her chin on her hand and looking down at a notebook. A young man in a green shirt is on the right, partially visible, looking at a laptop. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a paved ground. An orange circular graphic is on the right side of the image, containing the text 'SECONDARY RESEARCH'.

SECONDARY RESEARCH

Detailed Findings

Elon Student Population

The undergraduate student body is predominantly white and largely female.

Most students hail from the Northeast or the broader East Coast.

Arts and Sciences, as well as Communications majors, constitute the majority of the overall student population.

Black/African American and Hispanic/Latinx students represent the largest minority groups on campus.

Student Social Media Habits

Authenticity on social media is crucial for establishing meaningful connections with the audience.

A multi-channel approach, including influencer marketing, proves to be an effective strategy.

Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook are essential marketing platforms for engaging college students today.

The challenge lies not in visibility on social media, but in being heard amid an overwhelming amount of information.

Other Elon Organizations

Greek life is among the most popular organizations at Elon.

Other student organizations primarily leverage social media for event promotion.

Frequent posting across all social media channels fosters recurring viewership and continuous growth.

Effective strategies for engaging social media pages include using story highlights, updating profiles, and maintaining an appealing aesthetic.

Habits at Other Universities

Student involvement across all social media platforms is vital.

Videography is a key component in marketing, significantly boosting engagement and attendance.

Giveaways and incentives like free food/items are effective in increasing participation.

Utilizing social media, especially Instagram, to promote events is the most common practice among colleges and universities.



Implications

Comprehensive Social Media Strategy: Developing a robust and consistent social media strategy across multiple platforms—such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and YouTube—is essential to reach a diverse audience with varying backgrounds and interests.

Authenticity in Messaging: Social media content must convey authenticity to resonate with Generation Z students, enabling them to recognize the exciting and valuable opportunities for engagement within the organization.

Diverse Media Formats: Utilizing a variety of media formats—such as videography, photography, and graphics—across different platforms can enhance engagement and effectively showcase student involvement.

Highlighting Participation: Showcasing both student and faculty participation is one of the most effective ways to boost engagement and attract followers on social media. Illustrating students enjoying their involvement can significantly enhance the organization's perception.

Incentives for Participation: To increase attendance at events, offering incentives such as food, beverages, or engaging activities can significantly enhance overall participation and engagement.

Based on our research, the final campaign should prioritize a robust social media strategy, utilizing diverse media formats across all platforms. Additionally, it is essential for CREDE to enhance its engagement with Elon University students on social media and other channels, aiming to boost social awareness and increase event attendance. We also recommend incorporating activities that offer students the opportunity to receive free merchandise or engage in enriching experiences at social events. As demonstrated by our findings, these tactics can significantly enhance the campaign's effectiveness and overall impact.



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PRIMARY RESEARCH



Methodology

To collect survey responses, each team member distributed messages within various personal groups inviting individuals to participate in an anonymous survey for our course. We received a total of 30 responses, which informed our subsequent interview and focus group processes. For the one-on-one interviews, each team member recruited one or two participants who identify as part of the majority demographic on Elon's campus, resulting in four individual interviews.

For the focus group, we each contacted two individuals to gauge their willingness to participate in a discussion aimed at exploring students' perceptions of student organizations. The focus group ultimately comprised eight participants, evenly split between four men and four women across different academic years, all of whom identify as part of the majority race on campus. To further analyze the data collected through these research methods, we synthesized the information to identify key themes that will guide our campaign development.

Detailed Findings

Event Location: The location of events is a critical factor influencing attendance and comfort, particularly among first-year students.

Knowledge Gaps: Majority-identifying students at Elon recognize the importance of DEI education but often lack awareness of where to access this information in a comfortable setting.

Preference for Activity-Based Events: Majority-identifying students show a stronger inclination to participate in activity-based events related to DEI, rather than traditional educational formats.

DEI Education in Greek Life: Students involved in Greek Life and other student organizations engage in DEI education through initiatives within their respective organizations.

Limited Awareness of CREDE: Majority-identifying students have limited knowledge of the CREDE and report never having visited its facilities.

Insufficient Communication: Majority-identifying students receive minimal information regarding CREDE and its offerings

Implications

The primary factor influencing first-year students' participation in events is their location, likely due to limited transportation options and unfamiliarity with various campus sites. Therefore, when selecting venues for future events, it is crucial to consider the neighborhood chosen for hosting as well as the demographics of the student population in that area.

Our findings indicate that students who identify as part of the majority are more inclined to engage in activity-based events related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) rather than traditional panels or discussions. Examples of these engaging activities include cooking classes and dance workshops, where DEI topics can be organically integrated without being the primary focus.

Furthermore, many of these students lack the resources to independently pursue DEI education, which may hinder their motivation to seek knowledge on the subject. Providing additional resources for accessing DEI education could enhance their confidence in discussing these topics and subsequently increase event attendance. Notably, our research highlights an opportunity within Greek Life to bolster DEI awareness and education. Many student organizations, including Greek Life, may already host DEI-focused events that could greatly benefit from collaboration with CREDE.

THE CAMPAIGN



Creative Concept

The Full Circle Campaign is designed to encourage both majority and ALANAM-identifying students at Elon University to integrate the CREDE's advocacy and diversity education initiatives into their daily lives. "Coming Full Circle" signifies a commitment to engaging with the CREDE and its diverse array of programs and resources. This may include attending events, collaborating with on-campus organizations, or connecting with the CREDE through social media.

Through the Full Circle Campaign, the CREDE aims to enhance awareness and understanding of diversity education and intercultural competence within the Elon community. Together, the CREDE and the broader Elon community can embrace the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion, truly coming Full Circle.

Goals

Brand Establishment: Build a recognizable brand for the CREDE among undergraduate students at Elon University.

Clarify Advocacy and Education: Distinguish the various aspects of advocacy and education within the CREDE's initiatives.

Enhance Awareness: Increase awareness of educational opportunities offered by the CREDE specifically targeting majority-identifying students.

Boost Participation: Encourage greater participation in educational DEI opportunities and promote the utilization of DEI resources among all undergraduate students

Audience

The client aims to target all students at Elon University, not solely those who identify as white, through programs designed to create a lasting impact on their perspectives and experiences. While minority students have been effectively engaged, there is a notable need to improve outreach to majority-identifying students, who often perceive the CREDE as a barrier to participation. The client seeks to reach as many students as possible and foster low-stakes interactions, enabling all students to gain knowledge in diversity, equity, and inclusion matters and encouraging them to advocate for these principles.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Increase Event Attendance and Brand Awareness -

Track event attendance by scanning students' Phoenix cards.

Assess awareness through surveys distributed to students at the beginning, middle, and end of the campaign.

Foster Excitement Surrounding the CREDE Brand -

Evaluate the effectiveness of the new branding by monitoring visits to the CREDE's website, affiliated organizations' websites, and DEI resources.

Measure engagement through newsletter sign-ups and link clicks.



Strategies

1. Establish a Unified Brand: Develop a cohesive brand identity that integrates all of CREDE's programs, enhancing recognition and clarity.
2. Leverage Social Media and Storytelling: Utilize social media platforms to share compelling narratives from CREDE students and leaders, effectively highlighting the dual focus on advocacy and diversity education.
3. Forge Strategic Partnerships: Cultivate meaningful collaborations with other organizations to expand CREDE's network and boost student engagement and participation.
4. Integrate CREDE into the First-Year Experience: Position the CREDE as an essential component of the first-year experience at Elon, ensuring new students are aware of the resources available to them.
5. Cross-Promote Events: Enhance visibility by promoting CREDE and El Centro events across various media channels, creating a unified message that attracts broader participation.

Tactics

1. Develop Brand Guidelines and Logo: Create comprehensive brand guidelines and a new logo that encapsulate the essence of the CREDE and its programs.
2. Share Impactful Stories: Disseminate content through social media posts, stories, and email blasts that illustrate how the CREDE has empowered students to become well-rounded individuals through its resources.
3. Highlight Resource Utilization: Emphasize how students can enhance their personal and academic growth by leveraging CREDE resources to further their understanding of DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) and the center's role in advocating for ALANAM communities.
4. Create Sustainable Partnerships: Establish long-term partnerships with organizations that align with the CREDE's mission, ensuring collaborative efforts have a lasting impact.





CAMPAIGN DETAILS

Schedule Breakdown

This schedule gives a short overview of the first semester of school, highlighting ideas of how the CREDE can take the tactics previously shared and implement them into real actions/events. Examples of “Well-Rounded” events are given, however these events can change with further planning and research, should the CREDE choose to move forward with this campaign. Each action point shown below is directly related back to a tactic and was made with a clear purpose - supporting the strategies and goals of the CREDE.

August - Month One

Create a LinkedIn account further solidify new branding. Starting a LinkedIn will create an online community for current students and alumni, further strengthening the brand and it's community.

Updated branded materials on all social media.

Participate in the Organization Fair at Elon University, highlighting student stories and encouraging key influencers within the CREDE to share their experiences with the organization.

Start an interview series on social media highlighting CREDE students and their stories/ experiences of finding community and helpful resources through the CREDE.

Send a "Back to School" newsletter to student participants for the month of August, kicking off a new monthly newsletter.

Schedule student organization meetings for September, opening up a forum and space for students to be heard regarding issues around campus, as well as a space for students to access resources within the CREDE community.

Host regular August events with other organizations - pre-planned by the organization (a continuation of previously hosted events).

Well-Rounded event A: The Welcome Back Pizza Party - A new event hosted by the CREDE to draw in students who may be curious about the organization and the resources offered. This event should be advertised both on social media and in person at the Organization Fair hosted by Elon. The tone of the event should be informal, creating a space for students to feel comfortable venturing outside their comfort zone. As this will mainly be targeting first-years, recruitment should be the top priority of the event, asking each student to sign up for the monthly newsletters and informing them of future events being hosted by the CREDE.



September - Month Two

Post student work highlights that coincide with the CREDE mission - By highlighting strong student work in the community or work that may utilize a resource offered by the CREDE, the organization is able to further solidify its branding and brand values with the community. This will also give students the chance to network and share their work with alumni and a broad audience.

Continue the interview series on social media highlighting CREDE students and their stories/experiences of finding community and helpful resources through the CREDE.

Send a September edition of the new reoccurring monthly newsletter.

Utilize Elon 101 Classes as a way to share information about the CREDE and resources offered to students. Through Elon 101 Classes, a class all first-years are required to take in their first or second semester, all Elon students should be exposed to the CREDE and what it has to offer. Coming in with a short presentation and handouts will also solidify branding and messaging.

Host monthly student org meeting & schedule student organization meetings for October, opening up a forum and space for students to be heard regarding issues around campus, as well as a space for students to access resources within the CREDE community.

Reach out to partner organizations and RAs, asking them to post flyers and share information about upcoming/current CREDE events. This will be a key time to raise awareness with first-year students who are only starting their Elon journey and looking for extra-curriculares to take part in.

Host regular September events with other organizations - pre-planned by the organization (a continuation of previously hosted events).

Well-Rounded events B & C:

Cooking Class - A new event hosted by the CREDE that will highlight foods from different cultures, giving students a fun way to learn more about diverse cultures. The tone of the event should be informal and each dish prepared should teach students not only about the dish, but about the origins of the dish and why it was chosen.

Trivia Night - An event hosted by the CREDE where students are set up in a team based competition to prove how much knowledge they have about diverse communities from around the world. This event should challenge students to work together towards an incentive. The tone of the night is casual, but structured.



October - Month Three

Post student work highlights that coincide with the CREDE mission - By highlighting strong student work in the community or work that may utilize a resource offered by the CREDE, the organization is able to further solidify its branding and brand values with the community. This will also give students the chance to network and share their work with alumni and a broad audience.

Continue the interview series on social media highlighting CREDE students and their stories/experiences of finding community and helpful resources through the CREDE.

Send a October edition of the new reoccurring monthly newsletter.

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Host monthly student org meeting & schedule student organization meetings for November, opening up a forum and space for students to be heard regarding issues around campus, as well as a space for students to access resources within the CREDE community.

Host regular October events with other organizations - pre-planned by the organization (a continuation of previously hosted events).

Well-Rounded event D: Food & Drink Around The World - A new event hosted by the CREDE, Food and Drink Around The World should offer a new way for students to experience different cultures. The tone of the event should be informal, with booths or tables set up to represent different areas/cultures and “passports” provided to those who participate. Student or faculty representatives should be chosen to share a food from their background and more about where they’re from/how they identify. Students should be encouraged to try as many dishes as possible. If possible, “mocktails” and other beverages could be offered to further incentivize students to participate in the event. Recipes for the diverse dishes could also be printed and shared with students who wish to try recreating them at home.

November - Month Four

Post student work highlights that coincide with the CREDE mission - By highlighting strong student work in the community or work that may utilize a resource offered by the CREDE, the organization is able to further solidify its branding and brand values with the community. This will also give students the chance to network and share their work with alumni and a broad audience.

Continue the interview series on social media highlighting CREDE students and their stories/experiences of finding community and helpful resources through the CREDE.

Send a November edition of the new reoccurring monthly newsletter.

Utilize Elon 101 Classes as a way to share information about the CREDE and resources offered to students. Through Elon 101 Classes, a class all first-years are required to take in their first or second semester, all Elon students should be exposed to the CREDE and what it has to offer. Coming in with a short prevention and handouts will also solidify branding and messaging.

Host monthly student org meeting & schedule student organization meetings for December, opening up a forum and space for students to be heard regarding issues around campus, as well as a space for students to access resources within the CREDE community.

Host regular November events with other organizations - pre-planned by the organization (a continuation of previously hosted events).

Well-Rounded event E: Sit Down with Sandwiches - A new event hosted by the CREDE where students are invited into the CREDE space to share more about their background and how they’ve connected with other students/alumni at Elon. The tone of this event should be more formal, with students coming prepared to share their experiences and about their experiences at Elon. Creating a space for students to open up and share/learn more about others. With the previous events having food or activities as the incentive, this event should feel more experienced based, allowing students to share and form connections between one another using experiences they’ve gone through as the baseline for their relationships. The main goal of event E is further cultivate the community the CREDE has to offer, and really highlight the resources of the CREDE and their alumni network.

December - Wrapping Up

Post student work highlights that coincide with the CREDE mission - By highlighting strong student work in the community or work that may utilize a resource offered by the CREDE, the organization is able to further solidify its branding and brand values with the community. This will also give students the chance to network and share their work with alumni and a broad audience.

Continue the interview series on social media highlighting CREDE students and their stories/ experiences of finding community and helpful resources through the CREDE.

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Host monthly student org meeting, opening up a forum and space for students to be heard regarding issues around campus, as well as a space for students to access resources within the CREDE community.

As the semester comes to a close, re-evaluate these student org meetings. Take time to analyze what worked for the meetings and what may need to be relooked at in the new year. Take time at the December meeting to ask for student feedback and if they thought the meetings were beneficial or if they should be replaced/ reimagined.

Host regular November events with other organizations - pre-planned by the organization (a continuation of previously hosted events).



Elon's Center for Race, Ethnicity, and Diversity Education
Full Circle Campaign - Leave Behind