FIVE PILLARS AND BRANDING STATEMENT

(Sample Paper for Formatting Purposes)

Use the required title page using a small b in by

**Name, Date, Course, etc.**

**Five Pillars and Branding Statement**

(Sample- Note: This paper is not a perfect paper by any means. It is solely to help you get a

better idea of how to go about formatting your own paper. Be sure to use APA level one, two, and three headings per the guidelines listed in Blackboard).

**Title Here in Bold (Level One)**

**Introduction (Level Two)**

Begin with a statement to the reader of what the paper will focus on and what the reader can expect to find. It can be one paragraph but longer if you choose to do so.

**Five Pillars (Level Two)**

XYZ University will be recognized for our commitment to our student-athletes and their development as a whole person. To ensure this ideal, our athletics department will be built on the foundation of these Five Pillars: Excellence, Education, Family, Trust, and Resilience.

**Excellence. (Level Three)**

This applies to our commitment on- and off-the-field. Our student-athletes show their

passion to continually improve in their endeavors. Every day is an interview. We make our community proud to wear the colors of XYZ as they know they are a beacon of our university.

**Education.**

This is the top priority for our coaches and administrators, and they pass this focus

down to the student-athletes as well. In order to be the best, we surround ourselves with the best so it begins with recruiting players who are motivated and eager to attend our great university. They understand the commitment they are making.

**Family.**

Our community is made to feel as a family unit, and whoever comes in contact with

us feels it too. When asked to describe XYZ and our values, this is the answer we hear first. We treat each individual in our program as we would treat one of our own family members including what can be called ‘tough love’ at times. In order to achieve excellence, we will be pushed at times. If it were easy, anyone could do it.

**Trust.**

This is the backbone of any relationship. To successfully educate athletes, they must

trust we are leading them in the right direction, and we will honor that trust. This is reciprocated by our student-athletes as this is a part of their commitment to excellence.

**Resilience.**

Just as ‘tough love’ was mentioned as part of our family atmosphere, resilience is a

key component as well. Achieving excellence is not easy, but as with any commitment, you need to ‘weather the storm’ that comes alone. We educate our student-athletes on the importance of mental toughness, and how to cope with barriers they encounter along their path to success.

**XYZ University (Level Two)**

The fictitious XYZ University was created to give an outlook of what I will install once heading an athletics program. It is a combination of my personal experiences, our current values at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Points, and Jack Swarbrick’s Five Pillars at the University of Notre Dame. I expect the culture of our program to be that of a family, and just as a family, we will practice acceptance and understanding. Our student-athletes will come from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds. There will be different religions, races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, etc., but we will always treat one another as brothers and sister. Although we might not always agree, we will respect and learn from each other. Our student-athletes should feel comfortable with the ability to open up to any coach or administrator. It will be a culture of caring focused on the student-athlete experience.

 Our student-athletes should also be able to look to our Five Pillars to help define themselves. They should consider themselves trustworthy and resilient. As mentioned above, they should be accepting and understanding of one another just as family should. They ought to value their educations and consider themselves a good student. They need to make a promise to improve on their relationships and their academics every day which is part of their commitment to excellence.

 As a staff, we will use these Five Pillars to guide all of our decision-making processes. Our goal is also excellence. Every decision needs to be made in the spirit of improving our institution. Although we strive to create the best athletic programs, education is our top priority. Our student-athletes will never jeopardize their academics in spite of athletics. There will always be transparency and consistency in our decisions in order to develop the trust of our school administration and our student-athletes. There will be tough times for our staff, and there will be tough decisions to make at time. Budget cuts and media snafus are all too common nowadays. We need resiliency and to stick together. We are family.

**Branding Statement (Level Two)**

Our branding statement will read: “At XYZ University, we are raising young people to be better citizens – not just athletes. We define ‘winning’ in our student-athletes consistent dedication to better themselves academically, athletically, and socially.”

A specific branding image for our university is hard to define as XYZ University does not exist. Once it comes time for me to take over a program, our image will also need to be dictated by the mascot and traditions of the institution. The ideal image will be centered on a unique aspect of the college of university. For example, my current place of employment, the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, went through a branding change after our new Athletics Director, Daron Montgomery, was brought on board a few years ago. Our nickname, the Pointers, is something no other college or university uses so our branding revolves around it. Our logo was redesigned and now features solely the purple and gold head of a pointer dog. The goal of any brand logo needs to make it so it is identifiable on its own. The Nike ‘Swoosh’ and the McDonalds’s ‘M’ are images which can stand on their own and are recognizable. That should be the goal of any branding image and will be the goal of my institution as well.

Once the image and outline of our brand is created, we need to develop a product that ‘follows up and follows through.’ This is where the aforementioned Five Pillars can be seen. The two biggest dreams I want to fulfill with our brand is the presence of ‘excellence.’ In a sense, our logo needs to draw respect from the audience when seen. For example, the University of Michigan’s ‘M’ symbolizes the academic and athletic excellence which has surrounded the program for generations. When the logo is seen, it draws a reaction from the viewer. As with any successful organization, there will also be detractors. Either way the brand is creating an emotional reaction from its audience. That is my biggest hope. Our second Pillar – Education – is tied to the first. Our overall commitment to excellence begins in the classroom. Our brand needs to exemplify that educational foundation as well.

Our third Pillar – Family – should be felt when viewing our logo as well. When an alumni views our image on a sweatshirt or the bumper sticker of a passing car, he or she should feel a sense of belonging to our community. We are a family at XYZ and will always be represented as such. Our fourth and fifth Pillars – Trust and Resilience – need to be exemplified by the individuals within our organization as explained above.

What is distinctive to our brand as opposed to other colleges is the focus on the student-athlete experience. Our image should entice a feeling from viewers reminding them of their own home. They should have that ‘family feeling’ where they know XYZ cares about them, our student-athletes, coaches, administrators, and the rest of the community. We are to be known as a service organization

When our project begins, our brand will not have any recognition. Our new logo will need to have the XYZ name attached to it to show our audience who it represents. Over time, we can transition it so parts of the name can begin being removed, and five to seven years down the road, the logo standing alone with be able to draw recognition to the university. At that point, all the aforementioned qualities will be portrayed by that single image. As our communities evolve and grow, there are bound to be changes. Our brand is flexible in the fact it is centered on the student-athletes. Although technologies can change and buildings can be torn down and rebuilt, the one constant surrounding college athletics is that of the student-athlete. Although there can and will be unforeseen obstacles, we can always mend the brand by keeping the student-athlete goal in perspective: “dedication to better themselves academically, athletically, and socially.” This will serve the short and long-term goals of our coaches because it enhances the student-athlete experience – the main goal of our administration. Any goal outside of that is supplementary.

I expect our coaches to buy into the new XYZ brand because this is why we do what we do. Coaches who chose their career for anything other than the betterment of the players – or the satisfaction they get from that betterment – are doomed in this business. Although the scoreboard may not always end in our favor, we can take pride in the fact we helped our student-athletes develop into better citizens. If we keep that in mind, the wins will pile themselves.

**Conclusion or Summary (Level Two)**

Here you will restate the introduction statement and tell the reader again of the importance and significance of the Five Pillars and of an effective Branding Statement to support them.

Note- Keep in mind branding is much more than just logo, mascot, and school colors. It also includes slogans, sayings, web site, songs, pictures in facilities, letterheads, and much, much more.

**References**

Citations go here in alpha order and double spaced. Use APA format as reviewed in the MCAA Writing Guidelines.