Recruitment Strategies for the Heartland

Ranjit T. Koodali

Pre-Technical Workshop
CGS Annual Meeting
Nashville, TN
Recruitment Strategies for the Heartland

Universities located between the densely populated US coasts often encounter special recruitment challenges. These may include a lack of name recognition, less diversity, a lack of programs that match high-demand student interests, and stereotypes about particular US regions. Learn how institutions in the "heartland" and beyond can promote their strengths and expand their programs using creative enrollment management strategies.
9:00-9:15 a.m. Introduction of speakers, explanation of first breakout activity, and organization of groups
9:15-9:30 a.m. Breakout groups discussing current challenges at attendee institutions
9:30-9:45 a.m. Report back on challenges
9:45-10:05 a.m. Presentation #1 – Ranjit Koodali
10:05-10:20 a.m. Break
10:20-10:40 a.m. Presentation #2 – Jim Ahearn
10:40-11:00 a.m. Presentation #3 – Jeni Hart
11:00-11:30 a.m. Q and A and wrap-up
Build Awareness?

**SEARCH ENGINES**
- 79% use search engines for research
- 2 in 3 search for program

**WEBSITES**
- 89% of prospects visit university website for further research

**OTHER**
- 24% visit blogs, online forums etc.
- 13% visit social media

Wiley Education Services Survey, 2018
Brand Awareness - Recommendations

1. Enhance website discoverability with Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Techniques
   i. Update content regularly with faculty accomplishments, research interests/expertise, awards, publications etc.

https://www.usd.edu/health-sciences/occupational-therapy/
Brand Awareness - Recommendations

1. Enhance website discoverability with Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Techniques
   ii. Provide student video testimonials
   iii. Showcase diversity (faculty and students)

https://www.usd.edu/health-sciences/occupational-therapy/
Brand Awareness - Recommendations

1. Enhance website discoverability with Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Techniques
   iv. Provide links to Application, Degree plan, Strengths, Choice of programs etc.

https://www.usd.edu/graduate-school/future-students
Brand Awareness - Recommendations

1. Enhance website discoverability with Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Techniques
2. Highlight key statistics (admissions, enrollment, completion, placement etc.)

Rackham Graduate School
Brand Awareness - Recommendations

1. Enhance website discoverability with Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Techniques
   vi. Provide links to student resources, New student checklist, Policies, Handbooks, Guides, etc.

https://www.usd.edu/graduate-school/student-resources
Build a Pipeline - Recommendations

2. Increase your inquiries
   i. Reach out to your graduate students!
      A. Use data analytics & identify undergraduate school(s) of current graduate students.
   ii. Reach out to your undergraduates!
      A. Visit with student groups
      B. Visit classrooms
      C. Hold Graduate School Fair
      D. Partner with Admissions
      E. Reach out to summer interns
      F. Leverage existing conferences/academic events held on campus
2. Increase your inquiries
   iii. Reach out to undergraduates in the region
      A. Arrange for faculty visits to feeder schools
      B. Organize Open House
      C. Attend regional conferences
      D. Arrange campus visits to prospect students (and families)
      E. Leverage existing conferences held on campus
Build a Pipeline - Recommendations

2. Increase your inquiries

iv. Participate in regional/national conferences
A. American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) meetings
B. Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS)
C. National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers (NOBBChE)
D. Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans (SACNAS)
Build a Pipeline - Recommendations

2. Increase your inquiries
   v. Create customized e-mail campaigns to reach out to:
      A. Graduate Degrees for Minorities in Engineering and Science (GEM) consortium
      B. McNair Scholars database
      C. National Name Exchange

- Over 70 graduate programs – Find Yours
- Deadlines are approaching soon!
- Semester is starting soon!
- Ways to pay for Graduate School
- Not ready to apply yet, view upcoming term
- Don’t stress – We will do our best
Collect Prospect Information in a Robust Database
Maintain a Robust CRM

3. Use and maintain a robust Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System

- CRM’s provide a “one-stop” channel with an overview of prospects.
- Inquiries via events, e-mails, phone calls, in-person visits, Request More Information (RMI) etc. can be captured, managed, and tracked in a single common platform!
Engage the Prospect - Recommendations

4. i. The home/landing page for the graduate program should have a servlet, “Request More Information”.

https://webto.salesforce.com/servlet/servlet.WebToLead?encoding=UTF-8
Engage the Prospect - Recommendations

4. Engage the prospect

Contact Strategy - Phase 1

- **Day 1**: 0-1 Min: 1st Email Bounce Back
- **Day 2**: 1st Phone Attempt w/in 24 hours VM
- **Day 3**: 2nd Phone Attempt
- **Day 4**: Mail Letter & Viewbook
- **Day 5**: 2nd Email
- **Day 6**: 3rd Email
- **Day 7**: 3rd Phone Attempt VM
- **Day 8**: 4th Email
- **Day 14**: 4th Phone Attempt VM
- **Day 15**: 5th Email
- **Day 16 & Beyond**: Lead Nurturing & Re-Heat Strategies
## Overall Recommendations

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Design engaging and effective website</strong></td>
<td>A department’s website is usually the first point of contact. Should be up to date with information about admissions, funding, research interests, faculty, alumni, and student achievements, and key statistics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Build an effective pipeline</strong></td>
<td>Outreach to undergraduate students, Feeder Institution travel, Organize Open House, Visits to conferences <em>etc</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sustain ongoing and timely communication</strong></td>
<td>Respond to inquiries quickly from any prospective student. Develop a customized communication plan.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Make financing a part of the recruitment picture</strong></td>
<td>Program cost, Return on Investment (future job/career) Scholarships/Assistantship Opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Involve faculty, current students, and alumni in the recruitment process</strong></td>
<td>Set enrollment goals. Develop strategies and action plans for achievement of goals</td>
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References

5. Integrated Interdependence: The Emergence of Graduate Enrollment Management (GEM), NAGAP.
# Graduate Recruitment Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Website</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Are faculty accomplishments (publications, grantsmanship etc.) updated regularly and easily searchable?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do the graduate program home pages have student testimonials and is diversity showcased?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Are i.) Application, ii.) Degree plan (Credits required, course rotations), Strengths, Student Outcomes, Accreditation, Licensure/National Board Exam rates etc. displayed prominently?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Is information on applications, admissions, enrollment, median GPA &amp; GRE scores, career outcomes etc. posted?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Can prospective students access Checklist (to get started), Handbooks, Policies etc. easily?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Is information regarding cost, scholarships/assistantships, and financial aid easily accessible to prospective students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Are opportunities for professional development of graduate students indicated at your website?</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do you know your major feeder institutions (domestic and International)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do you engage with your undergraduate students on-campus?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do you engage with undergraduate institutions in the region?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Does your faculty participate in regional and national conferences and have a recruiting booth?</td>
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<tr>
<th>Enrollment Management</th>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do you have a robust CRM integrated with Student Information System (SIS) and Application Portal?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do you have a “Request For Information” servlet or similar widget on your landing page?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do you have an on-going communication strategy to engage with a prospect?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do you share prospect information with Graduate Program Coordinators regularly?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do you have dedicated Enrollment Coordinators for specific Programs/Colleges?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Are admission decisions made in a timely manner?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Is information regarding Assistantships/Scholarships, Financial Aid etc. communicated in the admit letter?</td>
</tr>
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