Marketing the Graduate School at a PUI – Challenges and Opportunities

Kathleen L. Kitto
Dean of the Graduate School & Vice Provost for Research
Western Washington University
Western Washington University

- **Bellingham, WA**
  - ~15,000 Students
  - 650 Active, ~ 950 Active + Dormant Graduate Students
  - 21% Students of Color
  - 35 Different Masters Level Grad Programs,
    - 41 with Options
Background

• Declining Budgets
  – Started in AY 2008-2009
  – Closed Low Enrollment UG and Grad Programs
  – Undergraduate Programs Preferentially Protected
  – Graduate Enrollments Fell to 5% from 7%
  – State Support Fell from 70% to 30%
• End of State Cuts - Higher Ed – AY 2012-2013
• Increase to Higher Ed – AY 2013-2014 WWU (+19%)
The Opportunities

• Rebuild, Revitalize, Revamp!
• Status Analysis (Appraisals)
  – Identify Signature Programs
• Improve Processes
• Clarify Policies
• New Programs – Inter/Multi-disciplinary Focus
• Strategic Planning – Forward Thinking Replacing Retrospective Thinking
• Role of Grad Students in Student Government
• Communicate the Contributions of Graduate Students and Programs
Western Has a Graduate School?
The Challenge
Internal/External

• Western is Known as:
  – A High Quality Undergraduate Institution
  – Affordable (Best Buy)
  – Research, Service Learning, and Community Projects
  – A Great Place to Work
  – Small Class Sizes
  – Individual Interactions with Faculty

• Adding to the Conversation
  – A High Quality Graduate Institution
    • Signature Programs
    • Enrichment of our Undergraduate Mission
Internal Audience

• Visibility
  – Administration
    • University Level Events
  – University Communications
  – Faculty
    • Graduate Council Faculty
      Faculty Leadership and Charge
  – Students
    • Professional Development
      – Thesis Writing
      – Teaching Professional Development
  • “Mixer” Events
WWU grad student creates map of homes in path of potential wildfires

BY DEAN KAHN
THE BELLINGHAM HERALD  September 16, 2013

Jacob Tully spent thousands of hours, many of them late at night with loud music and lots of coffee, figuring out how many people in the lower 48 live where their houses could be destroyed by wildfire.

His research for his master’s degree at Western Washington University took a new approach to calculating the extent of WUI - shorthand for “wildland-urban interface” - in those states in 2000 and 2010.

In simple terms, WUI refers to homes built close to potential fuels for wildland fires, such as grasses and trees. Such areas range from the wooded slopes of Chuckanut Mountain to the dry forests of Yosemite National Park to the chaparral canyons of Yarnell Hill in Arizona.
Our Vision of the Future
WWU’s View Book

“Why Reinvent the Wheel?”
Revising For Graduate Programs
academic programs

I HAVE INTERESTS WE HAVE OPTIONS

With more than 200 academic programs offered in western's college of liberal studies in research, education, and creative enterprises, we challenge and inspire students pursuing a variety of disciplines. Our breadth of offerings includes business, humanities, education, engineering, and health sciences, among other areas.

We offer a wide range of academic programs, including business, humanities, education, engineering, and health sciences, among other areas.

www.edu/honors

www.edu/majors
Location, Location —
Use Common Marketing Themes

Active Minds Changing Lives
To Best Practices

- Web Site Revamp
  - 3 Clicks Max for Vital Information
    - Program Specifics, Financial Aid, Tuition, Admissions
  - Google Analytics
  - Students Centered, Not Process Centered
  - New Program Landing Pages
- Friendly and Modern Admission Process
- Revise All Communications from Procedural to Support - with Contacts in Grad School
- Active Recruiting from Passive Recruiting
Toward Best Practices

- Revisit TA Compensation Packages
  - Raise Base Stipend Level
  - Market Total Compensation Rather Than by Quarter
- Recruiting Scholarships
- Student Surveys
  - Current (Sense of Identity, Thesis)
  - Non-enrollee ($ and Non-PhD)
- Graduate Student Professional Development
- Communications and Transparency
- Recruit MBA Marketing Team
- Student Voice in Government
Others to Consider?

- Print Media
  - Basic for Recruiting Fairs
  - CGS Materials
  - QR Codes for Landing on Faculty Research Pages
  - Conventional Media - Limited Yield
- Gradschools.com – Ads
- Google Search - Ads
- Social Media – Facebook, Twitter
- Accelerated Programs
- Extended Education Programs
Do Something Electrifying –
Create a Buzz About Your Graduate Program
Thank You