

# Managing Enrollment: Recruitment, Admissions, and Funding



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# Format of session

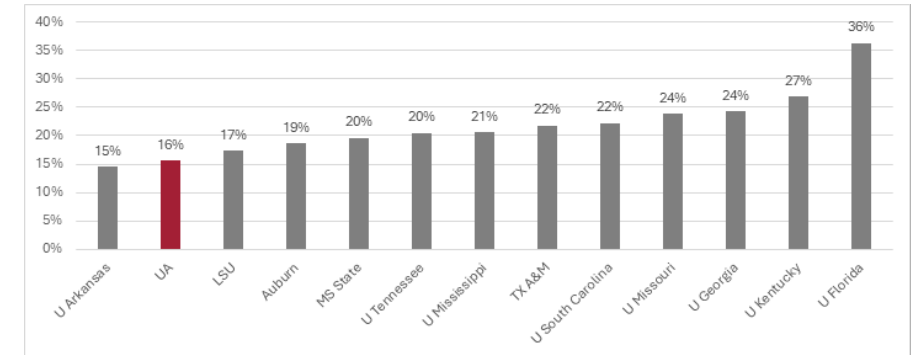
- 1:35-1:45      Admissions & Recruitment Overview
- 1:45-2:00      Tabletop Discussion
- 2:00-2:10      Financial Aid and Enrollment Management Overview
- 2:10-2:25      Tabletop Discussion
- 2:25-2:45      Open discussion



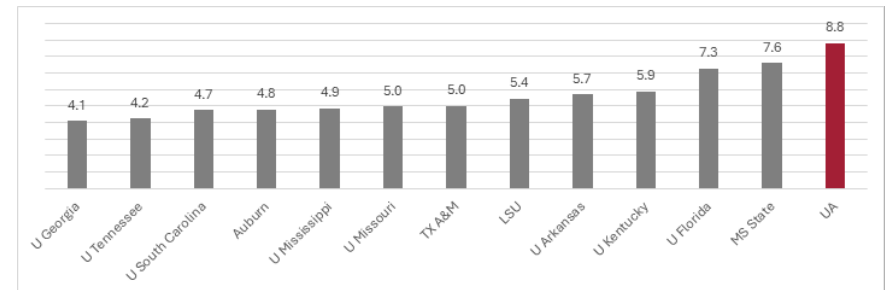
# University of Alabama: Institutional Context

- Total Enrollment 40,846;  
Graduate/Professional 6457 (16%)
- Recruitment is decentralized but Graduate School manages incentives budget
- All admissions decisions are driven by departments
- Graduate School includes Admissions and a Registrar's Office
- Admissions, and increasingly current students, are managed in Slate

Grad Students as % of overall student population (SEC)



Masters: PhD Ratio (SEC)



Graduate School



## Graduate Recruitment Strategies

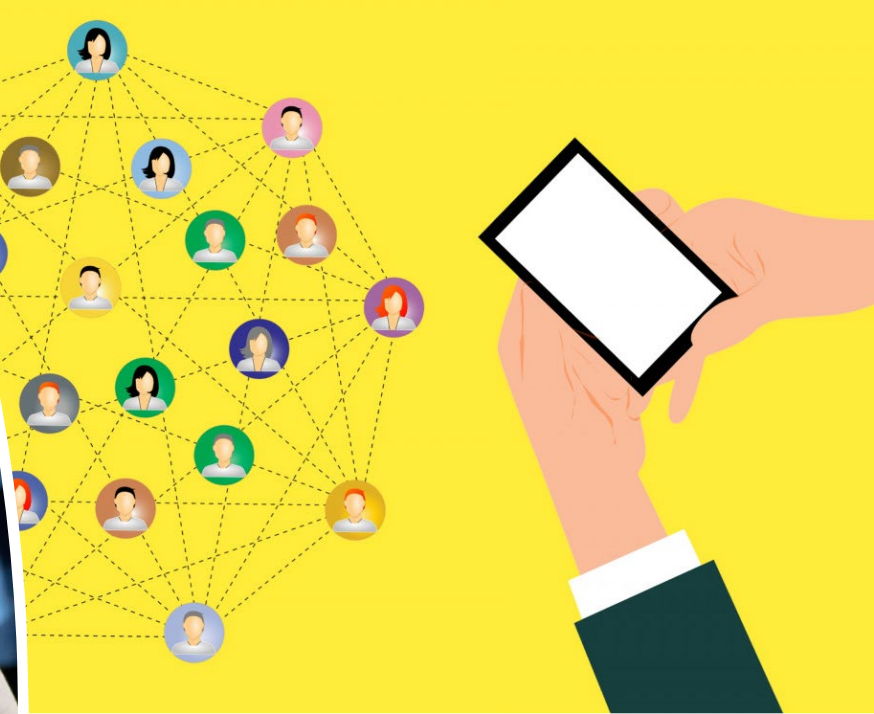
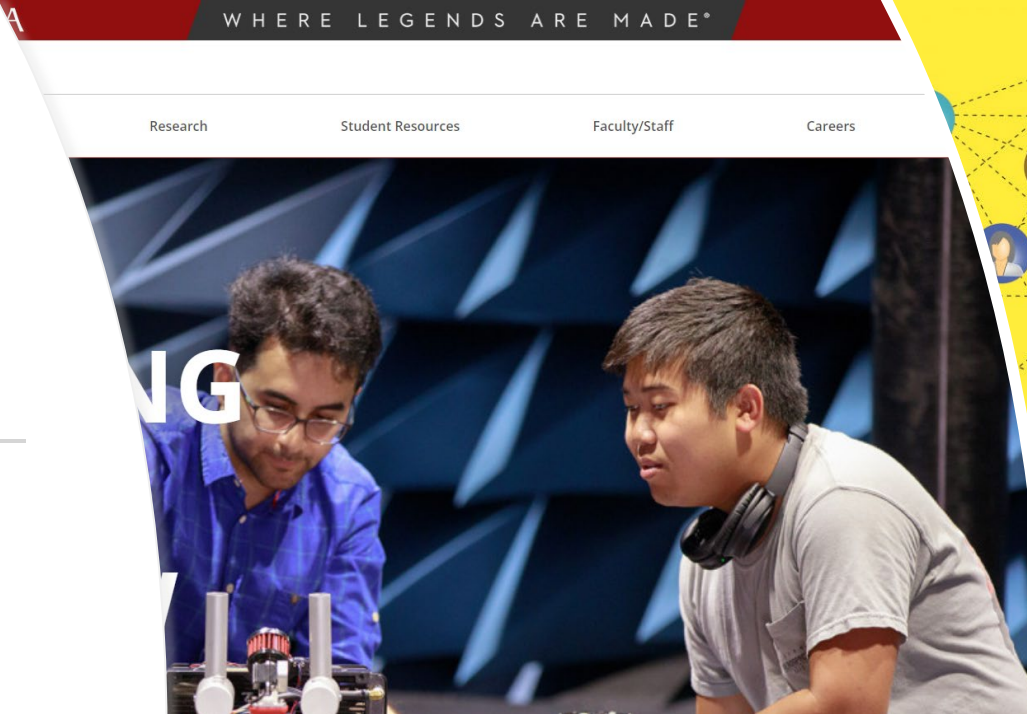
- What is the primary goal for your institution – strengthening the quality of the applicant pool, or growing overall enrollment (*with strong students, of course*)?
- In what areas does the institutional brand matter most?
- Recruitment funding support to departments is most strategic when administered as matching funds
- How are target markets shifting, in the current context?





# Graduate Recruitment

- Tool #1: Department's website
- Tool #2: Responsiveness
- Tool #3: Digital marketing
- Tool #4: Events (virtual, on-campus, off-campus)



The background of the slide is a photograph of the University of Alabama's main building, a large white neoclassical structure with a prominent dome. In the foreground, there is a large, curved stone welcome sign. The sign is light-colored and features the text 'UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA' in large, serif capital letters. Below this, in smaller letters, it says 'CATHERINE AND PETTUS RANDALL' and 'WELCOME' in large, bold, serif capital letters. A small stone monument with the year '2000' is visible near the building. The sky is clear and blue, and there are some trees on the right side of the frame.

## The arms-race of responsiveness to applicants

- Technology
- Texting; AI tools
- Ensuring admissions staff have a “recruiter mentality”
- Inspiring faculty to be proactive and responsive to applicants
- Timely decisions

# International transcript evaluation at UA – Scholaro resources for faculty

New Record

Person

[Application](#)

[College](#)

[Courses](#)

[Departments](#)

[Graduate Faculty/Staff Contacts](#)

[International Evaluation](#)

[Organization Contacts](#)

Staff A

International Evaluation

Partial Match

Matching Rows

Filters

Search...

68

Filter

NOT

(

OR

)

Join

Country	Country Code
Algeria	AG
Australia	AS
Bangladesh	BG
Belarus	BO
Belguim	BE
Benin	BN
Botswana	BC
Brazil	BR
Cameroon	CM
Chad	CD
China	CH

Nigeria	
Dashboard	Timeline
Profile	Materials
Details	
Accrediting Body	Natinal Universities Commision
Accrediting Body Link	<a href="https://www.sc">https://www.sc</a>
Available Degrees	
Native	US Equivalent
<a href="#">Add New</a>	
Postgraduate Diploma	Master's
Bachelor of Technology	Bachelor's
Bachelor of Arts	Bachelor's
Higher National Diploma (with National Diploma)	Bachelor's
Bachelor of Surgery	Master's
Master of Technology	Master's
Bachelor of Medicine	Master's
MBBS	Master's
National Diploma	Associates
Master of Philosophy	Master's
Doctor of Philosophy	Doctoral
Master of Science	Master's
Doctor of Veterinary Medicine	Master's
Bachelor of Science	Bachelor's
Certificate in Midwifery	Associates
Bachelor of Laws	Master's

US Equivalencies			
Scale Type	Native Grade	Grade Scale	US Equiv
<a href="#">Add New</a>			
Common	A or 70-100 or 5	5 pt.	A
Common	B or 60-69 or 4	5 pt.	B+
Common	C or 50-59 or 3	5 pt.	B
Common	D or 45-49 or 2	5 pt.	C+
Common	E or 40-44 or 1	5 pt.	C
Common	F or 0-39 or 0	5 pt.	F



# International transcript evaluation at UA – Scholaro resources for faculty

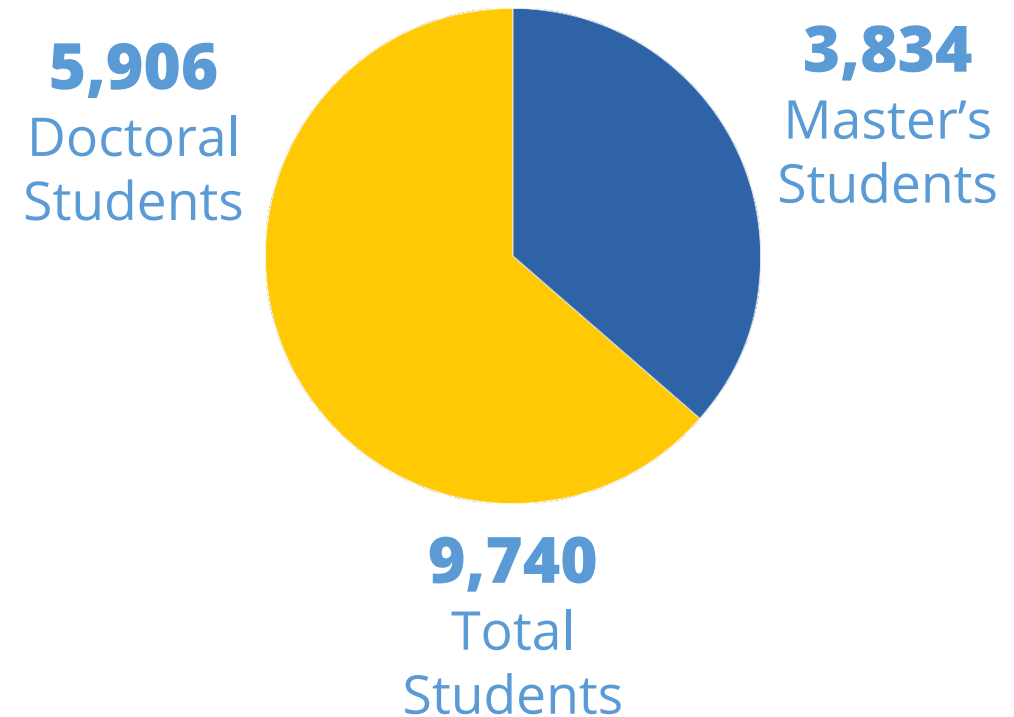
Institution-Specific	C or 60-64 or 3.00	Dual Letter	B	Moshood Abiola Polytechnic
Institution-Specific	CD or D or 50-59 or 2.75-2.50	Dual Letter	B-	Moshood Abiola Polytechnic
Institution-Specific	DE or 45-49 or 2.25	Dual Letter	C+	Moshood Abiola Polytechnic
Institution-Specific	E or 40-44 or 2.00	Dual Letter	C	Moshood Abiola Polytechnic
Institution-Specific	EF or FF or 30-39 or 1.50-1.75	Dual Letter	C-	Moshood Abiola Polytechnic
Institution-Specific	F or 25-29 or 1.25	Dual Letter	D+	Moshood Abiola Polytechnic
Institution-Specific	HF or 0-19 or 0	Dual Letter	F	Moshood Abiola Polytechnic
Institution-Specific	PF or 20-24 or 1.0	Dual Letter	D	Moshood Abiola Polytechnic
Institution-Specific	A or 70-100	Graduate	A	Umaru Musa Yar'Adula University
Institution-Specific	B or 60-64	Graduate	B+	Umaru Musa Yar'Adula University
Institution-Specific	B+ or 65-69	Graduate	A-	Umaru Musa Yar'Adula University
Institution-Specific	C+ or C or 50-59	Graduate	B	Umaru Musa Yar'Adula University
Institution-Specific	D or 45-49	Graduate	C	Umaru Musa Yar'Adula University
Institution-Specific	F or 0-44	Graduate	F	Umaru Musa Yar'Adula University
Institution-Specific	A or 70-100 or Excellent	5 pt.	A	University of Ibadan
Institution-Specific	B or 60-69 or Very Good	5 pt.	B+	University of Ibadan
Institution-Specific	C or 50-59 or Good	5 pt.	B	University of Ibadan
Institution-Specific	D or 45-49 or Pass	5 pt.	C	University of Ibadan
Institution-Specific	E or 40-44	5 pt.	D	University of Ibadan
Institution-Specific	F or 0-39	5 pt.	F	University of Ibadan



# University of Michigan: Institutional Context

- All campus graduate and professional enrollment is ~ 19,000.
- Rackham Graduate School is home to research-based master's degrees and all Ph.D. programs;
- Graduate recruitment, admissions, and financial aid, are highly decentralized
- State of Michigan Constitution prohibits considering race, ethnicity, gender, and national origin in admissions and financial aid

## Total Rackham Students (2024)



# Recent Priorities: Grad admissions and recruiting

- Best admissions practices for faculty
- On-campus recruiting to expand access to grad education
- Publicly available admissions data to support inclusive excellence
- Admissions technology
- Ph.D. enrollment management
- International student support

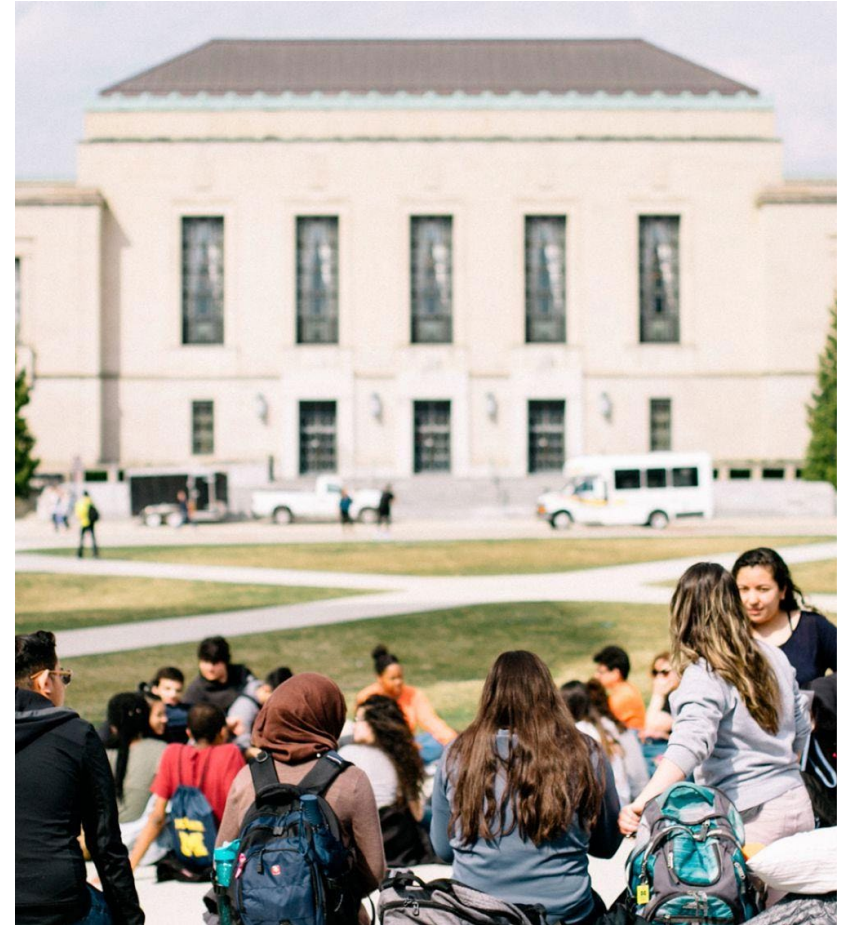


# Recent Priorities: Best practices for faculty

- Challenges
  - Limited experience of faculty with holistic admissions
  - State of Michigan constraints and SCOTUS decisions
  - Role of AI in admissions
- Actions
  - Holistic Admissions Workshops for Faculty
  - Required familiarity with FERPA, admissions law, and holistic admissions best practices
  - Caution about use of AI in admissions application review

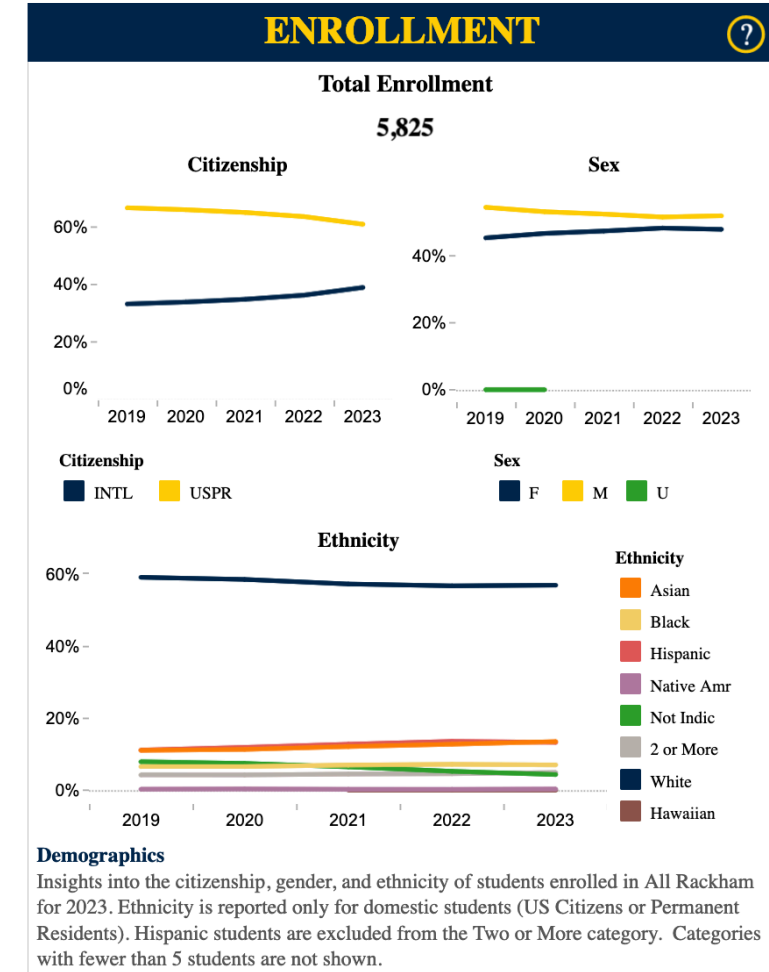
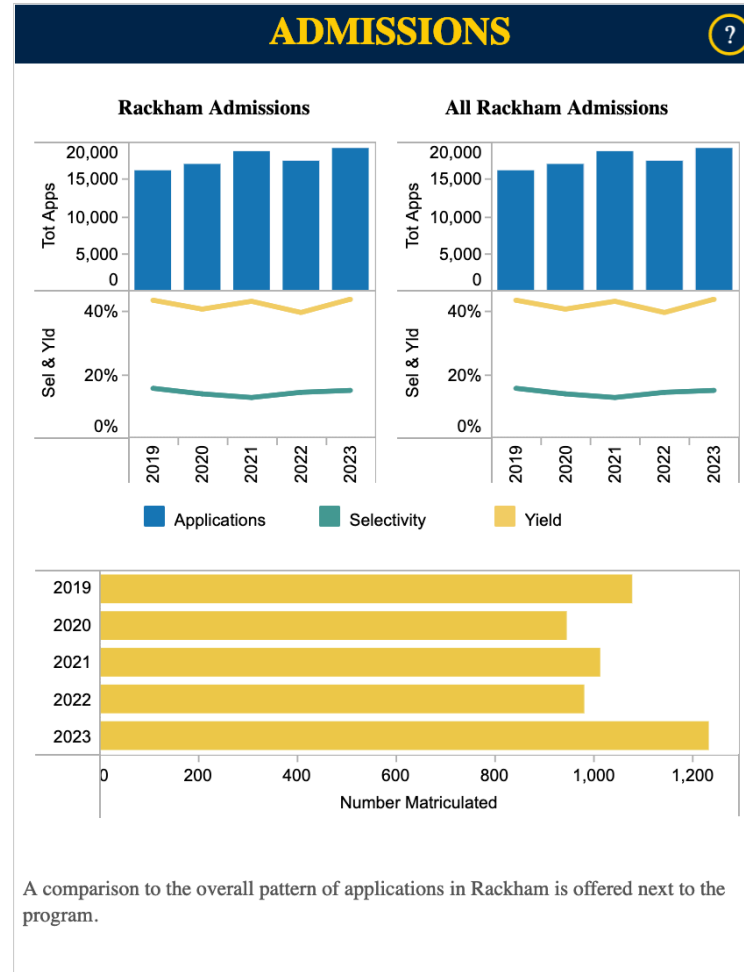
# Recent Priorities: On-campus recruiting for access

- Challenges
  - Students from underrepresented groups do not see themselves at our institution
  - Challenge of designing effective programs to engage students in the process of discovery, application, admission, and matriculation
- Actions
  - Coordinated portfolio of activities
  - Program differentiated by student readiness, interest and discipline



# Recent Priorities: Publicly available data

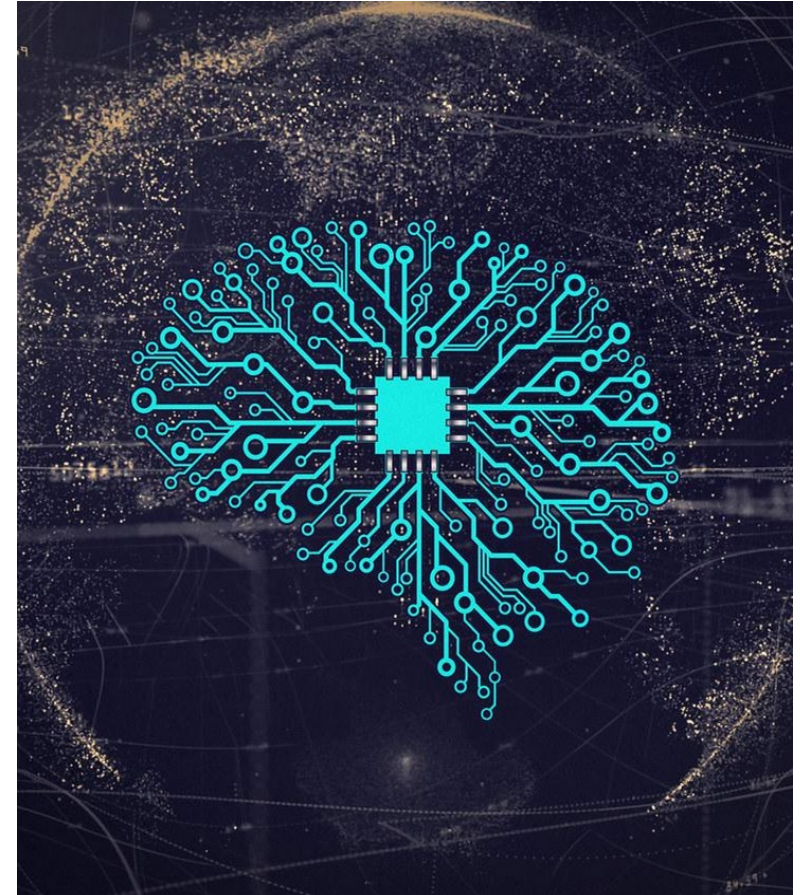
- Challenge: Faculty and students are uncertain if their admissions practices offer access to the broad range of students we seek to engage in graduate education
- Actions: Make admissions and enrollment data for each program publicly available





# Recent Priorities: Admissions Technology

- Challenges
  - Growing application volume
  - Decentralized systems
  - International transcript evaluation
  - Immigration documentation
  - Manual processes and shadow systems
- Actions
  - Evaluation of third-party vendors for solutions that allow coordination of communication and efficiency of review



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## Tabletop Discussion #1 (1:45-2:00)

- How does the work of admissions and recruiting occur at your institution, and what direct or indirect role does your position play in these areas?
- Discuss and be ready to report out on the top 2-3 priorities you will work on in your first year in these areas.



# Recent Priorities: Financial Aid and Enrollment

- Recording Ph.D. funding guarantees in offer letters
- Distinguishing between funding from fellowship and funding from employment
- Managing financial and academic risk of variability in yield on Ph.D. admissions offers
- New Categories of Financial Aid: International students and Master's education





# Recent Priorities: Offer letters and funding guarantees

- Challenges
  - Programs generate funding guarantees, especially for Ph.D. education
  - Balancing program autonomy and nimbleness with institutional needs for transparency, minimum levels of support, and management of financial risk
- Actions
  - Central steps to institute campus-wide minimum stipend amounts, continuous enrollment, and financial sustainability



# Recent Priorities: Fellowship support vs. employment<sup>18</sup>

- Challenges
  - Laborization of graduate education
  - Lack of student and faculty understanding of the variable sources of graduate student support, including distinction between fellowships and employment
  - Impact of federal agency actions on Ph.D. education
- Actions
  - Engagement in communications to promote understanding of the difference between academic work and employment
  - Elevation of program-driven enrollment planning



# Recent Priorities: Rising needs for financial aid

- International Student Fellowships, including funding availability of contingent support
- Fellowships to support Master's Education



# UA: Financial Aid and Enrollment Management

## Front-burner issues:

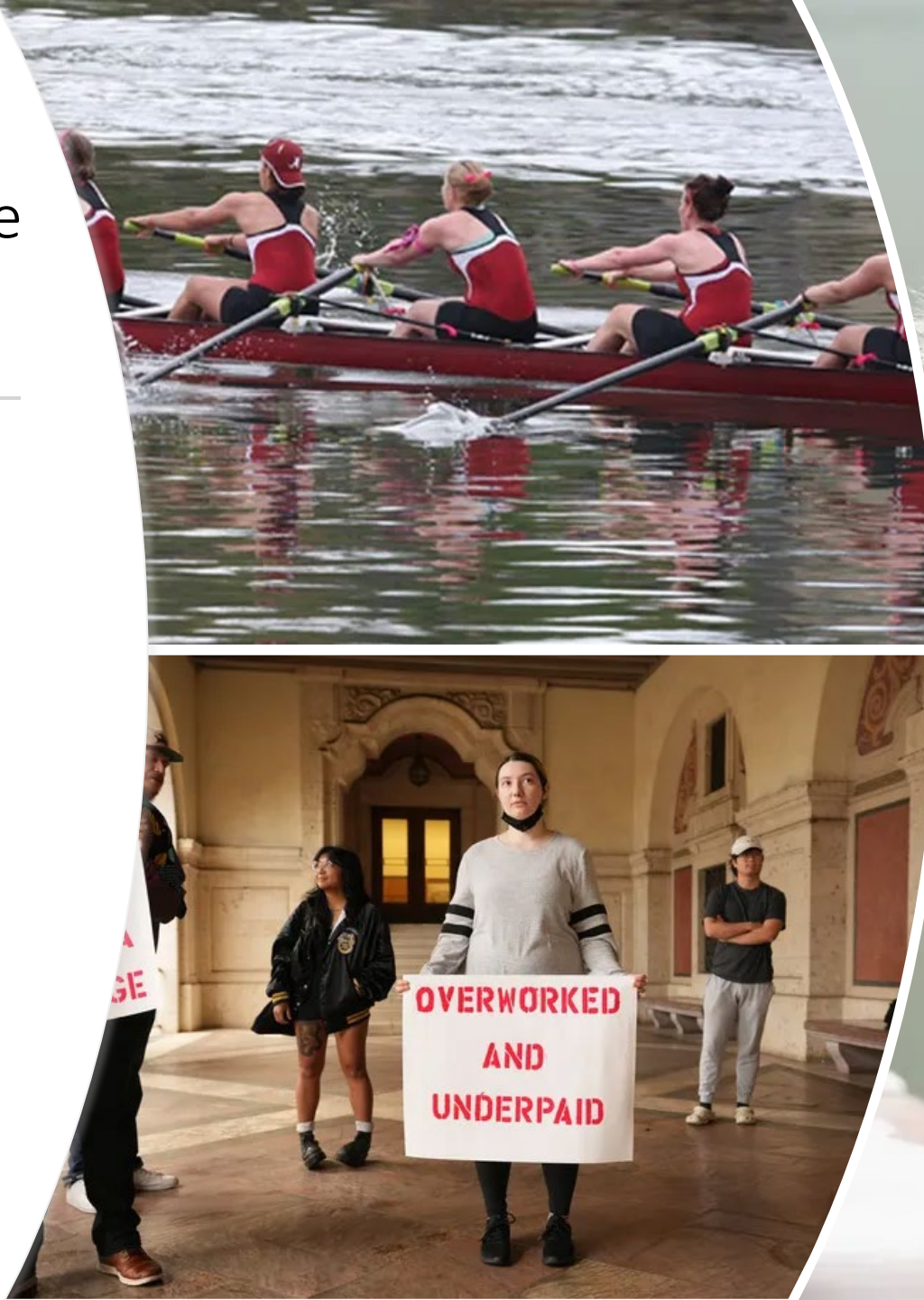
- Adjustments after DEI ('24) and GradPlus ('25) changes
  - Broader categories for eligibility
  - Reexamination of all financial support structures
- Enrollment Management – emphasis on growth
  - Annual Deans' Retreats on Graduate Education
- Potential gainful-employment analysis and impact on federal financial aid eligibility
  - Fed deadline for data is Sept 30, 2025
  - Where are adjustments needed?



## Levers for graduate growth

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- Faculty size and capacity
- Graduate support funding (fellowships, assistantships)
- Campus buy-in for growth (deans and faculty)



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## Tabletop Discussion #2 (2:10-2:25)

- How does the work of financial aid and enrollment management occur at your institution, and what direct or indirect role does your position play in these areas?
- Discuss and be ready to report out on the top 2-3 priorities you will work on in your first year in this area.

