NAGAP

The National Association of
Graduate Admissions Professionals
The Leader in Graduate Enrollment Management

PERSPECTIVES

A Newsmagazine for Graduate Admissions Professionals

NAGAP
CELEBRATING
20 YEARS
1987 2007
AS THE LEADER IN GRADUATE ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

IN THIS ISSUE

www.nagap.org

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I hope that the summer season is treating you all well after a very busy Spring 2007 semester! The summer months usually provide us all with an opportunity for some year-end reflection and re-evaluation. It is also a time to get oneself rejuvenated before the admission and enrollment cycle begins again. For many of us, summer is not a 'down' time at all, as many colleagues continue to review applications, host yield activities and gear up for the upcoming academic year. For some of you, this may also mean more professional development opportunities. If so, we hope you will look to NAGAP this summer for your professional development needs at our Summer Institute for New Graduate Admissions Professionals in Las Vegas, Nevada on July 12-13, 2007.

I would like to congratulate Harry Byerly and his outstanding conference committee for a simply "Magical" 20th Anniversary Conference in Orlando, Florida. These pictures and articles only give you a glimpse at what took place in Orlando in April, but it certainly gives you an idea if you were not able to attend. We enjoyed record attendance, more educational breakout sessions to choose from, and social/networking activities to honor our past 20 years! All of this plus a surprise appearance from Mickey Mouse himself!

There were so many highlights from the festivities in Orlando to mention, but the Business & Awards Luncheon stands out as one of the most memorable moments to me. It is at this luncheon that we recognize members for their hard work and dedication to the graduate admissions profession. We rely on members to nominate individuals they feel are worthy of this recognition. Please turn to page 4 to see who we recognized with our Future Leaders Award, Building Bridges Award, Promotional Excellence Award and Distinguished Service Award. Congratulations to our 2007 award winners.

My first year as NAGAP President was one of transition. Much of my time, and the time of our Governing Board, was spent learning how the new Executive Office and staff would be working with us. For many of us, this was an adjustment in responsibilities and duties. Now that this transition is behind us and our staff is up and running in Kansas City, year two will focus on strategic planning so that we continue to achieve and succeed for many more years to come. The culmination of our efforts will be providing members with another outstanding annual meeting in Denver during April 30-May 3, 2008.

Enjoy your summer months. We hope to see many of you in Las Vegas at the Summer Institute in July!

Tom Rock

NAGAP

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Editor, John M. Bury
Assistant Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Tulsa
600 South College Avenue
Tulsa, OK 74104-3189
918-631-2712
Fax: 918-631-2156
john-bury@utulsa.edu

NAGAP Perspectives is published four times per year (Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer). Articles of particular interest for publication are graduate admissions research/study results, how-to articles, success stories, reports of workshops/seminars, book reviews, etc.

Submissions should be sent to the editor via email. Articles should be provided in Microsoft Word, with figures and photos provided separately as high-resolution TIF or EPS files. APA style is preferred for documenting sources. Submission deadlines: August 15, November 15, February 15, and May 15.

NAGAP does not endorse any impediments to graduate education on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or class. NAGAP is committed to full inclusion and fairness in all aspects of graduate education, including admissions, recruitment, selection, and promotion.

HONEYMOONING, NAGAP STYLE!

It seems that overworked NAGAP members are always searching for opportunities to multitask. No surprise, therefore, that a new NAGAP member, Shari Sekel, saw the Orlando conference as an opportunity to learn more about the profession AND to celebrate her honeymoon.

Josh Sekel, IT manager for the Faculty of Business at Brock University in Ontario, Canada, first asked Shari, the Director of Graduate Business Programs at Brock University, out on a date while in a university parking lot on a blustery Saturday in January, 2005. A relationship that had started out as co-workers and progressed to friends continued its inevitable march towards engagement.

Shari first heard about NAGAP from past president Kristin Williams while traveling on the World MBA Tour in South America in the fall of 2006. When she saw that NAGAP's 2007 conference would be in Orlando, she "knew that Josh and I needed to make the wedding happen in time to spend our honeymoon at Disneyworld!" With the help of some careful event planning, Shari and Josh were married on January 1, 2007.

Together, Shari and Josh had the great pleasure of spending their time in Orlando on the "Tower of Terror" and the "Rockin' Roller Coaster," experiences that will serve them well in the later years of their marriage.

Shari wants to thank "the NAGAP Board and members for the really warm welcome that they show to new attendees at the conference." NAGAP would like to thank Shari and Josh for sharing their honeymoon with us. We look forward to their continued association with NAGAP.

UPCOMING NAGAP EVENTS

Summer Institute for New Graduate Admission Professionals
July 12-13, 2007
Flamingo Hotel
Las Vegas, Nevada

Winter Institute for Advanced Admissions Professionals
January 24-25, 2008
InterContinental Hotel
San Juan, Puerto Rico

Pre-Conference Executive Professional Development Institute
April 30, 2008
Hyatt Regency Convention Center
Denver, Colorado

2008 Annual Conference
April 30 – May 3, 2008
Hyatt Regency Convention Center
Denver, Colorado

NAGAP AWARD WINNERS

The National Association of Graduate Admissions Professionals, the Leader in Graduate Enrollment Management, would like to congratulate its 2007 award winners. These awards were presented at NAGAP's 20th Annual Conference on April 27, 2007, in Orlando, Florida.

Distinguished Service Award

The Distinguished Service Award is presented to an individual who has contributed exceptional service to the profession and to the Association.

This year's winner is: Kristin S. Williams, Executive Director, Graduate Student Enrollment Management, George Washington University, Washington, D.C., pictured here with NAGAP President, Thomas P. Rock.

Building Bridges Award

The Building Bridges Award is presented to an individual who champions the issues of access and equity in making graduate education available.

The 2007 Building Bridges Award was presented to Amy Potthast, Manager, Graduate Education Program, Action Without Borders/Idealist.org, Portland, Oregon, pictured here with Jeffery T. Johnson, NAGAP Awards Committee Co-Chair.

Future Leaders Award

This award is presented to an individual in the Association and who has displayed leadership and enthusiasm to the profession and also to the Association.

The Future Leaders Award for 2007 was presented to James N. Crane, Assistant Dean-Graduate Studies, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, pictured here with Joanne Canyon-Heller, NAGAP Awards Committee Co-Chair.

Promotional Excellence Award

The Promotional Excellence Award focuses on prospective students or applicants and promotes a new graduate-level program that successfully meets the needs of an existing community/market/discipline. Examples could include the promotion of a new certificate program, a new delivery format for an existing program, the creation of a new graduate program/degree, or "other."

The 2007 Promotional Excellence Award was presented to: Teach Nebraska. The purpose of the Teach Nebraska program is to increase the enrollment of non-degree seeking students in graduate level courses in teacher education and other related departments by specifically targeting teachers in the State of Nebraska. Contributors to the Teach Nebraska program include:

- Dr. Margaret Latta, Graduate Committee Chair and Associate Professor in Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education,
- Dr. Ellen Weissinger, Executive Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Associate Vice Chancellor for Research, and Professor in Educational Psychology,
- Dr. Thomas McGowan, Chairperson and Professor in Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education,
- Michelle Howell Smith, Director of Graduate Recruitment, and
- Jason Cruise, Recruitment Services Leader.

Promotional Excellence Award winner Jason Cruise with NAGAP President Thomas P. Rock.

NAGAP 2006-2008 Governing Board

Seated: Carolyn Payne, Joanne Canyon-Heller, Tom Rock, Nancy Knight
Standing: Dave Fletcher, John Bury, Jeffery Johnson, Ann Bruno, Harry Byerly, Tom Evans.
Not available for picture: Rick Liston

Orlando NAGAP Conference Committee

Helen Albertson-Ploucha, Debbie Lesperance, Maris Fallon, Mickey Mouse, Harry Byerly, Courtney Lewis, Lisa Davis

Some of NAGAP's Past Presidents at the Welcome Reception

NAGAP President Tom Rock, Glenn Berman, Carolyn Payne, George Abraham, Don Shaw (NAGAP's first President), Donald Resnick

GradSchool.Com representatives, sponsors of the Cannes After Party at Disney-MGM Studios, pictured with Harry Byerly, 2007 NAGAP Conference Chair, Tom Rock, NAGAP President and Jacques Touché, Executive Director of the Cannes.

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6TH ANNUAL EXECUTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE, MORNING SESSION

By Guy Berst, Medical College of Wisconsin

I think we all understand the value of the web as an effective tool in recruiting talented graduate students. Most colleges have focused significant financial and human resources on improving their website for the purpose of marketing and recruiting to our nation's most talented students. I have personally spent many hours brainstorming ways to keep pace with the changing needs and expectations of the current undergraduate population.

The pre-conference Executive Professional Development Institute presented me with raw data to validate ongoing initiatives and prepared me for the next generation of undergraduates that I am trying to recruit. Len provided an in-depth discussion about some of the key elements that I should consider and had previously overlooked. This was an informative discussion on what websites and portals students are accessing and where they are sharing information. The daily activity generated by our prospective graduate students on these sites is staggering.

The EPDI conference was beneficial and offered new and practical applications that should be considered for future recruitment strategies, especially the discussion surrounding interacting with new prospects via the web.

2007 CONFERENCE SESSIONS SUMMARIES

2007 National Survey on Website Usage in Graduate School Search

Presented by Kevin Mark Drexel, The Princeton Review
Recorded by Angelica Compton, Georgetown University

It is useful for graduate admissions professionals to understand how prospective students are using the Internet and other resources in their graduate school search. For the second year in a row, The Princeton Review has completed a survey analysis of website usage in graduate and undergraduate school research.

The survey was conducted using web traffic from The Princeton Review website, a web portal providing information on numerous types of graduate programs. More than 5,700 people responded to the survey over a one-month period. The top percentage of survey respondents, 26.8%, indicated that they planned to attend a master's degree program (other than M.B.A). 19.3% planned to attend a Ph.D. or doctoral program, and 13.9% planned to attend a traditional M.B.A. program. Several other types of programs were also represented.

According to survey participants, three of the top five resources used for graduate school program research were electronic, confirming the importance of website usage in research of graduate programs. Websites of specific graduate programs (74%) were the number one resource, followed by graduate school portal websites (60.5%). Portal sites were particularly important in the early stages of the search to help prospective students narrow their options. Email messages from specific schools ranked fifth (37.5%). Most respondents indicated that they visited both portal and individual sites at least once per week, spending a combined average of nearly 2.5 hours per week doing web research at an average of 16-30 minutes per session.

Survey respondents also indicated the most valuable features of the websites they visited. Most valuable were: information regarding admissions requirements, academic program information, online applications, and financial aid information. The elements ranked least valuable were podcasts, student blogs, and instant messaging, though the trend seems to indicate that these elements are becoming more valuable to applicants, especially amongst international applicants. When deciding where to apply, students ranked information on the types of programs offered, the quality of faculty and instruction, and the institutional reputation as most important.

Overall, the survey data indicated that prospective graduate students find individual program websites and portal websites to be the most useful tools for graduate program research. While there may be a shift occurring toward the use of new applications such as podcasts, blogs, and chats to reach potential students, these are not currently as important to prospective students. The bottom line is that graduate programs should have an easily navigable website with quickly accessible summaries of admissions and application information.

The Academic Transcript is Now Digital—Improving Student Service and Work Flow

Presented by J. James Wager, SCRIP-SAFE™ International Inc.
Recorded by Tom Carpenter, Northern Arizona University

A former registrar at Penn State with over thirty years of experience, Jim Wager is a self-described evangelist for moving from paper to electronic transcripts. The first half of his presentation focused on problems with paper transcripts. They are an anachronism in this era of online applications and student information systems—the buggy-whip at the Daytona 500.

Electronic transcripts are the future of graduate admissions. For this future to be a bright one, we will require security and trusted networks. The security is rooted in an industry-standard 128-bit encryption (anything less is like a big umbrella with a little hole). The trusted network is what his company is all about.

eSCRIP-SAFE™ provides a trusted network in which participating institutions are all vetted to ensure the authenticity of their documents. When a transcript request is made, the Registrar still "prints" the transcript, except the "printer" sends the signal to a secure server where the document is converted into a PDF file immediately. The recipient (also a member of the secure network) receives an e-mail notification that a transcript has been delivered to their account. This asynchronous transaction permits the receiver to open and store the transcript at a later time.

eSCRIP-SAFE™ is technology neutral, FERPA compliant, with instantaneous delivery and offers complete control and reporting. There is no cost to the student or to the receiver. Institutions can sign-up online at *www.scrip-safe.com.* Launched in September, 2006, eSCRIP-SAFE™ has 100 institutions in the network.

This is an innovative and secure solution to our buggy whip problem.

Advising Weaker Applicants: Resetting Expectations While Discovering New Opportunities

Presented by Grant Keener, Drexel University, and George Justice, Touro Law Center
Recorded by Leigh Jacobson, Emory University

Admission professionals would say that working with students who have applied to their graduate program is an important part of their job as an advisor. Difficulties working with applicants, however, can arise when you realize they may not be a good candidate for your program. This is a tough situation to be in and sometimes we find ourselves there on a regular basis. Don't skirt the issue: switch hats and continue communicating with the student to allow them to have a positive outcome with your institution.

Two questions should be addressed when working with weaker applicants: What is your school looking for? AND What are applicants looking for? By clearly defining your school's expectations of students you are able to advise weaker applicants what they need to do to improve their chances for next year's application cycle.

Sometimes gaining admission to a program is simply not an option and you must address question number two: What is the candidate looking for? This question can be addressed before the student applies, while they are completing their application, or after the decision letter is received. It's important to keep communication open between the student and their admission counselor. When the student is not an ideal candidate for your school's program, it doesn't mean you stop working with that student. Remember, admission professionals wear several hats . . . it's simply time to switch roles from Gatekeeper to Counselor!

When the student is ready to talk about other options, step into the counselor role and help identify future paths. Talk about other schools that offer the same program; help the student discover other programs at your school that are a better fit; or simply help them find resources to explore other educational and career paths. A denial from graduate school may best be considered an opportunity to explore other avenues.

Advising weaker applicants is not always the easiest job, since often times you may be the gatekeeper denying them admission, but by counseling the student to show them there are other (maybe even better?) opportunities you are creating a positive experience between the student and your admission office.

Assessing Three-year Degrees for Graduate Admissions: The Case for a New Approach

Presented by Mariam Assefa, World Education Services and Daniel J. Bennett, UCLA
Recorded by John Wilkerson, Columbia College

The emergence of the Bologna Process in Europe is causing many U.S. graduate schools and education credentialing entities to reassess their positions regarding admission of three-year bachelor degree holders. Article VI.1 of the Lisbon Convention, to which the U.S. is a signatory country, calls for recognition of credentials conferred in other signatory countries, "…**unless a substantial difference** can be shown between the qualification for which recognition is sought and the corresponding qualification in the Party in which recognition is sought."

Of course, Europe is not the only home to three-year bachelor degree programs. India, Australia, and other countries offer three-year degrees as well. As an advocate for increased recognition of three-year degrees, Mariam Assefa stated that it is no longer possible to discount these degrees, and explained the position of WES as considering the convergence of intent and purpose of foreign credentials when evaluating for functional rather than absolute equivalencies. The call for consideration of three-year degrees, evidenced by enrollment data from IIE and CGS, is further supported by the heavy reliance upon international students within some disciplines, such as engineering and science.

UCLA has developed an exception process to evaluate the admissibility of three-year degree holders to their graduate programs. Dismissing the "gate-keeper" approach, UCLA faculty are able to review all application documents in a holistic context. As such, three-year degrees are viewed not only in the framework of an independent credential, but also as a component of an applicant's overall portfolio, inclusive of faculty-provided recommendations and other indicators of potential success.

In consideration of three-year degrees, Assefa asked, "What we did fifteen—ten—five years ago, is it getting us the best candidates? Of course [change] means taking chances. When we recruit the best qualified students, we have to offer them something; so long as our decisions are made in a judicious manner."

Broadening the Vision: Building an Infrastructure to Support Enrollment Growth

Presented by Mike Marchetti, University of the Sciences
Recorded by Dawn Owens, University of Cincinnati

As the new Director of Graduate Enrollment and Admissions at the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia, Mike Marchetti knew he had a challenge ahead of him when he was charged with increasing enrollment from 400 to 800-1,000 graduate students over a five year span. Not only was the office challenged with the new goal of doubling their current numbers, their staff and resources were already stretched to the limits since the program had already grown from 100 students to 400 students in the past four years.

Mike took his new job as an opportunity to build a team within his office and to broaden their vision and mission to take them to the next level. In doing so, Mike was able to share with workshop attendees in his presentation titled "Broadening the Vision: Building an Infrastructure to Support Enrollment Growth" how to work with your graduate enrollment team to accomplish the following:

- build upon the institutional mission
- understand your environment and how it affects those with whom you work
- recognize your biggest asset—the people with whom you work
- set your goals and carefully prioritize them
- create, maintain, and revisit your specific strategies for moving forward

Although Mike was a first time presenter, he did a great job engaging the audience using many quotes from Steven Covey to John Maxwell in pointing out what true leadership looks like. Sharing his struggles Mike was transparent and authentic, reminding the audience that we learn from our mistakes. He ended his presentation by sharing some of the barriers and challenges he has dealt with in his years as a graduate admissions professional and how he's overcome some of them.

Building Strategies that Drive Graduate Student Enrollment

Presented by Mark J. Schaefermeyer, Virginia Commonwealth University
Recorded by Cathy Cady, Barry University

Anyone who is considering starting an effective graduate enrollment campaign would want to consider several challenges:

- Do we use both online and offline tools?
- Is it important to recognize branding and force name recognition?
- What about a Comprehensive Communication Strategy? Is that important too?

All these questions were answered recently in the well attended session at the 2007 NAGAP annual conference held at Walt Disney World in April.

Mark Schaefermeyer dug deep into the challenges that face a university when beginning to think of how to roll out an effective enrollment campaign: budget considerations, name recognition at the program level, how important faculty involvement is in the recruitment process, and which resources to use. Schaefermeyer suggested that you manage the processes that you have control over; such as, keeping in touch with your applicants, excellent customer service, and staying focused on the matriculated students and, of course, retention.

Faced with the difficult recruitment environment, he emphasized the importance of Branding and Name Recognition. So, how does a school get their name out there? How best do you promote a specific graduate program(s)? Schaefermeyer suggested using online and offline tools to stay in touch! That means using both print and electronic communications. Towards the end of the presentation the presenter went through various web sites of different schools to highlight useful features and various vendors.

In the end, he went over the most important parts to keep in mind:

- work on what you can control
- customer service is primary
- increase your contacts with applicants and vendors using both online and offline tools
- find a vendor who you can trust and establish a positive business relationship

Chindia: Optimizing Recruitment Marketing for Attracting Quality Students

Presented by Rahul Choudaha and Susan Nelson, University of Denver
Recorded by Hope Geiger, The University of Tulsa

Demand for international higher education is expected to increase from 1.8 million in 2000 to 7.2 million in 2025, with China and India generating over half of the global demand for graduate education. Despite the projected growth of international enrollments, US schools have noticed a decline in the number of students from India and China. This decline can be attributed to increased competition worldwide; particularly from the UK, Canada, and Australia.

In response to rising global competition, universities need to consider a go-to-market strategy utilizing network marketing and a better understanding of international market characteristics. Network marketing allows universities to gain leverage over their competitors and helps convert prospects to students through the use of internal resources (alumni, faculty and students) and external channels (internet and education fairs). Network-based marketing also establishes institutional credibility through shared partnerships, exchange programs, and alumni networks that becomes particularly important for students from India and China.

The success of outreach and recruitment plans depends on the synergy of internal and external resources and continued engagement with prospects through the enrollment funnel. Internet strategies should maximize customization, interactivity, and the targeted nature of the channel via:

- Search engines (SEO/SEM)
- Web advertising (banner ads, text links, directory listings)
- Email marketing
- Student/alumni blogs
- Online career counseling
- Feedback mechanisms
- Appropriate multimedia applications

Education fairs help establish institutional credibility and can be augmented through the use of:

- Student ambassadors and alumni
- Local events to build student networks
- Profiles on education fair websites
- Teleconferences with prospects before and after
- Speaking engagements at the undergraduate level
- EducationUSA network.

US universities should use these network marketing strategies to not only increase the applicant pool of Indian and Chinese graduate students but also to improve the overall quality of students they are attracting.

Bakaalouriyous, *Licence*, or *Izaaza*? The Complexities of Higher Education in North Africa

Presented by Emily Tse and Traci Wells, International Education Research Foundation, Inc. and Kristen Cammarata, EducationUSA
Recorded by John Wilkerson, Columbia College

North African countries, commonly defined as those African nations lying north of the Saharan Desert, have somewhat complex systems of higher education. Emily Tse pointed out that these systems have formed as a result of colonial French and English influences melding with regional and Arabic systems. The result has been hybridized national structures which draw upon these influences. Applicants from these countries present specific challenges in areas of credentialing by, and enrollment in, U.S. graduate programs.

When reviewing the credentials of applicants from Algeria or Morocco, countries which carry the nomenclature of the French educational system, admissions professionals will likely be provided a *licence* (Algeria) or the *ijaaza* (Morocco). The latter is a translation of the word *licence* into Arabic. However, applicants from Egypt or Sudan, countries possessive of heavy English influences, admissions officers may be given either a *licence* or a *bakaalouriyous* or bachelors degree, determined by the course of study an applicant has undertaken. As such, Traci Wells provided sample documents and urged evaluators and admissions personnel to familiarize themselves with the complexities and nuances of these credentials.

EducationUSA, a global network of advising centers supported by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, works to assist students from North African and other nations in their pursuit of U.S. higher education. Kristen Cammarata has engaged such applicants and discussed the challenges they face. Key among these are lack of access to testing services such as GRE or TOEFL, limited work/internship experience, the high costs of application, and a low return on investment for a U.S. degree upon returning to their country.

Though there exist complexities within applications from North African students, U.S. institutions should consider the challenges that these applicants overcome in seeking a U.S. degree. Working to find ways to accommodate the desires of well-qualified applicants from these countries for graduate education demonstrates the highest ideals of higher education as a whole.

Creating Graduate Community: A New Approach to Recruitment and Retention

Presented by Monika Gibson and Marilyn Kershaw, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Recorded by Hope Geiger, The University of Tulsa

Recent trends in graduate education have forced universities to recognize graduate student services as an important deciding factor for students. Virginia Tech responded to this challenge by considering the implications of departmental climate, program "fit", and the quality of the overall graduate experience in their recruitment and retention efforts.

Certain characteristics set graduate students apart, including:

- Older, more mature, and experienced
- Committed to their field/department, not the graduate school
- Often married or partnered, sometimes with children
- May have previous professional experience
- Utilitarian, with many demands on their time
- Increasingly reliant on services
- Unwilling to mix with undergraduates

To develop a strong graduate community, Virginia Tech took these unique characteristics into account to help meet graduate student needs in different ways, including providing the following:

- facilities designated exclusively for graduate students, designed and decorated with their input;
- opportunities for involvement in the community (graduate, campus wide, and local) at various intensity levels;
- professional development workshops and social events, for a chance to mingle with other graduate students

Virginia Tech has also instituted new community building programs for faculty to help with recruitment throughout the year. The most successful of these include a Recruiting Summit where program directors and faculty members receive recruitment training, a Preview Weekend, and competitive funds for departmental recruiting endeavors.

By combining new student services with more involved faculty members and a strong graduate student community, Virginia Tech has observed a noticeable improvement in their retention and recruitment efforts. Graduate students can now see Virginia Tech's strong commitment to their professional and personal well-being, making the improvements in graduate student services a sound investment for their futures, as well as the university's success in the sphere of graduate education.

2007 CONFERENCE SESSIONS SUMMARIES CONTINUED

Developing an Informed and Compelling Institutional Brand

Presented by Jeffrey J. Papa, Carnegie Communications
Recorded by Colleen Flynn Thapalia, The College of Saint Rose

Dr. Jeffrey Papa is a passionate believer in the power of research in developing and articulating a brand. To illustrate how research informs branding, he described a Virginia Military Institute (VMI) project to bring in a stronger applicant pool. Results identified qualities of successful VMI students—adventure, athletics, teamwork—which were later featured in marketing. By contrast, a project at the University of Indianapolis uncovered that the leadership's perceived brand, "internationalism," was not shared by faculty, staff, alumni, and local community. The eventual tagline, "Our City: Your Classroom," more closely reflected associations with the university.

Dr. Papa's key concepts included:

- **Brand—**sum total of all institutional associations, the target audience's perceptions, based on what you *say* and *do*
- **Branding**—process of influencing those associations, promises and perceptions through (1) Differentiation—that which is truly unique, and (2) Integration—permeation of the brand; people within the institution "own it, buy it, live it"

Why develop a brand? According to Dr. Papa, colleges and universities need to rise above the noise in a crowded marketplace. Administrators must do more with less to broaden their institutions' appeal. It may seem counterintuitive, he emphasized, but to broaden the appeal, schools should narrow their focus.

Developing a brand requires an understanding of the relative value of quantitative and qualitative research methods, as well as the benefits of mixed-method approaches. Significant steps include: (1) assessing the institution's current image from multiple perspectives as a first step, (2) finding the intersection of current perceptions, attributes that appeal to the audience, and attributes that embody the institution, and (3) using methods that elicit the widest range of views—online, in person, by phone, etc.

During the Q&A, Dr. Papa was asked how to take rich data about an institution's status quo and move toward an aspirational brand identity. He indicated that multi-channel data will point to where core constituencies want the institution to go. Another participant inquired about how to respect an institution-wide brand when operating in a status-conscious department that "doesn't want to be pulled down." This common concern calls for development of an umbrella concept that accommodates sub-brands, Dr. Papa recommended, as long as sub-brands remain consistent with the larger concept. It is detrimental for departments to work in silos, which is why all audiences need to be persuaded to take in the original branding research efforts.

Direct Mail: Still the Most Effective Marketing Tool for Adult Students?

Presented by Chris Domes and Francesca Reed, Marymount University; Charlie Fraga, Direct Development, Inc.
Recorded by Tyrone Jackson, Delta State University

Marymount University, with an enrollment of approximately 4000 students, centralized its graduate admissions after having a decentralized admissions process for a number of years, with each school handling its respective admissions process. Upon centralization of the Graduate Office in 1996, efforts were successful in coordinating recruitment of adult students by partnering with a direct mail marketing company, Direct Development, Inc.

Through this partnership with Direct Development, Inc. Marymount University initiated a targeted marketing campaign through direct mail, seeking to increase the number of potential graduate students wanting to pursue graduate degrees at the university.

Under the auspices of the Director of Graduate Admissions, graduate admissions staff work in a collegial relationship with Direct Development, Inc., to target markets, test through trial and error, and track prospects.

The partnership has also benefited the university by providing the following services:

- Guidance and expertise in direct mail for package options, postal issues, cost savings, and quality control during printing/mailing production cycle
- List Acquisition: allows access to the right audiences (prospective graduate students)
- Graphic design expertise
- Outsourcing of printing/mailing chores so that staff can focus efforts on core business of a Graduate Office
- Meeting deadlines for program rollout through professional project management

Results of these direct mail recruitment efforts have been measured through source codes on mailers, captured data from response cards/ registration on the web, and through a centralized database. Overall, direct mail gives Marymount University needed exposure by highlighting the prominence of the institution in a cost-efficient manner, as opposed to costly advertisement in publications, on the radio, or newspaper. This marketing approach to attract adults has proven to be effective and is yielding favorable results.

Direct One-to-One Marketing: Florida Gulf Coast University's Implementation Experience

Presented by Kevin Hunter and Jennifer Gjini, Florida Gulf Coast University; Kris Davis, Kate Davis and Brooke Tomlinson, Blue Results
Recorded by Jeremiah Nelson, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Where FGCU Was: Spraying and Praying

Before their strategic partnership with Blue Results, a one-stop shop for graduate program marketing and communications, Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) was saddled with a labor intensive prospect management system. Their communications were boring, not user-friendly, and mailed out at a high cost. They mass produced generic, impersonal materials that quickly became outdated and required either handwritten changes or wasteful large-scale disposal. It was clear that this approach was not working.

Where FGCU Is Now: Personalized and Results-Oriented

Blue Results helped FGCU establish a digital solution for their recruitment process that allowed for a personalized prospect experience and produced measurable results. They produced a combination of digital and print media that was targeted toward gathering information about individual students. Blue Results manages the process for the Graduate Studies staff, communicating the right thing to the right person at the right time. Since their system is automated, it works continuously and the data is always current.

The results have been amazing. FGCU has found that the partnership with Blue Results is extremely cost effective, especially because of reduced labor and postage costs. They are able to track what they are doing and stop or change what isn't working, ensuring the best outcomes for every dollar spent. Applications have been up 48% over two years.

The Big Ideas:

1. **You must know the quantity and quality of your results.** Don't do anything again until you know how it worked the first time.
2. **Personalize your marketing.** Use of Personal URL (PURL) and on-demand printing increases the "stickiness" of the material. The longer it sticks around and the better it stands out, the more likely a student will act upon it.
3. **Use the technology.** A series of if/then statements trigger automated actions. If they view their PURL, then an email is generated thanking them and the potential applicant is tagged a "good" prospect. If the PURL is not viewed, then a reminder email is sent. If this is not viewed within 72 hours, then a paper brochure is mailed.

2007 CONFERENCE SESSIONS SUMMARIES CONTINUED

Effective Marketing of Online Degrees and Certificate Programs: Online Advertising Models, Strategies & Tips

Presented by Andrew Gansler, eLearners.com
Recorded by Joseph M. Catrino, Quinnipiac University

Implementing an effective online marketing program is essential to generating students for institutions with online programs. Andrew Gansler, CEO of eLearners.com, provides the what, when, why, and how for getting an effective e-marketing campaign off the ground for successful promotion of online programs. The objective of eLearners.com is to:

- Help you understand that you are competing, and the resulting importance of marketing
- Advise you on the benefits, potential risks and best practices in online marketing
- Demonstrate the importance of metrics in marketing online

eLearners.com will consult with your school and marketing department to determine a few things before any campaign is unveiled. For example, your school needs to identify high-level goals before you begin. For many schools, these goals are related to new enrollments. Your school must then consider what the best forms of online marketing are for your online programs. Print and other offline marketing channels may be used, but results can be difficult to measure. There are many advantages to online marketing that are not present in offline marketing. These advantages include:

- Tracking and measurability
- Easy and fast to implement
- Can be highly targeted
- National exposure (a good thing for a distance program)
- Can be performance-based (your school doesn't pay unless you get something tangible)
- "Zero-cost" branding opportunities
- Ability to grow your program with high return on investment

Once your school has chosen to use online marketing, your school must set appropriate marketing goals and expectations, make sure that the admissions and marketing functions are well coordinated, and determine your budget. Your actions should be reflective of your goals. Once you've established your goals, you're ready to select your online marketing choices, which may include:

- Banners/graphical
- E-mail (lists, newletters, etc.)
- Popups/unders
- Directory listings
- Paid search engine marketing (Google Adwords, etc.)
- Lead generation
- Search engine optimization

After you've chosen one or more online marketing channels, you must be able to determine your ultimate 'cost per enrollment' for each channel. You will find that any online channel and/or vendor can be measured, so you'll be able to determine how effective each campaign is, and more importantly, re-allocate budget to the channels and vendors that are proving to be most productive.

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Effective Marketing on the Internet

Presented by Mark Shay, Educational Directories Unlimited, Inc.
Recorded by Linda Zimmerman, Boston University School of Medicine

Did you know that 93% of college students (our future prospects) access the web on a monthly basis, and that students spend an average of 60 seconds on a college website? This means that **we have to be** web savvy. It means that we have to know our audience and how to keep them interacting with our websites. The keys to keeping those hungry prospects at your site are: **interactivity, realness**, **responsiveness and ease of use**. Have you assessed your own website lately?

An **interactive** site will build a relationship with your prospective student by offering ways to connect with other students, faculty, and your campus. Students want blogs, virtual tours, and podcasts to research your school before they even consider applying. Initially, these communication methods were considered a fad, but as technology has advanced our prospective students, who are "early adopters," decide to go elsewhere if they can't find out what they want to know on your site.

Our prospective students want to know the **reality** of being a student on your campus. This means real images of students interacting, learning, and participating in campus events. Have you considered putting maps on your website so students can find out where things are located? Sounds like a minor detail, but these prospects are used to full disclosure, and we have to anticipate and address their FAQs.

Responsiveness is critical to maintaining and sustaining long term relationships with prospective students. Do you turn over your inquiries within 24-48 hours? I have personal experience with this critical factor in recruitment. Recently, I lost several excellent students to competing institutions because I neglected to provide the high level of follow-up and TLC that these students expected. We all must develop a web communication strategy that layers a variety of different contacts, connections, and messages throughout the recruitment cycle.

Websites should be **easy to use:** crisp, clean, professional, and updated regularly. They should provide clear calls to action (request information, contact us). It is critical that all relevant information be accessible to student via links or PDFs. Finally, we should think carefully about Search Engine Optimization (SEO), a science unto itself, but an important one nonetheless.

The internet is the most powerful medium available to recruit students into our programs. If we don't take the time to learn how to utilize the web as the foundation of our communication plan we might as well start saying goodbye to our enrollment goals. Students aren't going to wait!

Enhancing Graduate Recruitment: Responding to a Dynamic Environment

Presented by Colleen Gabauer and Dana Werner, Purdue University
Recorded by Suzanne Faubl, Roger Williams University

When a central administrative structure manages recruitment, admissions, and student records, a high level of efficiency can be achieved across enrollment management functions. However, those who wish to take their admissions operation to the next level by (1) increasing enrollment and/or (2) attracting a diverse, highly-talented class should bring members from the academic side of the house (deans, faculty, and current graduate students) into the recruitment and retention mix whenever possible.

Your admissions office can set the tone for graduate education in your school or institution by providing the training and resources individual departments will need to recruit top students. Graduate program faculty and staff will appreciate opportunities to network and brainstorm with experienced colleagues (if other programs have implemented successful practices, why reinvent the wheel?) and these program members are a critical part of the admissions chain because prospective graduate students want to hear from experts in their field, not admissions personnel! As administrative professionals, we should focus our efforts on facilitating quality interactions between academics and the students they seek.

Look for creative ways to get prospects interested in what you have to offer, and invest in events that will allow you to reach your target audience effectively. On-campus workshops on topics such as preparing for and applying to graduate school, choosing a program, and entrance examinations can help you establish identity and increase visibility of your program among prospects. Open houses that focus on an individual program's curriculum and/or research opportunities are a useful tool, as are special visit days for accepted students who need more information before deciding if your program is the right one for them. The session presenters noted that students who visited campus solo and were given personalized tours by current graduate students were much more likely to enroll than those who attended group events.

A necessity when you implement any of these initiatives? Track your data so you can see what works and what doesn't; then, continue to refine your plan to develop a schedule of events and communications that suits the needs of each unit you serve. With time and perseverance, you can help your institution reach its enrollment goals and maintain solid management practices.

An Evolution in Recruitment Marketing Using a Personal Approach

Presented by Barri Roberson, Columbia University and Damien Navarro, Earthbound Media Group
Recorded by Margaret Maybury, Xavier University

How do we get the information about our program(s) to the right students?

In the past, Teachers College at Columbia University used the traditional mass marketing techniques that most of us use, including direct mail. However, data shows us that one of the reasons that direct mail is not opened is because the person had no time and no reason to look at the information. So how do we ever get them to open our direct mail?

This recruiting year, the challenge to Teachers College was how to recruit with a "personal approach" to an increasingly segmented and selective audience. In collaboration with Earthbound Media Group (EMG), Teachers College came up with print and web-based advertising that was disseminated in several different ways. By using the traditional marketing methods (including direct mail and others), Teachers College was able to direct prospective students to a new "variable data publication" (VDP) system.

The student was directed to visit the Teachers College web site and to enter into the on-line program the "areas of study" in which they were interested. EMG was able to take all the data on the many programs (65) at Teachers College and target it specifically to these constituents based on their self-defined interests. VDP also enabled all the information that was available to prospective students to be in real-time.

The prospective student received an individualized brochure that highlighted the program(s) that interested her/him. When any change was made to program(s) or an event needed to be publicized, the student was made aware of it immediately.

The benefit of this collaboration was that Teachers College could control the brand message of the school and the program(s) while also making the information relevant to each individual.

Experience the Magic of Recruitment—The Role of the Student Ambassador

Presented by Leah Vincent and Lynda T. Konecny, A.T. Still University
Recorded by Karen Eden, Palmer College of Chiropractic

What is a Student Ambassador? This group of students comes from a selection process. You need to be selective with this group due to the nature of the student ambassador's role. This selective process starts with an application and then an interview. This interview is conducted by two staff members.

These students must be in good academic and ethical standing. They must also possess strong communication skills. These students are usually involved in other student organizations. A diverse group is strongly recommended.

Once they are selected, these students go through an extensive training process. They are trained on professionalism, tours, and how to give a presentation. These trained student ambassadors may be asked to participate in several on- and off-campus activities such as, but not limited to . . .

1. Campus Tours
2. Lunch with prospective students on interview days
3. Visit undergrad schools
4. Colleague Program
5. Provide transportation for special guests
6. Chats and discussions online
7. Work with early accepted students
8. House prospective students
9. Assist with office work

The roles of student ambassadors can have a magical effect on an institution through the relationships they develop with prospective students.

You would think since this is not a paid position that it would be difficult to find students who want to become part of this organization, but that is not the case at A.T. Still University. They get approximately 100 applications per year. Based on their needs, they are able to accept about 70.

Two groups that were formed as a result of the Student Ambassador organization are Alumni Ambassadors and Spouse Advocate Ambassadors. The roles of all these Ambassador groups are important to the institution.

Each group is rewarded with recognition, food (whether it be a party for Student and Spouse Ambassadors or a dinner for the Alumni Ambassadors), and other non-monetary support. These groups get great satisfaction from just helping people.

Every institution should consider this type of student recruitment. It is positively magical.

2007 CONFERENCE SESSIONS SUMMARIES CONTINUED

Getting on the Roller Coaster of National Recruiting: Ups and Downs of Creating an Effective Strategy

Presented by Janet Erickson and Tracy Molidor, University of Denver
Recorded by Heidi Pettigrew, Plymouth State University

In 2006, the University of Denver's Morgridge College of Education developed their first comprehensive recruitment plan. Janet Erickson and Tracy Molidor collaborated to identify organizational recruitment goals, secure funding, and achieve institutional buy-in for the initiative. The central goals of the plan included increasing their inquiry pool and improving communication with prospective students to improve the conversion rate.

Guidelines to consider in creating a recruitment plan:

- Develop a plan that is aligned with the strategic direction of your institution.
- Create marketing materials which meet the goals of your recruitment plan and convey a consistent and accurate message.
- Gather and analyze data. With appropriate data collection, you can identify the geographic locations your students are coming from and how they are hearing about your programs.
- Draft a plan based on your goals, the geographic areas in which to schedule recruiting and information sessions, timelines for participating in events, and how the events are to be staffed.
- Develop and maintain an itemized budget, including all event registration fees, meeting room rental fees, travel costs, extra expenses, marketing materials, and shipping costs.
- Gain institutional support of both the recruitment plan/strategy and the expenses associated with the initiative.
- Refine the plan based on feedback from faculty, staff and your overall experiences with recruitment fairs and information sessions.

Helpful hints for scheduling your own recruitment tour:

- Choose your events wisely. Use available resources, like the NAGAP website for access to listings of graduate school fairs. Contact the fair organizers and ask about how the fair is going to be advertised, the expected number of participants, and if you have access to participants' contact information.
- Don't over-schedule! Most people have additional responsibilities in the office and planning for, traveling to, and attending recruitment events is extremely time-consuming.
- When packing and shipping marketing materials to events, consider the size and weight of the packages. Confirm receipt of your materials prior to the event if possible. After your events, evaluate the amount of materials you brought with you.
- Take a suitcase of materials for smaller events, including a completed packing slip if you will be returning materials to the office.
- When traveling, use the airline's online check-in system and stay at large, full-service hotels. Many hotels have lobbies or restaurants where you can conduct information sessions, free of charge.

Through information sessions, participation in graduate fairs, development of marketing materials and extensive data analysis, the initial recruitment plan was a success. The College experienced an increase in applications, as well as a rise in the geographic diversity of applicants.

Graduate Education and the U.S. Peace Corps: Collaborative Partnerships That Make a Difference in Our World

Presented by Jody Olsen, U.S. Peace Corps; Jeffrey Johnson, Tulane University; Susan Nelson, University of Denver; and Brad Peloquin, Boston University
Recorded by Susan Grogan Ikerd, University of Southern California

Jody Olsen, Deputy Director of the Peace Corps, introduced the session, describing the history and focus of the Peace Corps. Founded almost fifty years ago during the Kennedy administration, the Peace Corps promotes world peace and friendship through a volunteer cadre of 7800 individuals serving in 75 countries. Its primary goal is to help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women. It also aims to help people of other countries gain a better understanding of Americans and our multicultural society, and actively recruits individuals with a variety of backgrounds and experiences. Approximately half of the volunteers go on to graduate school after their service with the Peace Corps.

The presentation focused on academic opportunities available to current and returning volunteers, highlighting programs at the Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, the Graduate School of International Studies (GSIS) at the University of Denver, and the Boston University School of Public Health, with a special focus on how other universities can also establish partnership programs with the Peace Corps.

The University of Denver GSIS, in cooperation with the Peace Corps, enrolls returning Peace Corps volunteers (RPCVs) in the GSIS Peace Corps Fellows program after they have completed their required service. Enrollment incentives are offered, including an 18 credit hour reduction of the Master's program (equal to a $15,000 tuition waiver) and waiving of the foreign language and internship requirements. There is also an active community student network group of RPCVs. As part of the Peace Corps Fellows program, students typically work in the community as an extension of the volunteer experience.

The Peace Corps Master's International Program is a coordinated program in which students apply simultaneously to a university and to the Peace Corps. Students serve in the Peace Corps midway through their coursework. Both Tulane and Boston University offer the MPH, offering tuition waivers for time in service as well as the opportunity to gain experience in international health.

Complete information on the Fellows and Master's International programs is available on the Peace Corps website (*www.peacecorps.gov*). Programs range widely from teaching English to speakers of other languages to environmental policy, economic development, urban and regional planning, and agriculture. Successful programs have a "champion" on campus at the dean's level, and a keen sense of the interplay between the goals of the Peace Corps and the academic program.

Jeffery Johnson (Tulane), Dr. Jody Olsen (Deputy Director, Peace Corps), Brad Peloquin (Boston University) and Susan Nelson (University of Denver) just before their panel presentation: Graduate Education and the US Peace Corps: Collaborative Partnerships That Make a Difference in Our World.

2007 CONFERENCE SESSIONS SUMMARIES CONTINUED

A Graduate Program Strategy: Success through Resources, Application, Training, Evaluation, Goals and Yields

Presented by Ramona Hart and Clifford Kennon, University of Alabama at Birmingham
Recorded by Kari Gibbons, Benedictine University

If you have been challenged with managing a graduate program with limited resources, personnel, and finances, then you need to ask yourself if you have a professionally trained manager in place who can implement strategic planning for the success of the program.

When Ramona Hart first assumed her position at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) she found a program that did not have a policy and procedure manual, was without a handbook and a program website. Ramona realized she needed to communicate with the School and the University about a program strategy. This strategy included short and long term goals that addressed the following questions:

- What is it you do?
- Who are your stakeholders—students, alumni, faculty, community?
- What do I want to accomplish for myself and my stakeholders? Example: engage faculty in the assessment of the program, involve students in recruitment
- What can you do for all of these stakeholders? Example: Re-connect alumni with the program

With the objectives in place, and written down, you have motivation and vision that will need to be applied and communicated. So, how is this accomplished with limited resources? Use both on- and off-campus resources (for example: UAB's print room, media faculty, marketing department) and consult other graduate programs. This is networking—an ongoing and essential part of training that can come from community members on and off campus, within the industry, and at professional conferences.

As you monitor, evaluate, and modify your goals you will be able to identify what works. By having a graduate program strategy in place you may realize successful increases in yields, as was the case at UAB where a 300% increase in applications was seen only one year after creating a graduate program strategy.

NAGAP's 20th Anniversary Cake

Twenty years of NAGAP history on display in Orlando.

Graduate Student Associations: It Doesn't Take Magic to Create Excitement

Presented by James N. Crane and Janice Robinson, Brigham Young University
Recorded by Krista Pettersen, University of Oklahoma-Tulsa

No one can dispute the importance of student associations in higher education. But often graduate students, with their different schedules, are unable to enjoy the benefits of student associations. Brigham Young University recognized this inequity and, under the guidance of Graduate Studies, founded the BYUGSA (Brigham Young University Graduate Student Association) in 2000.

The initial step was to hold town meetings to determine what the student body needed from a student organization. The Graduate Studies department also wanted to see what a Graduate Student Association could do to help in the departments' academic and administrative mission. They determined that the GSA would serve to:

- Improve and facilitate the graduate culture at BYU
- Promote interaction and study across disciplines
- Create events & forums to facilitate mentoring between students & faculty
- Ease the transition from undergraduate to graduate school life
- Increase awareness of graduate students in other levels of university administration
- Help the transition of graduate students into professional life.

BYU also realized that a successful graduate student association needed more than just willing students. BYU dedicated a substantial budget to the fledging organization, which included a paid president. The presidential position was actually filled through a regular hiring process, with interested applicants filing an application and going through a standard interview process. This ensured that the individual hired was truly qualified for the position.

A Graduate Student Council was formed to assist the president in managing the association and the budget. These council positions were voluntary and unpaid, designed for those students interested in improving their experience. The council is responsible for reviewing requests, preparing proposals, and attending quarterly meetings.

So now BYU has a Graduate Student Association. The bigger question is "Did it work?" The answer is an unqualified YES! BYUGSA is the "voice" of the graduate student body. It now has representation on the many University committees, including the Traffic Committee, Student Advisory Committee, and the University Student Learning Outcomes Committee. The GSA has sponsored a wide variety of events including an Annual Service Workshop, Women in Academia, and a Faith & Scholarship Symposium. The GSA has established awards for students presenting their research at conferences and is considering establishing a poster session fair for students to present research to others at the University. The BYUGSA is an excellent example of how vital a student organization can be to the student experience.

GRE General Test Update

Presented by David G. Payne, GRE Executive Director
Recorded by Elaine S. McBeth, College of William and Mary

This session should have been titled: *Revised GRE—Not, but maybe. Let's explain.*

GRE had announced plans to roll out a Revised GRE (rGRE) in September 2007. The rGRE was a significant change—that would be reflected by a new score scale. While still a three part exam, they would be modifying the sections to eliminate the ability of test takers to improve their scores through memorization. These modifications included adding item types to tease out verbal reasoning skills while dropping antonyms/analogies, or single item memorizations. Also, Analytical Writing would become Critical Thinking and Analytical Writing and similar changes to the quantitative section would be developed.

In addition, the proposed revised GRE has the feel of re-regulation—a return to a linear format and fixed date testing. The return to the linear format is due to web posting overseas with documented score bias. The computer adaptive test's shorter format, combined with the world of web based communities, allowed for memorization of question sets that were then posted on the web. A return to fixed date testing—establishing internet delivery via computer labs across the country—proved to be another difficulty of rolling out the rGRE. While international sites were ready for this due to the TOEFL revision, domestic test takers would have had difficulty getting a test seat. GRE did not anticipate the difficulty in getting testing sites, but many colleges have reduced the number of public computer labs as private laptop/notebook computers have become more common.

So what can we expect from ETS and the GRE delivery? While the rGRE is off the table, many of its components are still goals for the GRE Board. That said, there will not be a wholesale revision, but they will include some new components (new question types) in phases. The biggest change for most of us will be the return to fixed-date testing. The convenience of continuous testing, and the flexibility that afforded to rolling or continuous admissions offices, will be a thing of the past.

Imagining Possibilities: Increasing Yield and Successful Graduate Enrollment Management

Presented by Linda Nixon Hudson, Winston-Salem State University
Recorded by Mary Reid, The Chicago School of Professional Psychology

Founded in 1892, Winston-Salem State University (WSSU) is a premier regional institution that consistently ranks among the best public universities in the South. It transitioned to a master's degree granting institution in 2000, offering 2 graduate programs with 13 students enrolled. Just seven years later, it offers 9 master's degree programs, 3 teacher licensure programs, 2 post-master's certificate programs, with an approximate enrollment of 325 graduate students.

How did they do it? They concentrated on yield and retention.

Yield: The work begins before applications are received. It begins with recruitment events, marketing efforts, and on-campus inquiries. It includes an effective communication plan with an understanding that a timely response to prospective students is of the utmost importance. An effective communication plan includes admission packets, mailings, personal contacts, and miscellaneous campus events. Communication must also continue after admission.

Also important is to remember to recruit from within. Undergraduate majors at your institution can lead to a seamless transition from undergraduate to graduate studies. In addition to undergraduate students, non-degree students are a potential recruitment pool.

Retention: WSSU has a leadership role in the Enhancing Minority Retention in Graduate Education (EMERGE) Program, which promotes retention of graduate students, especially underrepresented populations. In addition to these types of programs, it is important to partner with other schools. WSSU partners with small colleges that do not have graduate degrees. The goal is to create a seamless transition from undergraduate studies to graduate school. They also partner with two universities that have doctoral programs. Current students at WSSU are invited and encouraged to participate in activities at the two colleges that have doctoral degrees. The objective is to create another seamless transition from the master's to the doctoral degree. The philosophy of WSSU is that if you admit a student to your school, it is your responsibility to do everything possible to see that they graduate.

By following the yield and retention plans, WSSU intends to have a graduate population of over 400 students this coming fall semester.

Institutional Branding in the New Technology Age

Presented by Dawn S. McWilliams, University of Rochester and Andy Gruber, Hobsons
Recorded by Joseph M. Catrino, Quinnipiac University

With assistance from Hobsons, the University of Rochester's Simon Graduate School of Business took advantage of new technologies and incorporated these technologies into their overall communication strategy to promote their institution and increase their brand awareness.

Dawn McWilliams reported that the school started this process by examining who they were, what they were best at, and who their target audience was. Once these steps were taken and certain benchmarks stood out, the school's marketing staff determined that integrating new campaigns was the way to go, but how? How would the school stand out? Along with Hobsons and other strategic partners, the school determined that the following were all options for improving their brand image:

- Blogs/Chats
  - Live exchanges with a group of people; very measurable to gather information
- Online business simulation scholarship contests
- Websites
  - Unique landing pages
    - Where are your prospective students coming from?
    - How are they getting to your page?
    - What information do you want them to get from your landing page?
- Personalized e-brochures
  - When a prospective student inputs their information into the database, a personalized brochure is sent in response via email within minutes and then again a week later.
- Online marketing campaigns
- Podcasts
  - Digital media file that students can get from the website, which portrays a class or lecture
- E-newsletters
  - Updates from the school to their prospective students via html format.
- Web-mercials
  - Two-minute flash commercial (a mini-movie)

These new technologies provide reporting capabilities and measurable outcomes unattainable through print marketing. With these new technologies, schools can track the number of prospects visiting their site, how long they remain on the site, and how many times they visit the site.

Dawn remains positive about these new technologies, but warns to be very careful about what technologies schools should consider using to improve their brand image. She states, "don't just use a technology to use a technology…be sure it makes sense for your school and your brand." In the end, understanding your prospects, teaming with innovative vendors, and setting realistic expectations are keys to incorporating new technologies to promote your institution and increase your brand image.

Integrating Recruiting Tours into Your Comprehensive Outreach Plan

Presented by Dan Chattan, University of California, San Diego; Ellen Driscoll, Suffolk University; and Gail Gershon, QS World MBA Tour and QS World, Grad School Tour
Recorded by Rebekah Hanousek-Monge, St. John's University

In the session entitled, "Integrating Recruiting Tours into Your Comprehensive Outreach Plan," presenters Dan Chattan, Ellen Driscoll and Gail Gershon were able to provide attendees useful information regarding recruitment tours. Each presenter provided a brief overview of how they have been able to incorporate recruitment tours into their strategic plans for their university. Below are some key points that were presented during the session:

Question: How do you begin preparing for a recruitment tour?

Ellen explained that the first thing you need to do is research.

Look at statistics and see where students are coming from demographically. Additionally, research the programs students are interested in. Other questions to consider are the following: Which countries are missing from your enrollment patterns? Which countries do you want to hit? Which countries have supplied you with huge enrollment numbers? In doing research, it is important to utilize all resources such as current students, faculty, staff and alumni. NAFSA as well as the U.S. State Department are also other useful resources. Although NAFSA (National Association of Foreign Student Advisors) focuses on undergraduate admissions, they are developing lots of resources for those in graduate admissions. The U.S. State Department has international advisers who can serve as a great resource. Go to *http://educationusa.state.gov/* for more details.

Question: In setting up a recruitment tour, who should represent the college?

Dan explained that tours serve as a platform for school-level marketing and that it is important to get the right people to represent the university.

He continued by suggesting that admissions officers may not necessarily be the best people to represent their school. Alumni, for example, serve as excellent candidates for promoting programs to potential students. Recent graduates who live overseas may also be a good resource for promoting a program to prospects within his/her respective country while also defraying the costs of a recruitment trip. Dan cautions that one must be careful not to substitute putting people on the road for maintaining relationships with the prospects. You should ALWAYS have a briefing as well as a de-briefing with all the individuals who go out on the road to represent you.

As Gail mentioned, there are always benefits associated with traveling with organizations that plan recruitment trips for colleges and universities. Organizations are able to take care of all the logistics and provide a full range of services for their clients. Before going on an organized tour you should consider the following: Is your program in a growth mode? Are you looking to build up your database with prospects? Or rather, is your program in a maintenance mode? Once you have established what your goals are, seek out organizations accordingly.

2007 CONFERENCE SESSIONS SUMMARIES CONTINUED

The Ivory Tower of Terror (?): Career Success in Higher Education

Presented by Margie Wendling, Holy Family University
Recorded by Cassandra V. Winter, Queens College—CUNY

"Does your career resemble a lurching elevator ride rather than a magic carpet ride?" By using clever analogies to popular Disney rides, Margie Wendling provided helpful career strategies everyone can use when it comes to finding job fulfillment within their institution.

First, understand the characteristics of the ride 1) There is a very long line to enter — the hiring process 2) An imposing physical structure 3) Creepy people are "toxic individuals that can be the poison apple" 4) Lots and lots of dust—can be physical, psychological and/or bureaucratic cobwebs.

Employee relations are key since everyone has a role to play. When hiring for a position 1) Hire for attitude, train for skill 2) Hire for the position—find the missing piece and, if necessary, revamp the job requirements 3) Find the person that fits—know that it takes more than just a good resume.

Self-promotion is essential to getting recognized as an individual. "Does your boss know you are here? Does your boss' boss know you are here?" Get yourself known outside of your office by getting involved with other departments on campus. Try to do at least one kind of networking event each month and go to every event on campus. Have your "elevator pitch" ready at all times. Should you ever run into a 'higher up' don't just stand there, create a chance to speak with them and have an action item ready. Remember that no one will make your case for you, but you.

When dealing with difficult people, as Ms. Wendling put it, "Misery loves company; beware of the green-eyed monster." All it takes is one bad apple to spoil the office environment. In Admissions we must keep a positive attitude in order to deal with the students. Extremely negative people are toxic. While you can't get rid of it, you can try to neutralize it. For those in management positions, it is necessary to address the issues as they will not resolve themselves.

Lastly, it is so important to dust off the cobwebs and avoid burnout. Anyone working in Admissions knows that our jobs are highly stressful. Your planning philosophy should incorporate staying focused and avoiding burnout. Take your lunch hour and make it about you, not your job. It is important to take downtime in order to recharge yourself.

If we utilize even just a few of the tips mentioned I believe we will all be on our way towards that magic carpet ride!

Moving to Online Application Review: Pixie Dist (and More!) Required

Presented by Bridget Sowinski, St. Edwards University
Recorded by Anna De Cheke Qualls, The Johns Hopkins University

Through collaborative decision making, Bridget Sowinksi of St. Edwards University's shared how their admissions office implemented an internally developed online application review system. Over the course of five years, IT staff, department administrators, faculty and admissions staff built a system that decreased the time to decision notification for their 1500 or so annual applicants.

Successful software deployment included a functional lead—a staff member charged with communicating admissions business process end-user needs with the project's technical staff. In addition, St. Edwards examined its staff and logistical needs to accommodate new configurations—large-scale document scanning, staffing, security, and electronic document storage. The final phase of the process involved testing and training.

As a result of this software implementation, applicants now experience more compressed decision times and accessible status information. Faculty and staff are able to view transcripts, statements of purpose, scores and other supporting documentation through the web. Future plans include score imports, online recommendations, and an expanded self-service component to the online application.

Need New Tricks? Cooperative Ventures in a Decentralized Admissions Process

Presented by Michelle Howell Smith, Seth Meranda, and Renee Rodriguez Batman, University of Nebraska, Lincoln
Recorded by Meredith Woerz, Sacred Heart University

Working at a large university using a decentralized admissions process can prove challenging. The Office of Graduate Admissions at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UN Lincoln) has developed some ways to streamline the admissions process, while still following the University's standards of a decentralized course of action. Since the admission process is decentralized, each program has different deadlines, application requirements, and processes. The common thread is that graduate admissions wants all programs to cooperate with the university's brand and share in university initiatives.

One solution to offering guidance and assistance to the academic department chairs, was to hold a recruitment workshop. This workshop offers an opportunity to educate faculty, recruitment staff, and anyone involved in recruiting students to review the Dean's plan for the upcoming year. Participants are also educated on important items within the field of graduate admissions. Held the second Friday of each Fall semester, this workshop kicks off the recruitment cycle and is used as a time to review presentation topics such as "Best Practices", "Increasing Diversity", and "Seal the Deal". As an incentive to attend the workshop, the Office of Graduate Admissions hosts a Recruitment Grant and Fellowship competition where departments could potentially earn money to be used towards departmental recruitment efforts.

In addition to the workshop, the Office of Graduate Admissions offers departmental support. Assistance such as:

- Personalized Marketing Plans
- GRE list purchases
- Recruitment travel
- Centralized REU support for summer research programs

Website Assistance is also offered from the Office of Graduate Admissions. A review of the department's sites is conducted annually ensuring accurate information. Recently, a direct order from the Chancellor to make each website have the same URL and look was implemented to give the graduate programs needed consistency. The Office of Graduate Admissions found that the departments are pleased about the website changes and claim they find navigation easier with the new template.

UN-Lincoln utilizes Talisma to track multiple recruitment properties, build print and email marketing campaigns, and generate extensive reports on ROI and overall effectiveness. Every prospect and email lead is loaded immediately into the system; Graduate Admissions can then send out a standard "nice to meet you" email and eventually follow up with a structured campaign. In the past this process has taken up to 3 months just to get the initial letter out, now it only takes a few weeks.

Overall, UN-Lincoln has done an excellent job streamlining the admissions process while still allowing the academic departments to market their programs in their own unique way.

New Resources for Foreign Credential Evaluation

Presented by Linda Kosene, AACRAO
Recorded by Jocelyn Morales, Columbia University

Graduate admission professionals working with foreign credentials have a plethora of information on international education and credential evaluation available to assist them with the admission process. Typically, information can be found on the Internet, in reference books, or through service providers. In this session Linda Kosene explained how to narrow down the information out there and grow a library specific to your needs using some of the best resources currently available.

Your institutional mission and admission policies determine your use of credential evaluation resources. Keep this in mind as you make an assessment of your office needs. Before you begin narrowing down information, you should understand who your applicants are. Identify the characteristics of your applicant pool, the countries/regions of your high-volume applicants, the kinds of credentials you typically see and the languages used. To become an expert in those areas you will need to gather general information about your applicants, such as geography, foreign languages, government, current events, and history. In addition, you will need specific types of information, on documentation, "educational ladder" (information on how students transition through their education), recognition of institutions, medium of instruction, and other important details.

Once you understand who your applicants are and what information you need to evaluate foreign academic credentials, you can review your current resources and start to grow and maintain your library. The following are good places to check for resources:

- Web—free and for purchase
- Professional associations and contacts
- Publications—free and for purchase
- School library
- Ministry of Education (or equivalent)
- Newsletters
- Conference handouts

To obtain this session handout listing recommended resources on the internet, contact Linda Kosene at kosenel@aacrao.org.

No Top Ten Sports Team?—Recruitment Challenges for a Small Graduate Program

Presented by Kathryn Kendall, University at Buffalo
Recorded by Craig Davis, Friends University

In a light-hearted and practical approach to recruiting for small graduate programs, combined with being new to graduate recruitment duties, Kathryn presented a variety of recruitment challenges from the perspective of a new recruitment professional. Challenges became opportunities that manifest usable and creative ideas and solutions to help overcome those challenges.

She used her institution as an excellent case study that included myths in her region (about the weather, geography, or other perceived limitations of her institution) that may have clouded prospective student's perceptions.

Observations and lessons learned:

- Being a graduate of the program helped give an immediate endorsement of the program
- Host Information Events or Recruitment Fairs.
- If you travel to host an event, allow for travel time, facility logistics, provide signage/maps to the location
- Pack light, but make sure all your programs will be represented
- Consider a variety of menus and/or refreshments for attendees, especially for multiple events
- Consider e-mail blasts. But, be aware that blasts may be construed as spam
- Identify volunteers/students to help with set up/take down
- Utilize your alumni to talk to prospective students
- Identify giveaways:
  1) Make sure your logo is on item
  2) Avoid printing logo on removable wrap that gets thrown away.
  3) Find a signature item for special events

     Kathryn gave an example giving away buffalo-wings, in Buffalo, New York; a special sauce kept the town talking about the event, and the provider became a sponsor
- Use Direct Mail, listservs, purchase lists, etc. and target multiple states, Universities and Colleges and/or school department contacts
- Target areas with similar fields of study, but not conflicting with same programs

Two other successful initiatives included development of an:

1) Alumni Ambassador Program providing letter writing, making phone calls, representing the school at fairs, hosting information sessions, receptions at employers or in your home.
2) Out-of-state direct mail campaign to 16 states, 71 colleges & universities, and 15 to 18 contacts within each school department. So far, there has been a 400% increase in applications.

Moral of the story, you do not need to have a top ten sports team to draw awareness, earn integrity, and gain respect for your smaller graduate programs. Rather, you should identify your strengths and build your message and campaigns around those strengths. Then, create targeted but strategic initiatives that set you apart from other schools.

The Power of Print in the Internet Age

Presented by David Cotter and Sarah Petrakos, Emerson College; Jim Gibson and Anne Callahan, kor group
Recorded by Erin Seheult, Loma Linda University

Thinking of throwing out your view books, fact sheets, and other printed materials? David Cotter and Sarah Petrakos from Emerson College along with Anne Callahan and Jim Gibson from kor group ask you to rethink your motives. Paperless media plans grow more common with electronic media progress. But before you decide that filing cabinets are extinct, consider the needs of the target audience. Believe it or not, there still are productive ways for print to impact those enveloped in an internet age.

Emerson College felt the need to revamp their marketing strategy and invited kor group, a visual communications firm in Boston, Massachusetts, to assist in creating an effective media plan to reach their market in Communication and the Arts. A survey of 114 prospective graduate students demonstrated the key to a successful media plan incorporates all media; no one method can exist in a vacuum—all communication media, including print, are vital. This caters to all prospective students, including those affected by the "digital divide" who do not have access to, or ability to, participate in digital technology.

Despite the cons of print media—not easily updated, more expensive, one way interaction—larger companies are realizing the need for balanced marketing and are jumping on the print bandwagon. "After purchasing YouTube, Google is investing heavily in print advertising for the first time in its history" (*Stamats*). Big name companies like Google have become conscious of the pros of print, such as readability (double comprehension versus online), consistency/familiarity, higher copy recall, portability, weight, feel, and flexibility. To feel the quality of the written page is to feel the tangible quality of the company.

David Cotter sums it up by pointing out that "print is not the only answer; create synergy among all of your marketing tools and allow them to do what they do best."

Reaching Off-Campus: Marketing Your Programs to Public Service Professionals

Presented by Amy Potthast, Action Without Borders/Idealist.org
Recorded by Christine Leland, Simmons College

This presentation shared tips and tricks used by Action Without Borders/ Idealist.org to market their fairs to professionals in large cities. Amy was joined by her colleague Jung Fitzpatrick, as well as two graduate admission representatives: Kerri Noonan from the Harvard School of Public Health, and Rob Sommo from the New York University School of Social Work.

Action Without Borders/Idealist.org performs outreach in five major ways: via professional associations, networking/online resources/listservs, on-campus resources, the Idealist.org website, and print advertisements. They do **not** spend a lot of money, as their association (as well as those with whom they work), is non-profit and, therefore, does not have a large budget.

Session attendees were given the opportunity to share possible **professional associations** with which to partner. Suggestions included the Public Heath Association, National Association of Schools of Public Affairs Administration (NASPAA), Council on Social Work Education, and the National Association of Social Workers. Another suggestion was to partner with specific program accreditation organizations.

Networking opportunities exist within these professional associations—for example, sending an email to the association listserv to let people know when a representative will be in a specific city. Other ideas include participating in Yahoo! Groups, AmeriCorps Alums (*lifetimeofservice.org*) or the Young Nonprofit Professionals Network (*YNPN.org*).

To take advantage of **on-campus resources**, work with the placement or fieldwork office and perform reverse recruitment. Employers are searching for students; search for potential students via the employers. Or, prepare packets of information for the companies that attend on-campus career fairs. Some institutions utilize their alumni network to generate names of prospective students by sending an email asking for referrals to the graduate programs.

Another possibility is to create a profile on the **Idealist.org website**. An individual membership must first be established, and then a profile can be created for the institution. Schools can be featured in the Online Resource Center on this site.

Although **print advertisements** are expensive, some publications that may provide a solid ROI include: *WorldView* magazine, *Youth Today*, *Teachers of Color*, *Winds of Change* magazine, *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, *Nonprofit Times*, *Nonprofit Quarterly*, and any free weekly newspapers distributed in target markets.

The session concluded with an activity in which participants placed themselves in groups, depending on their choice of recruitment environment (e.g. large city). The group then worked together to brainstorm a possible networking/ marketing plan for that specific region.

Recruit with Your Strengths

Presented by Joseph Dworak, Bethel Seminary
Recorded by Debra Dickerson, Eastern Washington University

It makes sense. Determine your talents; know the strengths of your co-workers, supervisor, and staff. Assign tasks, duties, and responsibilities according to each person's strengths, talents, and abilities. Mr. Dworak explained that people who work in jobs where they use their strengths are happier and more energetic after a work day than before.

Dr. Clifton, who developed the StrengthsQuest Test, sought to determine what makes top achievers successful. He interviewed successful people in a variety of professions. He thought he would find a formula of qualities or strengths that all these leaders had in common. Instead, Dr. Clifton found that these top achievers had a variety of talents or strengths, all were unique and different. So what was the key to their success? The key was that they recognized their own unique talents and strengths and used them in their chosen profession.

After 30 years of research and more than 2,000,000 interviews with people in every profession, Dr. Clifton and the Gallop Corporation developed the StrengthsQuest Test. Mr. Dworak said the first step to a more satisfying life is to take a StrengthsQuest Test to determine your five top strengths. These usually will cluster around a theme or domain.

The four domains in the Gallup Strengths finder are:

- Striving (or Working Harder)
- Thinking (or Working Smarter)
- Impacting (or Influencing People)
- Relating (or Assisting People)

Most people tested discover talents/ abilities in three of the above domains. Upon discovering your talents, add knowledge and skills to develop these abilities into strengths. The final step is to apply your strengths to improve your performance, and job satisfaction.

For more information about the StrengthsQuest Test visit the Gallop website at *http://www.gallup.com* or contact Joseph Dworak at *j_dworak@bethel.edu*

Recruiting for Students through Partnerships

Presented by Maxine Lentz, Quinnipiac University and Marcus Tillery, Thomas Edison State College
Recorded by Liz Majors, Pittsburg State University

"The ability to build and sustain effective partnerships will be a key competitive advantage for universities in an age of the global educational village."
Bray, S. and Scalzo, K. *The Journal of the University Continuing Education Association*. Volume 68, 2005.

In today's global education village, institutions of higher learning are being challenged to look for non-traditional routes to recruit students to their institution's programs. Under the guidance of Dr. Maxine Lentz and Dr. Marcus Tillery, two Northeastern institutions have found student recruitment success in forming partnerships with corporations and professional organizations on both the local and national level.

A partnership program that is supported by an institution includes three parties:

1. The College/University
2. The Employer/Partner
3. The Employee/Learner

The successful implementation of a partnership program includes the identification of three critical pieces: 1.) College/University's criteria; 2.) Wants of the Employer/Partner; 3.) Benefits to the all three parties.

1. College/University's Criteria for Partnerships
   - Will a partnership support the institution's mission?
   - What is the institution's internal support system?
   - Will the current institutional infrastructure support the partnership?
   - Can the institution provide the expected speed to market?
   - What type of organization will the institution target: enrollment/revenue potential?
   - How will the institution validate professional training for college-level credit?
2. Wants/Market Demands of Employer/Employee
   - Exposure to leading edge experts/practices/methods and technology
   - Practical application
   - Speed to market
   - Return on investment
   - Employee retention and recruitment
   - Increase in employee education levels through degree programs
   - Degree templates
   - Validation of existing professional workforce training for college credit
3. Benefits to Employee/Learner, Employer/Partner, and College/University
   - Employee/Learner
     - Use of professional training toward college level credit/degrees
     - Integration of studies within workplace
     - Positive reinforcement by supervisors of new skills and knowledge
   - Employer/Partner
     - Academic value given to existing professional training
     - Enhances employee performance
     - Integration of work responsibilities and education
     - Retention
   - College/University
     - Recruiting tool for gaining students
     - Increased visibility
     - Increased opportunities for additional partnerships
     - Keeps faculty current in the field

In conclusion, Dr. Lentz and Dr. Tillery stated that the overall planning process and the relationship of the partnership program to the institution's mission are critical to the development of a successful partnership. The ultimate goal is to reach for a program that is high in enrollment and low in maintenance. The reality of a partnership program is that it will be high in maintenance! However, with the support of the institution, the creation of a detailed plan, and an implementation team, the partnership program will also be high in enrollment.

AY Recruiting Solutions' representatives, sponsors of the NAGAP Welcome Reception, pictured with Mickey Mouse.

Recruiting Millennials: How to Attract This Unique Generation to Graduate School

Presented by Brian Niles, Target X
Recorded by Carol Huffman, Barry University

If you know the words to the Who's song "My Generation", then most likely you are not a part of the Millennial Generation. This distinct and challenging group of young people born between 1982-2002 is just beginning to approach Graduate School education, and they are doing so in a uniquely Millennial Style.

This generation is often referred to using the following descriptive words: sheltered, pressured, conventional, team-oriented, achieving, shy/timid, and entitled. They are the generation born of mini-vans and "baby on board" signs. They watched *Barney* instead of *Sesame Street*, and were often the only child for several years with parents who were wholly focused on their development. The two events that divide this generation are 9/11 and Columbine.

How will this unique generation affect the world of education and graduate admissions? We are just beginning to see some of the significant differences that this group will expect.

- First and foremost, they are *with* their parents. With them everywhere—including the graduate school admission interview.
- They are *part of* the internet; they have "My Space" and "Face Book" accounts.
- They distrust advertising and prefer websites to brochures and e-mail to direct mail.
- They will want details on cost and financial aid.
- They will want to connect—via the internet, not face to face—with students and faculty.
- They will want the graduate programs to tell stories, not stats; to talk about their people, not their programs.

In summary, the Millennials that come to Graduate school in the next twenty years will challenge the way that we provide education. They will expect to be taught to the test, they want expectations to be known, clear, and negotiable. They expect to be in a team/group setting, and feel that customer service is vital, and they are the customer. They will have "helicopter" parents that will ask "why isn't my child good enough for your program?", and will believe that they will be immediately successful upon graduation. As admissions professionals, we need to step up our electronic recruiting, expect the parents to be there, engage the customer, participate in the dialogue and remember, "My Generation" is a classic!

Selecting and Retaining Students in Doctoral Research Programs

Presented by Teresa Wilkerson and Courtney Lewis, University of Central Florida
Recorded by Claire DeWitt, Brigham Young University

Due to the tremendous cost of graduate education, it is important to improve the high rates of attrition in both masters and doctoral programs. When departments fund graduate students, there is a significant cost and institutional loss involved when graduate students do not complete their programs. Teresa and Courtney highlighted ways in which schools can attract and retain graduate students.

When decisions are influenced by such things as (1) institutional pressures to meet enrollment or headcount growth goals or (2) there is a need created for teaching and research positions, the attrition rate can be affected adversely. Therefore, it is critical for an admissions committee to have basic criteria for decision-making. The letters of recommendation, test scores, and GPA's are helpful, but the written statement sets a student apart because it includes why the person is applying for the degree along with their research interests as well as providing a writing component for the committee's review. Recent research suggests that success is related to the applicant's fit, motivation, goals, and independence along with the program's attitude, involvement, and support (financial support was not included in the study).

Selectivity and retention are indicators of quality, and academic services do play into success. Some functional solutions for retention include:

1) **an orientation** when the students arrive on campus (program handbook and timeline provided)
2) **a second year orientation** when the student's fit is reassessed and expectations are identified
3) **continual mentoring** to improve success where relationships are built, professional development occurs, academic integration is increased, and program involvement is encouraged which allows students to give tours, serve on committees, and have a voice
4) **improving success** allows for program self assessment (listen, ask, and find out why students did not complete the program; evaluate faculty's perceptions of completion and non-completion; consider alumni's perceptions of their own completion and others completion or non-completion)

Naturally, the desired outcome is to help graduate students have their educational needs and expectations met while they contribute to the university community as a whole.

A Standardized Evaluation of Noncognitive Abilities for Use in Graduate Education

Presented by David Payne, GRE Executive Director
Recorded by William M. Sisco, Grand Valley State University

Many factors influence success in graduate school, such as prior achievement, motivation, reasoning, interpersonal skills, persistence, and creativity. Only a few of these skills are measurable through standardized tests. The Standardized Letter of Recommendation (SLR) was designed to supplement traditional letters of recommendation with information not typically available in graduate school applications. The goal of the assessment is to have predictive validity regarding success in graduate school.

In 2005, GRE and Project 1000 (a national program to assist underrepresented students by using a single application process for 88 participating schools) agreed to work on a pilot project. The initial results of SLR use (October 2006 to February 2007) are: 48 students used the tool and 509 letters of recommendation were submitted to 69 different participating schools.

Because of confusion with the SLR name, GRE changed the name to Personal Potential Index (PPI), which reflects the predictive nature of the assessment. The PPI can be accessed by applicants, recommenders, and administrators via a single online portal. The applicant provides the names and e-mail addresses of potential recommenders and the addresses are loaded into a database along with the school information; and the recommender is sent an invitation. The recommender rates and uses free text to evaluate the applicant in six Personal Dimensions:

- Knowledge and Creativity
- Communications Skills
- Teamwork
- Resilience
- Planning and Organization
- Ethics and Integrity

Additional free text input provides an Overall Evaluation of the applicant and Program Fit to each school/program. Admission Committees review final reports.

There is a plan to collect higher education data (degree completion, GPA, and time to degree) from three states to track students through graduate school who have used the instrument. GRE is enlisting partner schools to help address issues such as format for scoring and a validity research program with the intent of broadening the use of the PPI to a mainstream assessment for graduate school applicants.

Strategic Partnerships in Minority Graduate Recruitment

Presented by Kate McAnulty, Fashaad Crawford, and Jonathan L. Johnson, University of Louisville
Recorded by Cynthia Grapczynski, Grand Valley State University

This presentation provided participants with early data from an empirical study analyzing the University of Louisville's Visitation Day, designed to increase African American enrollment in graduate studies. The program has been implemented for five years.

Concepts on which the Visitation Day is based include:

1. Institutional fit is important to enrolling and maintaining students of color, who need to feel a cultural and social connection to the university.
2. The event is planned over two days, to include networking and information sessions, providing ample time to educate potential students about the programs and opportunities that are available.
3. Students are recruited in their junior and senior years, accommodations are carefully selected, and follow-up through personalized email or telephone communication is used to personalize the experience.

Methods of data collection included a) program evaluation surveys, b) program satisfaction surveys, c) demographic information and d) interpretive questions at the end of the surveys.

Results: a) satisfaction with program is at 4.4 out of 5, b) out of 20 possible candidates, the U of L had 12 applications and 9 admissions, with no one denied to date, c) three important themes emerged, including:
Events—the number and nature particularly identifying and personalizing program interest for participants.
Networking—opportunities to engage with current and prospective students as well as respective program faculty and other students of color was important.
Community/Belonging—the staff made an effort to make students comfortable by demonstrating their own commitment, and the opportunity to speak with alumni from the students' own undergraduate institutions allowed for shared experiences, peer mentorship, as well as assistance in transition and adjustment.

Significant limitations of the study include the small sample size, the surveys were designed by researchers, and there was some data missing. However, the advantages of opportunities like these Visitation Days for improving minority recruitment are clear, as is the importance of helping these students to recognize that an advanced degree is not a luxury in our society, but a necessity.

Supporting your Brand with Consistency and Coherence

Presented by Susan Ikerd, University of Southern California and Gail Strauss, Richard Harrison Bailey/The Agency
Recorded by Michelle Howell Smith, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

This session provided an overview of how to develop a brand strategy and how to integrate it into your campus community.

The process starts with identifying your brand. A good brand is defined as being important, believable, and distinctive. Your brand is a promise and it is only as strong as your ability to deliver on your promises. When someone hears your name, what do they think? These are the "vivid descriptors" that you can cultivate in your brand. It is important that these descriptors be specific and focus on what differentiates you from your competitors.

Coherence refers to the integration of everything in your marketing mix working together to resonate with your mission, vision, values, and character. You can conceptualize coherence as three satellites tethered together:

- Where does the market put your brand?
- Where do you put your brand?
- Where do you want your brand to be?

The closer together these three elements are, the more coherence you have in your brand.

It is important that you have a clear vision of what you want your brand to be, and that you communicate it with others. The presenters offered this equation to illustrate the point:

Vision + Communication = Shared Purpose
Vision – Communication = Hallucination

The key to an effective brand strategy is harnessing the synergy that is created when communicating your brand with others. An engaged campus community is the best free media—do you know what their elevator speech is? Faculty, staff, and students are often asked about your campus and if they cannot articulate your core mission and values, they may be tempted to supply their own. By involving your entire campus community in your branding strategy, you can exponentially increase its effectiveness.

Tailoring Admissions to Meet Graduate Rigor and Professional Needs

Presented by Cynthia Grapczynski and William Sisco, Grand Valley State University
Recorded by Nancy Karabeyoglu, Sabanci University

Using a highly-structured, two-tiered admissions process, Grand Valley State University Occupational Therapy Rehabilitation (OTR) MS graduates complete the degree with a 100% employment rate and a high aggregate pass rate on Michigan Board exams (94% versus 83% National Board average). Because of the large number of schools and therapists in Michigan, enrollment is deliberately kept small (accepted students: 18-20); and because OT work requires good citizenship (OTR's mission—"occupation is healing") leadership, research, and critical thinking play critical roles. In addition, half of the student population comes from Midwest and many are non-traditional students.

Enrolled students, however, do not easily meet these standards. Faculty, believing that they must teach more than content, encourage students to stretch beyond their comfort level, so that they transform into professionals who understand how therapy benefits society. Faculty encourage development of logical thought, synthesis of knowledge, good writing skills, and resolution of ethical issues. Practice is critical, yet theory also figures into the mix as master's students transfer skills and knowledge across disciplines.

Since more than technique is necessary to be a good OTR student, applicant profiles are carefully managed. In Tier One of the admissions process, graduate rigor is measured by:

- Emphasizing pre-requisite courses in the admission process & no GRE
- 3.0 GPA in the last 60 hours
- 50 hours (minimum) volunteer community service
- Achievement summary
- Reference letters (less weighted).

Academic achievement and successful completion of pre-requisite courses rank highly in Tier One. Each criterion has a maximum number of points: a total of 30+ points results in progression to Tier Two of the application process, which is held on-campus.

The critical 45 minute individual interview, in which all faculty participate, takes place in Tier Two. Tier Two also requires problem-solving teamwork (Group Actions) and two writing samples. To make the process transparent, students receive scoring samples beforehand as well as their own scores afterwards.

Given that 85% of all master's degrees are awarded by professional schools and accredited institutions have been looking to raise the bar for quite some time, Grand Valley's encouragement of leadership, professionalism, and education offers attractive strategies for managing high quality graduate enrollment.

Tools, Tips, and Tricks for Personal and Workgroup Productivity

Presented by Dan Karleen, Peterson's and Brendon Connelly, George Fox University
Recorded by Dian Hartley, University of St. Augustine

Looking for ways to get more done in less time? If so, this was the presentation for you. Dan and Brendon demonstrated some interesting tools to enhance productivity.

A powerful tool to enable better collaboration with colleagues and to share ideas quickly and easily, Mindmaps are a useful resource. According to *Wikipedia*, "a mind map is a diagram used to represent words, ideas, tasks or other items linked to and arranged radially around a central key word or idea."

Mindmaps are great for planning sessions, note taking, outlining, and brainstorming. From a basic linear list, a mindmap illustrates connections between items. A mindmap can be saved as a .jpg for future use. Check out the following free mindmap sites:
Freemind—*http://freemind.sourceforge.net/wiki/index.php/Main_Page*
MindMeister—*http://mindmeister.com/*

Real Simple Syndication (RSS) will organize and speed your web reading. News items flowing through Google, Yahoo, and CNN are all done via RSS. Free RSS accounts are available through Google, Bloglines and My Yahoo. These web-based accounts allow you to get feeds from any computer with a web browser connected to the Internet. You create custom alerts based on the news and information that interest you most.

Many educational institutions are publishing RSS feeds; visit *http://directory.edufeeds.com/* for a directory. These feeds are as accessible as your webpage and can increase your presence in the education market. RSS audio feeds can also be played on an iPod.

Wikis are cool but with so many available, it can be difficult to decide which one, if any, is right for you. A wiki is basically a web-based document management tool that allows anyone to change, edit, update, or delete a web-based document. It can contain word documents or .pdf files, screenshots or screencasts that are great for documentation. Wikis on a public website are highly Google-able.

Screencasts allow you to record screen/monitor activity along with audio. Video can be added to a screencast by utilizing a digital camera or webcam. Uses for screencasts include tutorials, website navigation/browsing, completing forms, and it's a great rehearsal tool for giving presentations. Visit the following screencast software sites:
Camtasia—*http://www.techsmith.com/camtasia.asp*
CamStudio—*http://www.camstudio.org/*

The presentation contains other interesting tools including Zotero, Basecamps and Widgets: it is available online at *http://bzo.wiki.zoho.com/NAGAP-2007.html.*

So, no excuses, the tools are out there to help you save time and increase productivity. Jump in and explore!

Unleash the Magic of Cohort Marketing and Recruitment

Presented by Cathy Cady and Patricia Miller, Barry University
Recorded by Alisa Johnson, The University of Texas at Arlington

Cohort lock-step programs have advantages as adult learners benefit from group support and networking opportunities within the cohort. Cohorts can be set up on the main campus or satellite locations. Barry University's School of Education used the following strategies to successfully launch cohort programs.

Program Selection: Graduate degree must have intrinsic value for student–tangible professional advancement and quality education.

Master's degrees lead to:
- Preparation for licensure or certification
- Career advancement
- Increased income

Doctoral degrees lead to:
- Credentials for university/college employment
- Credentials for consulting/lecturing
- Increased income
- Career advancement

Establish marketing/recruitment time line (4-5 month lead time for Master's; 9-10 months for Doctoral) with these components:
- Recruitment and semester/term start dates
- Application and registration deadlines

Determine the number of prospects and applicants needed for sufficient enrollment to support tuition.

Ratios:
- Master's—3-4 interested and qualified prospects yield one applicant
- Doctoral—5-6 interested and qualified prospects yield one applicant

Tuition/fee structure established in advance by the Dean and Program Coordinator.

Anchor the prospects:
- Chose faculty who are comfortable outside the classroom and can conduct promotional presentations
- Designate admissions contact
- Establish a mentor and a contact at the site to provide support, facilitate meetings and distribute recruitment materials
- Hold face-to-face information sessions that cover these topics:
  1. Concept of cohort
  2. Program details
  3. Benefits of attending university/college
  4. Admissions requirements
  5. Cost

Conduct planning session to promote ownership and get "buy in" from prospects
- Establish format and meeting dates/times
- Guidance for registration and buying books
- Additional opportunity to meet with prospects
- Allow cohort to vote on electives courses

The mode of instruction included online, video conferencing and traditional face-to-face classroom interaction. Successful cohorts have led to increased enrollments as well as referral for future cohorts.

An Update on the Bologna Process in Europe

Presented by James Frey, Educational Credentials Evaluators, Inc.
Recorded by Emile Tse and Traci Wells, International Education Research Foundation, Inc.

Currently, forty-five countries have agreed upon the Bologna Process to help create a European Higher Education Area by harmonizing their higher educational systems. With the introduction of a three-cycle degree system, qualifications will become more recognized across borders and the costs associated to lifetime students will be reduced. Dr. Frey outlined numerous efforts in this regard prior to and following the Bologna Declaration in June 1999.

One of the key components to the Bologna Process has been the restructuring of programs to include a minimum of three years for the first cycle degree and one to two years for the second cycle degree, for a combined minimum of five years. It further calls for the creation of a credit system, foreign to many European educational institutions, and the Diploma Supplement containing relevant information on the educational system in a given country. More recently, a series of Communiqués have allowed leaders to restate many of the goals of the Bologna, while also advocating standardized grades and credits, improvements in quality, and dual and joint degree programs across borders.

At the implementation stage, countries are adopting and interpreting the Bologna guidelines in varying ways, particularly with respect to the time taken for each degree, the allotment of credits and the information provided in the diploma supplement. Graduate admissions professionals in the US are already seeing Bologna-inspired changes and are currently making decisions about how to deal with three-year bachelor degrees from Europe and ECTS credits. Diploma Supplements are still quite rare.

Dr. Frey concluded with the ECE (Educational Credentials Evaluators) position on Bologna-compliant degrees, in their various forms. He encouraged US academic institutions to make their own decisions, focusing on the level of preparedness of international students for graduate admissions, which, depending on each institution's policy, may also call for the determination of comparability of degrees.

2007 CONFERENCE SESSIONS SUMMARIES CONTINUED

Urban vs. Suburban Recruitment: An Exploration of the Implications of Your Campus Location and Recruitment Efforts

Presented by Veronica Jarek-Prinz, Iona College; William Madden, Fordham University; and Robert Sommo, Jr., New York University
Recorded by Christina Swift, Xavier University

Campus location is probably one of the biggest factors why students attend your graduate program, or run in the opposite direction. Since it is something we have absolutely no control over, we have to embrace all that our locations have to offer and project the positive aspects of our location to prospective students.

Campus location is a factor that is often based on perception, not facts. Veronica, Robert, and William all related stories where students had preconceived notions of what the experience at their respective universities was like. The presenters had a common theme in their presentation—create a solid message for your program and stress a commitment to your area. You have to deal with the perceptions, but convince the student of all the things that your campus has to offer.

The presenters also discussed having a branch or satellite campus to present the best of both worlds to your students. This enables the students to participate in both an urban and suburban learning environment. It can allow the schools to expand, as well as increase your audience base.

Some of the other issues facing prospects and recruiters are safety, transportation, diversity, resources, entertainment opportunities, and weather. Obviously, one can find advantages and disadvantages in each of these categories for both urban and suburban campuses. The most important thing is to be sure that you know what the student is looking for. The same campus can be perfect for one student and wrong for another.

Veronica, William, and Robert came to an important conclusion. We can all agree that campus location plays a significant role in recruiting, so the most important thing is to develop a message for your university and use your location to your advantage. And remember: "The grass (or pavement) always seems greener on the other side".

Using Representatives (Agents) to Recruit International Students

Presented by George Abraham and John Niser, University of New Hampshire
Recorded by Claudia Bean, Eastern Michigan University

The presenters discussed the opportunities and potential pitfalls of recruiting international students using agents. After the decline of international applications following 9/11, universities had to carefully consider what was the best means for finding those lost international matriculants. Added to the difficulties was the increased recruitment of international graduate students by governments in Europe and Australia.

After careful consultation with its legal office, the University of New Hampshire decided to use agents to attract more international students. Careful selection of an agent or agents is the most important element in making the relationship favorable for your university. The wrong agent, or an agent out to maximize their own profits rather than increasing the quantity and quality of your international matriculants, can cause significant damage to your budget and your university's reputation.

Reputable agents can be that "personal contact" in foreign lands that makes your university stand out in comparison to your peers. An agent's awareness and understanding of national and local languages and customs can help bridge a cultural gap that even a school representative traveling abroad could not. Good agents know where qualified students are and what information these students need in order to make the decision to attend your school. This help may not just include helping the student select a university, but also helping the student to process all of the necessary paperwork required to study abroad. In the best cases, an agent will represent your university honestly and fairly and be a thoughtful representative of your university's interests. Some research even indicates that international students from some parts of the world prefer working with agents rather than talking directly with universities.

Of course, not all agents will meet all of the criteria expected of a good and reputable agent. Since they are likely to be representing your university with minimal direct oversight on your part, don't be afraid to ask OSEAS for a short list of recommended agents and consult with colleagues who are currently using agents. Some countries require licenses of individuals purporting to be agents, but many times this is little more than a way to generate revenue for the government. Several agencies accredit and train agents, such as ICEF and IECA, but it is equally important to know as much as you can about the agent you are considering hiring: what is their fee structure, how many clients do they represent, do they have "sub agents" and, if so, how many, what professional organizations are they affiliated with, how do they promote universities, and what other services do they offer to students. In these cases, a little due diligence on your part can pay huge dividends for your university.

Using Technology to Streamline the Admission Process

Presented by Gail Potts, Georgia Institute of Technology
Recorded by Wilhelmena Braswell, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

The graduate admissions process is like an octopus whose unwieldy tentacles seem to be unmanageable. At Georgia Institute of Technology (GIT) new processes and technological advances have successfully "Harnessed the Octopus!!"

The method Georgia Institute of Technology used is known as "Controlled Flexibility." Here is how it works.

• **Identify the Issues**—Lack of organization, lack of support, and a lack of relevant technology were altered to create a centralized process for receipt of applications and supporting documents, a paperless environment in graduate admissions, and better communication with prospective students.

• **Develop a Strategic Plan**—"Do whatever it takes to fix it." Responsibilities were distributed, job descriptions defined, an administrative manual was developed, and a system for accountability and timelines was established. After gaining the confidence of key people, small changes were made and then they moved forward with more significant changes.

• **Hardware and Software Solutions**—An online application was developed using CollegeNet. Online letters of recommendation were processed and manual entry was eliminated through data upload. GRE, GMAT, and TOEFL scores, and payments to students' accounts are now accomplished by Nolij transfer. CollegeNet also provided online applications customized for each graduate program. GIT also hired a computer support specialist.

• **Implementing and Managing the Processes**—The motto is "Test, retest, and test again." Take one step at a time, be thorough, and deliver what you promise. When all the pieces are in place, a plan for monitoring and continual analysis must be established.

• **Providing Better Internal and External Customer Service**—There is now a central location for ongoing accreditation and self-assessment, a shorter "peak" season for application processing, faster processing in the graduate admissions office, and faster processing within departments. Assistance with analyses was also given to the Registrar's Office. Personnel from the Registrar's Office were trained to use imaging equipment and software and were assisted in setting up automated processes for staff. GIT's Admissions Office hosts numerous groups from other schools who wish to use similar processes, as well as assists other institutions with evaluation of software and hardware.

Using TOEFL iBT Speaking Section Scores for Selecting ITAs

Presented by Terry Axe, Educational Testing Services and Tim Farnsworth, UCLA
Recorded by Claire DeWitt, Brigham Young University

Terry and Tim shared the results of an ETS study linking the new TOEFL Internet-based test (iBT) and local school testing as predictors for success in teaching in the classroom. Including a speaking section on the new TOEFL iBT test has led graduate programs to ask whether these scores can be used in the pre-arrival selection and screening of international teaching assistants (ITAs). ETS conducted research with four large ITA programs that have competitive graduate programs to investigate how TOEFL iBT speaking can be used in conjunction with local ITA tests for screening.

The goals of the study were to:

1) investigate the criterion-related validity of TOEFL iBT speaking for ITA screening, determining the association between scores on TOEFL iBT speaking and on local ITA tests, and
2) establish cut-off scores on TOEFL iBT speaking for ITA screening, setting score requirements based on TA assignments determined by local ITA test scores

The major findings of the study revealed:

1) relationships between the TOEFL iBT speaking test and local ITA test scores were moderately strong
2) strengths of relationship were somewhat different depending on the extent to which the local test engages and evaluates non-language abilities
3) TOEFL iBT speaking scores were more strongly related to linguistic aspects measured by the local ITA tests
4) TOEFL iBT speaking scores were significant predictors of TA assignments and were fairly accurate in classifying students for TA assignments.

For more information:
Visit: *www.ets.org/toefl*
TOEFL Score User Help Line: 1-609-683-2008
TOEFL Client Relations, ETS, Terry Axe, *taxe@ets.org*
For questions about the study, contact Tim Farnsworth, *tim.farnsworrth@gmail.com*

Website (Re)-Design: Key Considerations and Lessons Learned

Presented by Stephen Bruce and Victoria Walker, Regent University
Recorded by Christine E. Schaeffer, Seton Hill University

The School of Psychology and Counseling at Regent University recently undertook a complete website re-design. This re-designed site (*www.regent.edu/psychology*) was the recipient of the 2006 NAGAP Promotional Excellence Award. During this session, the research, process, and outcomes of the website re-design project were discussed. Suggestions were provided for managing a process that relies on the participation of other departments and faculty.

It is important to note that a website is not just a website. A University's website is now, more than ever, an introductory piece to the University—the point of entry to the University. Many prospective students, friends of the University, and prospective donors view the website each day without you ever knowing who they are and why they are on the site. They may or may not contact your office depending on your website. A website is a marketing tool for new students and donors. It is also an informational source for current students, faculty and staff, alumni, and friends of the University. Therefore, it must be understood that a website, and in fact a website re-design project, encompasses much time, many resources, and many cross-departmental personnel. In essence, your school is only going to get out of the website what you put into developing it.

When beginning a website re-design project, take a long, hard look at your current site and determine what works and what does not work for your university. From there, the project team broke their ideal website down into different categories: what was needed on the site for promotional needs (mainly Admissions) and what was needed for informational needs (so the website could be used as a resource tool for current students, faculty, and staff). Just prior to the start of the website re-design project, the School of Psychology and Counseling had undergone a print media re-design as well. Therefore, it was important that there was consistency between the print and web materials. The re-designed site focuses on: easy navigation, useful content, easy maintenance and updating, streamlined code, and the School's marketing strategy.

Taking in to account the Regent University web standards, the School of Psychology and Counseling developed a template design for their re-designed website. This template is carried out through all pages and layers to provide a clean and consistent look. Once designed, the template was presented to and approved by key University and School constituencies such as the Dean, key faculty, staff, and students.

The session presenters offered several key suggestions: make sure your project has support and direction from your superiors; clearly understand who has the authority to make decisions regarding the project; ensure collaboration between the various departments—including faculty; remember that a website is both a tool and your University's image; use templates for consistency; and practice integrated marketing within your site.