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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to College and University, One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 520, Washington, DC 20036-1135. Copyright © 2004 American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.

INDEXES: College and University is indexed in Current Index to Journals in Education (ERIC), Education Index, Higher Education Abstracts and Compendia in Education.
Editor's Note

Philip Altbach, Boston College, provides an overview of doctoral education in the United States today including its scope, international influence, and funding, and the challenges and problems, both societal and systemic, facing doctoral education in the future.

Carl Einhaus, Western Michigan University, Wanda L.E. Viento, Kalamazoo College, and James Croteau, Western Michigan University, present the results of the survey and the recruitment and marketing initiatives developed at Western Michigan University to recruit lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender students.

Michael Poock, East Carolina University, presents the results of a survey on orientation practices for graduate students conducted among member institutions of the Council of Graduate Schools, and offers best practices for those responsible for graduate student orientation.

In the old days we memorized telephone numbers, today we memorize passwords. Jeff von-Munkwitz-Smith, University of Connecticut, and Ann West, EDUCAUSE, describe how identity and access management systems can simplify the process of accessing the variety of campus systems we use daily.

J. Michael Thompson, Vice Provost of Enrollment Services at the University of Southern California is interviewed by Mary Elisabeth Randall about his career in higher education.

In the Forum section, Travis Reindl, AACRAO, discusses the public's thoughts on issues related to issues of cost, access, and need for higher education.

Jim Black, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, writes about the political challenges faced by enrollment managers and provides advice for those attempting to leverage data and build relationships.

I traveled to Japan this summer where I was inspired by the extraordinary culture of service that pervades all interactions. I extended the memories of the trip by writing about some characteristic encounters and lessons learned.

Joe Head and Thomas Hughes, both of Kennesaw State University, describe the Freshman Admissions Predictor tool that has been implemented at the school to help prospective students, guidance counselors, and parents evaluate an applicant's eligibility.

Tom Eason, Sherry Reach, and Val Sisman explain and discuss the University of Cambridge International Examinations (CIE).

We also have three valuable book reviews in this issue. Chris J. Foley, Indiana University–Bloomington, reviews Atlas of Student Mobility by Todd M. Davis. Travis Reindl, AACRAO, reviews The Quiet Crisis: How Higher Education is Failing America by Peter Smith. And Brian Vander Schee, University of Pittsburgh, reviews Richard Whiteside’s book, Student Marketing for Colleges and Universities.

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Saira Burki, C&U Managing Editor, AACRAO, One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 520, Washington, DC 20036; Tel: (240) 683-8885; E-mail: burkis@aacrao.org
The system of doctoral education as it has evolved in the United States over the past century and a half serves both the academic system and society reasonably well. Indeed, many of the problems facing doctoral education are engendered by the system’s success. Some of the challenges facing doctoral education relate to broader societal forces while others are internal to the academic system.

Doctoral education needs to be viewed alongside broader trends in American higher education, and especially graduate education. The doctorate, especially the Ph.D., is the pinnacle of a large and complex higher education system. This essay focuses mainly on the Ph.D. degree, the research-oriented doctorate, and not on the increasingly important professional doctorates such as the doctor of business administration (DBA), the doctor of law (JD), the doctor of education (Ed.D.), and others, although some attention will be paid to these degrees. Doctoral study also is related to graduate education generally—master’s degrees in many fields including the traditional arts and sciences and in numerous professional fields (Conrad, Haworth, and Millar 1993). Postdoctoral study is also not considered in detail in this discussion, although in many fields in the physical and biomedical sciences a postdoctoral research appointment is increasingly considered part of research training and is quite common.

Doctoral education cannot be separated from either the American academic research enterprise or the arrangements for teaching large numbers of undergraduates in the larger research-oriented universities (Graham and Diamond 1997). Doctoral students, especially in the sciences, are an integral part of the research system. They provide the personnel at relatively low cost who do much of the research under the supervision of senior professors. The research grants provided by government agencies such as the National Science Foundation and many others, by private philanthropic foundations, and increasingly by corporations are the sources of funding for graduate assistants who work on research while studying for their doctorates. In many cases, dissertation topics relate to the funded research. This system of financial support for doctoral study and basic research works well for American higher education. It ensures financial support for students as well as faculty mentorship and supervision for them, and it ensures a steady source of labor for research projects. These research funds are awarded on a competitive basis, and as a result the bulk of financial support for doctoral students in the sciences goes to the prestigious research-oriented universities. Doctoral students in all disciplines, but especially in the social sciences and humanities, serve as teaching assistants and sometimes as lecturers for undergraduate courses. In return for modest stipends and tuition scholarships, doctoral students provide much of the teaching in large undergraduate courses. Typically, they work under the supervision of a senior professor and conduct discussion sections for students as well as helping with grading and evaluation. In some cases, advanced doctoral students independently teach courses. In the sciences, doctoral students may help with laboratory supervision. Funds for teaching assistants generally come directly from the university.

The United States spends about half of the world’s R&D funds—much of it supporting university-based research. Basic research, especially, is university based. A significant proportion of applied research, some of it funded by the corporate sector, is also located on university campuses. Thus, the health of doctoral programs in universities is of considerable importance for the entire research enterprise.

**The Size and Shape of the System**

In terms of total student enrollment, the American system of higher education is the second largest in the world after that of China, enrolling fourteen million students in postsecondary institutions. While no accurate statistics are available on
the number of doctoral students in U.S. universities, it is likely that around 400,000 students are working at the doctoral level in all fields. In 2000, 44,889 doctoral degrees and an additional 80,057 post-baccalaureate professional degrees (e.g., medicine, law, theology, and others) were awarded. It is possible that half of the world’s doctoral students are studying in the United States.

The size, scope, and diversity of doctoral education make accurate description difficult. A total of 406 universities award doctoral degrees, but 50 of them award half of all degrees (Nerad 2002). The top 50 degree providers consist largely of the most prestigious research-oriented universities—both public and private—although the proportion of doctorates granted by these prestigious universities has declined over the years. People assume that institutions like Harvard and Yale are the largest doctorate awarding institutions, but in fact, of the top ten providers, eight are public universities (including the University of California-Berkeley and the University of Wisconsin-Madison, which are the top two). The only two private universities in the top ten are Nova Southeastern University and Stanford University. Like the rest of the U.S. higher education system, doctoral granting institutions are highly stratified. While doctoral education continues to be dominated by the most prestigious institutions, much of the growth in the past 30 years has been in less famous public universities seeking to boost their reputations by offering doctoral degrees. In the highly competitive American system, offering graduate and professional degrees is seen as a sign of prestige and of joining the “big leagues” of research universities. Some public university systems, such as California’s, limit doctoral degree programs to specific institutions—for example, only the University of California institutions can offer doctoral degrees while the larger number of schools in the California State University system are limited to bachelor’s and master’s programs. Universities offering the doctoral degree are a reflection of the highly differentiated American system of higher education. Many are among the most prestigious institutions, both public and private, in part because research-oriented universities tend to be at the top of the hierarchy, but others are regional universities offering doctorates in certain fields.

In a small number of cases, specialized institutions offer doctoral degrees. Rockefeller University, for example, offers doctoral degrees only in the biomedical sciences and is one of the most prestigious institutions of its kind in the world. There are a few freestanding law and business schools as well. A small number of specialized institutions are authorized to offer doctoral degrees in psychology or psychotherapy and some other fields. For example, some well-known universities, like the California Institute of Technology, are quite small institutions that concentrate on a small cluster of disciplines. In the past decade, for-profit academic institutions have emerged, and a tiny number offer doctorates. The major portion of doctoral degrees are, however, offered by traditional universities.

**Patterns of Doctoral Study**

The basic structure of doctoral higher education in the United States has increasingly become the pattern worldwide. Aside from some variations, describing the organization of doctoral studies in the United States is a fairly simple task. The traditional pattern of American postsecondary education includes three degrees, the four-year bachelor’s degree, a master’s degree that is typically one to two years in duration, and the doctorate. Doctoral study is quite variable in duration. While new “executive” or “cohort-based” doctorates exist in applied fields such as school administration or management that can be finished in as little as three years, including a dissertation, the “time-to-degree” in the traditional arts and sciences fields has been increasing—to almost nine years in the humanities and six years in the life sciences. In some fields and at some universities, students are admitted to doctoral study directly after completion of the bachelor’s degree, while in other cases a master’s degree is required for admission to doctoral programs.

Like much else in higher education, many variations exist in the structure of academic degrees, along with considerable differentiation and competition among institutions and even among academic departments and programs. It should be kept in mind that, at the undergraduate level, the majority of the system is unselective—community colleges for the most part are “open door” institutions offering entry to anyone with a secondary school qualification. Many four-year colleges and some lower-tier universities admit most students with the appropriate academic qualifications. Doctoral admission is, of course, more selective, even at the less prestigious universities. At the top of the system, admission to doctoral programs is immensely selective, with only the top candidates being admitted, while at institutions lower in the hierarchy, standards for admission are less stringent.

Traditionally, the doctorate was the quintessential research degree, aimed at preparing students for a career in academic or, in some fields, applied research. For years, however, many doctoral recipients, in fact, have done relatively little research in their careers, having been involved mainly in postsecondary teaching. Virtually everyone who holds a regular academic appointment in a four-year college or university, and many in the community college sector, hold doctoral degrees. The growing disjunction between the traditional purpose of the degree—training for research—and the actual use made of the doctorate has led to some criticism of the pattern of doctoral education, but so far little actual change.

The organization of doctoral study varies by discipline and field and also to some extent by institution. However, throughout the academic system, coursework, a set of examinations,

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1. In 2001, there were 334,800 students enrolled in science, engineering, and health fields in academic departments offering the doctoral degree. Some of this number are master’s students, but most are likely studying for the doctorate.

2. The major doctoral institutions are members of the Association of American Universities (AAU). This organization, established in 1900, is generally seen as representing the major, research-oriented American and Canadian universities.
and a dissertation are standard requirements for the doctorate. In contrast to the traditional European pattern of doctoral education, the American degree relies heavily on formal courses as an integral part of the process. The standard pattern for doctoral education includes approximately two years of formal coursework, which may include considerable laboratory work in the sciences. Courses typically include basic and advanced material relating to the field and the appropriate methodology both for doing research and for preparing a dissertation. Coursework is followed by a comprehensive examination, aimed at ensuring that the student has in-depth knowledge of the field. These examinations come in many different forms depending on the discipline, department, and university, sometimes including both oral and written parts or just written elements. Some examinations feature extended review essays, while others more directly cover the discipline. If a student fails to pass the examination (several attempts are generally permitted), he or she is dropped from the doctoral program. In such cases, which are not uncommon, the student is often given a master's degree. Upon successful completion of the doctoral qualifying or comprehensive examination, the student then prepares a dissertation proposal and engages in dissertation research. Most universities also stipulate a hearing concerning the dissertation proposal before it is formally approved and the student has authorization to proceed with the research.

The dissertation is a central element of any doctoral program, and is intended to be a significant piece of original research that makes a new contribution to science and the discipline. A significant number of students never complete their dissertations, creating the informal category of ABD (all but dissertation). The proportion of ABDs varies by institution and discipline, but it is high and growing. Dissertations differ in rigor and focus, of course, with major variations by discipline. In the hard sciences, dissertation topics are often related to the research program of the supervising professor, which may involve a team-based project. In the humanities and social sciences, dissertations are typically individual projects reflecting the interests of the researcher, often with some influence from the faculty supervisor. Dissertation supervision is the main responsibility of the “major professor,” usually with the assistance of several other faculty members. The length, scope, and quality of a doctoral dissertation vary widely, depending, of course, on the discipline, the views of the supervisors, the norms of the university, and, of course, the interests and ability of the student. The length of time it takes for students to complete dissertations has come under much criticism, especially in the humanities and, to some extent, in the social sciences as the time-to-degree has increased for doctoral studies.

The traditional doctorate in the arts and sciences differs from practices in some of the professional fields that offer doctoral degrees. For example, the doctorate of education (Ed.D.), a degree usually obtained by people interested in school administration and related education professions, requires a dissertation—but one that is more a description of a project rather than based on original research. Other professional doctorates also have introduced variations on the research-based dissertation. The growing trend toward tailored professional doctorates in such fields as management studies, education, and others means that accredited doctoral degrees are now offered that include cohort-based weekend coursework and dissertations or other research projects that many would say fall considerably short of traditional doctoral requirements. While many people have criticized this trend as “cheapening” the traditional doctoral degree, such programs are growing in number, as are doctoral degrees offered by for-profit academic institutions, usually in professional fields, that always lack the rigor of a traditional doctoral degree.

Another aspect of the system of doctoral education is postdoctoral study. In some fields in the sciences, the postdoc is becoming a standard part of the doctoral study cycle. A significant number of doctoral degree recipients take postdoctoral positions immediately following completion of their degree studies, spending a year or more affiliated to a laboratory prior to competing on the job market. Postdoctoral study permits a scientist to work closely with a senior researcher and often with a research group. In some fields, postdoctoral experience is a necessary prerequisite to obtaining a regular academic job. This arrangement delays the start of a career in some ways and introduces an additional level of uncertainty. Postdoctoral appointments are largely limited to the sciences, and are seldom available in the humanities or social sciences.

**Accreditation and Quality Control**

Doctoral study takes place mainly at traditional universities—academic institutions that offer undergraduate and graduate degrees, including the doctorate, in a variety of disciplines and fields. These institutions are accredited by one of the regional accrediting agencies responsible for accrediting all postsecondary institutions. These regional agencies are not government bodies but rather private organizations controlled by the academic community itself and recognized by government to carry out accrediting activities. Nonaccredited institutions are typically not eligible to receive government loans or grant funds. In some fields of study—such as engineering, business administration, law, and teacher education, among others—additional accrediting bodies controlled by the professional associations must provide authorization for institutions to offer degrees of various kinds. The traditional arts and sciences disciplines have no accrediting beyond the overall institutional accreditation described above. This patchwork of accrediting and authorization, carried out by nongovernmental organizations and agencies, but with government at both state and federal levels recognizing the validity of these accreditors, constitutes the pattern of American accreditation.

Institutional and program accreditation has a long history and is, in general, quite rigorous. Institutions are asked to provide detailed information and self-evaluations of their
work, encompassing doctoral programs, extracurricular activities, academic resources such as libraries and laboratories, the qualifications of academic staff, and many other aspects. This information is carefully evaluated by accreditation teams made up of peer committees, and final decisions are made by the accrediting bodies. Institutions and programs are given basic accreditation—they are not ranked in any way. When a university or program specialty is found deficient in some way, it can be given provisional accreditation and asked to remedy the problem or, in rare cases, be denied accreditation. A denial generally means that the institution or program ceases to function.

In some states, additional authorization from state agencies is required in order to offer specific academic degrees, with some states extending this authority to private as well as public institutions. This authorization is often legally required in order for academic institutions to operate, and can apply both to entire colleges or universities or to specific degree programs. In some cases, state authorization is linked to institutional or program quality, but more often it is a matter of appropriately registering with state agencies and providing evidence of adequate academic resources—such as libraries, teaching staff, and the like. Some states also take into account the perceived need for additional programs or institutions in the state. It is universally the case that there are controls over establishing or expanding public institutions or programs. Controls over private institutions vary from state to state and this process is less rigorous. Accreditation basically provides certification that an institution or program meets the minimum standards of academic quality and has the minimum resources deemed necessary.

Accreditation is not the same thing as quality control or assessment. In fact, there is no systematic quality control over higher education institutions or academic programs at the national level. In a few states, there are some limited and generally incomplete efforts to measure the academic quality of public institutions and their academic programs. While there is considerable discussion concerning the quality of academic programs and concern over the cost of providing academic degrees, no comprehensive plans exist to measure quality in any systematic way. One specific issue being discussed widely is the perceived need to measure the outcomes of academic programs in addition to the inputs, but there are no agreed standards or programs relating to such measures.

There is no national or state quality assessment of doctoral programs in any discipline. However, several agencies have attempted to rank academic institutions and discipline-based programs. The most influential and widely circulated such ranking is that done by U.S. News & World Report. The U.S. News annual rankings attempt to measure quality based on a number of variables for academic institutions and programs at all levels. Rankings are provided for graduate programs in many, but not all academic and professional fields, but there are no specific rankings for doctoral programs alone. The most comprehensive national evaluation of doctoral programs was carried out by the Committee for the Study of Research-Doctorate Programs in the United States and was conducted by the National Research Council (Goldberger, Maher, and Flattau 1995). This study ranked doctoral programs in various academic fields but not in professional areas. Professional organizations, including some that accredit graduate programs, have been concerned with quality assessment and assurance as well. For the past 30 years, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has provided a categorization of American academic institutions by type—including a category for research and doctoral universities. While not a ranking, this listing helps to identify types of institutions.

The basic fact, however, is that the United States has a complex and highly effective set of accrediting arrangements, sponsored and managed by the academic community, that provides a basic “floor” concerning academic quality and resources at all levels of the postsecondary system, but very little in terms of quality assurance or assessment. Indeed, the United States is behind some other countries in thinking about and implementing programs in this area.

**The Funding of Doctoral Study**

The pattern of funding for doctoral education in the United States is complex. As with higher education generally, funding comes from a combination of sources. For doctoral education sources include the 50 state governments (mainly through funding of public higher education institutions and systems), the federal government (mainly through research grants to individual professors and occasionally to academic institutions and several different kinds of loan programs), tuition and fees paid by students, university endowments, philanthropic foundations, and businesses of various kinds. The mix of funding varies by field, type of institution, and even program within a university. Generalization is difficult.

Basic institutional support is provided by the states for public universities, although the proportion of state funding has decreased in many states as part of a public disinvestment in higher education generally and in the light of current economic difficulties. The federal government traditionally does not provide basic institutional funding, although it does support some university-based laboratories and facilities in areas defined as in the national interest—mainly although not exclusively defense related. Neither state nor federal funding is available for basic institutional support for private universities, although a few states do provide direct funding to private universities for doctoral education and the federal government funds some research facilities at private institutions. For private institutions, basic funding comes from tuition and fees, the university’s own endowment and other funds, and research grants and contracts.

The mix of funding varies by institution as well. The top 50 doctoral granting universities receive the bulk of research funding from the federal government. They also dominate foundation and corporate research funding. These universities are typically able to provide funding packages for many,
and in some cases, virtually all of their doctoral students. A large proportion of students have research assistantships and work directly on research projects with professors. This pattern holds for both public and private universities. Less prestigious universities have fewer financial resources. More of their students pay for their studies, and a larger proportion serve as teaching assistants than is the case at top-tier schools.

There are also differences by field and discipline. The sciences are generally better funded than the humanities and social sciences. A larger proportion of science doctoral students receive funding packages that permit them to study on a full-time basis. The size of stipends and scholarships is also typically larger. There is less external funding available in the humanities and social sciences. As a result, fewer students receive full financial support. Most students study part-time. A larger proportion obtain loans rather than grants; more take longer to complete their doctorates and more drop out before completing their degrees.

Providing funding for doctoral study in the U.S. is a perennial difficulty. The present situation is especially problematical because of a change in funding patterns in most states and the impact of the economic downturn. State governments, in general, have reduced their overall support to public higher education, and this has had an influence on doctoral education because the decline in general support has meant fewer resources, higher tuition charges, and less funding for academic facilities. At the same time, corporate R&D expenditures in some fields have declined. The federal government has, so far, not reduced funding for research significantly, but the focus of research funding has shifted to some extent. More important, the federal student loan programs have not kept pace either with demand or with the rising tuition charges at many universities. Funding for doctoral study faces some difficult challenges.

**Doctoral Education as an International Enterprise**

International students constitute an important element of doctoral study in the United States. Almost half (267,876) of all international students are studying at the graduate level, with a majority of these in doctoral programs. International students constitute 13.3 percent of all graduate students, significantly higher than the 2.7 percent of all undergraduate students that are international students. Just as important, international students tend to be concentrated at the most prestigious universities and in a small number of fields of study. Business and management is the most popular field for international students (almost 20 percent of enrollments are international students), followed by engineering and mathematics, and computer science. In these fields, about half of all doctorates are earned by international students. It is also the case that international students from a number of the countries sending the largest numbers to the United States—such as India, China, South Korea, and several others—tend not to return to their home countries immediately following the completion of their degrees—with half or more remaining in the United States.³

In fields such as engineering, computer science, mathematics, business administration, and several others, a significant part of the professoriate is also from other countries. International students are especially numerous in doctoral programs at the most prestigious research-oriented universities. Many international students who earn doctorates in the United States do not return to their countries of origin, and significant numbers enter the professoriate (Choi 1995).⁴ Those who do return home bring the norms and orientations of their American doctoral training with them.

The model of American doctoral education—the commitment to teaching and research at the same institutions, rather than separating them in specialized research institutions and teaching-oriented universities; coursework as part of doctoral training; a variety of academic institutions of different quality, prestige, and orientations offering doctoral degrees; and a mixture of funding patterns have proved to be quite influential globally. While U.S. universities have not exported doctoral training abroad, as they have done with some undergraduate and especially professional degrees, other countries have looked to the United States as a model for expanding doctoral training. For example, Japan is currently expanding its doctoral training opportunities and is looking mainly to the U.S. for ideas.

Although the U.S. borrowed the basic concept of doctoral education from Germany in the 19th century, adapting it to meet American conditions, in recent years, the United States has not been much influenced by other countries. The influence flows largely from the United States to the rest of the world.

**Challenges to Doctoral Education**

Seen from abroad, American doctoral education seems successful and innovative. Unparalleled in size, comprehensiveness, and quality, doctoral education in the United States seems to have little to worry about. Yes, there are major criticisms made of doctoral education, and the entire system of doctoral training and research faces some difficult challenges in the coming decade. The following discussion highlights some of the main points of criticism currently being discussed.⁵

**The Research Enterprise and Doctoral Education**

Doctoral education is closely linked to the research enterprise in American higher education, especially to basic

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³ Most of these statistics are from Open Doors, 2003.

⁴ In many fields, foreigners with U.S. doctorates find it easier to enter the academic profession than to compete for jobs in business or other sectors of the American economy. Americans, on the other hand, are often attracted to private sector employment where remuneration is higher than in academia. As a result, foreign degree holders are probably overrepresented in academia.

⁵ This discussion follows many of the points made by Maresi Nerad in her paper “The Ph.D. in the U.S.: Criticisms, Facts, and Remedies.” The Council of Graduate Schools, which is the main organization representing the interests of graduate programs in the U.S., highlights many of these issues in its publications and on its Web site.
research. In the sciences, the traditional model of research production is under strain. There is greater pressure for research to be linked to applied usage, especially so that income from patents and other innovations can be earned (Bok 2003). There is also pressure from private-sector corporations, especially in fields such as biotechnology, to be involved in academic research and to have rights to the results of research done on campus. Traditional funders of basic research, including such government agencies as the National Science Foundation as well as private philanthropic foundations, have been critical of the traditional patterns of research funding. At present, the level of funding for research has not significantly decreased although there is some evidence that patterns of funding may be changing. Further, funders are in many cases less willing to provide money for doctoral students, especially when such support cannot be directly justified in terms of research outcomes.

Doctoral education, especially in the sciences and at the most prestigious research-oriented universities, is linked to trends in research funding—both amounts of money available for research and the configuration of research support. This introduces significant uncertainty in terms of levels of funding that will be available, the areas that will receive external support, and the numbers of students who can be supported. The tight link between external research funding and doctoral education in the sciences at the most prestigious universities has always been problematical. So long as funds were available and providers permitted the academic institutions sufficient autonomy, the system worked. Now, there are signs that this status quo is changing, and it is not clear how either basic research or the provision of funds for doctoral students will survive. This situation has never been a major factor in the social sciences or especially in the humanities, since significant research funding has not in any case been available.

Narrowness and Limited Relevance of Doctoral Training

As knowledge has expanded, there has been a trend toward increased specialization in doctoral training, producing doctoral degree holders whose skills are limited and who have limited opportunities for employment as a result (National Academy of Sciences 1995). Employers in industry and many students and recent graduates complain that their training was too narrow and that graduates were ill prepared for a rapidly changing job market. The doctoral curriculum and the philosophy of doctoral education is mainly in the hands of doctoral students, especially when such support cannot be directly justified in terms of research outcomes.

A related complaint, perhaps most widespread in the humanities and social sciences, is that doctoral degree holders are not well trained to teach. This complaint is related to the narrowness of the curriculum, but it also highlights the fact that doctoral programs provide virtually no training in pedagogy and many offer only limited, if any, opportunities to teach. It has been pointed out that the majority of doctoral degree recipients in the humanities and social sciences, and a large proportion of the total number, engage primarily in teaching at the postsecondary level, including in community colleges. Critics have advocated that doctoral preparation include training to teach. They point out that even those doctoral students who serve as teaching or laboratory assistants during their degree program are often not given instruction in how to perform their limited teaching duties. While pedagogical training has never been part of doctoral education in the United States, many advocate it as a necessary reform to meet the changing roles of doctoral degree holders in many fields.

Doctoral training, many critics argue, has also become ever more specialized, creating further problems for degree holders as they enter an increasingly differentiated and complex job market. The reasons for increased specialization relate to the expansion of scientific knowledge in all fields and the perceived need to discover new knowledge, albeit in an ever contracting universe. Doctoral faculty, committed to the traditional values of scholarship in this context, have contributed to this specialization. Critics have also argued that doctoral training is also inappropriate for contemporary science and scholarship. It does not sufficiently emphasize collaborative work and new trends in scientific investigation. These trends have played themselves out in different ways in various disciplines, with some more affected than others, and with variations by broad scientific field as well.

Growing Irrelevance in a Changing Job Market

Due in part to the overspecialization discussed here, to a changing academic labor market, and to the fact that growing numbers of Ph.D. degree holders are finding employment outside the universities, there has been criticism that the doctorate has become irrelevant (Altbach 1999). Faculty members responsible for doctoral training still have the traditional model of a faculty career in mind. The fact is even for those entering the academic profession, the terms and conditions of the professoriate have changed for many. A declining proportion of doctoral degree holders can expect to work at research-oriented universities, while a growing number find themselves at colleges and universities that focus on teaching rather than research. And in many fields only a minority, and sometimes a small minority, find positions in academia. The job market for doctorates has been ever more diverse as many enter private industry, including entirely new fields such as biotechnology, consulting firms, and the like. Government service at various levels also increasingly attracts doctoral graduates.

This changing and in many ways expanding job market for Ph.D. holders has put pressure on doctoral training to be more flexible and aimed at a wider array of jobs than the traditional academic profession. While some fields have made some minor changes, there has been little rethinking of the links between doctoral training and the changing labor mar-

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6 The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching is currently studying doctoral preparation in the United States and will focus on teaching as an essential part of the process.
remain on campus for an extended period, and of course, the
tions. The universities accrue costs from having students
is not cost effective either for students or academic institu-
tional, students often accrue loan obligations of $20,000
their studies. In the humanities, where funding is most prob-
tional students, many are forced to study part-time or to delay
ing has become less available for the growing number of doc-
tional, students often accrue loan obligations of $20,000
to $30,000 during their doctoral studies. Further, the changes
stem, while half of those in
biochemistry and roughly one-third of those in computer
science and electrical engineering were in the professoriate
(Nerad 2002, p.7). A significant and growing number of
Ph.D. recipients are employed outside academe.

The transition from doctoral study to work is also increas-
ingly problematical in the United States. Obtaining an aca-
demic job, still a goal for many doctoral students and the
predominant desire in many fields, is difficult and ever more
complex. It is taking longer for a Ph.D. holder to find a ten-
ure-track academic job. The growth of postdocs in the sci-
cesiences lengthens the time period of obtaining a “regular”
academic position in those disciplines. And there is little
articulation between doctoral study and the growing number
of nonacademic jobs available to Ph.Ds. Efforts are being
made to smooth this degree-to-work transition, but the
problems are considerable.

“Time-to-Degree” and Degree Completion

Many have noted that obtaining the doctoral degree is taking
longer on average, and this is seen as a problem. It now takes
between six and nine years to complete a doctorate—with
variations by field and by institution. Students in the human-
ities take the longest, while those in life sciences complete
their studies most quickly. There are many reasons for this
trend. Faculty point out that knowledge has expanded and it
takes more time to impart the necessary skills (including ever
more complex methodologies) to doctoral students. As fund-
ing has become less available for the growing number of doc-
toral students, many are forced to study part-time or to delay
their studies. In the humanities, where funding is most prob-
lematical, students often accrue loan obligations of $20,000
to $30,000 during their doctoral studies. Further, the changes
in patterns of funding tend to slow doctoral completion as
students are asked to serve as teaching or research assistants,
often in areas peripherally related to their specialty.

Some have pointed out that the increased time-to-degree
is not cost effective either for students or academic institu-
tions. The universities accrue costs from having students
remain on campus for an extended period, and of course, the
students themselves face low incomes and the continuing
expense of study. Increased time-to-degree lowers morale
and contributes to a growing rate of noncompletion of stud-
ies. This complex nexus of conditions has created a pattern of
difficulties that has made doctoral study more difficult.

Recruiting the Best and the Brightest

One of the greatest challenges for American higher educa-
tion in the coming period will be recruiting top-quality
scholars and scientists to staff the postsecondary education
system and especially to ensure that the research universities
have the best-quality staff. Doctoral education plays a key
role in this arena because the academic profession as well as
those who staff research laboratories and institutions of all
kinds typically hold doctorates and are trained at research
universities that offer doctoral degrees. Those at the top of the
system are trained in the key 20 or 30 research universities.

Ensuring future scientific and academic leadership is now
in question. The problems, some of which are discussed here,
face doctoral education in particular and higher education
in general in the United States, are serious. Continuing
financial problems are placing strains on the doctoral train-
ing system and on higher education. Universities find it hard
to compete with the private sector for the best talent. Many
of the best young minds are unwilling to undergo the long,
poorly paid, and often disorganized road to a doctoral degree.
The problems encountered by Ph.D.s in obtaining academic
employment are another deterrent.

The United States imports some of the best minds from
other countries. In some cases, these people are trained at
American universities, and many seek employment in U.S.
academe. Others are recruited from universities overseas,
lured by better salaries and working conditions in the United
States. This strategy is neither fair to other countries, nor is it
an assured means of providing the best talent.

Conclusion

This analysis has provided both an overview of the pattern
of American doctoral study and an indication of some of the
problems facing this key sector of higher education. It may
seem paradoxical that the system of doctoral education
admired, and often replicated, in other countries, is seen by
many people as having some severe problems. The basic
structure of doctoral training in the United States as it has
evolved during the past century, is an effective means of
training creative specialists in the disciplines and, increas-
ingly, in multidisciplinary fields. Doctoral programs have
proved to be sufficiently flexible to allow for new scientific
developments and to adjust to the development of mass
higher education.

The American pattern of combining instruction and
research as part of doctoral preparation has proved to be
effective. The “taught doctorate,” as opposed to the European-
style research doctorate, has been effective in providing the
depth of knowledge required by the expanding disciplines.

7 The Center for Innovation and Research in Graduate Education is a new agency involved in
research and analysis relating to graduate study. Further information can be obtained from
CIRGE, Box 353600, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195, USA. E-mail: cierge@u.washington.edu
Locating doctoral study in universities rather than specialized research-focused institutions has also been effective. The fact that doctoral education exists in a large and highly differentiated academic system is also a major advantage—doctoral education is, for the most part, located at the best universities, institutions that can in general afford to provide the facilities needed for quality instruction and research.

The basic structure of American doctoral education does not seem to be in need of dramatic change. However, reforms that will ensure that past successes can be continued are needed. Of greatest importance, perhaps, is ensuring that sufficient funds are made available to provide high-quality training and to support the research enterprise that is integrally related to doctoral education. It is also necessary to ensure that doctoral programs are sensitive to changing employment trends, scientific developments, and the needs of doctoral students and faculty.

References


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A rich representation of diversity on college campuses has become an objective for many institutions. As the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (1990, p. 25) stated, “...a college or university is a just community, a place where the sacredness of each person is honored and where diversity is aggressively pursued.” Bryant (1996, p.31) maintained that “a diverse student population is just as important as a first-class curriculum or a faculty made up of Nobel Prize winners.” The intertwining of diversity on campuses has been asserted as being a key factor in quality education, as well as an essential element in preparing students for a pluralistic future (Dungy 1996; Bryant 1996). In fact, Blimling (2001, p.517) reviews research from the last 20 years that clearly indicates students’ learning is improved by diverse campus environments, essentially arguing convincingly that “diversity makes you smarter.”

Pascarella et al. (2001, p.270) wrote that “the efforts of admissions offices and international programs to recruit a diverse student body are important not only for the social environment that a diverse student population creates, but also as a means to encourage the development of critical thinking in college students.” In addition to the campus diversification advantages of specific group conscious admissions practices, admissions numbers can be increased by marketing and recruiting sizable diverse population segments that colleges might otherwise miss by a single marketing strategy (Sevier 1996). For these benefits and more, targeting specific diverse student groups in recruitment is a standard practice in most admissions departments. LBGT students, however, have largely been ignored in diversity-oriented admissions practices.

More and more lesbian and gay people are becoming aware of and acknowledging their sexual orientation while they are still in high school (Herdt and Boxer 1996; Ryan and Futterman 1998; Troiden 1998). This increasing consciousness about sexual orientation among high school students has resulted in the formation of over 1,800 high school GSAs, or gay-straight alliances (Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network [GLSEN] and American Civil Liberties Union [ACLU] 2001). LBGT high school students will undoubtedly be assessing colleges on their LBGT-affirmative environments, policies, and available services (Lucozzi 1998). A study that surveyed LBGT college student organizations reported that nearly 30 percent of LBGT students considered their sexual orientation as a factor in making their college choice and 40 percent reported that their college choice would have been different if they had had information regarding the campus climate toward LBGT individuals (Sherrill and Hardesty 1994). Recognizing that students are increasingly considering sexual orientation in their college choices, GLSEN (2002b) published a guide for students in “Finding an LGBT Friendly Campus” and three recent publications also addressed the issue of helping students in their search for such campuses (Cook 2002; Mitchell 2000; Sherrill and Hardesty 1994). Given these realities, we assert that it is the responsibility of college or university admissions officers to represent the LBGT-affirmative aspects of their institutions and actively seek LBGT high school students as potential candidates for enrollment.

Though there has been some informal information sharing through the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers’ (AACRAO’s) caucus that focuses on LBGT issues and the caucus’ conference programming, we found that the admission recruitment-related professional literature has given almost no attention to LBGT recruitment. The only published article was one that offered colleges a few broad suggestions in attracting LBGT students: addressing LBGT college services in recruitment brochures and Web sites, clear visibility of LBGT-affirmative information in admissions office environments (e.g., LBGT event announcements, books etc.), networking with other campus profes-
sionals involved in LBGT-affirmative work, and sponsoring LBGT related campus events (Hrabe 2002). The only other source we found about LBGT admissions was a higher education weekly magazine’s coverage of the budding efforts of colleges recruiting LBGT students, particularly the Boston Gay/Straight Youth Pride College Fair (Cavanagh 2002).

In 2000, we began to focus on Western Michigan University’s LBGT affirmative admissions practices. Given the lack of professional literature for guidance, we began by gathering information ourselves about such practices through a national survey of college and university recruitment departments. We then designed and implemented our own outreach recruitment program. The purpose of this article is to assist admissions and recruitment professionals by presenting some of the information we collected regarding LBGT student recruitment and then by describing our own LBGT outreach recruitment initiatives.

Survey on LBGT Student College Recruitment

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF SURVEY PROCEDURES AND DATA ANALYSIS

A short survey was sent to the heads of admission/recruitment departments at four-year public higher education institutions in the United States from a list provided by AACRAO. Of the 571 potential participants who received surveys, 147 (26 percent) completed either the paper or online version of the survey. The chart above reports descriptive data that the participants provided about their institutions’ size, LBGT services and policies, and targeted recruitment market segments.

An overwhelming majority of participants (95+ percent) did not engage in any recruitment activities that specifically targeted LBGT students. These participants answered open-ended questions about why they had not recruited LBGT students or about what had prevented them from doing such recruitment. The data were analyzed initially by the first and second authors, revised for clarity and meaningfulness based on feedback from presentations (e.g., Einhaus 2003), and finally examined critically by all three authors. The analysis identified barriers to LBGT student recruitment. Most barriers were easy to identify because they were explicitly stated by participants and they are described in the first section that follows. In the next section we describe an implicit perspective in participant responses that we believe might constitute a significant barrier to LBGT recruitment. Only six participants (4 percent) reported specifically targeting LBGT in recruitment and their efforts are briefly described in the final section about the survey.

BARRIERS TO RECRUITING LBGT STUDENTS EXPLICITLY DESCRIBED BY PARTICIPANTS

We organized participant responses into six general barriers, presented in the italicized text in order from most to least cited. The barrier most frequently mentioned by participants...
was that LBGT students were not part of their department’s or college’s recruitment goals. For example, one participant stated that LBGT students are not an “under-represented population identified within the university’s goals for diversity.” Some participants clarified that their recruitment initiatives were based on such factors as academics, ethnicity, income levels, and proximity, not sexual orientation. Some participants reported that no “specific market segment” was targeted at their institution.

Participants cited the next three barriers less frequently, though still in substantial numbers. Some participants stated that they did not recruit LBGT students because it was an idea that had not occurred to them, e.g., “it has never come up.” One participant admitted, “I’m glad that you are doing this study. You have certainly jogged my attention regarding this issue.” Some participants stated that a barrier involved a non-LGBT affirmative campus climate due to factors such as location in a conservative geographical area, e.g., “rural,” “southern,” or “bible belt,” or a politically conservative university leadership among boards of regents/visitors or university administrators. Some participants also saw the LBGT population as “relatively difficult to identify and access,” and thus difficult to recruit. For example, some reported ignorance of venues for reaching LBGT students or lack of a “way to collect information from high school students pertaining to LBGT orientations.”

The last two barriers were cited by a few participants. Limited time, economic, and people resources were identified as barriers in recruiting LBGT students, e.g., no “time to target this specific group” or “extremely scarce advertising dollars and marketing materials [make it] not feasible.” A few participants thought that no recruitment efforts were necessary because of the LBGT-friendly communities in which their campuses were located. They maintained that their location “naturally brings diversity to the campus,” therefore, no recruitment efforts were needed.

**Barriers to Recruiting LBGT Students Implicit in Participants’ Responses: The Inclusion Illusion**

The barrier to recruiting LBGT students that we saw as implicit in some participants’ responses involved a notion we first heard described by Jesse Jackson in his speech at the 2000 National Democratic Convention. He used the term “inclusion illusion” to refer to organizations’ claims that they were inclusive to diversity, when he adamantly believed they were not. Some participants claimed adequate service to LBGT students in their recruitment practices, but we saw their claim of adequate service as illusory when participants reported no specific attention to the needs of LBGT students in recruitment. For example, one participant responded that his institution did not recruit LBGT students because “…we have a non-discrimination clause. It applies to those students too so we don’t have to target them.” Another participant thought an open recruitment policy made specifically targeting LBGT students unnecessary. Other participants believed that since they already had LBGT students on their campus, it was not necessary to target them with specific recruitment initiatives.

The illusion of inclusion seemed to involve the notion that non-discriminatory, non-targeted enrollment of everyone, or the simple presence of LBGT students, somehow equated to LBGT-affirmative recruitment initiatives.

**LBGT Recruitment Initiatives Described by Participants**

The initiatives that six of the respondents had implemented included participating in college fairs that were explicitly for LBGT students, attending and supplying recruitment materials at LBGT events (community LBGT pride festivals, LBGT campus programming attended by high school students), and making a recruitment visit at a high school for LBGT youth. A few other initiatives were mentioned as well: including campus information about LBGT resources in recruitment publications, mailing recruitment materials with LBGT-specific information to high schools and high school counselors, and maintaining a Web-based e-mail program that allows prospective students to ask questions of a diverse group of current students including those who identify as LBGT.

**Discussion of Survey Results**

The low average response rate and limited mailing to only four-year public colleges and universities make it impossible to draw any firm conclusions about the nature and extent of LBGT recruitment efforts that are occurring on United States college campuses. However, the fact that very few of the admissions directors who responded to the survey stated that recruitment efforts were occurring on their campus does give some indication that such efforts are very infrequent. The lack of recruitment efforts that were reported mirror the lack of discussion of LBGT issues in the admissions literature.

As indicated previously, participants also mentioned practical obstacles to LBGT student recruitment including lack of resources, the challenges of identifying LBGT students and conservative leadership, as well as the lack of awareness or education about LBGT issues and the illusion that a non-discrimination policy or the presence of a few openly LBGT students make targeted recruitment unnecessary. Thus, admissions professionals may often fail to see the need for, and significance of, recruiting LBGT students. A key to advancing LBGT recruitment on college campuses will be increasing admissions professionals’ awareness of the practical potential for increasing admission numbers, of the educational significance of having a diverse student body that includes sexual orientation diversity, and of the issues of social justice in responding specifically to the unique needs of potential LBGT students.

In addition to this increased awareness, admissions professionals will also need information on LBGT-specific recruitment strategies in order to be successful in LBGT admissions work. The brief discussion of recruitment strategies by Hrabe (2002), along with the few LBGT recruitment efforts men-
tioned by survey participants, provide some possibilities for LBGT student recruitment. A systematic and detailed articulation of recruitment strategies in the admissions literature is needed to adequately assist admissions professionals in recruiting LBGT students.

LBGT College Recruitment: Assessment, Support, and Strategies

In the following section, we offer the first detailed exploration of LBGT college recruitment illustrated with our own work. We begin by discussing the assessment of campus climate on LBGT issues and garnering support for LBGT recruitment. We then discuss recruitment initiatives specific to LBGT students, followed by LBGT-specific marketing initiatives within existing general recruitment.

ASSESSING THE CAMPUS CLIMATE FOR THE LBGT COMMUNITY

The first logical step in developing an LBGT recruitment plan suited to a particular campus is to assess the campus climate regarding LBGT issues and support services available. Most colleges and universities do not have an ideal environment for LBGT students, and the results of such an evaluation on most campuses will be mixed in terms of degree of LBGT support and affirmation. LBGT students are most often making choices among such “mixed climate” institutions, as well as considering many other factors related to educational and social needs. Openly LBGT students will be savvy in their consideration of institutions, and admissions professionals will need to be able to thoroughly and honestly communicate to these students, and sometimes their parents, what it might be like to be an LBGT student on their campus. Evaluating the campus climate at our institution allowed us to better provide an accurate portrayal of the campus environment and existing services for, or friendly to, LBGT students.

Western Michigan University is a mid-western, public four-year institution with an enrollment of nearly 30,000 students. The University is located in a community with a mixed conservative and liberal population. In assessing our campus climate for the LBGT community, the first consideration was the “LBGT appeal” of the surrounding area. While not ideal, both the city and University are increasingly making the atmosphere for the LBGT community more inclusive and attractive. The city, for example, has extended health care benefits to employees with same sex partners, and the community LBGT organization has seen much growth and now has multiple paid staff.

The National Consortium of Directors of LGBT Resources in Higher Education Web site (2002) lists colleges that have done formal self-assessments to determine campus climate, and the reports from these colleges and universities can provide much guidance for formal assessment. These examples of formal assessment can be very useful to colleges and universities that have the resources and institutional commitment for a formal assessment process. While a formal assessment is ideal, an informal assessment can provide adequate information for successful LBGT recruitment initiatives.

In completing an informal assessment of our campus climate, two resources were particularly helpful in identifying factors to consider in assessing the LBGT climate. The National Consortium (2003) and GLSEN (2002a, 2002b) provide material on their Web sites that identify questions that can be used in assessing climate. Questions from these sources include: “Does the college’s Equal Opportunity Policy and Non-Discrimination statements include sexual orientation?” “Are courses offered in LGBT/Queer studies?” “Is there an active LGBT student group?”

Our assessment resulted in identifying our campus as a mixed climate for LBGT students. Many LBGT-positive elements were revealed: for example, sexual orientation is included in the University's non-discrimination statement, an Office of LBGT Student Services is present on campus, the student affairs division seems quite LBGT affirmative, and there is an active undergraduate student group. However, many areas for growth were also identified: for instance, the University does not supply domestic partner benefits for its employees, and the Office of LBGT Student Services is not staffed by a full-time employee. Further, there is a strong religiously conservative element on campus that is not LBGT affirmative, and many LBGT students do not feel safe being open. Upon completing our assessment process, we began pursuing ways within the university setting in which we could garner support for our efforts to reach LBGT students.

GARNERING SUPPORT

Garnering campus support is necessary to gain access to resources and is particularly needed should such efforts come under scrutiny or receive criticism from administrators and political or religious groups that oppose LBGT inclusion and civil rights. As such, we were extremely fortunate to have the dean and associate directors, as well as the staff of the Admissions Office supportive and encouraging from the start of our process. Unfortunately, not all colleges will have the same level of support for recruiting LBGT students. Admissions professionals may have to begin their work by building support for LBGT outreach recruitment. Other admissions professionals may find key administrators need basic education on LBGT issues before recruitment can even be considered, and these admissions professionals may have to approach such efforts with patience and political savvy.

One way to build support within the admissions area and across campus is by collaborating with other departments and organizations that would have an investment in the quality of life for LBGT students on campus. Our Office of LBGT Student Services, our Student Activities and Leadership Programs department, as well as our undergraduate LBGT student group all supported and contributed to recruitment efforts. LBGT-friendly staff, faculty and alumni, as well as off-campus LBGT organizations like local chapters of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) and GLSEN or a
local LBGT resource center can provide much assistance in actual LBGT student recruitment initiatives and in efforts to garner internal political support.

RECRUITMENT INITIATIVES
In this section, we describe the range of recruitment strategies that we employed on our own campus. These strategies, of course, will have to be critically evaluated and adapted to fit the realities of each particular college or university climate. Our discussion of recruitment initiatives is categorized within two general strategies: instituting specialized LBGT recruitment, and incorporating LBGT-specific marketing initiatives into existing general recruitment.

LBGT Recruitment Initiatives Specific to LBGT Students

While recruitment efforts that target other specific populations such as students of color or honors students provided some ideas, we found that such methods could not always be directly applied to recruiting LBGT students. For example, a student’s sexual orientation is not requested on our admissions applications or inquirer cards, unlike other targeted student group descriptors, so we had to discover other less traditional avenues to identify and contact prospective LBGT students.

- **LBGT Information Flyers.** We first had to create the information that we wanted to disseminate to potential LBGT students. We developed a flyer, entitled “Q & A for LBGTs at Western Michigan University” (“A” is for heterosexual allies) that specifically focused on campus climate and resources, including information on student groups, LBGT services, LBGT campus events and policies, and brief information on the local community (Einhaus 2000). We also developed a flyer titled “Searching for a Gay-Friendly College: Measuring the Campus Climate for LBGT Students” (Einhaus 2001). This flyer included questions for students to consider in assessing a college’s LBGT climate, avenues for finding information related to the questions, references to books on the LBGT college experience, local LBGT organization contact information, and advice on how to engage in a successful college search as it relates to being LBGT. While the flyer utilized and cited some information from the previously mentioned GLSEN material, it was written for, and labeled explicitly from, our Admissions Office.

- **Mailings to Gay/Straight Alliances.** To reach LBGT students, we mailed general information regarding our university and the two flyers described previously to the high schools with Gay/Straight Alliances (GSAs) in our state. We located GSAs through newspaper articles that reported their existence and by visiting the GLSEN Web site. In the mailing, we also extended an offer for an outreach presentation at a GSA meeting regarding the college search process for LBGT students.

- **Gay/Straight Alliance Visits.** In the outreach presentation to GSAs, we always brought current LBGT college students so they could provide the high school students with a direct and personal account of campus life. We began by introducing ourselves and explaining the purpose of the visit to assist LBGT students in the college search process. We then initiated an open discussion with the GSA students to learn about their experiences in high school. Our questions centered on the history of the GSA, what activities and programs they were involved in, and what type of experiences they had being LBGT or a heterosexual ally student in high school. The LBGT college students then shared their personal experiences about being LBGT in college. The high school students seemed to appreciate this part of the presentation the most. The “Searching for a Gay-Friendly College” flyer, along with “Q & A for LBGTs at WMU” flyer were then distributed and discussed. We closed the presentation with open discussion and a request for feedback regarding the visit.

- **LBGT Pride Festivals/Events.** Staffing a table at local LBGT pride events is an excellent way to show a college’s support for the LBGT community and reach potential students. At an LBGT pride festival, staff from the Admissions Office and Student Activities Office answered questions regarding our college’s LBGT services and distributed the aforementioned informational flyers. Potential students also completed inquirer cards. While the pride festival did not result in many direct recruitment leads, we believe our participation will contribute to our college’s image of being LBGT inclusive, especially if done consistently over time. Many alumni from our school and other colleges as well as LBGT parents of potential college students approached our table, impressed that a college would send a recruiter to an LBGT event.

- **Collaboration with College and Local LBGT Services.** Admissions departments can receive great assistance from the college LBGT student services office and/or local LBGT community organizations in recruitment and outreach to LBGT students. Potential LBGT students and their parents do contact the college’s LBGT student services office to ask questions regarding services and the campus climate. By collaborating with the LBGT student services office, information regarding the college can be more effectively communicated to students. Local LBGT community organizations work with youth frequently. These organizations may be very willing to display or distribute college recruitment materials and further develop and communicate the college’s support of the LBGT community.

INTEGRATING LBGT INITIATIVES INTO EXISTING RECRUITMENT TRAINING AND STRATEGIES

In order for our general recruitment efforts to be more inclusive of LBGT students, it was essential to train all admissions officers on the campus’ LBGT climate and services, as well as potential issues LBGT students may be facing regarding the college search process. During our annual staff training, we
presented information on what LBGT services our institution offers, general issues surrounding the LBGT community, and answers to questions that may be posed by LBGT students and their parents. The flyers developed for LBGT students discussed earlier were distributed, discussed, and made available to the staff. We encouraged admissions officers to include LBGT issues in the diversity portion of their admissions presentations and whenever it was relevant in discussing the University at college fairs. We conveyed that LBGT students commonly will not self-identify and ask outright about such services, underscoring the importance of including LBGT information in our general presentations.

With the growing number of students coming out in high school, both students and their parents will increasingly and actively seek information on LBGT services and climate. Many LBGT students may want to find this information anonymously. College recruitment publications and Web sites can offer a safe avenue for LBGT students to assess campus services and climate. The absence of LBGT-related information in publications will leave LBGT students guessing at the causes of such omissions, and they may well assume that the college does not offer an inviting atmosphere for LBGT students.

Our admissions Web site offers a direct link to diversity services on campus, including our LBGT Office. Further, we advocated successfully for the mention of sexual orientation in the diversity section of our recruitment resources guide for prospective students. These were modest but significant steps in providing another avenue of information for LBGT students and also were part of the overall effort in communicating that our college values and desires a diverse student body including LBGT students.

While the LBGT recruitment initiatives specific to LBGT students discussed in the previous section do require additional staff time, the initiatives that incorporate LBGT issues in existing recruitment are very cost efficient, often simply involving the inclusion of LBGT issues alongside the issues of other targeted diverse populations in written recruitment materials and presentations. Whatever the cost efficiency of particular LBGT recruitment strategies, assessing their relative success cannot rely on concrete measures of increased enrollment. In contrast to racially and ethnically diverse students and even honors students, universities generally do not track data on the sexual orientation of their students. Thus, assessment of recruitment initiatives must include such indicators as increased interest and participation in LBGT student groups, increased requests from GSAs or LBGT-oriented community groups for presentations or information, and positive changes in the campus climate for LBGT students, staff, and faculty. These indicators can be assessed both formally through the collection of longitudinal quantitative data, or informally through the perceptions of key faculty, staff, and student leaders. Such assessment must occur over the course of a number of years to see any visible results.

At Western Michigan University, LBGT recruitment efforts began a little over three years ago, and we have not under- taken any formal assessment. Informally, our efforts seem to be gaining some momentum. Key LBGT student leaders have been recruited successfully, LBGT community groups and GSAs in the state have requested visits and information more frequently, and the national media has taken notice of our recruitment efforts (Marklein 2004).

Conclusion
LBGT issues are becoming more visible in our society as the media have become more inclusive of sexual orientation, and major LBGT legal and civil rights issues have been in the forefront of public attention. This visibility is clearly alive in the nation's high schools with increased student activism and organizing among LBGT high school students and their heterosexual counterparts who care about LBGT people and issues. These students are increasingly concerned about the climate around sexual orientation in their search for colleges. Admission professionals need to rise to the challenge of being inclusive of LBGT issues in their recruitment work. As Mitchell (2000, p.19) argued, this challenge must be met “because we believe in America's young people. Each and every one of them.”

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New graduate students often face many of the same issues and concerns as undergraduates, including anxiety about a new environment and the need to feel welcomed by their institutions (Boyle and Boice 1998; Rosenblatt and Christensen 1993). They are challenged further by having to fit into the culture of their disciplines (Golde 1998; Tinto 1993; Weidman, Twale, and Stein 2001). Attention to their needs has grown in the past few years with recent studies focused on ethnic diversity (Isaac, Pruitt-Logan, and Upcraft 1995), attrition (Golde 2000), retention (Washburn 2002), student services (Vlisides and Eddy 1993), and on another vital component, graduate student orientation.

Researchers have analyzed the orientation activities offered by academic departments (Miller, Miles, and Dyer 2001; Taub and Komives 1998) or those provided campus-wide (Barker et al. 1997). In 2002, Poock examined orientations offered by the academic department, by the graduate school, and then by graduate schools nationwide (Poock 2004). Together, the current research offered a better understanding of what was going on around the country. The next step, then, was to evaluate the effectiveness of these practices against a national standard.

In this analysis, the results of a nationwide survey of graduate student orientation practices conducted by the U.S. member institutions of the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) (Poock 2004) were compared against national standards developed by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) in The Book of Professional Standards for Higher Education (CAS 2001). The CAS standards and guidelines were chosen because they "have utility for institutions of all types and size and provide criteria to judge the quality and appropriateness of student orientation programs" (CAS 2001, p.221). However, the Council’s thirteen standards, comprehensive in many respects, did not entirely address the unique nature of graduate student socialization and orientation.

For the CGS survey, the highest ranking officials at all 446 member institutions were sent an individual e-mail and a follow-up message. They were directed to an online questionnaire, which a total of 191 participants completed, resulting in a response rate of 43 percent. For the purposes of their study, graduate students were defined as those in master’s or doctoral programs (not first professional programs such as J.D., M.D., etc.). Orientation was described as “any efforts…to assist incoming students making the transition to graduate education. Orientation is limited to campus-wide activities and not activities that may be offered by an academic or administrative unit that are not available to all incoming graduate students (e.g., those offered by the Department of History or School of Business).”

Each of CAS’s thirteen standards and guidelines, many abridged because of their length, are bulleted followed by an assessment of nationwide graduate student orientation practices, most of which met the standards. However, not all the CAS standards were addressed in the CGS survey, and some were not consistent with the organizational structure of most graduate schools.

**Mission**—The mission of the student orientation program must include facilitating the transition of new students into the institution, preparing them for its educational opportunities, and initiating their integration into its intellectual, cultural, and social climate.

Of 191 CGS respondents, 72.8 percent offered campus-wide orientation sessions to their incoming graduate students. This may suggest that over a quarter of the respondents did not. However, some universities are structured with-
out a central graduate school, and orientation may be offered through a particular college (e.g., education, business) rather than campus-wide.

**Program**—The student orientation program must be based on stated goals and objectives, coordinated with the relevant programs and activities of other institutional units, available to all new students, assist them in understanding the purposes of higher education and the mission of the institution and their responsibilities within the educational setting, provide them with sufficient information about academic policies, procedures, requirements, and programs to make well-reasoned and well-informed choices, inform them about the availability of services and programs, and assist them in becoming familiar with the campus and local environment.

Most institutions stated their orientation goals and over 73 percent also assessed their effectiveness. Generally, their goals were to facilitate the transition to graduate study and to provide educational information. Although the programs tended to be organized and funded most often by the graduate school (as indicated by 60 percent of the respondents), the topics covered during orientation often required coordination with other institutional units.

Most discussion focused on graduate school/university policies (Questionnaire—Part III). Other topics included the availability of services and programs and the history of the institution. Some offered tours to help students become familiar with their environment. Few institutions, however, offered information on employment or educational opportunities for students’ spouses or partners.

**Leadership**—Effective and ethical leadership is essential to the success of all organizations. Institutions must appoint, position, and empower leaders within the administrative structure to accomplish their mission. Leaders at various levels must be elected on the basis of formal education and training, relevant work experience, personal attributes, and other professional credentials.

A review of the CGS membership indicated that Ph.D.s, or other doctoral degrees, were the norm for most graduate school leaders who often held faculty appointments in academic units. They appeared to have the appropriate training and experience for their positions. However, the spirit of this standard related to the training and education of professionals who worked full-time in orientation programs. CGS staffing patterns indicated that, while some graduate schools had an assistant dean for student affairs, no one had a position dedicated solely to orientation.

**Organization and Management**—The student orientation program must be structured purposefully and managed effectively to achieve its goals. It must provide channels for regular review of administrative policies and procedures. There must be written policies and procedures regarding program delivery that are reviewed regularly.

Most institutions stated their goals and assessed their performance. Since many of these goals involved sharing information and fostering social interaction, over half of the respondents (52 percent) held workshops and small group sessions or required students to shift locations to hear various speakers. The majority of the programs (56 percent) lasted half a day, while 26.6 percent lasted a full day. Most orientations tended to start two to five days prior to the commencement of classes, and, surprisingly, were optional (65.6 percent).

**Human Resources**—The student orientation program must be staffed adequately by individuals qualified to accomplish its mission and goals. It must establish procedures for staff selections, training, and evaluation, set expectations for supervision, and provide appropriate professional development opportunities. Professional staff members must hold an earned graduate degree in a field relevant to the position description or possess an appropriate combination of education and experience.

As noted earlier, the graduate schools’ professional staff tended to hold terminal degrees and the appropriate faculty rank. Once again, the spirit of the standard is directed towards those who work in orientation programs full-time. While that model appeared common at the undergraduate level, it was not so in the graduate schools.

**Financial Resources**—The student orientation program must have adequate funding to accomplish its mission and goals. Priorities whether set periodically or as a result of extraordinary conditions, must be determined within the context of its mission, goals, and resources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Sources for Campus-Wide Orientation Programs for Graduate Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative/Academic Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student government/organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic school or college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President Academic Affairs/Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni affairs/development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Funding for campus-wide orientation programs was clearly the burden of the graduate schools, which were identified...
by 60 percent of the respondents as providing the main financial support for orientation. The next most frequent contributors, student governments and organizations, were identified by just 10.5 percent of respondents.

Relatively few respondents indicated that financial support was offered from the vice president for student affairs, the vice president for academic affairs, or the academic departments, (14, 10, and 14, respectively). Since the vice presidents for student affairs have the mission to address the needs of all students, their lack of financial support was surprising and appeared to indicate that they did not view graduate students as a high priority. Many student affairs offices have full-time staff to address the needs of undergraduates, but graduate students are left to the care of the graduate school.

Despite the lack of internal financial support, 93.4 percent of the institutions did not charge an orientation fee.

**Facilities, Technology, and Equipment**—The student orientation program must have adequate and suitably located facilities and equipment to support its mission and goals.

The survey did not address this issue. However, the format for most orientation programs allowed students to interact with others, so one could presume that the facilities supported this goal.

**Legal Responsibilities**—Staff members must be knowledgeable about and responsive to law and regulations that relate to their respective program or service. Staff members must use reasonable and informed practices to limit the liability exposure of the institutions, officers, employees, and agents. The institution must provide access to legal advice for staff members as needed to carry out their assigned responsibilities. It must inform staff and students, in a timely and systematic fashion, about extraordinary or changing legal obligations and potential liabilities.

It is unclear from the survey whether the campus-wide orientation leaders were familiar with their legal responsibilities. Professionals involved in undergraduate orientation have support from the National Orientation Directors Association, an organization that keeps members abreast of a variety of issues. However, no such organization exists for graduate students. The closest equivalents might be the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators and the Knowledge Community for Administrators in Graduate and Professional Student Service. However, legal responsibilities are generally not discussed at such conferences.

**Equal Opportunity, Access, and Affirmative Action**—Staff members must ensure that the student orientation program is provided on a fair and equitable basis. It must be accessible and adhere to the spirit and intent of equal opportunity laws. Consistent with its mission and goals, the student orientation program must take affirmative action to remedy significant imbalances in student participation and staffing patterns.

Because the survey addressed practices and not participants, it is not clear whether there were imbalances. Since most orientation programs are not mandatory, ensuring equal participation may prove challenging and indicate that equal opportunity, access, and affirmative action are topics for future research.

**Campus and Community Relations**—The student orientation program must establish, maintain, and promote effective relations with relevant campus offices and external agencies.

Topics that involved on- and off-campus agencies tended to be offered during the orientation workshops. Libraries were addressed by 56 percent of the respondents, health services by 51 percent, student organizations by 48 percent, parking by 46 percent, career services by 39 percent, and recreational opportunities by 35 percent. Community activities, for example, cultural opportunities (38 percent), local restaurants (12 percent), and a tour of the community (6 percent), were also addressed by the respondents, although to a much lesser extent.

**Diversity**—The student orientation program must nurture environments where similarities and differences among people are recognized and honored. It must promote cultural and educational experiences that are characterized by open and continuous communication, that deepen understanding of one’s culture and heritage, and that respect and educate about similarities, differences, and histories of cultures.

Although graduate students study within a specific program and evidence suggested that much of what they need should be offered by academic departments (Poock 2002), students of color benefited the most from campus-wide orientation programs that included diversity. Because of their relatively low numbers (National Center for Education Statistics 2003) and their isolation among the departments (Robinson 1996), students of color were offered the opportunity for social interaction during campus-wide orientations. For example, a doctoral program in genetics may have only one African American male. However, a campus-wide orientation would bring together African American males from graduate programs all over campus, thus providing a unique opportunity for social integration. However, since two-thirds of the respondents indicated that orientation was not mandatory, it cannot be determined how many students took advantage of this opportunity.
**Ethics**—All persons involved in the delivery of the student orientation program must adhere to the highest principles of ethical behavior.

Approximately one-third (34 percent) of all respondents indicated that they addressed ethics during orientation. Ethics was also woven into the fabric of graduate education in the form of orientation seminars, workshops, institutional review boards, and requirements of federal granting agencies. Therefore, while the survey did not address the ethical training of those who offer orientation, one could infer that ethical concerns were part of the graduate school culture.

**Assessment and Evaluation**—The student orientation program must regularly conduct systematic qualitative and quantitative evaluations of program quality to determine whether and to what degree the stated mission and goals are being met.

Approximately two-thirds (73.3 percent) of the respondents conducted quantitative and qualitative assessments that were used to modify their future orientation programs.

**Best Practices**

Based on this analysis, in combination with the findings of the CGS survey (Poock 2004), the following best practices are offered to those responsible for graduate student orientation.

- Orientation programs should be established on well-defined goals and objectives and directed by professionals with specific responsibilities for such programs.
- Appropriate levels of financial and human resources should be dedicated to orientation programs to ensure that the stated goals and objectives are effectively attained.
- Orientation programs should be assessed annually on the basis of their stated goals and objectives.
- Orientation topics should be relevant. Common topics should include information about academic advising and deadlines, the bookstore, career services, child care, computer facilities, and ethics. Special attention should also be given to the unique needs of underrepresented groups, including first generation and international students, and racial minorities.
- Orientation programs should be scheduled before the first day of classes and run at least half a day. They should take the format of concurrent workshops or small group sessions, which allow students to select the topics most relevant to them as well as provide them with an opportunity to meet a variety of other students.
- The graduate school programs should be coordinated with those offered by the individual departments and/or schools. New students should be notified well in advance of all the available orientation opportunities.

**Limitations**

Three factors limited the findings in this study. First, the response rate was fairly low. With fewer than half of the deans completing the questionnaire, the results may not represent the orientation activities at all CGS member institutions. Second, as noted earlier, not all colleges and universities have a graduate school. Indeed, many activities may be offered to graduate students through the academic colleges (e.g., College of Business, College of Agricultural Sciences, etc.) which were not captured in this study. Third, not all elements of the CAS standards and practices were addressed in the questionnaire.

**Conclusion**

The graduate schools appeared to meet most of the CAS standards, including mission, program, organization and management, financial resources, campus and community relations, diversity, ethics, and assessment and evaluation. However, the degree to which the practices adhered to the standards varied somewhat. Clearly, graduate schools solidly met those for mission, program, diversity, and assessment and evaluation. Since they did not dedicate a professional solely to orientation activities, they cannot be said to meet both the letter and the spirit of the organization and management and ethics standards. The graduate schools, but not the other organizational units on campus, met standard for financial resources.

The CGS survey failed to address the standards for facilities, technology, and equipment, legal responsibilities, and equal opportunity, access and affirmative action, so it is not known if these three were being met by the graduate schools. Future studies should include them.

Finally, the leadership and human resources standards appeared to be directly related to undergraduate orientation and did not fit into the graduate school model. This does not mean that graduate schools failed to meet these standards. If revised to address graduate school staffing patterns and the unique nature of graduate student orientation, they, then, would be effective and appropriate.

Generally, graduate schools in the United States are offering orientation programs that meet the standards outlined by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education. While there is, of course, room for improvement, as well as the need for further research on the standards not addressed in the survey, this is a good start.

**References**


PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. The name of your institution []

2. What is your institution's Carnegie Classification?
   - Doctoral/Research Universities – Extensive: 42.1%
   - Doctoral/Research Universities – Intensive: 20.2%
   - Master’s Colleges and Universities I: 28.7%
   - Master’s Colleges and Universities II: 3.9%
   - Baccalaureate Colleges – Liberal Arts: 5.1%
   - Baccalaureate Colleges – Genera
   - Baccalaureate/Associate’s Colleges: 2.6%
   - Don’t know: 5.1%

3. Does your institution offer some form of campus-wide orientation for new graduate students?
   - No (please go to the end of this questionnaire and submit your responses): 27.2%
   - Yes (please proceed with the questionnaire): 72.8%

4. Approximately how many graduate students were enrolled at your institution in fall 2002? (please use F.T.E.)?
   - 1–1000: 23.2%
   - 1001–2000: 26.8%
   - 2001–3000: 10.6%
   - 3001–4000: 12.0%
   - 4001–5000: 7.0%
   - 5001–6000: 3.5%
   - 6001–7000: 7.7%
   - 7001+: 9.2%

5. Approximately what percentages of your graduate students were enrolled part-time in fall 2002?
   - 0–25%: 36.8%
   - 26–50%: 26.3%
   - 51–75%: 25.0%
   - 76–100%: 11.8%

6. When do you inform students that you offer a campus-wide orientation?
   - When they arrive on campus: 13.6%
   - One month prior to the beginning of classes: 20.5%
   - Two months prior to the beginning of classes: 25.8%
   - Three months prior to the beginning of classes: 18.2%
   - More than three months prior to the beginning of classes: 22.0%

7. How do you inform students that you offer a campus-wide orientation?
   - Information on orientation accompanies students’ acceptance letters: 29.6%
   - Information on orientation is sent from the Graduate School (not accompanying the acceptance letter): 37.8%
   - Information on orientation is sent from students’ academic departments (not accompanying the acceptance letter): 6.7%
   - Information on orientation is sent from an academic or administrative unit on campus (other than the Graduate School or a student’s academic department): 8.1%
   - Other (explain): 17.8%
10 What is your primary method of informing students that you offer a campus-wide orientation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>76.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printed newsletter</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic newsletter</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other [explain]</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PART II: WHO PAYS FOR ORIENTATION?**

11 Are full-time students charged an orientation fee?

- Students are not assessed a fee for orientation: 92.0%
- New graduate students are assessed a fee only if they participate in orientation activities: 0.7%
- All new graduate students are assessed a one-time orientation fee: 7.2%
- All new graduate students are assessed an orientation fee over more than one semester/quarter, but not very semester/quarter: 0.7%
- All graduate students are assessed an orientation fee every semester/quarter: 0.7%

12 How much is your orientation fee for full-time students each semester/quarter?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fee Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$0</td>
<td>89.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1–25</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$26–50</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$51–75</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$76–100</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$101+</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other [explain]</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13 Are part-time students charged an orientation fee?

- Students are not assessed a fee for orientation: 93.4%
- New graduate students are assessed a fee only if they participate in orientation activities: 0.7%
- All new graduate students are assessed a one-time orientation fee: 5.8%
- All new graduate students are assessed an orientation fee over more than one semester/quarter, but not very semester/quarter: 0.7%
- All graduate students are assessed an orientation fee every semester/quarter: 0.7%

14 How much is your orientation fee for part-time students each semester/quarter?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fee Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$0</td>
<td>89.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1–25</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$26–50</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$51–75</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$76–100</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$101+</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other [explain]</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15 Regardless of full-time/part-time enrollment status, does the orientation fee vary at all among graduate students (i.e., by program of study, for international students, etc.)?

- No: 95.1%
- Yes [explain]: 4.9%

16 What academic/administrative units, or organizations, provide funding for campus-wide orientation for graduate students? (check all that apply)

- President: 0.5%
- Vice President Academic Affairs/Provost: 5.2%
- Vice President Student Affairs: 7.3%
- Graduate School: 59.7%
- Academic school or college: 6.3%
- Academic department: 7.3%
- Alumni affairs/development: 1.0%
- Student government/organizations: 10.5%
- Other [explain]: 8.4%

17 When did your institution begin offering campus-wide orientation activities?

- Prior to 1980: 18.3%
- 1981–1985: 4.8%
- 1986–1990: 15.1%
- 1991–1995: 17.5%
- 1996–2000: 20.8%
- 2001–present: 8.0%
- [Don’t know]: 15.9%

18 What is/are the goal(s) of your campus-wide orientation? [explain]

19 Do you assess the effectiveness of your campus-wide orientation activities?

- No: 26.7%
- Yes [explain how and how often]: 73.3%

**PART III: WHAT HAPPENS DURING FALL SEMESTER/QUARTER?**

20 Does your institution offer a campus-wide orientation in the fall specifically for graduate students?

- No (please go on to Part IV): 9.4%
- Yes (please complete items below): 90.6%

21 Is your campus-wide orientation considered mandatory or optional for graduate students?

- Mandatory: 34.4%
- Optional: 65.6%
How long does your campus-wide orientation program last?

- ½ day: 56.3%
- 1 day: 26.6%
- 1 ½ days: 2.3%
- 2 days: 4.7%
- 2 ½ days: 0.8%
- 3 days: 0.8%
- 3+ days: 8.6%

At what point during the fall semester/quarter do your orientation activities begin?

- 5 days before the beginning of classes: 27.9%
- 4 days before the beginning of classes: 11.6%
- 3 days before the beginning of classes: 8.5%
- 2 days before the beginning of classes: 14.0%
- 1 day before the beginning of classes: 7.0%
- The day classes begin: 3.1%
- Within the first week of classes: 9.3%
- Within the first month of classes: 4.7%
- Other [explain]: 14.0%

Approximately how many graduate students participated in campus-wide orientation activities during the 2001-2002 academic year?

- 0–100: 23.1%
- 101–200: 18.5%
- 201–300: 20.8%
- 301–400: 13.1%
- 401–500: 5.4%
- 501–600: 6.2%
- 601–700: 4.6%
- 701–800: 3.1%
- 801–900: 1.5%
- 901–1000: 0.8%
- 1001+: 3.1%

What is the primary format of your campus-wide orientation?

- Students sit in one location and listen to various speakers: 48.8%
- Students collectively shift locations to listen to various speakers: 10.4%
- Students attend concurrent workshops or small-group sessions, but have no choice in which workshops/sessions to attend: 3.2%
- Students choose which concurrent workshops or small group sessions to attend: 10.4%
- Other [explain]: 27.2%

What topics are addressed during your campus-wide orientation? (check all that apply)

- Academic advising: 49.7%
- Academic deadlines: 45.5%
- Bookstore: 29.8%
- Career services: 39.3%
- Childcare: 19.4%
- Computer facilities: 56.0%
- Cultural opportunities: 38.2%
- Degree requirements: 35.1%
- Email accounts: 48.2%
- Employment/educational opportunities for spouse/partner: 7.9%
- Ethics: 34.0%
- Expectations as an RA/TA/GA: 30.9%
- Financial aid/funding opportunities: 46.1%
- Graduate School/university policies: 61.3%
- Health care/health insurance: 51.3%
- History/mission of institution: 24.1%
- Housing: 24.6%
- In-state residency (for public institutions): 14.1%
- Library(ies): 56.0%
- Parking: 45.5%
- Payment/benefits as an RA/TA/GA: 24.1%
- Professional development opportunities: 29.3%
- Recreational/social opportunities in the local community: 29.3%
- Recreational/social opportunities on campus: 34.6%
- Registration: 46.6%
- Restaurants/cafeterias: 11.5%
- Sexual harassment: 32.5%
- Student identification card: 42.9%
- Student organizations: 48.2%
- Student services available to graduate students: 57.1%
- Tour of campus: 28.3%
- Tour of local community: 5.8%
- Training associated with being an RA/TA/GA: 23.6%
- Other [explain]: 8.4%

PART IV: WHAT HAPPENS IN SPRING?

Does your institution offer a campus-wide orientation in the spring semester (or winter and spring quarter) specifically for graduate students?

- No (please go on to Part V): 63.8%
- Yes (how does it vary from what you offer in fall?): 36.2%
PART V: WHAT HAPPENS IN SUMMER?

Does your institution offer a campus-wide orientation in the summer specifically for graduate students?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No (please go on to Part VI)</th>
<th>90.2%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes (how does it vary from what you offer in fall?)</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PART VI: WHAT HAS NOT BEEN ASKED?

What comments or insights about graduate student orientation do you have that are not addressed in this questionnaire?

This questionnaire and the results are based upon a previous study: Poock, M. C. 2004. Graduate student orientation practices: Results from a national survey. NASPA Journal, 41(3): article 5. Available at: <http://publications.naspa.org/naspa-journal/vol41/iss3/art5/>
Jeff’s in his office and the telephone rings. The display gives him the number; it’s one he recognizes. “Hi Dave, what can I do for you,” he says. Dave is the director of First Year Programs and they speak pretty often. “Hi, Jeff! Some of the students in my Peer Mentoring classes are registered for the wrong sections. What’s the best way to fix it,” Dave asks. “Send me a list,” he replies. A few minutes later, he receives an e-mail message with a list of students to move to different sections. He gives the list to one of the staff in the Enrollment Services section of his department and a while later can let Dave know that the students are now in the correct sections.

Later a student knocks on his door. She’s dressed in a suit and she’s in tears. “Can you help me? I was in your class a few years ago.” She asks. “Sure, Jennifer, I remember you. What do you need?” “I lost my purse and I need a transcript for an internship interview and I can’t get a transcript without my ID card, what can I do?” “No problem, I know who you are,” he tells her and informs the appropriate staff person that it’s ok to give Jennifer her transcript.

What do these two situations have in common? In both, the transactions depended on the identities of the people involved, Jeff’s ability to verify their identities (and his staff members’ ability to verify his identity), and the appropriateness of the transactions they requested to their roles.

Clearly, it works on an occasional basis, since we do it all the time. However, it doesn’t scale. Many of the nearly two thousand faculty and 26,000 students like their problems solved promptly, but Jeff likes to sleep at night and take the occasional day off!

Identity and Access Management

Automated approaches to these problems are not new. Access is typically managed differently in each system and then augmented in an ad hoc fashion by people like the examples above. This wasn’t a big problem years ago, when the number of systems that a person might use was limited. Now, a person might be granted access and authorities for e-mail, voice-mail, the student information system, the human resources system, the financial system, the course management system, the library system, an electronic portfolio, a campus portal, a data warehouse or data mart or two, a local area network, and who-knows-what-other campus resources. All of these might require separate applications for access, customization profiles, and IDs and passwords. Navigating the multiple processes for gaining access can be a daunting task for any new student, employee, or faculty member.

Enter the identity and access management services. This new information infrastructure has several key characteristics.

- It integrates all the pertinent information about people from multiple authoritative source systems such as those listed above. This reconciles the accounts we all have in these systems and joins our identities together under one campus unique identity. Using such a system, an application in the library, for instance, might use a person’s library system ID to look up that person’s e-mail address, campus address, and role at the institution to generate a message that a recalled book was being sent, print a label to use to send the book through the campus mail system, and verify the person’s role at the institution to determine a due date for the book, extracting information from separate systems with separate identifiers.

- It processes and transforms information about people including their affiliations with the institution, employment status, and resource access. It then pushes out and stores the information where it can be of use to applications. For example, a campus advising system resource on study habits and the college transition is only licensed for freshmen on campus. The resource needs class standing

Identity and Access Management: Technological Implementation of Policy

Navigating the multiple processes for accessing ever-multiplying campus information systems can be a daunting task for students, faculty, and staff. This article provides a brief overview of Identity and Access Management Services. The authors review key characteristics and components of this new information architecture and address the issue of why a campus would want to implement these services. Implementation issues, particularly those where technology and policy intersect, are also discussed.

by Jeff von Munkwitz-Smith and Ann West
to verify access, but the student information system only stores credit information. This piece of information could be computed and stored in the identity management infrastructure.

And let’s say ten applications written by different developers wanted to use this same information. Each of them would need to contact someone regarding the algorithm: How would someone know if they’ve done it correctly? How would the developers know if there are changes in the computation? Computing class standing once and making it available to applications increases likelihood of data accuracy and security and reduces development time. If the student drops out of school in the middle of the term, his or her class standing changes and access is no longer granted.

It acts as a focus for implementation of policies concerning visibility and privacy of identity information and entitlement policies across the systems. In many cases, it’s difficult to implement a privacy service that allows individuals to set higher levels of privacy in some instances (such as a request from outside the institution) than others. Having a central place for management of identity allows the individual to set a privacy profile based on policy governing the types of information being released and under what conditions. This in turn can be used by application developers across the institution.

Components of Identity Management

The key components of Identity Management can be summarized by four questions:

- Who are you? (Identification)
- How do we know? (Authentication)
- What services and transactions are available to you? (Authorization)
- Is the information about you secure? (Privacy)

“Identity” is the set of attributes about, and identifiers referring to, an individual. The question “Who are you?” is usually answered by a username or ID that uniquely identifies an individual user. It might be an identifier already associated with an individual, such as the SSN. It might be system-assigned, as is the case with many of our administrative systems. Or it might be user-assigned, as is the case with most commercial services we access via the Web.

“Authentication” is the process used to verify that individual’s, or “subject’s,” association with an identifier. The most common form of authentication used by our system is a password. Identity cards, often used in combination with a password or personal identification number are also common, particularly with financial transactions. A less common method of authentication, outside of the movies, is biometric identification using a unique physical characteristic, such as a fingerprint, voiceprint, or retinal pattern. The most secure authentication would use a combination of these forms. Identification and authentication link the electronic identity to the physical individual.

“Authorization” is the process of determining if policy permits an intended action to proceed. For individual systems—online library resources, for example—the authorization for access might be all or nothing. For other systems the authorization might be group-based or role-based. An example of this access might be one where all employees have access to view their own payroll information, but only payroll staff are able to update that information. In other cases, the authorization could be controlled at the transaction and field level, with the individual being able to process certain types of transactions for a limited range of data, such as the chair of
history department being the only member of that department allowed to update course instructors. Electronic authorization is, ideally, the technical manifestation of institutional policy. Its efficacy is limited by the availability of subject attributes and by how faithfully policy is incorporated in the infrastructure or application.

Why would your campus want one?

Besides the obvious opportunities for making existing services more convenient to use and for developing new services not easily possible using older systems for authorization and authentication, there are six reasons why an institution ought to consider implementing an identity and access management system.

- **Reduced overhead of service management**—In typical application delivery models, each service maintains its own user identity store and related authentication (and authorization) services. Simplifying the authentication model by having the applications use the same shared identity and access infrastructure not only reduces the staff and resulting overhead required to manage each application, but also achieves substantial economies of scale for the service providers and results in time and system cost savings. Having consolidated systems and business processes for authentication services also reduces the cost and time to deploy new applications. Since these services do not need to be created for each new application, the cost and time of doing so, and the recurring cost of independently maintaining those services are mitigated. (See Figure 1.)

- **Increased security**—Security and privacy issues are not new to higher education. After all, we’ve operated under FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) since 1974. With the growth of identity theft there is a greater awareness and, as we discuss below, the regulatory requirements have become more stringent. Consolidating the identity and access services for separate applications means that related policies can be supported in one protected place by the same group of staff. Because the same user credential is presented to all integrated services, all system and application log files reference the same identifier. This enables a consolidated approach to logging which assists in the investigations of alleged cases of abuse. In reduced sign-on instances, users need to remember fewer credentials. They may therefore employ less creative password memory-jogging mechanisms, and are more likely to remember them. For those campuses with a distributed model that provide password feeds to departments to simulate a single-password environment, having the applications instead access a consolidated authentication service reduces the likelihood of password theft and the chance the department password data is corrupted.

- **Simplified network and online service access**—Consolidated authentication can enable unified identity verification for many online services, so our constituents need only to provide a reduced set of credentials, with user ID/password pairs being the most common. Because of the integration with Web-based applications, solutions to common service issues like self-service password resetting and management are enabled using a common infrastructure.

- **Contractual requirements**—Campuses must be able to prove that resources are being used by the subjects licensed to do so. This could be due to a specific library or course-resource contract or because of funding agency requirements and access to restricted research findings. For example, a faculty member working on a classified project might need to provide funding and employment status—information currently stored in two different administrative systems—for access to online resources. Another illustration includes an e-procurement site that might want information on the employment status, title, and department in order to make a decision to process an individual’s order. Contractual obligations, such as those restricting access to licensed electronic resources to people affiliated with our institutions, also play a role. When we charge users fees—either directly or as part of a general student fee—for use of specific resources, such as student recreational facilities, we may want to ensure that only the group that pays has access to those resources.

- **Legal pressures**—Institutions are required to restrict access to health, financial, and academic records. And while FERPA requires us to keep student information private, both the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (GLB) include requirements that we have plans...
in place for maintaining security of the covered information. It is no longer sufficient to merely not release private information; we also have an obligation to keep the information secure.

Business and ethical stewardship—Institutions must also consider the requirements of doing business including safeguarding confidential information and intellectual property, and other strategic information. This includes ensuring appropriate access to tenure committee communications, salary and review information, institutional planning, and archive information, to name a few. The institution also has an ethical obligation to protect information that can be, for example, used for identity theft. A very concrete example of this is restricting access to and use of social security numbers in states where no legislation exists to protect them.

Implementation Issues
While not minimizing the effort involved in implementing the technology pieces, the issues related to policy tend to be the stickiest ones to resolve, requiring the collaboration of numerous campus participants. (See Figure 2.)

Interdependency: We’re All in This Together
Tying together the access to our applications so their use can be updated, enabled, or disabled quickly is a powerful thing. However, what we do on a daily basis affects may people we’re unaware of and small, un-communicated changes can make for unforeseen consequences.

For example, a new, temporary policy allows returning students to pay their bills a week late. This grace period begins, and the Bursar’s Office hasn’t received Bob’s bill and doesn’t update his active status in the sis system. And as usual, every half hour, the identity management system checks the active status, updates its information, and, in this case, removes the contents of the attributes used in authorizing Bob’s access to the library service, health service, course management system, e-mail, and departmental accounts. At 7:30 a.m., Bob tries to log on and read e-mail and can’t, contrary to the new policy. In this case, the operating policy consequences ripple out to the applications served by the infrastructure and the student is confused.

Tradeoffs: Risk and Service Delivery
A critical part of the identity and access management function is an accompanying security policy that highlights the goals and levels of trust the systems will support. From this (and other things), the technology and procedures are derived. For instance, providing access to a course resource site might require a different security level, than, say, an application that changes a student’s financial aid. Looking further, to reset one’s password in the first scenario might require answering two predefined questions online and, in the second, visiting a particular office in person.

So what if there’s a mismatch between the level of security supported by the infrastructure and that required by the application? Or vice versa? Coupled with increased security is increased cost and decreased risk, but how important is the new application to the institution, and who will pay this increased cost? Is it worth it? And who makes the decisions regarding the tradeoffs? This is where a well developed governance process comes into play.

Governance: Communication Is Critical
Data stewardship policies and ongoing interpretations of them are classic examples of the need for governance. Setting up a definition of stewardship, the responsibilities of the steward as well as the user of the data (application developers) is important for those using the identity management system. The stewardship of the identity management system should be discussed as well. Usually it’s a combined management of IT (for the service), data stewards (for the data), and the policy stewards. Additional players including the risk managers and auditors, online service providers and resource managers, application champions, and system users.
A classic example of a problem that the technologists typically receive, but should be considered at policy level is that of a faculty member who wants to give a colleague at another institution access to an online course he is teaching. They are collaborating on research on pedagogy in their field, and he believes that it would be helpful for his colleague to view what’s happening in the course. It would require little effort to create an affiliate ID in the identity management system for the colleague and to give her access to the online course and the identities of the students and their grades. However, this raises potential FERPA issues. Would the person processing the request for an affiliate ID know enough to ask the right questions?

Communication and education about the challenges and issues that we each face on a daily basis is crucial. In the most successful implementations, policy examination and interpretation is an integral part of the process and an on-going, rather than a one-time, event. It is critical that all of the groups—data and policy stewards, technology staff, and others—understand both policy and technology issues well enough to identify potential problems as they arise and know how to get them resolved.

### Conclusion

In general, we’re all trying to accomplish similar things, such as transitioning to self-managed services for faculty, staff, students, parents, alumni and any constituent the institution wants to maintain a relationship with. In fact, we want contact with more people, earlier in their affiliation with us, wherever they are, and for life. Beyond that, we want these services to work and we want a degree of trust that only those we want to access them do so. Beyond that, we hear rumors of government-sponsored electronic services that are reliant on our campus ability to vouch that a student or faculty member is who they say they are. All this can’t be done cost effectively or reliably without an identity management system.

*This material is based in whole or in part on work supported by the National Science Foundation under the NSF Middleware Initiative—NSF 02-028, Grant No. ANI-0123937. Thanks are extended to Mark Bruhn of Indiana University and Michael Gettes of Duke University for their ideas and contributions.*

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Interview with J. Michael Thompson

J. Michael Thompson is the Vice Provost for Enrollment Management and Dean of Admission and Financial Aid at the University of Southern California. J. Michael has worked in higher education for more than 30 years in a variety of roles at small private and mid-sized and large public universities, and now at USC, a large private university. He has worked in registrar’s offices, admission offices, and computer centers. He has led organizations that include various other units such as financial aid, learning centers, transfer services, disability services, educational outreach units, SAA/EOP—the wide array of student success support at universities. For more than ten years, he has led groups of functional people and programmers to develop high touch through high tech systems, including one of the earliest electronic applications to college called Pathways. His group won an IBM Best Practices in Student Services award for UC Gateways. At USC, J. Michael has led the development of cutting-edge systems for worldwide educational outreach: Preparing for College, now available in eight different languages, and the Student Information Gateway, a postmodern communication tool for students interested in USC. Throughout his career, his two touchstones have been superior student service and developing and supporting the staff who work with him.

Mary Elisabeth Randall

How did you get started in this profession?

I’d finished school and was staying at my friend’s house. He said they were hiring proctors down at Loyola Law School for $2.50 an hour, so he and I rode motorcycles down to the law school with our long hair streaming behind. My job was watching students take exams. I hung around for a little while after that and they got me to alphabetize cards and photocopy record cards and all the things you did in the ‘70s. Then I left and worked for an employment firm. Then they created a job at the law school for an assistant registrar and the ladies in the office persuaded the registrar to call me and offer me an interview. I came down and interviewed on April 30, 1974, and began the next day as a full-time employee at Loyola Law School.

After being assistant registrar for about a year, I went off to run the clinical programs at the law school. We had about 244 separate programs. We had an in-house law firm and variety of other out-placements. I ran all the out-placements and matched academic components to those and worked with the students. About a year after that, the dean was walking down the hallway on a Friday afternoon and said Ron Slominski, the registrar, was leaving. The dean asked what we should do about a registrar. I said why not make me the registrar. We went into his office and talked about 45 minutes and about a week later he asked if I would consider being the acting registrar. He was inclined to run a national search six months later; after about three months he decided not to do that and he made me the registrar. I was registrar at Loyola for three years.

How did you get started in this profession?

What motivated your move from higher education to Information Associates?

I think three things made it an attractive choice for me. First, I had come to UCLA at a time to help lead the office forward through a systems implementation. UCLA had sent me to business school and I had completed my executive education program at its Anderson Graduate School of Management. I had been there seven years and we had implemented and significantly modified Information Associates’ SRS product. Perhaps most importantly, our office, which had always used a hand-maintained leave accounting system, brought in an early PC to do the work. When the smoke cleared after that implementation and process change, it turned out that I was nine weeks over the maximum allowed for vacation. I told my boss I’d take off Mondays and Fridays for the rest of my natural life and he said no. He said, “A week from Monday you’ll leave and when you come back, that will be your nine weeks.” In January of 1987 I left and essentially played golf for nine weeks. When I came back, the office was running better than it had when I was there. My role in helping the office to reorganize and create a culture where supervisors stepped up and took their roles as effective leaders seriously was working so well that I realized a big part of my work at UCLA was done.

Secondly, after having accomplished my goals at UCLA, I got a phone call from Melanie Biel, who was the sales manager in the West for Information Associates. She asked me to come down to San Diego to see her about a sales position. It was an interesting opportunity—at that time Information Associates was driven by a customer service-oriented philosophy. I thought of it as a way I could continue to expand my commitment to student service. It struck me that through the correct use of effective systems, we could all together dramatically improve service levels at many schools. The third and final reason I left UCLA was because they told me I would never be the registrar because I did not have a Ph.D.

What was most challenging about that job?

The funniest thing was how I was treated by many of my friends and colleagues. Somehow, suddenly, I was icky; I was
a traitor; I had changed sides. The rationale I had for myself about why I had done this didn’t sit well with my friends from the admissions and registrar’s offices. The notable exception was Sunny Low, the remarkable associate registrar at UC Berkeley. Sunny passed away several years ago but not a day passes that I do not think of him and his steady, thoughtful, committed career to serve students.

Learning about systems in areas beyond those areas of functional expertise I had was quite a steep learning curve. To learn about financial systems, human resources systems, and development systems meant that you had to quickly develop some relatively middling level of understanding about principles and philosophies that drove almost every other part of the university. It was a tremendous experience learning how other parts of the university worked, and it provided me with many ideas about how our systems could help people all across America do things better.

**Why did you decide to come back to higher education?**

I had married Elaine Wheeler about a year before I left Information Associates and we wanted to have a family. Elaine was an associate registrar at UC Santa Barbara and the Information Associates office was located in San Diego, about 240 miles away. Around this time I became Information Associates’ regional manager in the West and was traveling almost every day. We felt we needed to make job changes to improve our family lives. We found jobs at the University of California at Irvine. I became the registrar and director of student academic information systems and Elaine became manager of student affairs in the School of Engineering and was the founding director of the Minority Engineering Program. Ultimately she ran NSF’s California Alliance for Minority Participation (CAMP) grant, a statewide minority retention grant.

**Did your years working for a vendor enhance your qualifications to return to higher education? What additional skills did you bring back to higher education?**

Yes, absolutely. When I left and went to a systems vendor, I learned a lot about how universities run outside the realm of the admissions and registrar functions. I also spent a lot of time talking to presidents and vice presidents. When I came back to higher education, I was no longer self conscious when talking to chancellors and vice chancellors in quite the same way that I had been as a young person at Loyola Law School and UCLA.

**It increased your confidence level?**

It increased my confidence level because I had taken advantage of the opportunity to learn about universities. I read voraciously while I was a vendor. I read magazines like *Change* and other publications about universities and how they were run. I read Clark Kerr’s *The Uses of the University* over and over again, and tried to develop my understanding of the vision for universities and how they worked at a higher level. Thus when I returned to the university setting, I found myself on a completely different intellectual plane than I was before. I was now comfortable in senior faculty groups and senior administrative groups talking not about process, but about vision and directions for the future.

**You’ve worked at three different campuses of the University of California System—UCLA, Irvine, Santa Cruz. How did they differ from one another?**

The University of California, during the time that I worked there, was nine campuses and became ten. One was founded in 1868 (Berkeley), one in 1919 (UCLA), and several were created after World War II concluding with three founded in 1965 (UC San Diego, UC Irvine and UC Santa Cruz). Each of those three campuses was organized with a different particular response to the growth of the large public research universities in the 1950s and 1960s. Each sought to find an organizational model different from the mega-university with large departments and many students. Irvine organized itself into academic units so there were ten academic units. All the advising was done in those units and students identified quite closely with being in an academic unit (i.e., “I’m a student in Engineering. I’m a student in Physical Science.”). And so, it was the first decentralized university in which I had worked. UCLA was more centralized with a fewer number of colleges of much larger size. Irvine’s decentralization presented some challenges and opportunities. We were able to be a lot more nimble; we were able to be adventurous.

At Irvine, the administration and the faculty regarded me as a significant member of the campus’ intellectual community and I was able to do things in partnership with faculty members that I couldn’t have even conceived of at UCLA. We worked with some faculty members on improving their classroom instruction. We were inventive about how to represent the University on the World Wide Web in remarkable and interesting ways. The Registrar’s Office, and the staff and undergraduate developers in the Student Academic Information Systems unit, were the catalyst for much of the early service enhancement work that was done with the World Wide Web in the early ‘90s. We were seen by the people in academic computing as a partner in helping to provide information to faculty and to others.

The move to Santa Cruz was an interesting choice. Again, Santa Cruz started in ’65 and was organized in a different way. It was organized along the Oxford model. Colleges had precedence rather than academic units. Each college had its own identity. Academic units and departments and divisions and were subordinated to the colleges in the beginning years of Santa Cruz. During my time there, we saw the inevitable pressure of the American research university and the rankings and ratings and desires of the young faculty to change us...
to become much more of a traditional place with academic units coming to the fore. Grades became mandatory during the time I was at Santa Cruz. Before that they had a narrative evaluation system which was extremely difficult in large classes, but interesting.

So inside the University of California system I had the opportunity to work in three distinctly different organizational paradigms. Centralized at UCLA, decentralized along academic disciplines at UC, and decentralized along residential college lines at Santa Cruz. Each had its advantages and each had internal and external forces pushing and simultaneously pulling the organization in differing sometimes opposite directions.

**Why did you leave Santa Cruz? What led you to USC?**

When I was called by the search firm, they said they wanted to talk with me about this job that was held by my friend Joe Allen until he passed away. I had a conversation with them about people in Illinois and people in Louisiana and other places in the country that I thought would be good candidates for them to consider. They listened quite politely, but finally they said, “We’ve already talked with people in Ohio, and Illinois and Louisiana and they say that you’re the person we should be talking to.” I said, “You know, after twenty years in the University of California, it’s very hard for me to think about going to USC.” This was a change from public higher education to private, a change to from one side of a significant institutional rivalry to the other. But the opportunity intrigued me and frankly so did the university. So I began to investigate USC and I discovered many facets of the university. My investigation began by trying whether they had a strong commitment to the community and access and opportunity.

In considering the job opportunity, I recalled that in 1992 I had been driving and listening to KUSC when the commencement program broadcast began. I remembered Steve Sample’s commencement address two weeks after the riots in Los Angeles where he reconfirmed and committed that the University of Southern California was not just in Los Angeles but of Los Angeles. USC’s response wasn’t to flee; they were going to stay where they were in the community; they were reshaping two academic units to address issues in the urban paradigm; and they were creating new programs for people in the community including scholarship programs for young residents in the neighborhood.

Ten years later when I was asked to consider USC, I remembered having stopped alongside the road to listen to that speech. I did my testing and discovered that this was, a point in fact, a place that was special in that way and that would let me continue to do the work that allows me to put my head and my heart together to create access and opportunity for students. I met with Provost Lloyd Armstrong, who is one of the most remarkable leaders in higher education today; his executive vice provost, Mike Diamond; and the vice provost for academic programs, Joe Helige, at the Los Angeles airport. As a result of that conversation, I was asked to come to the campus. After an exhaustive series of interviews over two days with people from many different parts of the campus community, I had the opportunity to meet with President Steve Sample.

**What are the notable differences between public and private institutions?**

There is an astonishing alignment of values at USC. We’re attentive to a strategic plan and a strategic plan is something we all commit to follow. There are interesting ideas there; there’s a real sense of service to the community, and there’s even a statue with five words inscribed on it—faithful, scholarly, skillful, courageous, and ambitious. Since 1930, these have been our aspirations for our students. Those five words really seem to mean something in our community—they help us focus on the future.

We’ve just completed, after a two-year period, a new strategic plan for the University. It has three main elements: societal benefit, a global presence, and learner centered. Faculty members, deans, and a group of us worked hard for two years to come up with this plan under the leadership of Provost Lloyd Armstrong. It’s been accepted now by everyone in our community, including the Board of Trustees. The learner centeredness is really about being student centered. I can’t imagine a public research university where I’ve worked stating and meaning that they were student centered.

We manage a financial aid program that is more than $600 million. That enables us to provide scholarships and a variety of other funds for students so they are able to come to the University in a way that they might not otherwise have. Even at some of the public schools in California, they have other restrictions. In addition, there are salient differences between the publics here in California and the privates, especially with regards to the student experience: in the private university classes are smaller and tenured or tenure-track faculty teach all of the general education classes. And of course the economic woes of California have not had an impact on USC in quite the same way as the California State University and the University of California.

**How is selectivity at USC different from that at the UC schools?**

The UC has an eligibility model so you have to hit a certain SAT score and a certain GPA to be “eligible” to be admitted to one of the campuses, not necessarily the campus of your choice. The idea is that the University of California is supposed to be there for the top 12.5 percent of the students in California, driven by academic criteria. USC has fundamentally different view. We have no minimum GPAs; we have no minimum SATs. Every year as we go through the process, we hire people with high degrees of emotional intelligence; we train them about what we are seeking in the sense of
building a class for people who will go out and be leaders in the world. Then we set them free to read those files. We don’t score them; we don’t grade them. We read most every file twice. But the student that is in the bubble area—we’re trying to decide whether to admit them or not—some of those files are read three, four, five, six times by different people, each one making a recommendation. It’s up to the leadership of the office to reconcile some of those recommendations.

We have turned down students with 4.0 GPA; we’ve admitted 2.2 GPA students; we’ve turned down 1500 SAT score students; we’ve admitted 900 SAT score students. We are looking for the young women and men who will make a difference in the world. For some people that means they haven’t had the opportunity to take advantage of education at this point, or they had other things that were going on in their lives that prevented them from accessing educational opportunity in quite the same way. Having said that, USC also has a significant support program that’s set aside for students who come and are below our academic means. We work aggressively toward supporting them. We believe, like many universities do, if we have admitted a student, it is our responsibility to help that student successfully persist and succeed by graduating. We have a significant number of our staff that are dedicated to doing that.

The idea of making an individual, subjective decision as opposed to a formalized, structured decision—eligibility based—is one of the great differences between USC and the UC schools. This may indeed be one of the differences between public and private institutions across the country.

How has the California budget cuts impacted USC if at all? How has it impacted other private universities in California?

It has an impact on us in the sense that what happens in the marketplace in California impacts our students. About half of our students come from California. The budget woes of the other universities create confusion in the marketplace. The budget woes of individuals create uncertainty about whether they will be able to make the financial commitment to be able to come to a university like USC. This is true for all private universities. USC, according to a recent study by Tom Worthington, has the largest number and percentage of Pell Grant recipients of any private university in America. Twelve to thirteen percent of our students are first-generation students. USC has a long history of attending to the needs of the people from our local neighborhood and to ensuring that poorer students can have the opportunity to come. The challenge becomes middle class students. And now the middle class seems to run from about $90,000–$200,000 a year. Those are families who are greatly challenged. They don’t qualify for federally-based financial aid. To come to USC, or any other university, it means they either pay cash or they have to borrow money. Because of the size of the financial aid budget at USC and because of some of the interesting ways we use it, a local financial planner told me that he believes the average effective cost differential of attending the private University of Southern California as opposed to attending one of the public University of California campuses is only about $2,000. So anxiety and uncertainty on the part of families about budget is actually what hurts us the most.

This past year there was a proposal to cut the Cal Grant state-funded student grant by 44 percent. While ultimately the cut was only 14 percent, it still represented a shift of about a million dollars in cost from the state budget to our financial aid budget. Fortunately, Cathy Thomas, one of my associate deans and USC’s director of financial aid, is one of the most thoughtful and inventive student aid professionals in higher education today and we came up with a plan to shift merit aid to need-based aid to maintain the necessary support for students.

Public schools in most states have a group of enrollment management professionals who meet often. Is there such a group for private schools in California that meets regularly to exchange ideas?

There are two groups that come to mind. One is AICCU (Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities), which does lobbying in Sacramento, leadership development work, is engaged in financial aid lobbying in the state capital, and has some engagement from many parts of the university. USC supports this work but is not always an active participant in everything they do.

Another organization is the Lakes Group, which caters to senior admissions staff in private schools. That group gets together to talk about common issues and conditions. The meetings focus on understanding that the decisions made in one private university in a particular geographical area can have a dramatic effect on other private universities in that area. The privates react more significantly to changes in class size than do the publics. It is important to state that in these groups there is no collusion; there is no collective future planning that’s done.

You have done some interesting work with the College Board on demographics. Can you describe that project and how it came about?

I’ve been an enthusiastic supporter of many things that the College Board has done in helping us understand issues that might impact upon the student’s decision to attend the University. I’ve been an active user of the enrollment planning service for a long time. I’ve had many conversations with Jim Montoya and Ken Woods about the high school clusters and the educational neighborhoods. All of this is trying to help us understand how class, attitudes, and cultural beliefs and customs also go into the decisions about students choosing where to apply and where to attend—not simply the force of numbers and academic preparation. We had used some of their tools to better understand some of those cultural factors
that play across the country in what they call geomarkets. As we use them, we provide feedback to the College Board and to others about how we use geodemography as a way for us to understand something about the students and the likelihood of enrollment. For example, although we cross apply in number the most with the University of California, across the United States, students apply to both USC and NYU. NYU is a large, successful, private university in an urban area with strong arts programs and a strong business program. There are many similarities about us academically as well as geographically. After that we begin to part ways. USC is a campus of affiliation. Students come to USC to belong to something. They have active opportunities to engage in community service, sports programs—a whole variety of things. We have a beautiful campus that people love to be on.

You have enrollment management staff all over the world. How do you keep your staff tied emotionally to the center of USC and the changes that occur there?

Unlike some other institutions that have regional models everywhere, we really don’t. There are people who work with us for admissions in Jakarta, Tokyo, Taipei, and Hong Kong and we have a regional director in Chicago. All the rest of the recruiting work is done by people working in Los Angeles. The people in the international offices are graduates of the University and work with the Admissions Office, but they are actually outside the organization and report to the Provost’s Office. The executive vice provost and I go out twice a year to meet with them. We spend a fair bit of time communicating with them about the University and they come to the campus two weeks each year. They are remarkable young people. One of the things about USC is we have quite tight, emotional bonds. We talk about the Trojan family, not as a PR statement but as a reality. The international office directors are also buoyed and supported by the alumni in those areas and by the parents of current students in those areas. In Hong Kong, for instance, there’s a recently constituted Hong Kong Parents Association. There are 170 members of the Hong Kong Parents Association who meet often to discuss their children’s experiences and about what it’s like to be the parent of a student at USC. This is coordinated by our Hong Kong office director and I think she gets a lot of sustenance from that effort. The interesting thing is that as people recognize each other around the world as being Trojans, there is a connection; there’s an emotional bond. You feel it whether you are in Shanghai, whether you’re in London, or New York, or Boston, or New Orleans, or Los Angeles. It is unlike anything I have ever felt in my experience in higher education.

USC has the highest enrollment of international students in this country. Tell me why that is important.

For many years, educating students from around the world has been one of the things that USC has focused on. During the 1960s we had a significant number of students who came from throughout the Middle East, mostly studying petrochemical engineering and/or business. As bad as things are, I have to think that in some ways the time international students spend at American universities—walking our streets, understanding our culture, relating to our feelings—helps them gain an understanding of us as a people despite the comings and goings of governments. It strikes me that that kind of knowledge is enormously powerful and valuable. Currently, Asia provides the most significant number of our international students. They come from throughout Asia—Southeast Asia, India, China, Japan, and Korea. These students bring with them a remarkable view of the world. In February of this year we had a democratic primary debate on our campus. While the candidates were debating in one of our auditoriums in the international residential college at Parkside—which is made up of 400 residents (200 international and 200 American)—there was a facilitated conversation going on in the lounge with a TV set and a couple of faculty. There were two distinct perspectives: the international students were describing what they had seen and heard, as were the Americans. Real education, real understanding. The differences in perception were profound and important for all of us to understand if we’re going to live in a better world. It was important for both groups to listen, hear, and understand each other’s voices.

We have been fortunate enough that our alumni success in the international arena has mirrored the success of our students in America. Many of our former students have taken significant roles of responsibility in many countries. One of our graduates is a former prime minister of the Republic of Korea. Others represent politics and business throughout Asia.

Understanding the American experience from a personal level, I think, is great preparation for leading corporations and governmental entities. The students’ experience at USC has had a profound impact on their ability to discern the difference between the American people and our government. Just as important, the tremendous opportunity for American students to hear the authentic voices from people from around the world is critical to our collective success in issues of peace and war and the global economy.

Does USC continue to offer merit-based aid as well as need-based aid? If so, why do you think it’s important to offer both?

The decision to begin using merit money at USC as a way to raise the attention of excellent students across the country preceded my arrival on campus. We were a great regional university with aspirations to be a national university. But it wasn’t necessarily true that great student scholars from across America were considering USC as a place to go to school ten years ago. In those ten years, the SAT scores have gone up more than ninety points; the GPAs have gone up probably half a point. This is partly because Morty Shapiro, then dean of the College of Letters, Arts & Sciences, along with Joe Allen,
my predecessor, Mike Diamond, executive vice provost, and a variety of other people came up with the idea and structure to use scholarship money to encourage the very best students to come to USC. At the same time, USC has met the full financial needs of all its students. For this current academic year, the governor proposed a 44 per cent cut to the Cal Grant Program, which was supporting our students at $9,867 per year. The impact on the campus budget was $1.857 million. We decided to move money from the merit side to the need side to make sure the ability to meet the needs of our students wouldn’t be threatened. That meant we took millions of dollars out of the merit side. It’s an interesting institutional thing. You start out to do something, you are successful, and then it’s very difficult to change because no one wants to be the person on whose watch things change. But there was enough of an impetus to us that it was clear that we needed to take a chance. So we moved $2.089 million to the need side. And our SAT scores went up, our GPAs went up, our national distribution of really excellent students went up, and our national merit scholars went from 154 to 179. So, it’s clear that a strategy used at first to acquaint excellent students across the country with the academic quality of USC has been successful. I would see us continuing to diminish the amount of money that’s available on the merit side in the continuing years.

Have you had mentors in your career? If so, how were they important to your career?

I have been extremely fortunate throughout my career to have people who have taken an interest in me and who have allowed me to intellectually grow and explore. At Loyola Law School there is a man named Christopher Newton May who is, in many ways, my intellectual hero. He is a Harvard undergraduate, Yale Law School fellow who came to run the law clinics, and subsequently became the associate dean for academic affairs—the role he played most of the time I was there. He always took the time to answer the extra questions I had about why we were doing something; and he always listened to my ideas, no matter how silly, about how things might work. He appreciated my emotion and my commitment to students. I think in almost every place I’ve had someone who has attended to me that way.

At UCLA there was a man named Bill Locklear—the Colonel as we called him—a Marine Corps man. He understood and taught me about leadership. He showed me that fairness doesn’t mean that you treat everyone the same. He taught me that true leadership means that you find out how people want to be treated and you strive to treat them that way. He had a fierce commitment to student service. This caused us to align significantly in that way. Those two men influenced my development and experience and continue to be friends of mine to this day.

At Irvine, Bill Parker, the associate executive vice chancellor, was extremely supportive of me and my goals. Bill had a group of young people from academic computing with whom I would meet and talk about the campus-wide information systems with boldness and without any attention to rank or level. It was a taste of what a graduate lab might be like in one sense. At Santa Cruz, I learned much from Marty Chemers, who is now the interim chancellor at Santa Cruz. His intellectual work was in leadership. I found myself gravitating towards him sometimes to talk about that work.

Coming to USC two people stand out. I came to USC to a significant degree because of Steve Sample and his leadership, his commitment to the students, to the future of the University, and his commitment to excellence. Lloyd Armstrong, the provost, who is retiring at the end of this academic year, has showed me how to be a leader in a different sort of way. Every Thursday morning the provost’s staff meets. It is absolutely what a graduate seminar might be like. We each bring intractable problems to the table; we discuss them without regard to level of interest, experience, or rank. We talk about what those problems are and we talk them over and over again. There is such a remarkable level of trust in this group of women and men that it is unlike anything I’ve seen. In addition, Lloyd Armstrong seems to have the least amount of personal ego of any senior executive that I have ever seen. He is a remarkable leader, a remarkable man.

The underlying theme tying these individuals together is that they had a smooth and steady leadership style, seemingly unruffled by events around them. They were committed to the success of the people who worked in their organization. They were thoughtful, engaged, and passionate. They were supportive of me and my goals, but also supportive of me and the things I wanted to do to support and sustain the university. They worked very hard to ensure their groups and units were supported in the university. They were great citizens in their universities. They would sublimate their own individual benefit in a moment for a greater university benefit. They saw as their task to serve the university and its students more than building a castle for themselves. The keys are that they would hear me out and treated me like a peer. It’s something I try, every day, to model in my own experience.

What are your goals for enrollment management at USC in the next five years?

Last year USC concluded the most successful capital campaign in the history of the University. We are hiring 100 more faculty members in the College of Letters, Arts & Sciences. Over nine years we raised $2.85 billion. Our long-term goal is to reduce our undergraduate population by more than a thousand students. People ask how we can do this. Part of the answer is because of the substantial generosity of the people who have given to support the capital campaign and the people who give every year to provide scholarships and support to the University. We made this decision because the trustees are attending to the student experience and they want to ensure that the USC student of the future has a remarkable educational experience, both inside and outside the classroom.
My goals are these:

- We will continue to empower students and their families to make the right choice in college by providing them with timely, correct, and meaningful information about USC through a combination of effective technology and intense personal service.
- We will continue to support counselors by providing scholarships to professional development activities.
- We will seek to find the balance of demonstrated academic quality, emotional intelligence, and commitment to the future in identifying tomorrow’s USC students. We seek not to maximize any single factor, but rather to find the golden mean among the seventeen factors we use in making admissions decisions.
- Mindful of the importance of access to higher education, we will continue to strive to build communities of students of all nationalities, religious beliefs, and ethnic backgrounds.
- Since our founding in 1880, USC has been committed to educating students from around the world. With more than 6,000 international students currently enrolled, we will fight against bureaucracy and prejudice at home and abroad to continue to be a beacon of hope for students.

**Have you taken any risks in recent years and have they succeeded?**

One takes risks in a couple of different ways. There’s institutional risk and there’s personal risk. On an institutional basis, USC has been on a ten-year run of success and because of that many people are reluctant to change anything. Often one hears “...Uh.Oh. We can’t change that....” Often this is an emotional reaction and not an intellectual one based in causation. One of the things we have been doing over the time I’ve been at USC is changing things. We’ve been changing around the mix of merit and need. We’ve reduced the number of school visits we’re making. We’ve made dramatic investments in electronic resources in ways to communicate more broadly. We’re changing the publications we’ve used over the years and that’s a big risk because, in any given year, it can have an enormous impact. We balance our budget at the end of every year at USC. In the early ’90s, several hundred people lost their jobs because the enrollment target was missed by a significant number. It’s a big responsibility to all of us in admissions and financial aid because we know that we have an impact on our colleagues’ jobs. So, we attend to taking risk thoughtfully. We have begun to do significant research to understand causality, to understand the impact of things we are doing. We test small things first and larger things later. We take risk with individual students and whether we can find a way to help them realize their dream or idea of coming to the university. That has less potential of having significant institutional or personal ramifications.

Last spring, I asked that we develop a new road video for the spring program. There was a remarkable video that was done for commencement two years ago called “Reflections of a Class,” where students talked about their experiences at USC. I was so moved when I saw it, I thought we had to turn this into a conversion piece. We added three elements together—a graphical piece, a welcome to the campus and description of what people were about to see, and the edited video. The people who did the work did a remarkable job. It was a beautiful piece. The weakest part was the introduction by me. It had no resonance at all with the people we showed it to or with our test marketing after it was finished. We did not use it. This year we created a new publication that had interesting, intellectual ideas about non-linear communication. Our evaluation of how the market responded to it was that, although it was very interesting to us and our communication friends, it was not very successful as a publication.

**Do you wish you hadn’t done those things?**

No not at all. First, they were interesting things to explore. Second, I believe it is important to model the behavior that says risk can incur failures and that if we fail, we simply move on. We don’t persist in a strategy that isn’t working, but at the same time, if we’re not failing, we’re not trying hard enough. If we’re not failing, we’re not moving the bar far enough. In both of these cases I think these were substantially my ideas. However, we worked as a collective to determine whether they were valuable or not and then moved on. I’d love to have an organization where failure happens every day because it means we’re trying our very hardest to do the very best. My belief about people and the way they approach work is that in an organization where you fail every day, you will succeed ten times more.

It is clear that, at USC, your head, your heart, and your gut are all aligned. Do you think you could ever take a job where you didn’t think that would be so?

No. As I look back on my career, that has always been true. One of my colleagues at USC described me as a true believer. The constancy of my belief in the students and the future they will build for our world is the thing that ties all of this together for me. Proximate or distant from students, my work is about creating access and opportunity for them to do the things to help them realize their potential. It is my commitment to students and their success.

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Overwhelmed by the complicated process of planning a graduation ceremony? The AACRAO Guide to Staging a Graduation Ceremony provides everything you need to design your institution’s ceremony from start to finish including budgetary needs, facility choice and set-up, logistical arrangements, commencement programs and photography and academic regalia, all accompanied by numerous examples and diagrams. In addition, the Guide contains comprehensive information on anticipating, preventing and responding to any potential difficulties that may arise.

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As the economic and social capital of higher education continue to rise, so too does interest in how the public views colleges and universities and the policies affecting them. A number of organizations have recently put a finger on the public pulse, asking about access, prices, priorities, and a host of other issues. One series of polls in particular, conducted by Public Agenda for the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, is particularly insightful, because it tracks opinion on a wide range of questions over a ten-year period (1993–2003). The responses to the surveys, which sampled opinion from higher education stakeholders and the general public, yielded observations that policymakers and university leaders would be well-advised to heed, including:

- Higher education is increasingly viewed as necessary for success in the current working world, especially among racial/ethnic minorities. This should come as no surprise to most in the education world, but especially notable is the degree to which this perception has risen, particularly among historically underrepresented and disadvantaged in the area of educational opportunity. In just a three-year span, the survey found that the share of minority respondents labeling a college education as necessary for workplace success (as opposed to other routes to success) jumped substantially, from 35 percent to 53 percent for African American respondents, and from 41 percent to 53 percent for Hispanic respondents. The role of the recent economic downturn is important to consider when assessing this timeframe, but increasing awareness of college opportunity and outreach efforts to minority communities likely have played a role.

- A growing number of Americans believe that access to higher education is at risk. Again, growth in this perception can be traced in large measure to the recent economic slump, as the portion of respondents indicating that many qualified students do not have the opportunity to attend college rose from 45 percent in 1998 to 57 percent in 2003, after falling from 60 percent in 1993 to 45 percent in 1998. Perhaps not surprisingly, parents of high school students and racial/ethnic minorities are more likely to perceive threats to access. Among parents of high school students, those believing that qualified students are being denied access jumped from 42 percent in 2000 to 58 percent in 2003. Similarly, the share of African American respondents agreeing with this sentiment rose from 60 percent in 2000 to 76 percent in 2003.

- Americans are concerned about college prices and do not necessarily understand how they are set, but are somewhat suspicious about colleges’ and universities’ price control efforts. The recent state and federal policy backlash against significant tuition increases clearly suggests public concern about higher education’s prices and the public’s ability to keep up with them. Asked what motivates price increases, a significant portion of the public (38 percent in 2003) said that they do not know enough to judge whether colleges and universities work hard to keep prices down or simply raise prices whenever they can. A larger portion (43 percent in 2003), however, believe that institutions raise prices whenever they can, while less than one-quarter (19 percent) felt that colleges and universities work hard to keep prices down.

While it is important to recognize the limitations of public opinion polling as an input for the policy process, the sentiments expressed here and in other surveys portray currents that political and higher education leaders would be ill-advised to ignore. Specifically, the concerns expressed about access bear watching, particularly as the long-term effects of the state fiscal crisis become known. The combination of this
concern and the increasing perception of the necessity of higher education results in a disconnect—one that is particularly sharp for underrepresented and disadvantaged groups. For policymakers, the stakes are extraordinarily high—raising expectations, only to leave them unfulfilled, will have serious negative consequences for the nation’s economic competitiveness and social cohesion. The clock is ticking, and an increasingly anxious public awaits.

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Elements of Bolman and Deal’s (1991) political frame are widely discussed and written about among enrollment managers. Whether it is under the guise of managing change, getting things done, understanding institutional politics, or soliciting campus-wide involvement, the issues are often thorny and leave many practitioners perplexed. Frequently, these issues involve leadership styles, decision-making criteria, organizational impediments, competition for scarce resources, power struggles, and the institutional culture.

“Politics is a natural way of getting things done in enrollment management because, by its nature, enrollment management relies on an interdependence of many departments, functions, and processes” (Kalsbeek 1997, p.157). It is this interdependence that makes politically savvy enrollment managers an institutional asset. Even if an enrollment manager is in a position to mandate what matters or has the ear of a president or another senior administrator who can issue directives, skills such as building relationships and motivating others to embrace an idea or a strategy are needed to integrate services, influence the academic product, shape institutional image, or on occasion, circumvent the bureaucratic maze.

Politically astute enrollment managers are always searching for leverage (Owens 2001). For example, a decline in new student enrollments or continuing student retention can provide the leverage necessary to create an institutional sense of urgency. It is virtually impossible to effect substantial change without a sense of urgency (Belasco 1991; Kotter 1995; Black 2001; Whiteside 2001). After all, colleges and universities have been in existence longer than any other organizations in the world except the church. We have endured not because of our capacity to change, but rather in spite of it.

As enrollment managers we have access to data that can transform or influence mindsets, business practices, strategic decisions, and institutional priorities. But the data are rendered useless if there is no analysis. According to Black (2001), the data also must be used to tell a story. The story should promote an understanding of the dynamics that impact enrollment. And it must be delivered in digestible sound bytes, over an extended period of time, with some repetition. It must answer the proverbial question, “What’s in it for me?” Lastly, the story must be compelling. Once the story has been ingrained in the psyche of the intended audience and they have shown signs of investment in the cause, it is time for what development officers call “the ask.”

Not only should circumstances and data be leveraged, but relationships should as well. Enrollment managers should invest considerable time in identifying power brokers and developing relationships that are mutually beneficial. A recently retired dean had a practice of sending a single long stem rose to departmental secretaries along with a brief personal note expressing appreciation for what they had done for his unit. He recognized that secretaries, particularly in the academic departments, play a major role in getting things done. Similarly, an admissions office at a public university in the South hosts a reception for physical plant and grounds staff once a year to show appreciation for what they do to keep the campus looking pristine. These simple gestures motivate others to invest in and when necessary, sacrifice for your cause.

The art of leveraging circumstances, data, and relationships is at the heart of the political frame. These leverage mediums are simply a means to an end, yet they are prerequisites to advancing the enrollment management and indeed, the institution’s agenda. If enrollment managers fail to exert political skills and appropriate tension within the organization, they have failed their institution. In keeping with the laws of inertia, higher education organizations remain at rest unless propelled otherwise. Kalsbeek (1997, p.169) said it best when he wrote,
In organizations like colleges and universities, nothing happens unless someone pushes. The challenge we all face in enrollment management is how to push forward, how to solve the many problems facing our institutions, how to exercise the influence required to make things happen—and then having the political will to do it…

Our job is to push. More importantly, our job is to push in the right places at the right times, which implies that our efforts must be informed and strategic. Whether we are comfortable with it or not, we must be political creatures to be effective in such a highly political environment.

References

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Ah, the annual vacation. Time to get away from it all, forget the work-a-day world and the daily office routine. This year I was looking forward to visiting Japan, a new culture. With excitement I anticipated soaks in hot springs, monumental shrines, breathtaking gardens, delicious sashimi and soba, and the speedy bullet trains—all so different from my life in Boston. I was not disappointed but I was surprised, pleasantly, by constant reminders of my job in student services thanks to the extraordinary customer service I experienced each day in often unexpected ways. This article will describe characteristic encounters, offer some lessons learned, and recommend some practical applications.

Service Encounters
It began with the dreaded and all-too-familiar lost luggage scenario. While lost luggage is hardly the norm, it does happen to me on average of once every two years. Most often it happens after I return from the Christmas holidays when flight connections are tight and the amount of luggage handled is overwhelming. My luggage has never been irretrievably lost, but with each occurrence, I complete the required forms and unless I follow-up, that’s the last I hear about it until the bags are delivered.

So I landed in Tokyo and my luggage didn’t. I filled out the usual forms and a very gracious and competent woman checked the computer, determined the bag was still in New York and assured me it would be on the flight to Tokyo the following day. She said it would be delivered to my hotel at approximately 10:00 p.m. She sounded confident, but given my experience I didn’t set my heart on receiving the luggage as described.

Later that evening I received a call from another person with the airline again indicating that the luggage was in New York and would be on its way the following day. The next day I was up at the crack of dawn and ready for bed by late afternoon so I was in my room when the luggage was delivered around 6:00 p.m. Remarkable, I thought, because the flight from New York lands around 4:00 p.m., and it takes at least an hour to get from Narita Airport to Tokyo. Around 6:30 p.m., I received a call from the airline saying the luggage was on its way. I thanked the caller and said it had arrived. Later that evening I received another call from the airline indicating that the luggage had been damaged (a wheel had been removed) and explaining how I could file a claim for the repair.

Once the luggage issue was settled, we prepared to set off for Nikko. My travel companion called to make a reservation at a small Japanese hotel. The reservation clerk said we were welcome but wanted us to know there would be a group of Japanese school children staying there as well. We assumed Japanese school children wouldn’t be overly disruptive and indeed we barely heard any noise from them at all. When we arrived at the hotel, we were again reminded about the children and given a sheet of paper indicating the time the children would be using the public bath. The following evening when we returned to our hotel, we were given another sheet of paper with the time the children would be using the public bath. When we left the hotel, the two staff members at the desk came outside to bid us farewell and thank us for our stay.

Later in Nikko, we went to the train station to reserve seats for Matsumoto, our next stop. The middle-aged man who assisted us understood English, entered our destination into the computer and produced the tickets for the trip. He explained the itinerary, which terminated in Takayama, another popular destination for travelers. When we reminded him we wanted to go to Matsumoto, he reared his head back and had a good laugh. He then proceeded to issue tickets for the Matsumoto trip.

The bullet trains were great; we rode them almost every day and as a result spent a lot of time in train stations. Eventually
we found ourselves in Osaka on our way to Hiroshima. On the train platform, I bought an ice cream sandwich and a bottle of water at a kiosk. The clerk anticipated that I would be boarding the train within minutes, noted what I was picking out, recorded the price on a small adding machine, and presented it to me as I approached her at the counter.

We arrived in Hiroshima late in the evening and found McDonald’s was the only restaurant in the train station still open. Although it was closing time, we received a friendly greeting and several confirmations of our order to ensure it had been understood. The staff stayed beyond the posted closing time to deliver the order, ensured a plentiful supply of napkins, and helped us find seating in an area outside the restaurant.

Despite the excellent service at McDonald’s, we agreed that one McDonald’s meal was enough so we stopped to buy various snack items including yogurt at a convenience store. The clerk who noted we were travelers took the time to tape small plastic spoons to the containers.

We loved Japanese food right from the start and ate frequently in small, neighborhood restaurants where the local people ate and the staff was eager to please. During our stay in Takayama we went to a small restaurant where the waiter returned three times after he took our order to ensure he had understood the order correctly. At a sushi bar in Tokyo we asked for rice, which is something one does not usually request in a sushi bar, yet they made every effort to figure out what we were asking for and prepare something that would satisfy us.

Small gifts instead of tips are often given to show appreciation—the twist is that the recipient of these courtesies is the customer. In Himeiji, home to Japan’s most beautiful castle, I bought postcards and I was given a bag containing the postcards and two small cinnamon cookies. At each inn where we stayed, we were provided a treat every day to accompany our tea, and each time the treat was different—a cookie, a wafer bar, a sweet. When we were leaving Kyoto, the proprietor of the inn gave us each a gift including a set of postcards, a small purse.

The Japanese people are in my experience unsurpassed when it comes to maps and directions. When we asked people for directions, we often walked away with a hand-drawn map. In Takayama each question at the Tourist Information Office yielded a handout including a special map to a hard-to-find destination and a timetable for a bus to a remote location. The maps were always clear and informative with lots of colors and graphics to target the key sites or the easiest routes. Distances and time to destination were often noted including walking time and the number of minutes by bus or train. In Hakone National Park where I enjoyed my first view of Mt. Fuji, an elementary school that I passed by prepared included interesting sites, modes of transportation, and helpful tips.

Although the Japanese people are comparatively quiet (even large cities seem quiet), they offer a warm welcome, a grateful thank you, and an evident desire to be of assistance. In Kyoto the proprietor of the inn was so eager to provide helpful information about the area that I asked questions I already knew the answers to so I wouldn’t disappoint her. In the Shinjuku section of Tokyo where skyscrapers and neon prevail and 2 million people pass through each weekday, the four sushi chefs in a small sushi bar greet each customer in unison, whether they know the person or not, with an enthusiastic greeting reminiscent of the way Norm’s friends greeted him when he entered Cheers.

These are some of the interactions, among many that I experienced. Upon reflection, these experiences (and admittedly there were some not up to standard) suggested some parallels to our work in student services.

Lessons Learned

- **Be proactive.** Delayed luggage is never a pleasant experience, but the effort made by the airline to inform me at every step of the way about the location and expected delivery of the luggage made the experience more bearable. Similarly, an encounter with a group of school children at a hotel wouldn’t be startling in Orlando, but it might take someone by surprise in another city or town. The several alerts by the hotel in Nikko ensured there would be no surprises, no complaints, and no disappointments.

- **Be attentive.** In our multi-tasking world we often find ourselves doing several things at once, listening while simultaneously thinking about other things, or assuming others understand instructions as well as we do (especially if we wrote them). The elementary school children who posted a welcome sign and prepared hand-drawn maps in Hakone National Park were made attentive by their teachers to the needs of travelers and encouraged to think as a traveler would think. The resulting map they prepared included interesting sites, modes of transportation, and helpful tips. The waiter in the Takayama restaurant made certain he understood our order by listening carefully, repeating our order to us, and returning to confirm he had understood correctly.

- **Be yourself.** The reservation clerk at the train station displayed a very genuine, human reaction when he enjoyed a good hearty laugh after he realized he had made a mistake. It endeared him to us. In other places we were thanked for coming in ways that were warm and kind. It was a marked difference from the scripted greetings and farewells we often hear in movie theaters, retail stores, or any other establishment where staff thank you for coming with a look that suggests that in reality they couldn’t care less.

- **Surprise people.** People generally enjoy and appreciate small gifts and surprises. The treats left in the room each day at the inns were always something to look forward to because they were never the same. When two cookies were given to me with the purchase of some postcards, I
was delighted. While small gifts are not given all the time, they are given out from time to time and it always makes the day seem a bit brighter.

- **Anticipate customer needs.** The clerk at the convenience store anticipated that we were travelers and didn’t have utensils to eat the yogurt we had purchased. It was a small gesture to ensure we wouldn’t have to fumble around looking for a spoon when the time came to eat our yogurt. Similarly, the clerk at the kiosk on the train platform knew I was going to catch a train soon since they pass through every 15 minutes, and she was prepared with the cost of my purchase, allowing me to board the train on time.

- **Provide clear instructions.** I’ve always loved a good map and the ready availability of maps and directions at information counters made travel easy and failsafe. It seemed no important detail was left out and some maps even included details such as the location of convenience stores and public toilets, pictures of key sites, and graphics showing how to enter, exit, and pay for the streetcar.

- **Be welcoming.** It can be intimidating to be in a new place especially one where both the language and the written word are unfamiliar. The proprietor of the inn in Kyoto made every effort to welcome us, thank us for our stay, ensure we were comfortable, and provide us with the information we needed about the area. And we hated to leave the Shinjuku sushi bar even though we didn’t understand a word they were saying because the sushi chefs made us feel welcome and appreciated with their boisterous greeting and attentive service.

- **Be respectful.** I was reminded by my observations of the Japanese that we can show respect in the simplest way. The hotel staff that came outside to bid us farewell, which happened more than once, was a simple and lovely gesture conveying respect for us and appreciation for our stay. Another method of showing respect occurs when items such as a credit card are exchanged. The Japanese usually do it with both hands, accepting the card gently and returning it the same way.

Admittedly there is nothing new here and many of these lessons are simply examples of basic human kindness, but reminders can be helpful as we get caught up in the routine business of responding to repetitive questions, attempting to understand people whose command of English is not the same as our own, or dealing with volumes of students simultaneously. People often forget that greeting others with a smile can brighten someone’s day or defuse an angry customer. An effort to do something extra may delight the customer and cement their loyalty. A genuine thank you can make every day more pleasant for our 25,000 guests. Over the years these ideas have resulted in better advance informational materials for parents and students, enhanced maps and direc-

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**Some Practical Applications**

**Be proactive** to ensure students complete their financial aid application, understand their degree requirements, and are informed about major changes. For example, in our Office of Student Services, prospective students are notified several times via postcard if the financial aid application has not been completed. Students are referred to the Web where they can see missing items and click to obtain more information about each item. Students are also given a degree audit each semester, and prior to their final semester students are sent additional degree audits if they have not completed all degree requirements. When significant changes are planned, e.g., elimination of credit cards for the payment of tuition and fees, students are given one year’s notice to prepare for the change. Notice is given in publications, e-mail announcements, and letters sent to parents.

**Anticipate customer needs.** In our one-stop service area, academic, financial, parking, and One Card services are delivered within one cross-functional unit thus minimizing the number of students who must be referred to another office. The service staff responds to approximately 90 percent of the telephone and visitor inquiries for academic, financial, parking, and One Card services, and when the situation requires expert intervention, they refer callers or visitors to specialists in academic records, financial aid, student accounts, student loans, and student employment, all of which are housed within the same office. Staff are encouraged to think about ways to improve service, streamline processes, automate transactions, and consolidate information, all with the goal of simplifying administrative tasks for all patrons.

Our Web-based Agora services allow students to conduct business online at their convenience including registration, payment, degree audit, waivers of medical insurance, Stafford entrance counseling, One Card account detail, enrollment certification requests, transcript requests, refund requests, and privacy preference selection. Students process most transactions on the Web resulting in minimal foot traffic in the office, and staff are freed from routine tasks to provide assistance to students who have more complicated situations such as a change in family financial circumstances or questions about the completion of degree requirements.

Continually encourage staff to be **attentive** to processes that could be improved. After school opens in September, the staff are challenged to submit to the director of operations at least 50 ideas for improvements. They are given a week to submit their ideas and told they will be treated to a bagel breakfast buffet if they reach the goal. This year the goal of 50 ideas was exceeded and the breakfast was served. The ideas ranged from systems enhancements to signage to snacks.

Similarly after commencement, all staff who serve as University Hosts are asked to submit their ideas for making the day more pleasant for our 25,000 guests. Over the years these ideas have resulted in better advance informational materials for parents and students, enhanced maps and direc-
tions, better accommodations for elderly and disabled visitors, and free bottles of water for all graduates and guests.

Despite our best efforts to be proactive and to automate our services, there are peak times of the year when a line does form in the service area and students may have to wait for 10 or 15 minutes to see a service associate. At these times we make every effort to have a staff member welcome people, make certain they are in the right office and provide in advance the forms and paperwork they will need to complete their transaction.

At peak times we also attempt to anticipate frequently asked questions and have clear instructions to distribute as handouts by the person doing triage at the door. The handouts include information about the student employment application process, location of academic departments, parking permit application guidelines, maps, and other materials that will assist in providing fast, reliable information.

Finally, at these peak times we try to eliminate as much of the volume as possible. In order to ensure that students aren’t waiting in line to obtain a student ID card or a parking permit, student photographs and parking permit applications are requested during the summer. The student ID and parking permit are prepared in advance and available for pick-up upon arrival.

Although it would be costly and perhaps counterproductive to give everyone a surprise gift when they enter the office, candy and lollipops are available at the service counter and students help themselves. If the wait is unusually long, a staff member may offer the student a small item (such as an office pen) and apologize for the delay. When Stafford loan exit interviews are held students are given a magnet with the URL of the student loan Web site.

I haven’t started bowing to visitors yet, but my visit to Japan certainly raised my consciousness about the importance of looking for every opportunity to improve service. It’s easy to forget that sometimes the simplest things make a difference.

**Conclusion**

After I returned home, I went to my neighborhood gourmet food market to get something to eat and as I walked past the salad bar, I slipped on a piece of lettuce and fell on my knees with a thud. The fall took my breath away and it took me a minute to get up. No one was paying much attention to what had happened. It took another thirty seconds before a man came over to ask if I had been injured and mop up the wayward lettuce. After he finished, he walked away and I headed for the ladies room to check for bruises. Welcome home, I thought.

The next day I went into my neighborhood delicatessen and sat at the counter to get something to eat. As I sat down, the friendly waitress had already gotten a bottled water for me and was pouring it into the glass. “The usual?” she asked.

The following day I attended one of our summer orientation sessions for freshmen and observed faculty members interacting with students at advisement and registration. They greeted students pleasantly, discussed course options with them patiently, assisted them with the registration transactions, and invited them to make contact over the summer if they had further questions.

My visit to Japan emphasized the concept of service. At the same time I am pleased to realize that in many ways we do measure up to Japanese standards for customer service and am happy to see it happening in my neighborhood and at my university. Welcome home!

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Louise Lonabocker is Director of Student Services at Boston College, an AACRAO Past-President, and Editor of College and University.
Campus Viewpoint

Freshman Admissions Predictor:
An Interactive Self-Help Web Counseling Service

Joe F. Head and Thomas M. Hughes

Colleges and universities must seek or develop the most competitive enrollment management tools in order to reach and admit qualified students. However, institutions that utilize transactional Web features are more effective if they can personalize services by providing useful customized information in real time for the prospect. Well crafted high touch features combined with high tech interactive services give an advantage to any college admissions office over other peer institutions.

Kennesaw State University (KSU), the third largest public university in Georgia, is a popular choice among traditional-age students. In early 2003, the University raised its admissions standards, and as a result, the Office of Admissions was faced with the challenge of becoming more “customer” friendly, especially with regards to communicating information about the increased standards and its impact on applicants. After the new standards implementation, the demand for appeals and informal reconsiderations reached an all time high. Due to the volume of unprecedented requests for personal appointments by denied applicants, the Office of Admissions developed a Web tool to help prospective students, guidance counselors, and parents evaluate an applicant’s eligibility. The Freshman Admissions Predictor (FAP) is a timely advisement tool that promises to increase the percentage of eligible applicants while decreasing the number of applicants not meeting admission standards.

The Freshman Admissions Predictor
The FAP is a 24 x 7, self-help, interactive counseling Web tool with two desirable purposes:

1. First, the FAP provides a basic admission counseling template that enables parents, prospective freshmen, and transfer freshmen with less than 30 hours credit to determine unofficially if their credentials meet or exceed admission standards.

2. The second purpose is achieved when prospects are electronically advised of their likelihood of admission, thus preventing unnecessary fees/expense, lost time, credential collections, and disappointment. This also reduces the need for personal contact with office staff. The volume in data entry and appointments with counselors are better managed if ineligible prospects can be redirected early in the process, thereby reducing the need to collect documents, build folders, and review files only to render a decision of ineligibility.

The operational philosophy of the KSU Office of Admissions is one of providing high touch 24 x 7 transactional Web services along with traditional recruitment and processing. The transactional Web strategy services include an online application, online brochures, virtual advisor Q/A, application status check access for both applicants and high school counselors, freshman admissions predictor, online high school guidance counselor service center, Georgia High School Directory, e-mail communication plan, and automated outbound phone notifications. Other electronic services supporting the admissions process, as internal operations, include electronic data push technology for applications, credentials and SAT/ACT scores, document imaging, and limited workflow. What was a traditional phone-a-thon system has been transformed into a telephone and e-mail Chat Telecenter.

With limited funding to expand the number of staff members, transactional Web/electronic services provide alternative communications for prospects needing assistance. The FAP Web page is found at www.kennesaw.edu/admissions/ugadm.shtml.
Freshman Admissions Predictor Format
The structure of the FAP tool is relatively simple and requires less than two minutes to complete. An illustration of a completed form is provided in Figure 1.

PART 1
In the first part of the FAP form, prospects provide demographic information such as name, state, high school type, and diploma type.

PART 2
The second part addresses the completion of the following Collegiate Preparatory Curriculum (CPC) classes: 4 English, 4 Mathematics, 3 Natural Sciences, 2 Foreign Languages in the same language, 3 Social Sciences. For each course, applicants must toggle radio buttons indicating one of the following options: Complete, In-Progress, Failed, or Deficient.

PART 3
Grade point average and test scores comprise the third part. To determine GPA, prospects estimate their CPC average and choose one of the following grades: A+, A-, B+, B-, C+, C-, or D. Test scores are entered as indicated. A written exam is not yet part of the college entrance (SAT/ACT) requirement, so this score is not used.

After the information is entered, an advisory notification is displayed when the prospect clicks on the “Process Student Inquiry” hot link bar at the bottom of the Web form. One of three probabilities is indicated: Strong, Marginal, and Ineligible. Strong prospects exceed admission standards, perhaps lacking only CPC courses in progress. Marginal prospects meet minimum standards for GPA and test scores. Ineligible prospects do not meet one or all of the admission standards for GPA, test scores, or have failed or not completed the prescribed CPC requirements.

Ineligible prospects receive an explanation of deficiencies and a list of alternative institutions to help redirect the student. Strong or marginal prospects also receive specific information according to data entered in the form regarding classes that must be completed, possible placement testing, and other appropriate tips that will influence a final decision.

The FAP used in Figure 1 is from a hypothetical prospect, Joe Smith. Joe attends public school in Georgia, pursues a college preparatory curriculum, has a B- GPA, and scored 1090 on his SAT (560 in Verbal and 530 in Math). Figure 2 depicts the Electronic Advisory Notice or “result page” generated as a result of the criteria Joe Smith entered. Even though an indication of a “Strong” probability for admission was given, several sentences in this notice clearly indicate this is not an official decision and is subject to changing conditions. Similar language is used for Marginal and Ineligible probability. Ineligible advisory notices present probable reasons in boldface type.

FAP Usage
The FAP tool is equipped with a “behind the scenes” counter that collects all transactions and logs data entered. Reports reveal percentages of in-state and out-of-state inquiries, total number of transactions, and more.

The positive reputation of FAP has spread among students, parents, and secondary counselors. During its first six months,
A tracking study of FAP usage revealed that 5,302 prospective students submitted the form. Of this total, 64 percent resulted in a strong possibility of a positive admission decision, and 26 percent and 38 percent were predicted to be marginal or ineligible, respectively. Unfortunately this study was unable to track who actually applied with reference to Strong, Marginal, or Ineligible probabilities. At the conclusion of the second year over 1,400 transactions were submitted.

Survey research findings indicate prospective freshman are aware of the FAP, but much still needs to be done in marketing this tool. Table 1 indicates that about half of freshman prospects (299 freshman attending orientation completed questionnaires) know of this Web service. Survey results show that most came upon the Web site while surfing the Internet, but guidance counselors were also instrumental in leading students to the site.

Table 2 reveals that 97 percent of freshman prospects believed the FAP to be either useful or very useful. Of some concern to admissions staff is the fact that 3 percent believed the FAP was not useful; this statistic is higher than projected. It is possible that a portion of these prospects probably were aware that they would be accepted, making such a tool perfunctory. However, this issue merits further investigation.

Area high school guidance counselors are very supportive of the FAP tool. They see it as a timely service to advise students about the reality of admission regardless of what college they may be considering. In addition, the expanded success of this 90-second interactive Web service caught the attention of The

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**Table 1: Are You Aware of the Freshman Admissions Predictor (FAP)?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If “Yes,” how did you learn of the FAP?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surfing the Internet</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referred</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance Counselors</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Table 2: Did You Use the Freshman Admissions Predictor (FAP)?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If “Yes,” rate its usefulness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Usefulness</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Useful</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Useful</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Useful</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Georgia Board of Regents. With some modifications, the KSU FAP was adopted for optional use by other institutions in the University System.

KSU Admissions invites you to try out the FAP Web tool at www.kennesaw.edu/admissions/ugadm.shtml.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Joe F. Head is Dean of Enrollment Services and Director of Admissions at Kennesaw State University. He received the APEX Innovations in Technology for Admissions Award in 2004 from AACRAO. In 2003 The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia presented him the Best Practices Award for the Freshman Admission Predictor and five other innovations. In 2005 he received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Georgia Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.

Thomas M. Hughes retired as Associate Director for Graduate Admissions at Kennesaw State University and continues part-time in special projects.
The Cambridge Continuum from CIE—
A Positive Alternative for U.S. Schools

Tom Eason, Sherry Reach, and Val Sismey

Registrars and admissions officers across the U.S. will have noticed a gradual but definite increase in students bearing qualifications from CIE—University of Cambridge International Examinations. Most already recognize the Advanced Level (A Level) and Ordinary Level (O Level) qualifications; many are less familiar with IGCSE (International General Certificate of Secondary Education), Advanced Subsidiary Level (AS Level) qualifications, and the AICE Diploma (Advanced International Certificate of Education)—all obtained during high school and now listed on college applications. What is the provenance of these qualifications? And why should registrars and admissions officers feel reassured when they see CIE examination scores on an application?

The Cambridge Continuum—
A Challenging Curriculum

CIE is part of the University of Cambridge (established in 1207), one of the world’s oldest and most highly regarded educational ‘brands,’ revered as much today as at any point in its 800-year history. CIE is also a division of UCLES (the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate), an examination board which comprises CIE and sister divisions OCR (one of the world’s leading providers of tests for speakers of English as a second language). UCLES has been providing internationally standardized curriculum frameworks and assessments since 1863, and as a result has become a world leader in curriculum development, assessment technologies, and teacher support.

CIE qualifications provide an assessment continuum for students from grades 9 to 12, comprising IGCSE, AS, and A Levels. CIE also provides:

- **Cambridge International Diplomas**—specialist assessments focused on workplace skills and applications in vocational subjects, including: IT, travel and tourism, business, and management
- **Cambridge International Diplomas for teaching professionals**—the Diploma in Teaching with Information and Communication Technology; and the Diploma for Teachers and Trainers

In the U.S., CIE’s most popular assessments are IGCSE and AICE, also known as the ‘Cambridge Program.’ IGCSE (the International General Certificate of Secondary Education) follows a one or two-year course in grades 9–10 and leads to a possible IICE Diploma (International Certificate of Education), which students earn if they pass seven IGCSE examinations from the required subject groups. AS and A Levels follow a one- or two-year course in grades 11–12, and lead to a possible AICE Diploma if students pass six credits worth of AS or A Level examinations from the required subject groups. Both are available in a wide range of subjects, and course structure and content emphasize the development of higher order thinking skills, oral skills, writing skills, real world applications (often tailored to local exemplar), independent investigative skills, teamwork, and international understanding.

IGCSE and AICE are recognized by major universities, professional bodies, and employers around the world. For a full list of all recognizing institutions, please see the A/AS Level Recognition Handbook by following the recognition links on the CIE Web site at www.cie.org.uk.

**IGCSE and ICE**

IGCSE, the equivalent in standard to GCSEs, which replaced O Levels in the UK in 1988, is roughly equivalent to a U.S. honors high school curriculum, with courses divided into five groups:
In the U.S. IGCSE is typically examined at the end of Grade 10, after two years’ study. Passing grades range from ‘A’ (the highest) to ‘G.’ A basic comparison between CIE and U.S. grades is shown in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CIE Grade</th>
<th>Suggested U.S. Equivalent Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>A+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>A- or B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Five passes at grade ‘c’ or higher at IGCSE would indicate that a student is ready to start a freshman-level course at any U.S. university. For more able students at this level, CIE also offers ICE, a group award for students gaining seven IGCSE passes across the subject groups—two languages; four from the remaining groups; and one from any group. ICE equates to a U.S. advanced academic or honors high school diploma, and is awarded at either Distinction, Merit, or Pass, depending on the individual grades achieved.

**AS Level, A Level, and AICE**

CIE qualifications have grown in popularity across the U.S. since their introduction there in 1995. This is especially true of AICE, which comprises A Levels (offered worldwide for over 50 years) and the more recently introduced AS Level examinations. The AICE Diploma program is an internationally standardized pre-university curriculum and examination system. Courses leading to AS Level exams typically require 180 hours. An additional 180 hours, or 360 hours total, is recommended before taking the A Level exam in the same subject. These courses and exams, considered equivalent to college-level, are typically taken in grades 11 and 12 in the U.S. They are divided into three groups:

- Mathematics and Sciences
- Languages
- Arts and Humanities

Passing grades from CIE on the AS and A Levels are ‘A’ to ‘E,’ with ‘A’ being the highest. Students not meeting the performance threshold of grade ‘E’ receive a grade ‘U.’ Students passing a minimum number of A Level and/or AS Level examinations (worth six credits), with at least one coming from each group, can qualify for AICE.

Offered worldwide since 1994, AICE was piloted for three years in the U.S. by the Florida Department for Education and has been approved for use in any Florida school since 2001. All public universities and community colleges in Florida award up to 30 hours college credit for AICE exams passed. Many other U.S. universities also award college credit for AICE—those that have provided CIE with a written statement about their policy are included in the Recognition Handbook accessible at www.cie.org.uk/usa.

The A Level is already awarded advanced status by many U.S. universities so that a full year’s credit (30 hours) may be given for three A Level passes. As AICE requires the equivalent of three A Level passes, it is recommended that equivalent credit should be given to successful AICE students (see Table 2).

**Table 2. A Level Grades**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Level Grades</th>
<th>AICE Diploma Level (Equivalent Performances)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A, A, B</td>
<td>Distinction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C, C, C</td>
<td>Merit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E, E, E</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For institutions awarding advanced standing or college credit on a course-by-course basis, it might be appropriate to offer one-sixth of a full year’s credit for each A level pass, resulting in an average of five credit hours per subject in a 30 credit year. As the amount of credit will vary from subject to subject, further guidance can be found at the CIE Web site where full subject syllabi can be viewed.

AICE not only prepares students to get into a university by delivering college credit, but it also provides them with the necessary skills to achieve success once there. A study done by the University of Florida’s former director of admissions found that AICE program graduates had an average end-of-freshman year GPA of 3.46, whereas students coming from other acceleration mechanisms had a GPA of 3.12 and under at the end of their freshman year.

Further underlining its quality, AICE and IGCSE are now included in the Washington Post Challenge Index, ranked alongside AP and IB tests as offering students the chance to stretch intellectual ability to college level while still at school. The Index is not necessarily a measure of how many students pass these tests, but rather an indicator of opportunity. Index author Jay Mathews is actively challenging a worrying trend in U.S. schools toward a lowering of educational standards in order to raise percentage passes. Schools listed in the Challenge Index take the opposite view. They know that by adding an internationally standardized assessment such as AICE to the curriculum, students often surprise themselves by the level of their achievement. This is further endorsed by a recent study undertaken by Dr. Clifford Adelman for the U.S. Department of Education (‘Study Links High School...’).
Courses with College Success’). This showed that, irrespective of grades achieved, students exposed to academically rigorous courses while in high school were much more likely to attend college and graduate. CIE is now encouraging all its AICE and IGCSE schools to forward data when requests are issued for next year’s Challenge Index.

Why CIE?
Evidence is clear that courses such as IGCSE and AICE benefit students of all types—from bright students hungry for a more demanding educational experience to those who (initially at least) have little hope of passing but who are keen to try. But why are IGCSE and AICE growing so significantly, when established ‘challenging’ curriculum alternatives exist?

An important factor is provenance. There are few more recognizable educational ‘brands’ than the Cambridge name, known around the world as a symbol of academic excellence. The University’s relationship with the U.S. goes back to 1636, when one of its senior members, John Harvard, became the first benefactor of Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. CIE’s close links with the University allow it to tap into one of the world’s finest educational resources, placing it in a unique position of authority on matters ranging from curriculum development to electronic testing.

Yet CIE’s international perspective is also important. CIE develops its own assessments rather than adapting existing UK tests in order to reflect the international context in which many students learn and eventually work. Many schools find that CIE qualifications allow them to add an international perspective to their curriculum, especially valuable if there is a multicultural or multilingual student body. Many institutions also wish to raise educational standards and to have a recognized international scale against which to measure performance.

CIE’s assessment methodology employs a wide range of techniques, which help reveal a student’s true ability and knowledge. These include essays or extended writing, laboratory practicals in science subjects, listening and oral practicals in foreign language subjects, and multiple choice questions in a few selected subject areas. AS and A Level examinations range in length from three to twelve hours, which leads to the welcomed practice of administering different sections (called papers) of a subject examination over the course of multiple days at particular times according to a set timetable.

Many schools are also attracted by CIE’s inclusive philosophy, a belief that all students should be challenged and should be encouraged to succeed. The flexibility of the Cambridge Program allows students of all abilities to follow a course while also providing opportunities for the brightest to extend their learning goals. Most IGCSE subjects comprise core (suitable for all ‘regular’ students) and extended curricula (for students aiming to follow on to a college-level course). ICE and AICE students who do not pass the examinations required for a full diploma are still awarded a certificate listing each individual subject examined successfully. So while more able students can get to grips with more challenging subject matter, all students can benefit by developing skills such as writing, independent research, and critical thinking, which underpin all CIE curricula.

AICE students in particular benefit from this flexible approach. For example, students must select subjects from across a range of curriculum areas in order to qualify for the AICE Diploma, unlike other programs which tend to focus only on students’ specific strengths. AICE students can still specialize in certain areas, say math and science, but must pass one exam in each of the other two curriculum areas as well. For example, to qualify for AICE a scientist could take A-Level Mathematics and A-Level Physics examinations (worth two credits each if passed); the AS English Language examination from the Language group (for one credit); and the AS Economics examination from the Arts & Humanities (for one credit). This structure satisfies both specialists and generalists, allowing the individual to develop personal strengths while adding more varied fare to the study menu.

Conclusion
Registrars and admissions officers, although already aware of Cambridge, may not fully appreciate the benefits of the Cambridge Program and the quality it represents—the rigor of each course, the level of support, and the underlying philosophy. From relatively modest beginnings in the U.S., uptake of IGCSE and AICE is now beginning to accelerate, and the program is set to become a curriculum feature in many more schools across the country.

For more information please visit www.cie.org.uk/usa or contact Val Sisney, CIE’s Qualifications and Development Manager, at international@ucles.org.uk or Sherry Reach, CIE’s U.S. representative, at cieusrep@comcast.net.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS
Tom Eason has a master’s degree in Modern History from Oxford University, England. He taught in secondary schools in Southern England until 1989 and then joined Cambridge to manage its UK History assessments in 1989. In 1994, he took over the management of Cambridge’s main suite of International assessments for students, becoming in 1998 the Regional Director for North America and Europe and very recently the Director of International Education.

Sherry Reach is the United States Representative for University of Cambridge International Examinations (CIE). Formerly, in Florida, she served as a CIE Center Coordinator, and high school and college instructor, and at Auburn University, she was the Assistant Director for the Center for Economic Education.

Val Sisney is the Qualifications Development Manager with CIE. She has worked for seventeen years in teaching and training in Botswana, China, Namibia, Poland, and the UK, and in assessment for Cambridge for 6 years.
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Global competition for students has concerned U.S. educators for more than a decade. Every year, articles and conference sessions detail threats to U.S. enrollments posed by other countries. At stake is the U.S.’s status as a leader in international education. Other trends, such as the enhanced mobility within Europe through programs like the Bologna Process and Erasmus, also alarm U.S. international educators. Finally, visa regulations, embassy and consular procedures, and U.S. foreign policy further impact enrollments at U.S. universities and colleges.

Without question, there is reason for concern, but how much is warranted? In most cases, assertions are based upon disparate statistics and anecdotal evidence. Arguments could not be built upon transparent or reliable statistics about global student mobility because none existed. Until now.

Todd M. Davis of the Institute of International Education has now provided educators and researchers with the Atlas of Student Mobility. With this resource, Davis, who edited the Open Doors volumes for more than a decade, gives us a data-rich book that provides excellent insights into the current status of international education and adds important perspective to student flows. Luckily for international educators, Davis has created a book that is full of information but presents it in simple and accessible ways.

The book’s simplicity understates its complexity. Davis has stocked it with colorful charts, graphs, and maps. Student populations are quickly comparable, and trends are easily seen. This is not a resource simply for the data-junky. The Atlas is for anyone interested in international enrollment trends—regardless of their level of comfort or experience with numbers.

Davis presents the data in two parts: “Destination” and “Origin.” In “Destination,” he provides profiles of 21 countries that host the largest international student populations. Each profile features two pages of information on countries/regions of origin, income levels, and a short commentary on the country’s international population. Maps and charts give a quick snapshot of the data.

This first part is very helpful in defining the prime competitors to U.S. education as well as putting these players into perspective. Immediately, the reader of the Atlas understands that even though other countries may have growing international student populations, the U.S., with its 547,092 international students, has more than double the number of its closest rival—the United Kingdom. Drilling down deeper, the reader can compare the population’s major countries of origin and determine whether the countries truly do compete against each other for the majority of their students.

The second part of the book, “Origins,” outlines the countries of origin and groups them by income level. This section begins with a summary of various aspects of countries and is essentially an attempt to describe countries through such attributes as the Human Development Index (HDI), civil liberties, press freedom, and foreign investment. Davis then links these data to the number of its citizens who are studying in other countries. In doing so, he implies relationships between various non-educational factors and the mobility of the country’s students. The result is a creative, informative portrait of the world viewed through international student enrollments. The information takes time to grasp but, once understood, is incredibly insightful and rewarding.

To round out the remainder of “Origins,” Davis provides profiles of each country. The profiles include income level (relative to other countries), population, GDP, and HDI rank. Alongside this information, Davis has included the percent...
in Europe, percent abroad-English, percent tertiary abroad, estimated tertiary enrollment, number of tertiary institutions, and the number of students abroad. All of this provides an excellent snapshot of the country’s educational statistics.

If “Destination” helps define the strength of competition, then “Origin” defines prospective markets. Through the data presented in this section, a recruiter can analyze the general traits of a market, and with this analysis, have a better understanding about the likelihood of recruiting students from that country. For example, if a country has a relatively low income and most students, when they study abroad, look toward countries other than the U.S., is this an easy market to tap into?

In addition to the two sections, Davis also scatters small factoids throughout the book. Though they may not be enough in and of themselves to develop arguments around, they provide interesting insights into global trends. They range from interesting notes about international education (“Education = Shopping”) to projections about its future (“The global demand for higher education is forecast to increase from 97 million in 2000 to 263 million in 2025”). Each factoid is accompanied by a reflection on its meaning. Interestingly enough, it is with these reflections that Davis comes closest to interpreting data and trends, but even here, Davis stops short of major analysis.

The Atlas is not perfect, and its weaknesses are in the availability of data and their consistency. Davis relies upon each country to define and report their numbers, and each country may define their data in different ways. Even though Davis provides a glossary as well as the source, the definitions are not complete or detailed. Thus, comparisons from country to country are inherently flawed. For instance, what did Canada include in the number of tertiary institutions? Were Ontario’s Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology included? Did Germany include Fachhochschulen? To know for certain, the reader would have to go beyond the Atlas and contact the sources.

A second limitation of the Atlas is that it does not drill down into each country’s international student population. For instance, it does not (nor could it very easily) provide how many undergraduate students study in Greece, nor is it able to provide most popular majors within countries. More importantly, what is an international student? Readers must settle for simple generalities rather than concrete comparisons.

Though not a flaw, the Atlas provides no analysis, nor are there historical data. The first is beyond the scope of Davis’s project, and the second would be extremely difficult, if not impossible to obtain.

Readers should understand that the Atlas must be viewed as an important start, not end, to the study of international student mobility. Since its publication, thirteen countries have gathered to study and address the weaknesses of its data, and the British Council and IDP Education Australia (among others) have already plans to update the Atlas’s content. Most likely this will be done via the Web and not in print. Other countries have also seen the value of this resource (most importantly the British Council and IDP Education Australia) to continue to support its existence. One hopes that, whatever the future format, the information presented in the successors to Davis’s Atlas is as easily accessible to readers of all backgrounds.

Despite its current limitations, the Atlas of Student Mobility is to be applauded and welcomed. Any criticisms are greatly outweighed by the value of the book. The Atlas is, without a doubt, a gift to international educators not only in the U.S. but also throughout the world. With this compilation of data, Davis has once again provided educators and administrators a wonderful resource. We desperately need it to make wise and informed decisions for our institutions and students.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chris J. Foley is the Director of International Admissions and Chief of Operations in the Office of Admissions at Indiana University–Bloomington. His articles on international credential evaluation and recruitment have appeared in The International Educator, and he is the author of The Educational System of Kyrgyzstan, published by AACRAO.

The Quiet Crisis: How Higher Education is Failing America

By Peter Smith
ANKER, 2004; 159 PP.
Reviewed by Travis Reindl

When it comes to accounting for what ails American higher education, there is no lack of diagnoses. Indeed, the current literature is replete with articles, monographs, reports, and books detailing the maladies afflicting a system simultaneously praised as the best in the world. If anything is lacking, it is new, realistic remedies for academe’s real and/or perceived ills, for policy and practice that will maintain and even bolster the system’s competitiveness. In The Quiet Crisis, educator and policymaker-turned university president Peter Smith treads the now well-worn path of “whither American higher education?” but does it with two refreshing departures—a blunt, plainspoken approach to the problem (not laden with “academe”), and a creative but significant discussion of “the way forward.”

The book leads, logically, with diagnosis, blending statistics familiar to many, charts, and anecdotes gleaned from his experiences as a wunderkind administrator (helping to found the Community College of Vermont in his 20s) and as an elected official. Smith’s read of the symptoms and underlying dysfunction are familiar, but no less compelling. The college opportunity pipeline is leaking on a scale that threatens the nation’s economic competitiveness and social cohesion. Colleges and universities are caught in the vise-grip of the Information Age. Most damning is the fact that many institutions are largely configured to help those most equipped to navigate the collegiate world on their own, leaving those less...
prepared for that world by virtue of socioeconomic status or life experience to fend for themselves. Little in this portion of the book should surprise anyone who has spent any amount of time in higher education, but Smith’s straightforward approach may cause some to look at these issues through new eyes.

The transition between diagnosis and cure contains the book’s greatest contribution—namely, its emphasis on how learning takes place, what that means for academe as currently configured, and the role of technology in meeting learners “where they are.” Smith cites compelling research on learning and the development of human intelligence to issue two powerful reminders to a system faced with an influx of older, diverse learners. First, experience counts, and some of the most profound learning emanates from “learning projects” that often coincide with major life events. Second, advances in educational technology have enabled colleges and universities to reach learners anytime, anywhere and help them to develop and refine competencies. Perhaps most importantly, he calls for a change in mindset regarding postsecondary education’s approach to diversity (socioeconomic as well as racial/ethnic). Smith makes the uncomfortable—but accurate—observation that college and university leaders must start emphasizing the assets of a diverse enrollment experience, rather than strictly its challenges and limitations. It is a crucial and overdue point for an educational community weary of the continuing debate over affirmative action.

The concluding section of the book links these issues to the world of policy and practice. Unfortunately for the reader, it is also the weakest. Smith makes some constructive, focused recommendations for the creation of a coordinated system that meets emerging needs, such as community-based learning experiences supported by improved finance mechanisms such as the year-round Pell Grant. He detracts from them, however, with a liberal dose of futuristic stories that seem out of place and add little value to the thrust of his arguments. Additionally, the book’s discussion of “the way forward” fails to engage two critical factors that will affect the fate of any learning-driven reform agenda—the centrality of basic research (versus applied research and learning) in funding, policymaking, and prestige, and the prevailing orientation of faculty toward service to discipline, as opposed to service to place.

On balance, however, The Quiet Crisis represents a “plain English” contribution to a higher education reform conversation that seems to be plodding forward. It is a book that campus leaders and policymakers can have a conversation around, which is no mean feat. For those tiring (or already tired) of the reform literature, this one is worth a look.

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Travis Reindl is Director of State Policy Analysis and Assistant to the President at the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU).

Student Marketing for Colleges and Universities
BY RICHARD WHITESIDE
AACRAO, 2004; 262PP.; $60, AACRAO MEMBERS; $80, NON-MEMBERS
Reviewed by Brian A. Vander Schee

To most academics, the idea of applying the principles of marketing to colleges and universities is akin to selling your soul. However, many in higher education have come to terms with the idea that marketing is not only necessary but is an important tool to help institutions reach their institutional goals. Call it student recruitment, student retention, or institutional image; it is marketing just the same.

Student Marketing for Colleges and Universities, edited by Richard Whiteside of Tulane University, introduces marketing theory to the higher education setting with application specifically to student recruitment. As a marketing professor and a former enrollment manager, I related very well to the content of the book. However, I also found that the authors make appropriate presentations and sound explanations for those not familiar with marketing concepts.

The text smartly addresses several basic areas of marketing including the marketing environment, marketing information and technology, consumer behavior, market segmentation, and branding as well as some areas of integrated marketing including direct marketing and advertising. The editor states that the book is “intended for those in leadership positions who are interested in or responsible for marketing the institution to prospective students.” Enrollment managers will likely embrace the text as much of the advice within it supports the position taken by those in the field. Other campus administrators will benefit from examining the section that makes the case for having an institutional marketing plan as outlined in the final chapter. Faculty are also introduced to how they can have a role in student recruitment and how the governance of colleges and universities has a significant impact on enrollment issues.

Each chapter reflects the stance of the author from a commercial profession or enrollment management perspective. The introductory chapters highlight the need to establish an effective mission, vision, and marketing statements from which an institutional brand identity can be created. Clifford Lull and Bernice Thieblot’s chapter on branding then lists the elements of brand positioning, suggests several tools for creative direction, and poses many poignant questions that college administrators should ask creative consultants before contract negotiation.

The text continues with many noteworthy contributions to student marketing. For example, David Crockett, in his chapter on strategic priorities, wisely recommends that “setting clear and realistic enrollment goals is a key fundamental to achieving enrollment success.” Jim Black accurately describes the academic culture on most campuses as “terminally collegial” in his chapter on integrated college and university mar-
marketing. The text closes with guidelines on how to institute a marketing plan with a sample plan included in the appendix.

Although issues of pricing, product, and distribution are given a cursory overview, they likely do not merit further exploration for enrollment managers given that those decisions are usually beyond their scope of their decision-making authority. However, topics worthy of further exploration for all colleges and universities include social responsibility and marketing ethics. With so much emphasis on corporate responsibility in business, it is appropriate to address ethics and responsibility in marketing colleges and universities. For example, one can legitimately ask whether it is ethical to admit a financially endowed student who is not adequately prepared for the academic rigor of the institution.

The text also does not address other aspects of integrated marketing communications such as public relations, personal selling, and sales promotion. Colleges and universities use sales promotion tactics all the time. Waiving the application fee for highly qualified prospects or for those who apply online is a consumer promotion. Offering free overnight campus stays to new high school guidance counselors in the area is a trade promotion. Incorporating this topic can help to clarify how all the tools of promotion can be used together as part of a comprehensive marketing plan.

Not addressing personal selling also omits a critical component in student recruitment at smaller or less selective colleges. At these institutions building a personal relationship with prospective students and their families is vital to substantiating their claim of individual attention. Moreover, the text would be even more valuable to all college and university enrollment managers if it had made a stronger case for increasing marketing expenditures using the objective and task method.

The marketing plan included in the appendix is comprehensive and tactically sound. It serves as an excellent model for selective comprehensive universities with strong name recognition and an established identity. It does not, however, address why selectivity should be increased, why the incremental increases in standardized test scores are valid, or why standardized test scores are even an appropriate measure of preparedness. Perhaps these issues are addressed in another document from the sample university; however, gaining campus consensus in the process necessitates outlining the rationale in the marketing plan. In addition the sample plan does not address why certain quantitative items should increase and how those increases will be accomplished. Specifically, why increase the average SAT score of the incoming freshmen class by five points? Why not two points or twenty points? What will be done in the marketing program to make the desired increase a reality?

The editor prefaces the book by stating that it was created to address the concern that “there does not appear to be a single authoritative source that interprets basic and advanced marketing techniques within the context of student marketing.” I agree that this work is significant in applying many aspects of marketing theory to the context of higher education. This book is a great reference tool for enrollment managers at colleges and universities that are in a position to select and finance students. Many institutions are not in such a position and thus do not have the time and financial resources needed to implement all that the text recommends.

Therefore, the text has limited application for colleges and universities with limited resources or dire enrollment deficits. However, the absence of application to this segment of the higher education market is not unique in the enrollment management literature. The book is well written and highlights the need to publish other texts on this topic with application to more targeted audiences within higher education.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Brian A. Vander Schee, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor of Business Management at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford. Previously he served as the Vice President for Enrollment Management at two different colleges. His doctorate in Higher Education Administration is from the University of Connecticut.
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