



**A Social Media Strategy for Graduate
Enrollment Growth:**

The @UCIrvineGD Experience

Frances Leslie, PhD

Vice Provost and Graduate Dean

Strategic framework

• Goals

- **Major Goal:** increase doctoral applications and ultimately, doctoral enrollment through increased brand awareness
 - *Critical to increase applications and/or yield to maintain quality during doctoral enrollment growth*
- **Secondary Goal:** to promote successful launch of new Professional Master's programs

• Important Shifts

- Targeted ad and email campaign
- Cohesive handles
- Constant use of images and videos
- Consistent branding and aesthetic



[@UCIrvineGD](#)



[@UCIrvineGD](#)



[@UCIrvineGD](#)



UC Irvine Graduate Division



[UCIrvineGD](#)



[flickr.com/photos/ucigd/](#)

First steps

- **Who?** | *Identify your target population(s).*
- **What?** | *Identify the type of content you will communicate, for each population, for each platform.*
- **When?** | *Identify a good entry point in the calendar to launch your new strategy and social presence.*
- **Why?** | *Have an answer to this. This speaks to the way you communicate. The content you communicate. And, it will ultimately drive your social strategy.*
- **How?** | *How will you manage this work, maintain it, and ensure that it evolves with the times, the platforms and your target populations?*

Communicating with graduate prospects

- Importance of tone
 - Inclusive
 - Be conscious of the diversity of the audience
 - Speak to all
 - Avoid aligning with specific values or belief systems
 - Be consistent with institutional messages
 - Approachable
 - Opportunity to be more conversational than the tone of more official communications
 - Balance approachability with professionalism
- Keep expectations flexible
 - Some needed directions may be challenging to achieve
 - Ex: **User Generated Content** is a big value added bonus. But, graduate students are quite uncomfortable on camera, thinking about social in a way that takes them just beyond their own basic use. Makes getting student made videos and images from their perspective a challenge.

Platform selection

- Meet people where they are
 - Choose platforms that graduate prospects use
 - Must understand where your demographic spends their social media time
- Fit of platform and message
 - Popularity should be balanced with fit
 - Not all platforms are the right format for intended message
 - Examples: Snapchat, Pinterest

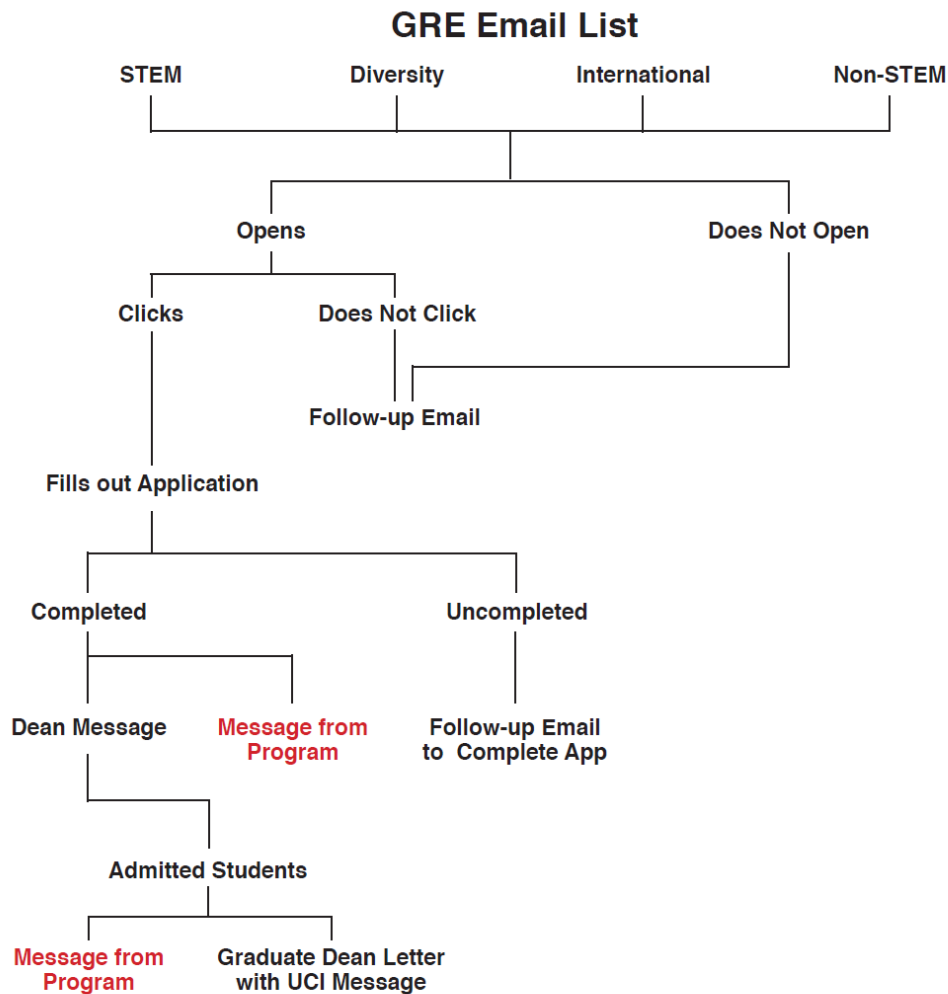
***By the Numbers:** between October 2016 and April 2017, our demographic was far more likely to engage in social media via **mobile devices** versus desktop*

Mobile outperformed Desktop dramatically

- Desktop Total Clicks: **572**
- Desktop Total Reach: **138,957**
- Mobile Total Clicks: **87,071**
- Mobile Total Reach: **2,027,513**

CRM e-mail campaign plan

2016 EMAIL CAMPAIGN



slate

KEY

■ School can contact student at this point



Initial message inviting application

UCI Graduate Division

[About Us](#) [Admissions](#) [Funding](#) [Academics](#) [Services](#) [Professional Success](#)



Discover the Power of **Inspiration.**

As a graduate student at the University of California, Irvine, you will be given every resource and opportunity to explore your chosen path. Here, you have the power to develop into a leader and make a true difference in the world and your local communities. UCI will provide you with everything you need to succeed, but ultimately it is up to you to get there.

Discover what lies ahead. Discover the Power of I.

APPLY NOW »

Admission message

UCI Graduate Division

[About Us](#) [Admissions](#) [Funding](#) [Academics](#) [Services](#) [Professional Success](#)



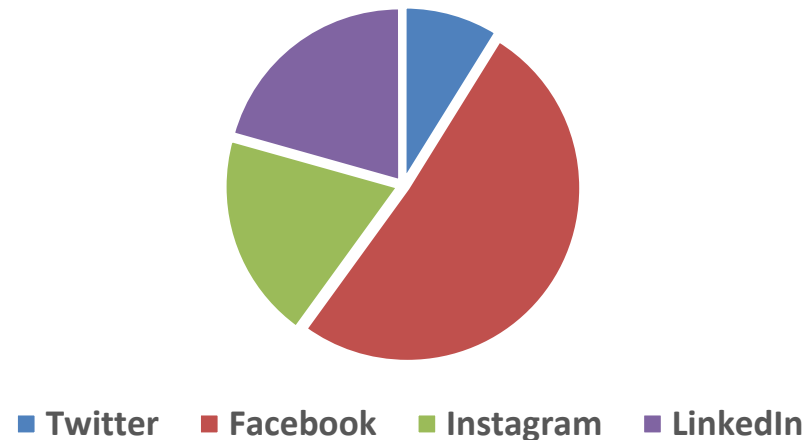
Again, congratulations on your admission to UC Irvine. We hope to see you at our Campuswide New Graduate Student Orientation on September 20, 2017. This event provides essential information for those new to UCI, and those familiar with UCI but new to graduate education. The campuswide orientation also presents a unique opportunity to meet your fellow incoming students from academic disciplines beyond your own. We will e-mail you detailed information about this event in the weeks to come. In the meantime, I encourage you to remind yourself why you applied to UCI by reviewing What Sets US Apart <http://www.grad.uci.edu/about-us/what-sets-us-apart/index.html>

Social Media Strategy & *Growth by Platform*

Which social media channels to use?



Survey responses



Social media management software

- Schedule posts
 - Ability to plan, populate and edit posts in advance
 - “Needs Approval” feature places a hold on select posts to allow for review
- Background tracking of platforms for basic metrics
- Integrates and tracks the bit.ly shortner
- Reduces staff time and allows for better overall strategy integration



AUDIENCE DEMOGRAPHICS Across UC IrvineGD's Twitter and Facebook accounts

TWITTER FOLLOWERS		FACEBOOK IMPRESSIONS DEMOGRAPHICS	
64% Male Followers	36% Female Followers	49% Male Fans	51% Female Fans
18-20	0%	0%	0%
21-24	16%	16%	19%
25-34	66%	66%	62%
35-44	11%	11%	9%
45-54	1%	1%	2%
55-64	4%	4%	5%
65+			

Mon, Jul 03, 2017

Scheduled Message Mon, Jul 03, 2017 12:00 pm

UC Irvine Graduate Division
Worried about funding your advanced degree? Don't be! UCI offers numerous fellowships and awards for its students. Check it out here: <http://bit.ly/2o9Ugr5>

Scheduled Message Mon, Jul 03, 2017 12:00 pm

UC Irvine Graduate Division
Negotiating in the work place is a valuable skill, particularly for women. <http://bit.ly/2tbydk1>

Tue, Jul 04, 2017

Scheduled Message Tue, Jul 04, 2017 12:00 pm

UCI GraduateDivision @UCIrvineGD
Happy Fourth of July! Stay safe today! #ZotZotZot

Platform focus: Facebook

Ad set launched from **October 2016 - April 2017** garnered the following results:

- Impressions: **4,551,208**
- Reach: **2,140,167**
- Clicks: **87,643**
- Average cost per click (CPC): **\$0.185**

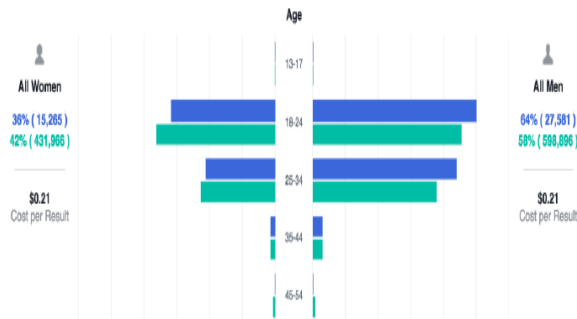
42,921 Results: Link Clicks \$0.21 Cost per Result 2.09% Result Rate



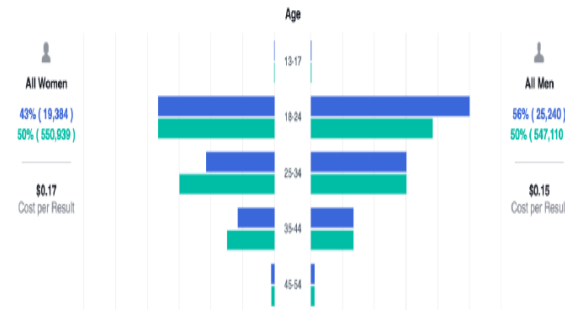
44,722 Results: Link Clicks \$0.16 Cost per Result 1.79% Result Rate



42,921 Results: Link Clicks 1,037,261 Reach



44,722 Results: Link Clicks 1,102,906 Reach



UC Irvine Graduate Division
Sponsored ·

Choose from over 100 masters and doctoral programs. Apply today!



Join the UC Irvine Community!
apps.grad.uci.edu [Apply Now](#)

Robert Paulson and 21 others
 Like Comment Share

Clicks: 33,096
Reach: 764,271
Impressions: 1,374,740
CPC: \$0.20

UC Irvine Graduate Division
Sponsored ·

What inspires you? Choose from over 100 masters and doctoral programs. Apply today!



Graduate Studies
After January 15, 2017 man... [Learn More](#)

Michelle Chan and 4 others 1 Share
 Like Comment Share

Clicks: 43,281
Reach: 1,016,725
Impressions: 2,305,042
CPC: \$0.15

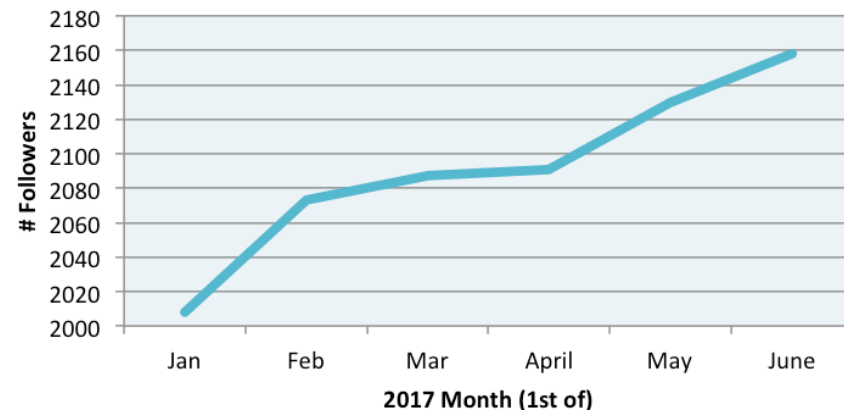
Platform focus: Twitter



@UCIrvineGD

- In **2010** – not a major place for engagement
- In **2016** – engagement in organic posts often outperforms Facebook
- Characteristics
 - 140 character limit: soundbites and teasers, not dense content
 - “Real-time” feel: reduces saturation for consumers
 - Instant response/feedback from followers
- Other Ways to Engage
 - Share live account of events → allows remote participation
 - Polls → generate engagement

2017 Twitter Growth by Followers



UCI GraduateDivision @UCIrvineGD · Jun 6

Home stretch of Spring Qtr! #Gradeaters, how do you plan to spend the first few weeks of summer?

25% Traveling 🗺️

13% Beach 🏖️

25% Netflix + 🍕 pizza

37% More work hustle 💻

8 votes • Final results



Platform focus: Twitter

Ad set launched from **October 2016 - April 2017** yielded the following results:

- Impressions: **1,368,245**
- Clicks: **32,271**
- Average cost per click (CPC): **\$0.32**



@UCIrvineGD

Gender	Impressions	Spend
Summary for 3 items	1,368,245	\$10,481.19
Male	672,159	\$3,948.35
Female	518,520	\$4,810.34
Unknown	177,566	\$1,674.50

Platform	Impressions	Spend
Summary for 5 items	1,368,245	\$10,481.19
Android devices	1,082,572	\$9,403.94
iOS devices	274,313	\$971.53
Desktop and laptop computers	8,462	\$4.86

UCI GraduateDivision
LIFE @UCIrvineGD

What inspires you? Choose from over 100 masters and doctoral programs. Apply today! bit.ly/2dOQ8WF



Impressions: 214,172
Clicks: 5,058
Avg. CPC: \$0.32

UCI GraduateDivision
LIFE @UCIrvineGD

Join the UCI community! Choose from over 100 masters and doctoral programs. Apply today! bit.ly/2dOQ8WF



Impressions: 229,813
Clicks: 5,335
Avg. CPC: \$0.32

Platform focus: YouTube

- Launched in 2010
- “**Video is King**”
 - Video as a critical window into UCI, graduate education, constituent experience which **provides a feel** for who we are
 - Provides an important **searchable** archive/library for video content that **can always be referenced** in other platforms
- Linkability
 - Can link to YouTube videos from other Social Media channels
 - Ability to highlight other social channels on YouTube



Platform focus: LinkedIn

- Launched in 2016
- Unique Characteristics
 - Focus on professional development
 - Opportunity to maintain connection w/alums
 - Ability to link to other social channels
 - Nature of content and voice must shift to reflect professional stance
- Challenges
 - Newest platform;
 - Takes time to gather same level of followers as other platforms
 - Different content, different strategy
 - More expensive ad cost-per click (CPC)



UC Irvine Graduate Division

UCI UC Irvine Graduate Division
2mo

IN THE NEWS: Check out the new research on memory recall featuring UCI graduate alum Aurora LePort who earned her PhD in Neurobiology and Behavior from UCI in 2014. <http://bit.ly/2oF49uk>



Total recall: the people who never forget
theguardian.com

2 Likes

Like Comment Share

UCI UC Irvine Graduate Division
2mo

Find out why Heidi Contreras, who received her Ph.D. in 2010 with a focus on Ecology and Evolutionary Biology would choose UCI Irvine again and again. WATCH: <https://lnkd.in/eiYhAAe>



Heidi Contreras, Ph.D. '10 - Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
youtube.com

4 Likes

Like Comment Share

Personal LinkedIn account



Frances Leslie

Vice Provost for Graduate Education at UC Irvine
1mo

Do you know anyone who is interested in going to graduate school? UCI is looking for good applicants.



UCI opens doctoral programs to hundreds more students

news.uci.edu



12 likes



Like



Comment



Share



89% 4:43 PM

UC Irvine's rare distinction: It's an elite research university that's a haven for ...

207 6



5 people from University of California, Los Angeles viewed your post

More views from:

UC Irvine 14

UCI Applied Innovation 2

California State University-Los Ang... 2



Most of your clicks came from your **2nd+ degree network**



1ST

2ND+

Overall social media growth



- What is a Klout Score?

- A number between 1-100 that represents a user's **influence on Social Media**
- Greater influence yields a higher Klout Score
- According to experts:
 - 60+, and you're doing pretty good, takes work to maintain
 - 80+: rockstar status

53

MARCH

- The power of a strong Social Media strategy that is also multi-faceted is evident via Klout: *great measure of performance in one value*

55


FEBRUARY

- UCIGD Klout Score at the time of ad launch: **44**
- UCIGD Klout Score 6 months into our ad campaign: **53**

54

JANUARY

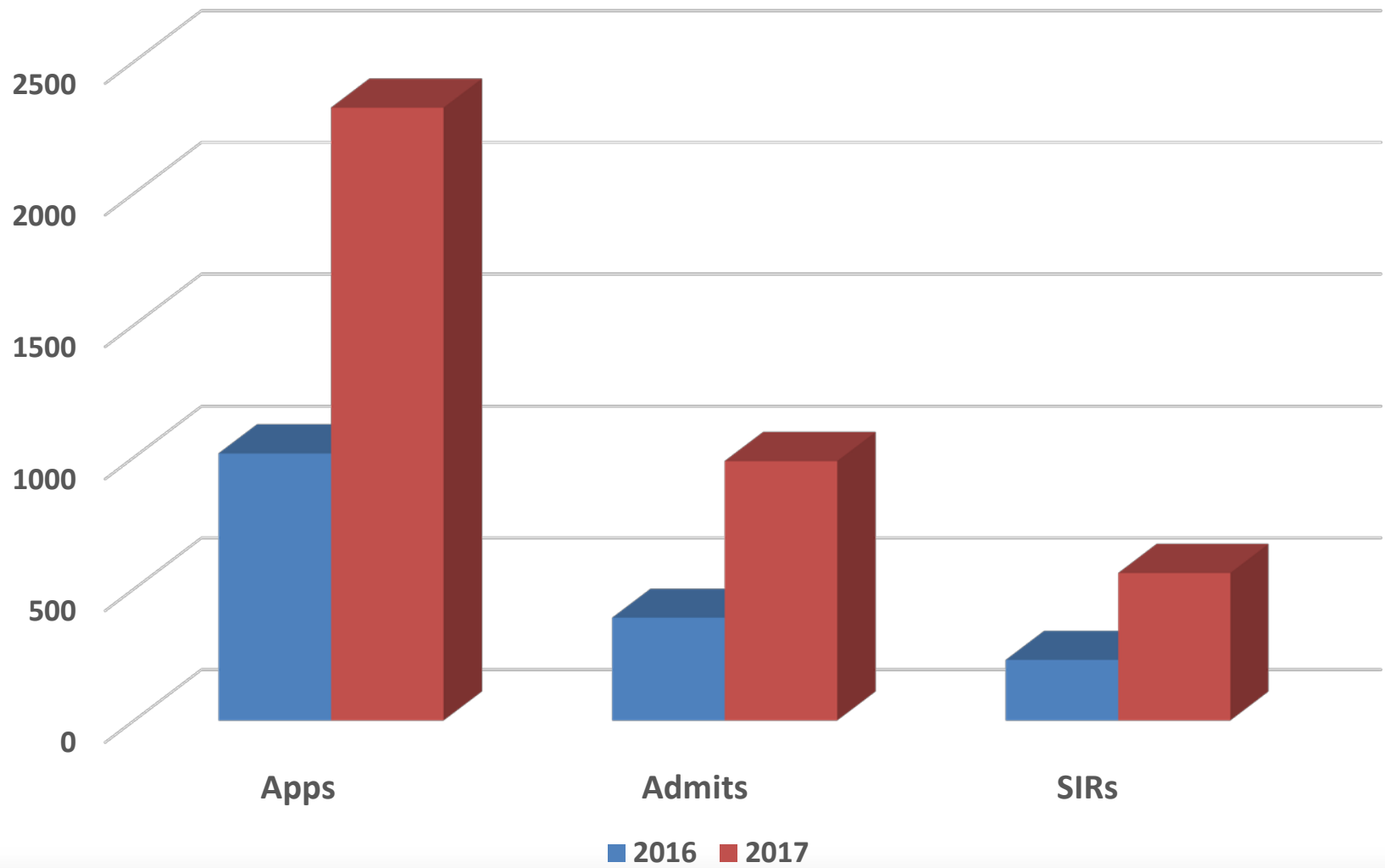
- How to Increase your Klout Score? To start...

- Increase followers/likes AND diversity of followers/likes
- Achieve active engagement in social (beyond likes and )
- Increase number of active platforms and activity on each
- Run an active ad campaign

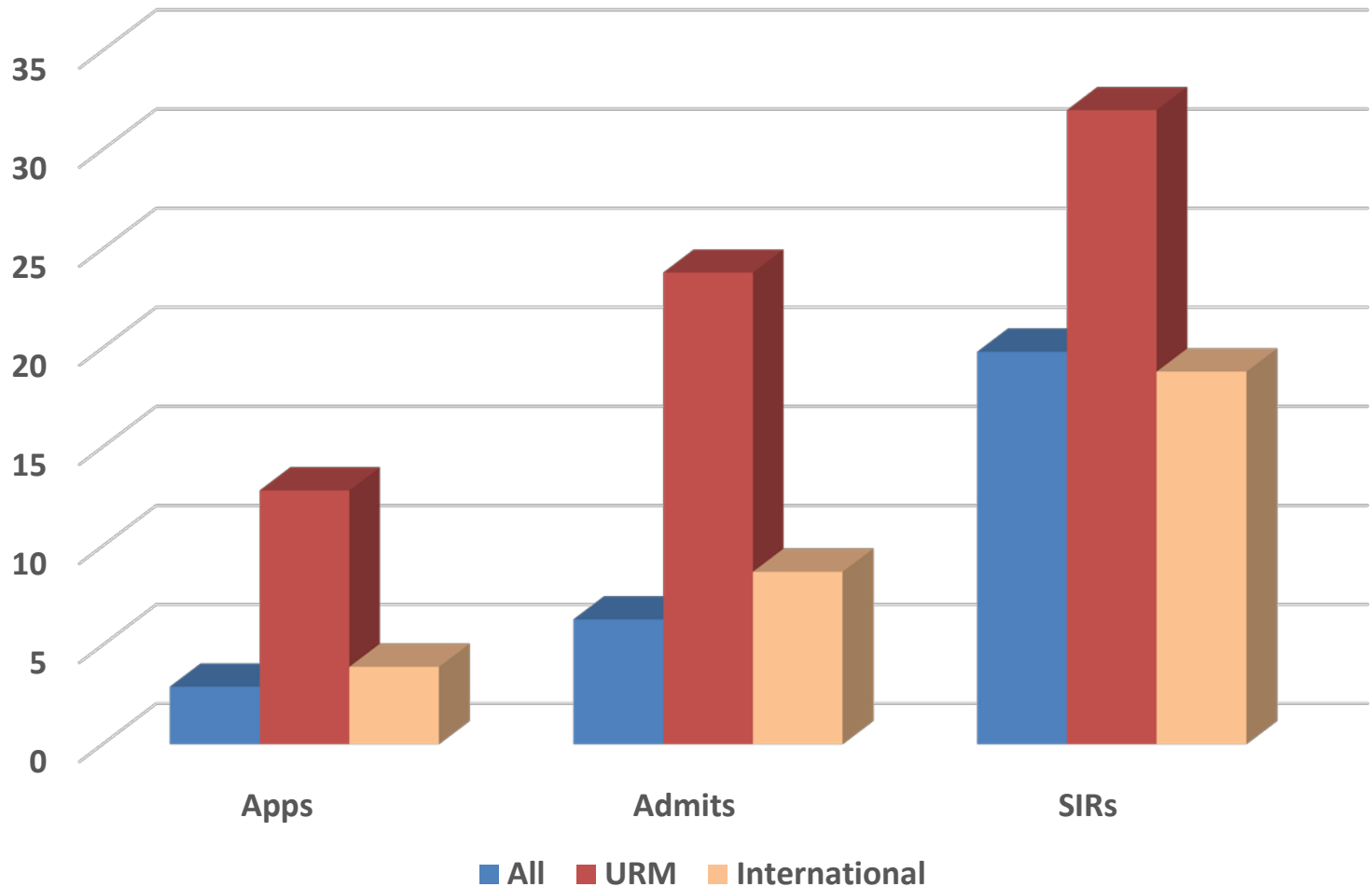
44

OCTOBER

Professional Master's programs growth



PhD growth (%)



Maximize existing resources

- **Communicate with other units on campus**
 - Make note of other Social Media accounts. Actively tag, like, retweet, share, etc.
 - Speak with the managers of these accounts to get a sense of different strategies, what works, what doesn't in their experience
- **Maximize connections**
 - All connections in Social matter
 - Garnering attention (via engagement) from accounts with larger followers will pay off in your reach, following, and ultimately your Klout Score
- **Designate social media staff**
 - Assign a staff member, student or volunteer the responsibility of monitoring social activity, developing content, scheduling posts, noting changes within platforms, capturing special events, daily images and videos, tracking metrics and more
- **Solicit graduate student opinions & input**
 - Student Working Group
 - ✓ Start-up in-progress at UCI
 - Engage students (or your target population) directly as part of your strategy

Questions?



@UCIrvineGD



@UCIrvineGD



@UCIrvineGD



UC Irvine Graduate Division



UCIrvineGD



[flickr.com/photos/ucigd/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/ucigd/)

