

# Recruitment Strategies for the Heartland

Ranjit T. Koodali

Pre-Technical Workshop  
CGS Annual Meeting  
Nashville, TN

# Recruitment Strategies for the Heartland

Universities located between the densely populated US coasts often encounter special recruitment challenges. These may include a lack of name recognition, less diversity, a lack of programs that match high-demand student interests, and stereotypes about particular US regions. Learn how institutions in the "heartland" and beyond can promote their strengths and expand their programs using creative enrollment management strategies.

# Recruitment Strategies for the Heartland

**9:00-9:15 a.m.** Introduction of speakers, explanation of first breakout activity, and organization of groups

**9:15-9:30 a.m.** Breakout groups discussing current challenges at attendee institutions

**9:30-9:45 a.m.** Report back on challenges

**9:45-10:05 a.m.** Presentation #1 – Ranjit Koodali

**10:05-10:20 a.m.** Break

**10:20-10:40 a.m.** Presentation # 2 – Jim Ahearn

**10:40-11.00 a.m.** Presentation # 3 – Jeni Hart

**11:00-11:30 a.m.** Q and A and wrap-up

# Build Awareness?

## **SEARCH ENGINES**

- **79% use search engines for research**
- **2 in 3 search for program**

## **WEBSITES**

- **89% of prospects visit university website for further research**

## **OTHER**

- **24% visit blogs, online forums etc.**
- **13% visit social media**

**Wiley Education Services Survey, 2018**

# Brand Awareness - Recommendations

1. Enhance website discoverability with Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Techniques
  - i. Update content **regularly** with faculty accomplishments, research interests/expertise, awards, publications *etc.*



**National Accreditation Oversight Provided by University of South Dakota Occupational Therapy Associate Professor**

VERMILLION, S.D. – Ranelle Nissen, Ph.D., OTR/L, academic fieldwork coordinator and associate professor in the Occupational



**Occupational Therapy Alumnus Receives 30 Under 30 Recognition**

Mary Schaefer '14 B.S., '16 M.S., is an occupational therapist for Folsom Cordova Unified School District in Sacramento, California, and provides therapy to children of all ages. Schaefer received the 30 under 30 achievement for

**OT is a Great Career Choice**

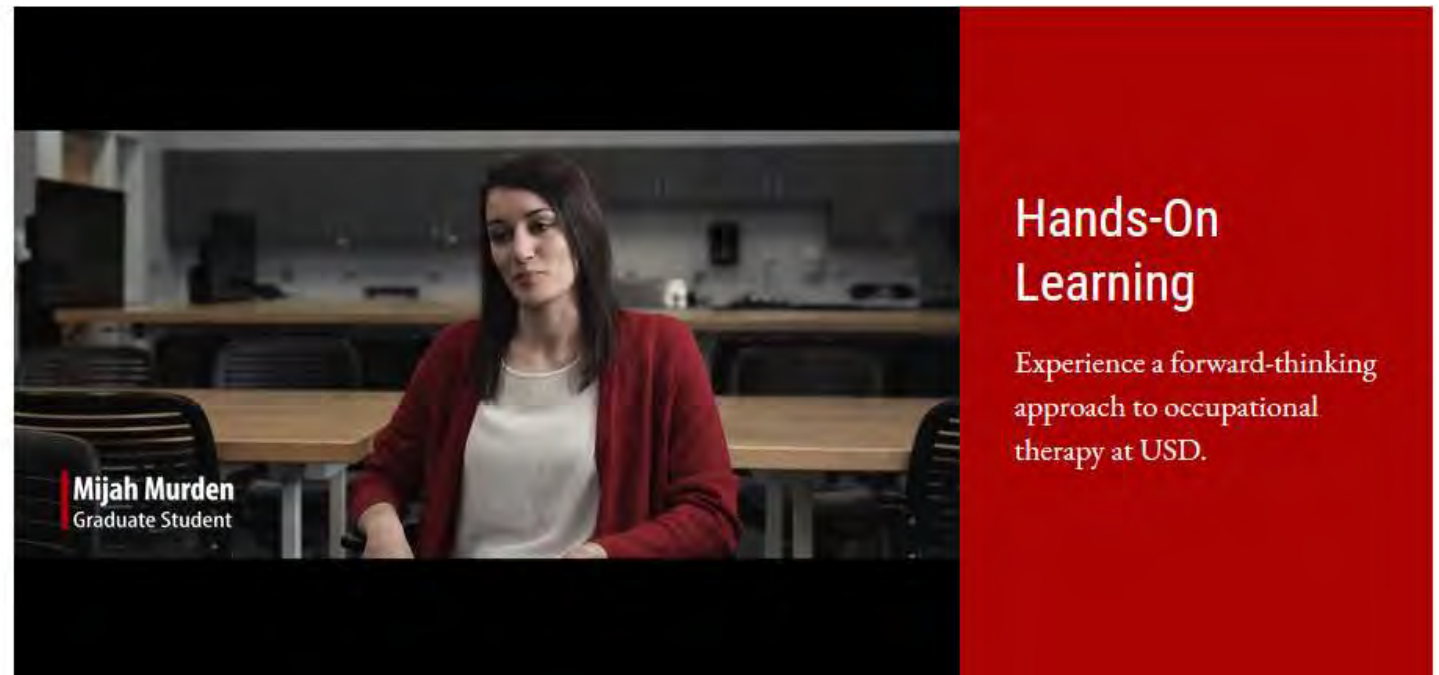
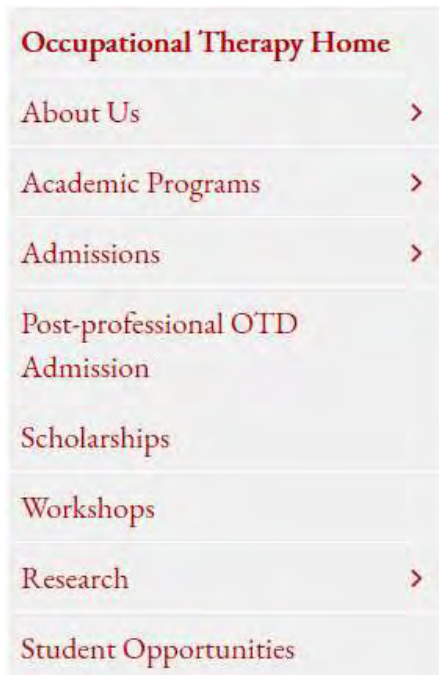
Occupational Therapist ranks fourth in the 50 Best Jobs in America.

[Read More](#)

<https://www.usd.edu/health-sciences/occupational-therapy/>

# Brand Awareness - Recommendations

1. Enhance website discoverability with Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Techniques
  - ii. Provide student video testimonials
  - iii. Showcase diversity (faculty and students)

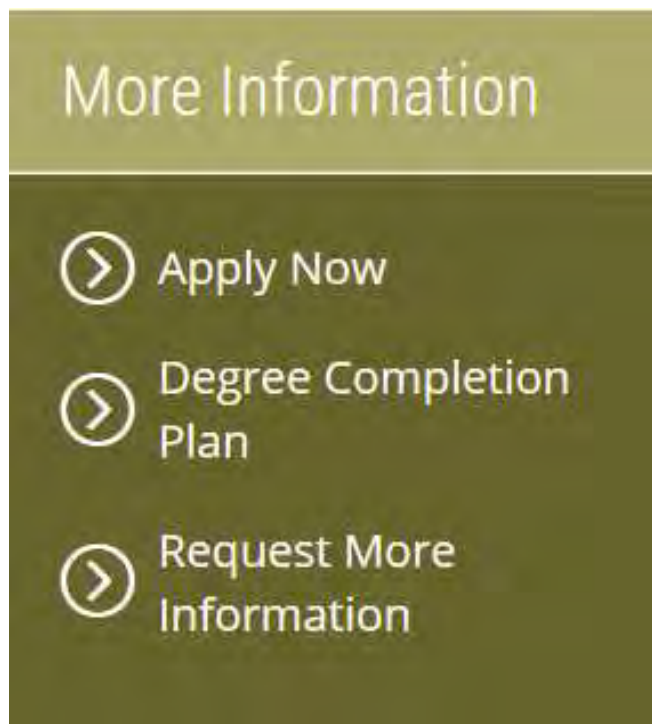


<https://www.usd.edu/health-sciences/occupational-therapy/>



# Brand Awareness - Recommendations

1. Enhance website discoverability with Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Techniques
  - iv. Provide links to Application, Degree plan, Strengths, Choice of programs *etc.*



See Why Students are Choosing **South Dakota**

MORE THAN 70 GRADUATE PROGRAMS

**MORTGAGE & RENTAL PAYMENTS**  
Housing costs in SD are among the lowest in the nation

RENTALS IN SOUTH DAKOTA	MORTGAGES IN SOUTH DAKOTA
STUDIO APARTMENT - PER MONTH: \$464	- PER MONTH: \$277
2 BEDROOM - PER MONTH: \$734	- PER YEAR: \$9,288

**COST OF LIVING**  
South Dakota is considered one of the most reasonably priced places to reside.

**COST OF LIVING** 15% LOWER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE

**COST OF HOUSING** 24% LOWER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE

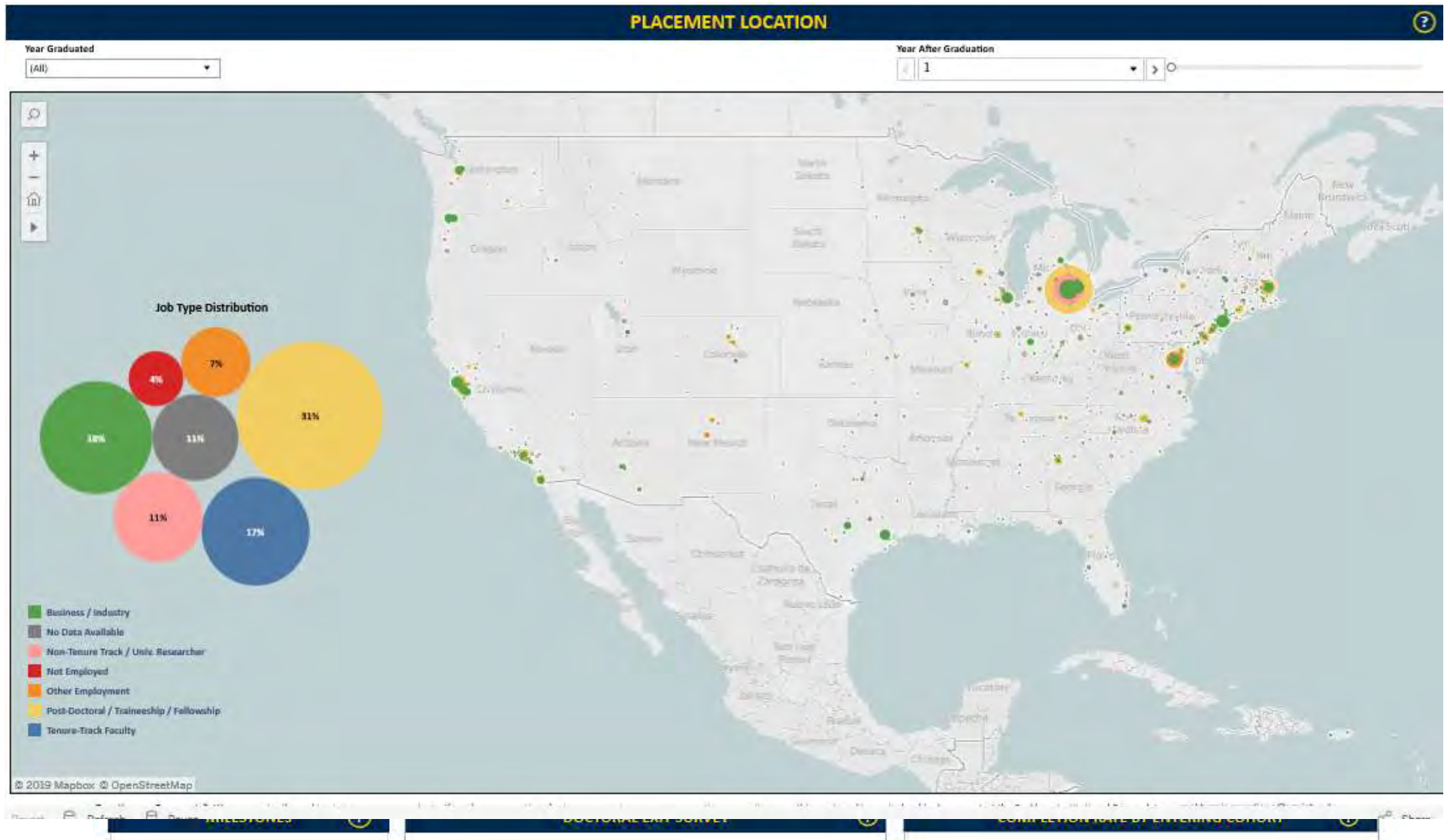
**QUALITY OF LIFE**  
People in South Dakota are friendly, generous and family focused. The low cost of living provides a higher quality of life making South Dakota a great state to raise a family.

CLICK TO VIEW >>



<https://www.usd.edu/graduate-school/future-students>

# Brand Awareness - Recommendations



**Rackham Graduate School**



# Brand Awareness - Recommendations

## 1. Enhance website discoverability with Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Techniques

vi. Provide links to student resources, New student checklist, Policies, Handbooks, Guides, *etc.*

🏠 > Graduate School > Student Resources

### Graduate Student Resources

Graduate School Home

About Us >

Academic Programs

Apply Now

Professional Development >

Research

**Student Resources**

Future Students >

Request More Information

International Admissions

Contact Us

The Graduate School is committed to providing comprehensive student support services.

**Student Resources:**

- Campus Resources 📄
- Graduate School Forms 📄
- Graduate School Policies
- Graduate Student Handbooks
- Thesis and Dissertation Guide 📄
- Graduate Student Responsibilities and Deadlines 📄
- Computing - Technology Resources

**Grievance Processes:**

Academic: Please see [Board of Regents Policy 2.9](#) 📄. This policy governs

Newly Admitted Students

➔ Graduate Student Checklist

<https://www.usd.edu/graduate-school/student-resources>

# Build a Pipeline - Recommendations

## 2. Increase your inquiries

i. Reach out to **your** graduate students!

A. Use data analytics & identify undergraduate school(s) of current graduate students.

ii. Reach out to **your** undergraduates!

A. Visit with student groups

B. Visit classrooms

C. Hold Graduate School Fair

D. Partner with Admissions

E. Reach out to summer interns

F. Leverage existing conferences/academic events held on campus

## Thinking Graduate School? **THINK USD**

of **SEPTEMBER**

### 12 So you want to go to Graduate School?



This workshop will provide prospective graduate students with information about the application process, letters of recommendation, deadlines, assistantships etc.

4 - 5 p.m. | MUC 216A

### 13 Statement of Purpose Workshop



This workshop will provide students with information on how to craft a compelling personal statement.

7 - 8 p.m. | Delzell 110

### 14 Getting into Graduate School - Panel

A panel of graduate faculty members from various disciplines will be available to take questions and provide advice about how to be a successful graduate school applicant. Please join us if you are considering attending graduate school in the future.

5 - 6 p.m. | MUC Pit Lounge



### 20 Graduate School Fair

If you are thinking about attending graduate school, law school, medical school or another professional program, this event will connect you with recruiters from different colleges and universities, including USD, to learn more!

11 a.m. - 2 p.m. | MUC 1<sup>st</sup> floor



UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTH DAKOTA  
GRADUATE SCHOOL



# Build a Pipeline - Recommendations

## 2. Increase your inquiries

- iii. Reach out to undergraduates in the region
  - A. Arrange for faculty visits to feeder schools
  - B. Organize Open House
  - C. Attend **regional** conferences
  - D. Arrange campus visits to prospect students (and families)
  - E. Leverage existing conferences held on campus

**THINKING ABOUT  
GRADUATE SCHOOL?  
MED SCHOOL? LAW SCHOOL?  
OR ANOTHER PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM?**

**IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO  
PLAN FOR THE NEXT STEP!**



**GRADUATE  
SCHOOL  
PANEL**

Tuesday, Sept. 18  
3 - 4 P.M.  
MUC Pit Lounge

**PERSONAL  
STATEMENT  
WORKSHOP**

Wednesday, Sept. 19  
4 - 5 P.M.  
Delzell 110

**GRADUATE  
SCHOOL  
FAIR**

Thursday, Sept. 20  
11 A.M. - 2 P.M.  
MUC First Floor

# Build a Pipeline - Recommendations

## 2. Increase your inquiries

### iv. Participate in regional/national conferences

- A. American Indian Science and Engineering Society ([AISES](#)) meetings
- B. Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students ([ABRCMS](#))
- C. National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers ([NOBBChE](#))
- D. Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans ([SACNAS](#))





# Build a Pipeline - Recommendations

## 2. Increase your inquiries

v. Create customized e-mail campaigns to reach out to:

- A. Graduate Degrees for Minorities in Engineering and Science ([GEM](#)) consortium
- B. [McNair](#) Scholars database
- C. [National Name Exchange](#)

- Over 70 graduate programs – Find Yours
- Deadlines are approaching soon!
- Semester is starting soon!
- Ways to pay for Graduate School
- Not ready to apply yet, view upcoming term
- Don't stress – We will do our best



### Great Education Starts at the University of South Dakota

Not surprisingly, USD graduates can be found in leadership positions around the world. In South Dakota, 70 percent of the attorneys, 48 percent of the physicians and 50 percent of the teachers graduated from the University of South Dakota. With over 70 graduate programs offered in 8 different colleges and schools, we have a program for you: [View Graduate Programs at USD](#)

### Our Campus

As you consider graduate or professional study, we highly recommend you learn about the campus and local community as well. Of course it is best if you can visit in person, but there are a number of online resources that can help you learn more about the University of South Dakota campus and the community of Vermillion. After all, you may be living here in the near future!

The University's 321-acre tree lined campus features manicured green lawns, sculptures and displays of seasonal flowers that create a lush park-like educational setting. All across campus, visitors will notice significant campus improvements projects as USD has invested more than \$100 million in projects that have recently been completed. See below for a few helpful resources: [Learn More at Our Campus](#) [Life in Vermillion, S.D.](#)

### Diversity and Inclusiveness

USD embeds diversity and inclusiveness throughout every dimension and sector of the university. This inclusive excellence creates a welcoming community engaged in diversity. It provides an environment that prepares all students for living and working in a diverse society. To learn more about USD's diverse campus, visit [www.usd.edu/diversity](http://www.usd.edu/diversity).

### Tuition Rates

Graduate education at USD is remarkably affordable. USD provides convenient opportunities through research and creativity grants and graduate assistantships.

[Graduate Assistantships](#) [Research and Creativity Grants](#) [Financial Aid](#)

### Ready to Apply?

Applying to the Graduate School is easy. Apply Today. Become one of us.



# Collect Prospect Information in a Robust Database

**UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTH DAKOTA**  
GRADUATE SCHOOL

*Quality  
Flexibility  
Affordability*

**Please send me more information about the following programs:**

**DOCTORAL DEGREES**

- ☐ Audiology (AuD)
- ☐ Basic Biomedical Sciences (PhD)
- ☐ Biomedical Sciences/Physician Sciences (MD/PhD)
- ☐ Biological Sciences (PhD)
- ☐ Biomedical Engineering (MEng)
- ☐ Counseling & Psychology in Education (PhD)
- ☐ Curriculum and Instruction (EdD)
- ☐ Educational Administration & Leadership (EdD)
- ☐ English (PhD)
- ☐ Health Sciences (PhD)
- ☐ Law/Political Law (JD)
- ☐ Materials Chemistry (PhD)
- ☐ Medicine (MD)
- ☐ Occupational Therapy (OTD)
- ☐ Physical Therapy (DPT)
- ☐ Physics (PhD)
- ☐ Political Science (PhD)
- ☐ Psychology (PhD)
- ☐ Sustainability (PhD)

**GRADUATE CERTIFICATES**

- ☐ Adult Literacy Studies
- ☐ Alternative Teacher Certification
- ☐ American Indian Education
- ☐ Arts in Health
- ☐ Bioethics
- ☐ Business Analytics
- ☐ Dental Hygiene Leadership
- ☐ Disability Mental Health
- ☐ English Language Learners
- ☐ Library Leadership & Coaching
- ☐ Long-Term Care Management
- ☐ Marketing
- ☐ Mental Health Counseling
- ☐ Museum and Archive Studies
- ☐ Nonprofit Management
- ☐ Operations and Supply Chain Management
- ☐ Piano Pedagogy
- ☐ Reading Interventionist
- ☐ Science, Technology, and Math Pedagogy
- ☐ Spanish Translation (working and retiring)
- ☐ State Government Leadership (graduate-level programs)

**EDUCATIONAL SPECIALIST DEGREES**

- ☐ Counseling & Psychology in Education (EdS)
- ☐ Educational Administration & Leadership (EdS)

**MASTER'S DEGREES**

- ☐ Accounting, Professional (MAcS)
- ☐ Addition Studies (MA)
- ☐ Administration (MS)
- ☐ Art (MFA)
- ☐ Basic Biomedical Sciences (MS)
- ☐ Biology (MS)
- ☐ Biomedical Engineering (MS)
- ☐ Business Administration (MBA)
- ☐ Business Analytics (MS)
- ☐ Chemistry (MS)
- ☐ Communication (MA)
- ☐ Computer Science (MS)
- ☐ Counseling & Psychology in Education (MA)
- ☐ Educational Administration & Leadership (MA)
- ☐ Elementary Education (MS)
- ☐ English (MA)
- ☐ Executive Master of Administration (EMPA)
- ☐ History (MA)
- ☐ Interdisciplinary Studies (MA)
- ☐ Kinesiology and Sport Management (MA)
- ☐ Mathematics (MA/MS)
- ☐ Music (MM)
- ☐ Physician Assistant Studies (MS)
- ☐ Physics (MS)
- ☐ Psychology (MA)
- ☐ Public Administration (MPA)
- ☐ Public Health (MPP)
- ☐ Secondary Education (MA)
- ☐ Special Education (MA)
- ☐ Speech-Language Pathology (MA)
- ☐ Social Work (MSW)
- ☐ Sustainability (MS)
- ☐ Technology for Education & Training (MS)
- ☐ Theatre (MFA)

For specific program details and specializations, please visit [www.usd.edu/grad](http://www.usd.edu/grad)

**UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTH DAKOTA**  
GRADUATE SCHOOL

*Quality  
Flexibility  
Affordability*

☐ Mr. ☐ Ms. First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ MI: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Highest Level of Education: \_\_\_\_\_

Term/Year of Interest: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

**GRADUATE ADMISSIONS**  
 414 East Clark Street • Vermillion, SD 57069  
 605-658-5200 • [www.usd.edu/grad](http://www.usd.edu/grad) • [gradadmission@usd.edu](mailto:gradadmission@usd.edu)

# Maintain a Robust CRM

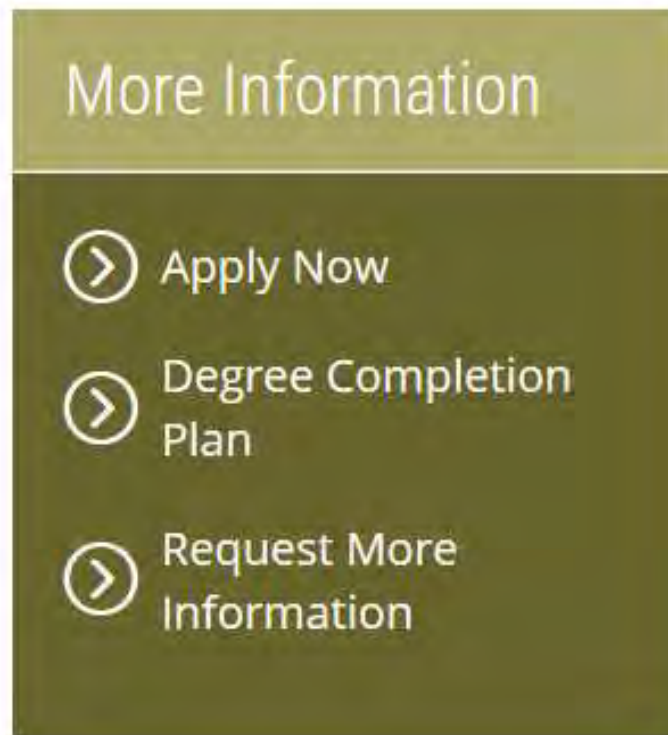
## 3. Use and maintain a robust Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System

- CRM's provide a “one-stop” channel with an overview of prospects.
- Inquiries *via* events, e-mails, phone calls, in-person visits, Request More Information (RMI) *etc.* can be captured, managed, and tracked in a single common platform!



# Engage the Prospect - Recommendations

4. i. The home/landing page for the graduate program should have a servlet, “Request More Information”.



<https://webto.salesforce.com/servlet/servlet.WebToLead?encoding=UTF-8>

I would like more information about USD's Online Master of Arts in Addiction Studies

First Name

Last Name

Email

Phone

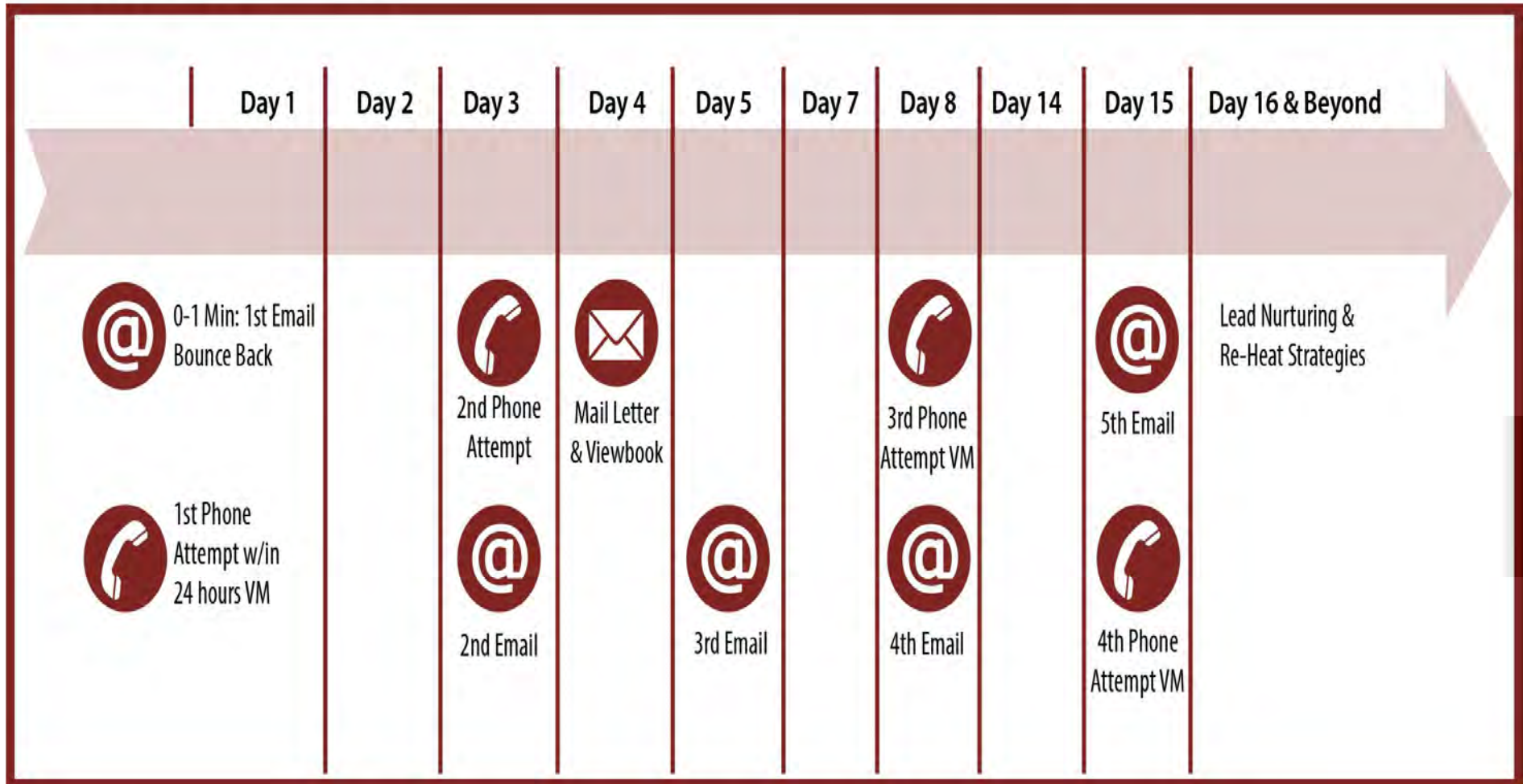
Entry Year:  ▼

Entry Term:  ▼

# Engage the Prospect - Recommendations

## 4. Engage the prospect

### Contact Strategy - Phase 1





## Overall Recommendations

Design engaging and effective website	A department's website is usually the first point of contact. Should be up to date with information about admissions, funding, research interests, faculty, alumni, and student achievements, and key statistics
Build an effective pipeline	Outreach to undergraduate students, Feeder Institution travel, Organize Open House, Visits to conferences <i>etc.</i>
Sustain ongoing and timely communication	Respond to inquiries quickly from any prospective student. Develop a customized communication plan.
Make financing a part of the recruitment picture	Program cost, Return on Investment (future job/career) Scholarships/Assistantship Opportunities
Involve faculty, current students, and alumni in the recruitment process	Set enrollment goals. Develop strategies and action plans for achievement of goals



# References

1. Behind the Curtain: Lessons from a Modern Digital Marketer, Accessed Dec. 1, 2019.
2. Moving forward in GEM: Establishing Meaning, Best Practices, & Professional Growth, NAGAP Webinar, Mar, 19, 2015.
3. Understanding Graduate Enrollment Management, NAGAP Annual Conference, April. 2014.
4. Best Practices in Graduate Student Recruitment, Hanover Research, 2014.
5. Integrated Interdependence: The Emergence of Graduate Enrollment Management (GEM), NAGAP.

# Graduate Recruitment Checklist

Website		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Are faculty accomplishments (publications, grantsmanship <i>etc.</i> ) updated regularly and easily searchable?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Do the graduate program home pages have student testimonials and is diversity showcased?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Are i.) Application, ii.) Degree plan (Credits required, course rotations), Strengths, Student Outcomes, Accreditation, Licensure/National Board Exam rates <i>etc.</i> displayed prominently?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Is information on applications, admissions, enrollment, median GPA & GRE scores, career outcomes <i>etc.</i> posted?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Can prospective students access Checklist (to get started), Handbooks, Policies <i>etc.</i> easily?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Is information regarding cost, scholarships/assistantships, and financial aid easily accessible to prospective students?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Are opportunities for professional development of graduate students indicated at your website?
Pipeline		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Do you know your major feeder institutions (domestic and International)?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Do you engage with your undergraduate students on-campus?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Do you engage with undergraduate institutions in the region?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Does your faculty participate in regional and national conferences and have a recruiting booth?
Enrollment Management		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Do you have a robust CRM integrated with Student Information System (SIS) and Application Portal?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Do you have a "Request For Information" servlet or similar widget on your landing page?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Do you have an on-going communication strategy to engage with a prospect?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Do you share prospect information with Graduate Program Coordinators regularly?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Do you have dedicated Enrollment Coordinators for specific Programs/Colleges?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Are admission decisions made in a timely manner?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Is information regarding Assistantships/Scholarships, Financial Aid <i>etc.</i> communicated in the admit letter?