

Managing Enrollment: Recruitment, Admissions and Funding

Perspective from an R1 Institution

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The Graduate School at Brown University

First degree awarded in 1888

2,631 graduate students today

- 1,568 PhD
- 1,018 Master's
- 45 Non-Degree
- ~1200 degrees awarded annually

51 Doctoral programs and 31 Master's programs

41 affiliated departments, centers and institutes as well as:

- School of Engineering
- School of Public Health
- Division of Biology and Medicine*
- School of Professional Studies

Staff: 24 FTE

Graduate education produces:
builders, doers, innovators and thought leaders.



*Made up of the Program in Biology and the Alpert Medical School (AMS). MD degrees are awarded by the AMS and PhD degrees are awarded to PhD and MD/PhD candidates by the Graduate School via the Programs in Biology.

Brown: A Centralized Graduate School

Role

- Review & approve all degree applicants for admission
- Awards all degrees
- Oversee and organize all orientation & commencement events
- Set all policies, review and approve all graduate courses and courses of study
- Fund 82% of all 1st year PhD students and 52% of all PhD students in out years
- Fund all terminal non-professional masters (MFA)

Suite of Programs

- Doctoral degree programs
- Professional Masters (Sc.M and MBA degrees)
- MD/Ph.D Program (Shared oversight with Medical School)
- University funded terminal Masters (M.F.A.)
- 5th year Masters (open only to Brown undergraduates)
- 1 and 2 year Masters (A.M. and Sc. M degrees)
- Non-Degree Post-baccalaureate Programs

Enrollment Management

Scenario 1:

Graduate program A selectively recruits international PhD students. In the last 2 years 100% of its entering class of ~30 students have been students from outside of the US despite having a larger pool of domestic applicants.

When asked why the program does not admit domestic students, the Director replies 'domestic students as not as well prepared as international students'.

Case Study Questions:

- How might you address the program's reluctance to train domestic students? Specifically, What strategy/programming could be developed to increase the strength and thus enrollment of domestic students while adhering to the programs desire for the best students?
- Aside from visa and possible language issues, what might be motivators and detractors to a program selectively recruiting international students, and should such programs be supported to the same extent as other programs?

Enrollment Management

Scenario 1:

Case Study Possible Answers:

To address reluctance for and to increase domestic student enrollment:

- Develop on-ramp programs specifically designed to strength domestic applicant readiness for PhD training. Options include:
 - a. Post-Baccalaureate programs
 - b. A Joint Masters-PhD programs, where admissions to the PhD program is guaranteed to students successfully completing the Masters degree
- Are students remaining in the US in sizeable numbers and adding to our workforce?
- Is preferential international student training solely 'transactional'? To what extent is it motivated by revenue?

Enrollment Management

Scenario 2:

Program B, whose external funding portfolio has fallen, is struggling to maintain a critical mass of PhD students. It also has an important role teaching undergraduate courses, which requires PhD students as Teaching Assistants to assist faculty. The faculty research program in the department is fairly monolithic which likely accounts for poor funding.

To meet enrollment, critical mass and funding needs, the program is considering launching a Masters degree program.

Case Study Questions:

- What are the limitations of Masters programs on advancing the research enterprise of the department/program?
- What might be the likely effects of increasing Masters enrollment on undergraduate teaching, and on the quality of PhD student training?
- What might be a solution that meets the goals of establishing a robust PhD program while providing the benefits of a Masters program?

Enrollment Management

Scenario 2:

Case Study Questions:

- What are the limitations of Masters programs on advancing the research agenda of the department/program?

ANS: Masters program don't provide the needed faculty research partners

- What are the likely effects of increasing Masters enrollment on undergraduate teaching, and quality of PhD student advising and mentoring?

Fails to provide the needed TAs. Draws from PhD programs and student advising, mentoring and training. Creates a financial 'Master-Slave' relationship between Masters and PhD programs.

- What would be one solution to meet the needs of the PhD program while meeting the aspirations for a Masters program.
 - a. Use Masters as feeder for PhD Program/Develop Post-Bacc program
 - b. Create joint Masters-PhD programs, where PhD admissions would be guaranteed for students successfully completing the Masters degree