



Improving Marketing and Recruitment Strategies for Master's Programs

Brian Carolan, Dean, Graduate Studies, Sacred Heart University

Andrea Golato, Dean, The Graduate College, Texas State University

Ranjit Koodali, Associate Provost, Research And Graduate Education, Western Kentucky University

Plan for today

- **2:00-2:05** Session introduction
- **2:05-2:20** Recruiting and Marketing Master's Programs: What do we mean? (Andrea Golato)
- **2:20-2:30** Q&A followed by small group introductions
- **2:30-2:45** Going *All In*: Technology in Recruitment and Marketing (Brian Carolan)
- **2:45-3:10** Interactive activity – branding elements, keyword strategies, costs, show-and-tell
- **3:10-3:20** Break
- **3:20-3:35** Recruiting Diverse Students (Ranjit Koodali)
- **3:35-3:50** Q&A followed by interactive activity
- **3:50-4:00** Take aways and conclusions



Part 1: Recruiting and Marketing Master's Programs: What do we mean?

Andrea Golato, Dean
The Graduate College

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University Profile

- Texas State University is a Hispanic-serving, public university, classified as a doctoral university: higher research activity in the Carnegie Foundation classification system.
- Located between Austin and San Antonio; it is the seventh largest university in Texas.

37,849 Students

- 33,230 Undergraduates
- 4,157 Graduate Students
- 462 Post Bacc Students

Degree Programs

- 99 Bachelor's Programs
- 83 Master's Programs
- 14 Doctoral Programs (Ph.D., Ed.D., DPT)

Diversity

- First Gen – 46% of total population, 30% of graduate population
- HSI – 38.67% of total population, 26.6% of graduate population
- International – 1.5% of total population, 9% of graduate population

Marketing and Recruitment – what do we mean?

- Any activity along the following continuum to increase graduate enrollment



Marketing and Recruitment – what do we mean?

- Any activity along the following continuum to increase graduate enrollment



GENERAL AWARENESS RAISING

- Advertising campaigns
- Search engine optimization
- Geo-fencing advertising
- Information sessions and other forms of outreach

GENERATING APPLICATIONS

- Communication with leads
- Campus visits etc.
- Application boot camps

ACTIVITIES TO ENCOURAGE APPLICANTS TO COMPLETE THEIR APPLICATIONS

- Emails
- Text messages
- Phone calls

ACTIVITIES TO ENCOURAGE ADMITTED STUDENTS TO ENROLL

- Transactional info
- Info about what makes the university special
- Campus visits
- Scholarships/Fellowship/Assistantship offers



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Andrea Golato @GolatoAndrea · Feb 8
Podcast suggestion for the ride home @TXSTProvost: To the Next Degree
hosted by @TXSTGradCollege! bit.ly/3cO79R8



Who completes these steps?

- University Marketing
- Enrollment Management Companies
- Graduate College Staff
- Graduate Program Faculty / Staff

What do you need?

- A flexible and functional CRM System (Customer Relations Management System)
- Adequate staff: recruiter(s), communications specialist(s), marketing/publications specialists
- Advertising budget
- A webpage that is easy to navigate
- Solid admissions and enrollment reports
- Regular meetings / communications with programs

Sessions include:



- Graduate School and You
- Standardized Test Prep Resources
- Graduate Application Process
- Funding Your Graduate Education
- Achieving Success in Graduate School
- Graduate Studies and Your Career

For more information and registration visit:
www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/events/info

<i>San Marcos Campus</i>		
Monday, Feb. 3 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. LBJ Student Center Room 3-5.1	Tuesday, Mar. 10 Noon – 3 p.m. LBJ Student Center Room 3-9.1	Thursday, Apr. 16 4 – 7:30 p.m. LBJ Student Center Room 3-9.1
<i>Online Sessions</i>		
Tuesday, Feb. 25 11:30 a.m. – 2 p.m. Webinar	Friday, Mar. 27 11:30 a.m. – 2 p.m. Webinar	Monday, Apr. 27 11:30 a.m. – 2 p.m. Webinar

Register today to attend the sessions that are right for you!

Additional Information

- Additional tips and strategies at various levels of expense and effort can be found on the recruiting handout
- Additional idea: Hold a recruitment session with your graduate advisors and ask each to bring their three most successful recruitment strategies and have them share them in groups (and compile the information for all to share back)

Let's chat...

- Introductions
- Questions, recruitment successes, recruitment challenges
- For off-line questions/comments:

Andrea Golato

agolato@txstate.edu



GOING ALL IN: TECHNOLOGY IN RECRUITMENT AND MARKETING

OBSERVATIONS ON CREATING
AND IMPLEMENTING A *DIGITAL*
FIRST STRATEGY



Sacred Heart
UNIVERSITY

OVERVIEW

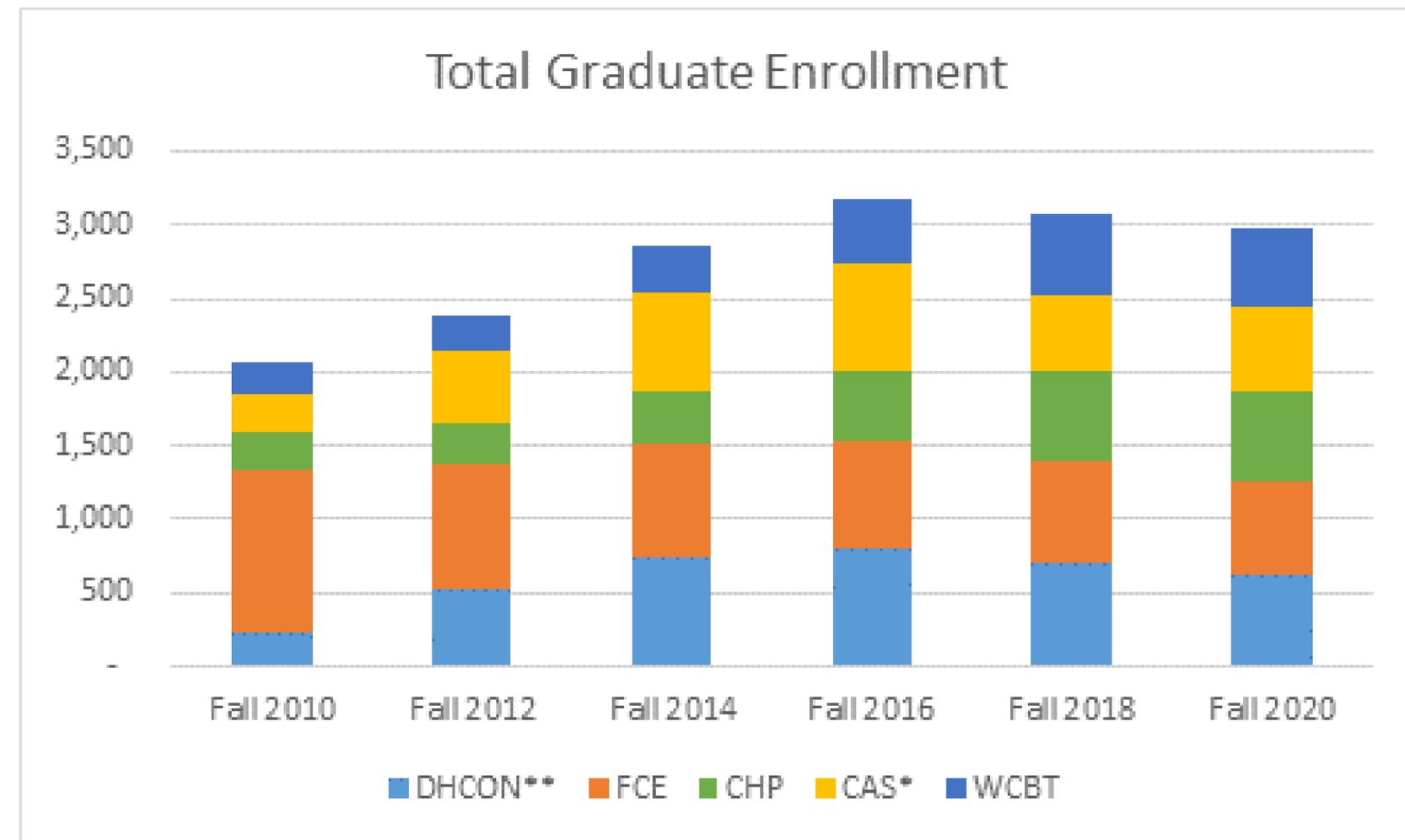
1. Institutional context
2. Understanding the “new” admissions funnel
3. Blurring the line between marketing and recruiting
 - Series of research projects prepared by an external partner
4. Creating and implementing *digital first* strategy
 - New tools and tactics
5. Web page optimization
 - Exercise to assess UX of your programs’ web pages



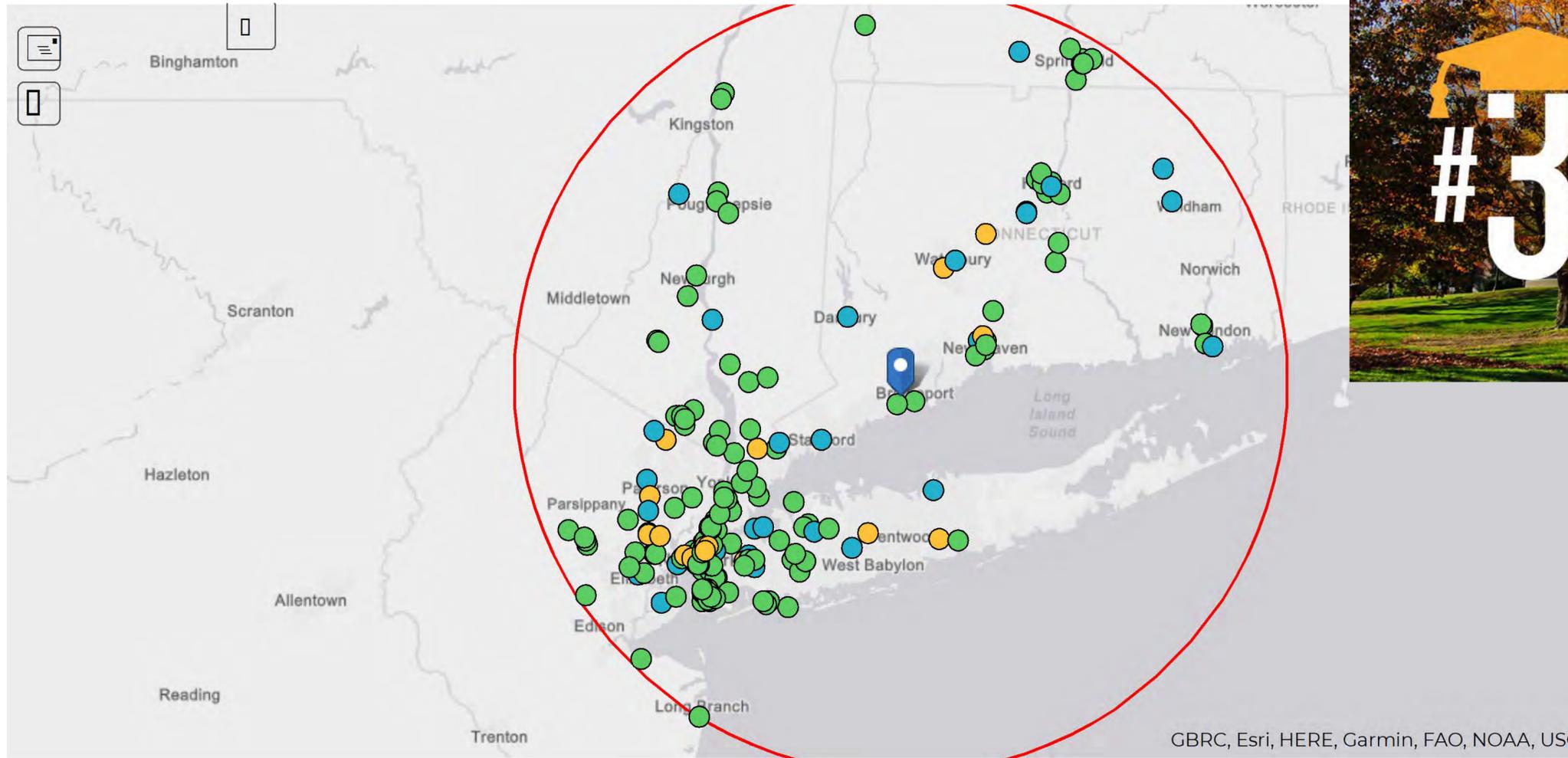
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SACRED HEART UNIVERSITY: INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

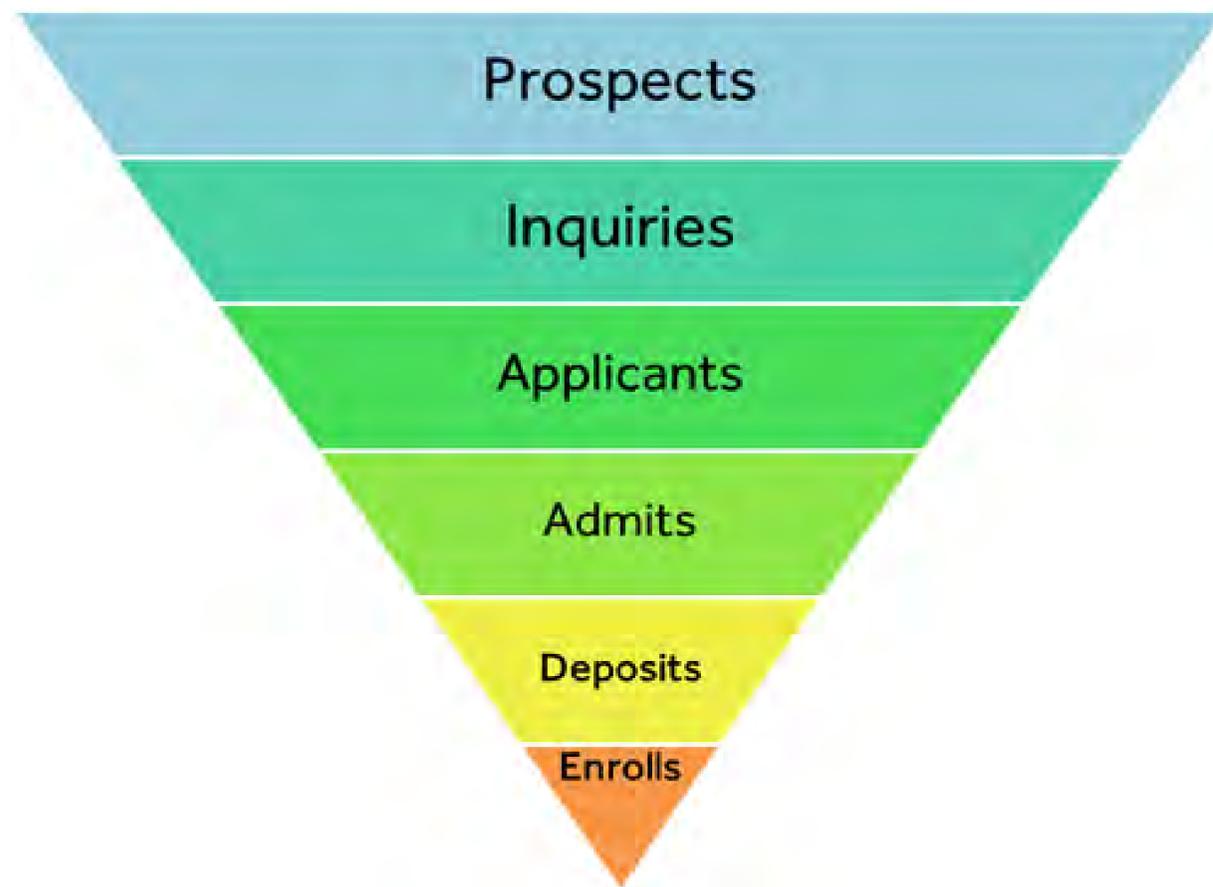
1. Founded in 1963 as an independent, Catholic University.
2. First Catholic University in the United States to be founded by lay people.
3. 9,156 total students: 5,348 full-time undergraduates, 810 part-time undergraduates, 2,998 full- and part-time graduate students (fall 2019)
4. Over 44,000 living Sacred Heart University alumni. Approximately 50% have graduated in the last 10 years.
5. Carnegie Classification: Doctoral/Professional University



PLACE: COMPETITION AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES



THE “OLD” AND “NEW” ADMISSIONS FUNNELS



BLURRING THE LINE BETWEEN MARKETING AND RECRUITING

- MARKETING TO INDIVIDUALS THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE FUNNEL
- INCREASING THE PERSONALIZATION OF THOSE EFFORTS AS THEY MOVE CLOSER TOWARDS ENROLLMENT
- HOW DOES THIS FORCE US TO RETHINK THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MARKETING AND RECRUITING AND THE BUDGETING TO SUPPORT THIS RELATIONSHIP?



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KEY INSIGHTS FROM THREE DATA SOURCES

- RESPONSIVENESS MATTERS!
- LOW BRAND AWARENESS
- NEWLY ENROLLED STUDENTS APPLY TO ABOUT TWO SCHOOLS
- PREFER NOT TO HAVE TO ASK BASIC QUESTIONS ABOUT A PROGRAM
- TOP OF THE FUNNEL ENGAGEMENT IS DONE ON A MOBILE DEVICE, INCLUDING APPLICATION



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DIGITAL FIRST STRATEGY: NEW TOOLS AND TACTICS



Significant investment in leveraging the CRM



Personas



Sourcing newly enrolled students



Mobile first

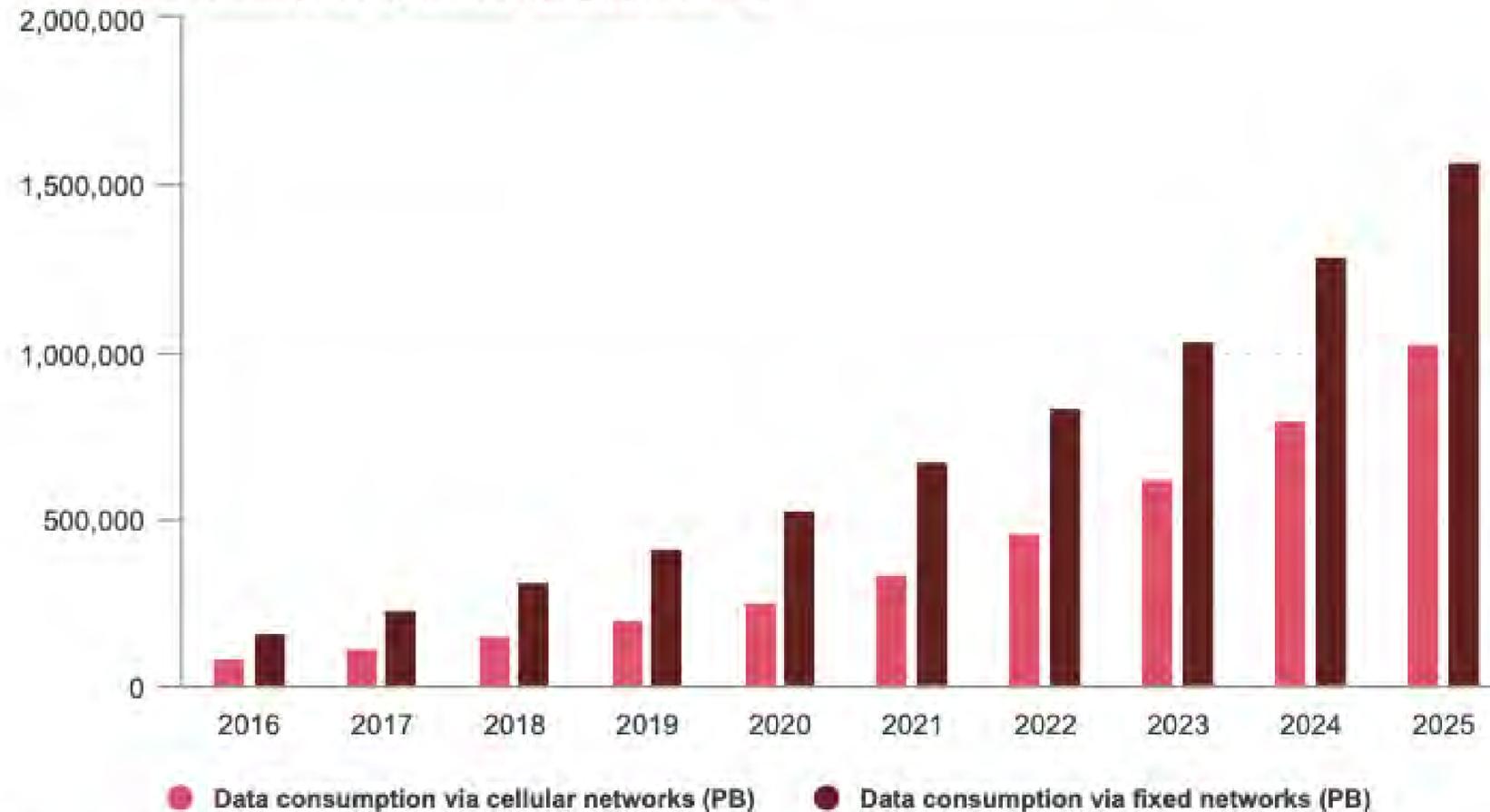


Webpage optimization and tracking UX

MOBILE FIRST AND WEBPAGE OPTIMIZATION

Growth in data consumption via cellular networks and fixed networks

Global, data consumption by content category, 2016-25



Source: Global Entertainment and Media Outlook 2021–2025. PwC. Omdia

THE VALUE OF OPTIMIZING A PROGRAM'S MOBILE WEBPAGE

- 1. SEO AND WEB ANALYTICS MUST BE REGULARLY EVALUATED**
- 2. INTERACTIVE ELEMENTS, INCLUDING CHAT OPPORTUNITIES, PROGRAM COMPARISON TOOLS, TOURS, ETC. TOO MUCH TEXT IS NOT HELPFUL**
- 3. CALLS TO ACTION (CTA), INCLUDING REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) SHOULD BE PROMINENT AND SIMPLE—THIS IS WHAT LINKS AN INQUIRY TO THE CRM**
- 4. BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT A PROGRAM SHOULD BE HIGHLIGHTED, INCLUDING START DATE, APPLICATION DATE, MODALITY, COST, AND LENGTH**
- 5. USERS' ENGAGEMENT PREFERENCES**

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EXERCISE: ASSESSING THE UX OF A PROGRAM'S WEB PAGE

1. Using your mobile phone, search for a graduate program at your school.
2. Scroll and locate the following information:
Start date, application date, program cost, program length, and career outcomes
3. Click on the calls to action. Are they prominent and simple? Submit one or more and see what happens.
4. Do Step #s 2 & 3 for two of your competitor programs.

QUESTIONS FOR FOLLOW-UP AND DISCUSSION

1. IF YOU WERE A PROSPECTIVE STUDENT, WHAT WOULD YOU THINK OF YOUR SCHOOL'S PROGRAM? WOULD YOU CLICK A CTA?
2. WHAT NEEDS TO BE IMPROVED IN ORDER TO INCREASE ENGAGEMENT?
3. WHAT DID YOUR COMPETITORS DO BETTER?
4. WHAT IS THE FIRST THING YOU WILL DISCUSS WITH YOUR WEB TEAM?
5. DOES YOUR PROGRAM'S PAGE ENGAGE DIVERSE AUDIENCES?



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THANK YOU

Brian V. Carolan, PhD
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Improving Marketing and Recruitment Strategies for Master's Programs: Recruiting Diverse Students

Ranjit T. Koodali

**Associate Provost for Research and Graduate Education,
Western Kentucky University**

**Pre-Meeting Workshop
CGS Annual Meeting
New Orleans, LA**

Build Awareness/Visibility

Search Engine Optimization

79% use search engine
66% search for programs

Website

About 90% visit website to explore more details



Other "Forums"

24% visit blogs, online forums
13% visit social media



How to Showcase Diversity?



Showcase accomplishments, publications, honors of faculty and students



About 90% visit website to explore more details



24% visit blogs, online forums

13% visit social media



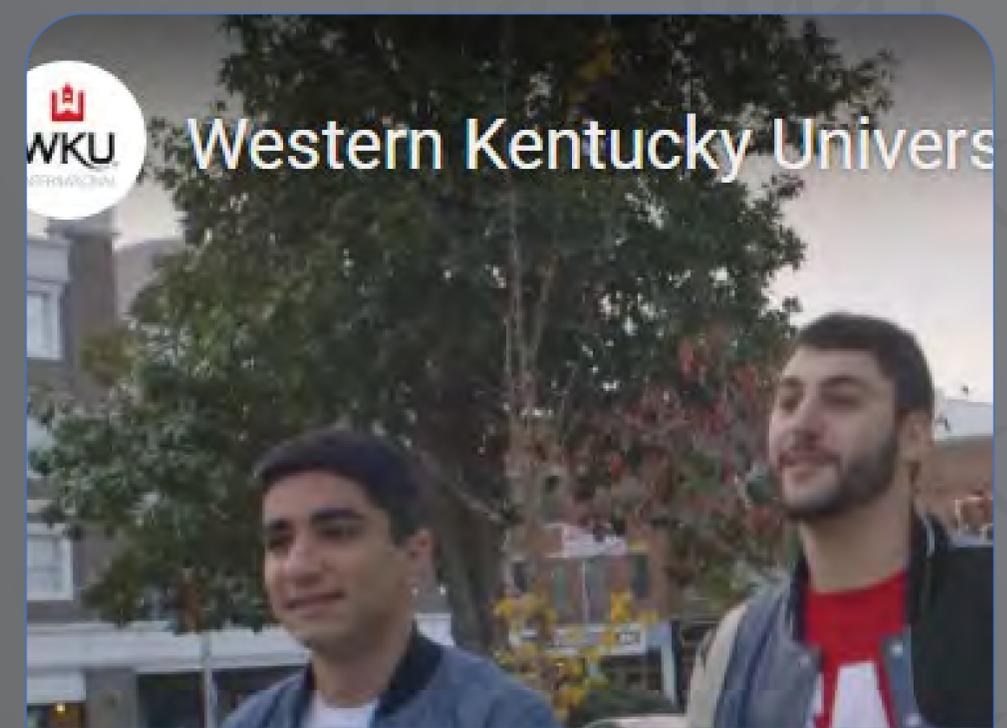
Partner with Allies



Partner with the Diversity Office



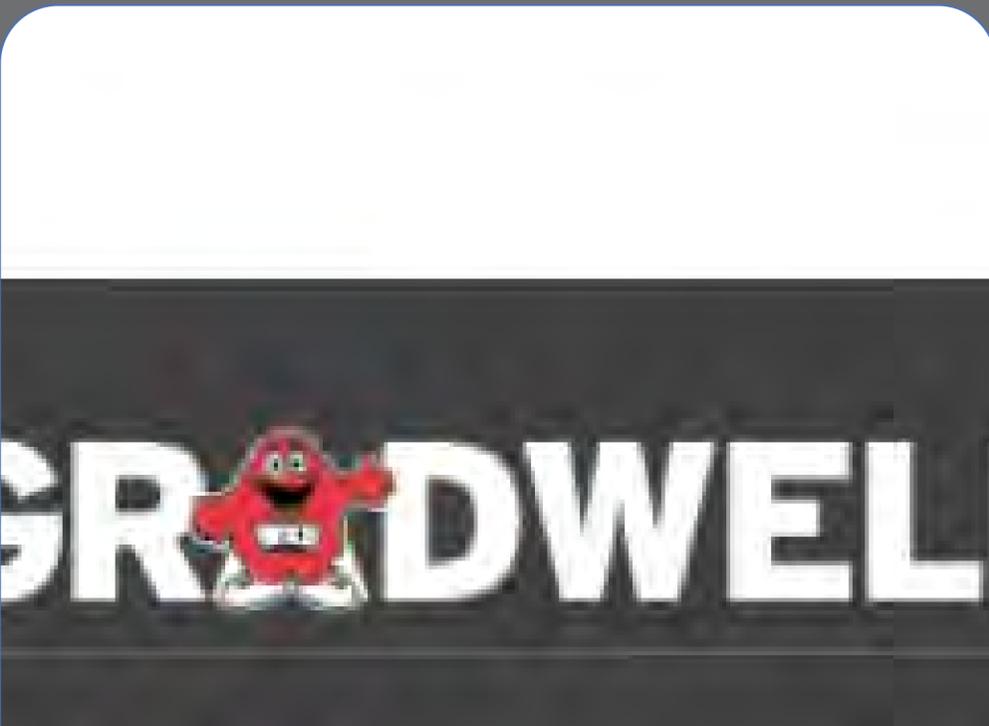
Partner with Academic Affairs



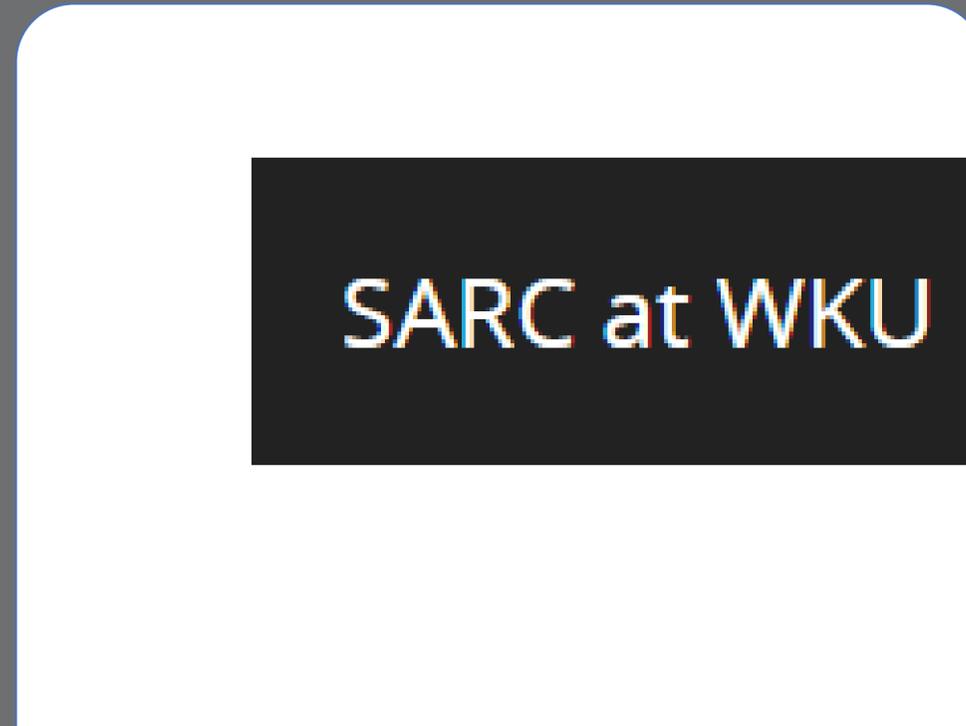
Partner with International Office



Partner with Allies



GRADWELL –
Partnership with
Counseling Center



Partner with
Student
Accessibility Center



Partner with
Career Center



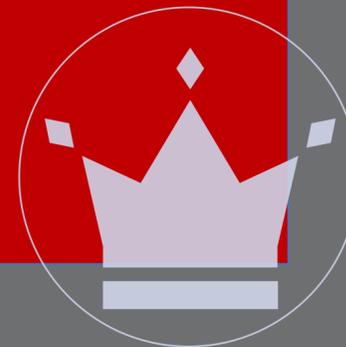
Establish Programs & Activities



Distinguished Minority Fellowship (DMF) Program



Hire Diversity Ambassadors



Thanksgiving Meal for International Students



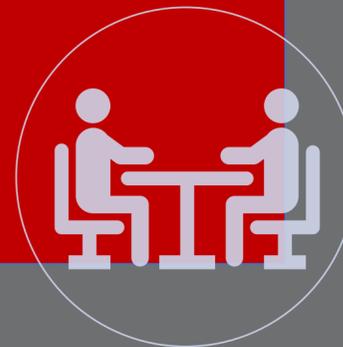
Establish Programs & Activities



Volunteer at a Conference



Host a Conference



Recruitment Fair



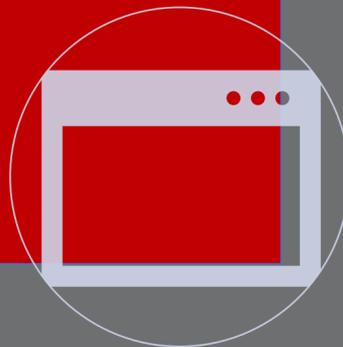
Examine Policies

Graduate Catalog in its entirety represents the University's policies. The Associate Provost for Research and Graduate Education is advised that candidates have fulfilled the requirements and Graduate Education is advised of the right to make changes as necessary for knowing and fulfilling a candidate's requirements. The Associate Provost for Research and Graduate Education is advised of the right to make changes as necessary for knowing and fulfilling a candidate's requirements.



Policies

Graduate Catalog



Application Fee Waiver



Institutional Policies



Build a Pipeline - Partnerships

The logo for TRiO, with 'TR' in black, 'i' in red, and 'O' in black.

Partner with TRiO



Engage with student groups



A Conversation with Faculty
Women of Color in Academia

Engage with Faculty



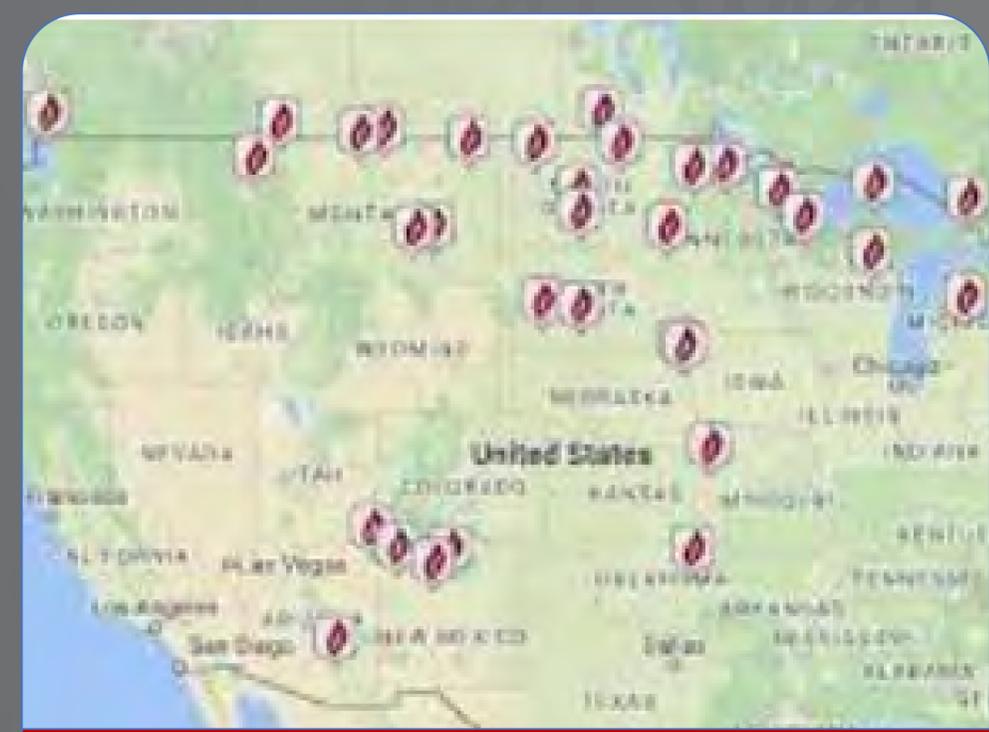
Build a Pipeline - Partnerships



Partner with [HBCU's](#)



Partner with HSI's



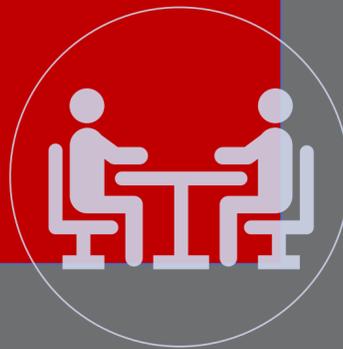
Partner with TCU's



Build a Pipeline - Conferences



Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans ([SACNAS](#))



Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students ([ABRCMS](#))



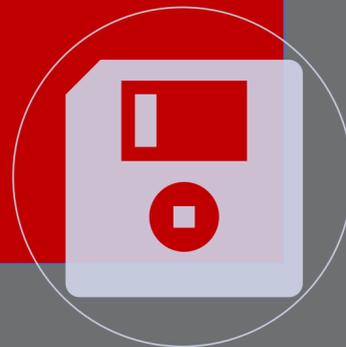
American Indian Science and Engineering Society ([AISES](#)) meetings



Build a Pipeline - Campaigns

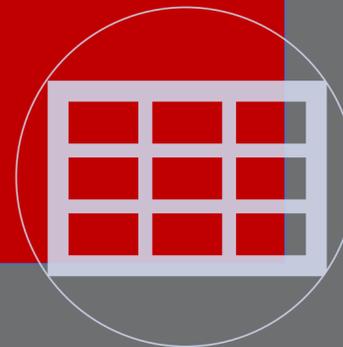


[McNair Scholars](#)
database



The GEM

Graduate Degrees for
Minorities in
Engineering & Science
(GEM) consortium



[National Name
Exchange](#)



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3. [Extending the Pipeline: Model Programs for Enhancing Diversity and Inclusiveness in Graduate School at the University of Memphis](#)
4. [Meyerhoff Graduate Fellows Program at UMBC](#)
5. [Investigating Challenges to Matriculation and Completion for Underrepresented STEM Graduate Students during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
6. [Minority Attrition and Completion in STEM Doctoral Programs](#)
7. [Ph.D. Completion Project](#)
8. [NAGAP-The Association for Graduate Enrollment Management](#)
9. [Ruffalo Noel Levitz](#)
10. [Education Advisory Board \(EAB\)](#)
11. [Hanover Research](#)
12. [Carnegie-Dartlet](#) (digital marketing expertise)
13. [Council for Opportunity in Education \(COE\)](#) (non-profit for low-income students)
14. [American Council on Education](#)

Thank You!

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Interactive Activity

1. Websites

- a) Have you done an audit of graduate school website? YES _____ NO _____
- b) Do graduate school & graduate program showcase diversity of faculty? YES _____ NO _____
If yes, list 3 examples
 - 1. _____
 - 2. _____
 - 3. _____
- c) Do graduate school & graduate program showcase diversity of students YES _____ NO _____
If yes, list 3 examples
 - 1. _____
 - 2. _____
 - 3. _____

2. Recruitment and Marketing Materials (Brochures/Flyers)

- a) Is diversity captured in printed and digital marketing items? YES _____ NO _____
- b) If yes, is it inclusive (capturing gender, age, experience etc.)? YES _____ NO _____
- c) If No, what strategies would you explore as a first step? _____

3. Recruitment Activities

- a) Have you participated in recruitment activities focused on DEI. List three examples below
 - 1. _____
 - 2. _____
 - 3. _____

4. Recruitment Pipeline

- a) Have your explored or established relationships with four-year Colleges and Universities in the region? How many are BHCU's, HIS,'s and TCU's in the region.
 - 1. _____
 - 2. _____
 - 3. _____

5. Programming Activities

- a) What activities are organized/co-organized by the Graduate School/College to foster Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI). List three below.
 - 1. _____
 - 2. _____
 - 3. _____

Take Aways and Conclusion