

Admissions Advisory Committee

Annual Report

March 2006

Committee members: Stan Barnett (CHE), Celia MacDonnell (PHP), Lewis Pakula (MTH), Karen Ramsay, Chair (LIB), Paula Viau, (NUR), Linda Welters (TMD), Jayne Richmond (Dean, UC), Edmund Ferszt (Associate Dean, ASFCCE), Gerald Williams (Director, SPTD), James Lynch, ex officio (Dean of Admissions)

Charge:

[5.77.10 The Admissions Advisory Committee](#) shall review and evaluate standards and policies concerning recruitment and admissions and study all matters related to recruitment and admissions, except the establishment of annual admissions targets which is the responsibility of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. The committee *may* make recommendations to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and provide the Faculty Senate with a copy of their recommendations. The Dean of Admissions shall provide the committee with appropriate information to enable the committee to carry out its charge.

[5.77.12](#) This committee shall meet at least once each semester and shall report annually to the Faculty Senate on the status of admissions for that academic year, including recommending any changes in admissions policy.

Activities:

The committee met in the fall semester, November 10, 2005. Admissions furnished the committee with all relevant materials, including the Preview, Viewbook, general admission policies, special admission policies, Providence Campus brochure and Admissions website information. The following is an excerpt from the summary of the fall meeting.

A new three year strategic plan for the University is being formulated. Four initiatives have been developed and across campus unit goals will be formulated to achieve them. The first of these initiatives is especially relevant to the Admissions Advisory Committee: 1. Enhance student recruitment, retention, involvement and graduation rates. With the changing

demographics, we know that high school graduation numbers will decline beginning in 2008. Given this fact, attention to how we attract students is crucial. It also means that we will need to commit both efforts and resources to compete for students from a dwindling pool. There was a clear consensus among the committee members that a marketing plan is essential. Funds for marketing and increased staff are necessary for this plan to be realized.

The areas of interest and concern identified were marketing, technology and the contact process in recruitment. Over the course of the year the Committee received two updates from Admissions with added materials available for review, including overviews for Meet the University, Welcome Day, Centennial Day, and campus tours. The Committee was also provided documents on goals, a business plan, preliminary marketing and website assessment for Undergraduate Admissions, to name just a few.

The Committee met a second time, February 13, 2006, to discuss the areas of concern and began to formulate recommendations. The Committee felt very strongly, given the growing competition in the admissions process, combined with the demographics, that it is imperative that initiatives and processes be implemented, addressed and reviewed by the Admissions office with immediacy. The need for increased resources and planning for admissions is essential to remain competitive.

Recommendations:

After several iterations the Committee arrived at the following recommendations:

Given the demographics which indicate the decline of high school graduates we believe it is essential to:

- create and implement a marketing plan.
- fund a recruitment initiative.
- use PeopleSoft capabilities to generate new and necessary reports to aid in revising strategies for the following year's recruitment efforts

Recruitment Process:

- Encourage alumni participation in recruitment (inviting distinguished alums to showcase events, Meet the University, etc.)
- Investigate and pursue increased financial aid options and opportunities to better meet students need
- Increase faculty involvement in recruiting process (high school visits, presentations to invited guidance counselors, science and math teachers)

- Schedule follow-up contacts (using telephone calls, email, etc. from Admissions, current students and faculty) with students who attend Meet the University, make inquiries, attend tours/information sessions or apply
- Determine where our students come from and specifically target those areas for recruitment efforts (high school/area visits)
- Increase our recruitment reach by using alumni groups around the country
- Establish clearer articulation between admissions and advising, particularly with transfer students (e.g. CCE, CCRI to URI, etc.)

Meet the University:

- Establish a registration process so that a list of attendees with contact information is produced. On Meet the University Day students can “check-in” to verify who actually attends and update information for follow-up contacts.
- Improve venue for prospective students by providing a larger facility (perhaps the Ryan Center) to prevent crowding to appear less intimidating and allowing more one-on-one personal contact
- Review the physical layout of academic and student services tables/stations possibly grouping in separate locations by area
- Run repeating concurrent sessions, e.g. one on admissions and financial aid, one with representatives from the professional colleges, one with representatives of liberal arts, one for sciences, one on health and safety, etc. These could each run during 60-90 minute slots repeating x times so that prospective students and parents can pick and choose or split up between sessions.
- Consider a parents session to address concerns such as who to contact (or not), tutoring and academic help, empty nest, etc.
- Conduct tours throughout the day, possibly specialized (e.g. for fine arts, nursing, engineering, etc.) to show relevant buildings to those who are thinking of majoring in those areas
- Establish alternatives to “Meet the University,” possibly a shadowing day or individual colleges showcase day, coordinated with the various colleges
- Offer application fee waiver if students attending fill out shortened application form and submit transcripts by some agreed upon date