Best Practices to Recruit Students from Feeder Schools

Allison Brinkley
Maryanne Maree-Sams
Marianne Williford
Successful recruiting means drawing in talented students from diverse backgrounds who have the potential to succeed in a program.

It also means identifying and attracting those who are likely to thrive in a department culture, university environment, and locale.
What is a Feeder School

• Feeder schools are colleges that enable a percentage of their graduates to move on to specific universities and/or specific programs.
• Certain schools have specific affiliations; there doesn’t have to be an official connection to be deemed a feeder school.
Why Establish a Feeder School

• Typically feeder arrangements are created in response to the need to increase more applicants in programs or to increase a certain type of student in graduate education.

• There is usually a feeder representative associated with the program or Graduate School and he/she may serve as a liaison to the school and program.
Responsibilities of Feeder Schools

Their mission-
• Promote graduate education
• Equip students with the knowledge and tools to become successful graduate students.
Responsibilities of Graduate Programs

• Provide individual/small group tours, workshops or classroom experiences for applicants.
• Articulate acceptance rates/guidelines (definitive test scores or GPAs for applicants).
How Collect Data

• Where did your students come from?
• Survey students (how were they informed about your program)?

Work with your colleagues to develop a pipeline in your program.
How (cont’d)

• Collaborative relationships and partnerships
  Build relationships with educational institutions
  Build relationships with employers

• Articulation agreements
• Presentations and campus visits
Who

Identifying an appropriate feeder school for your program
Track backwards – UNCC – feeder school

• Target the undergraduate institution of your successful current students
• Contact the recommenders for other referrals
• Contact a colleague/advisor for the UG department
• Identify the strengths of the undergraduate program – selected courses, projects, etc.
Who cont’d

• Target new students within the program with guided communications.
• Select a particular institution because of your familiarity whether receiving current applicants or not.
• Build upon the relationship with the contact and develop an applicant pool.
When

• Start contact with students early.
• Declared majors: Start Freshman year
• Check back with sophomores/juniors who may have declared late.
• Offer more specific sessions/information to upper level students. Let students know what criteria are important to your program.
• Be a constant. Make sure you check in with interested students often. Keep them interested.
Strategies

- Build working relationships with administration and faculty/staff to recruit students. Contact early in the undergraduate careers so they can transition when Bachelor’s degrees are complete.
- University feeder and articulation agreement
- Campus recruiting Saturday to introduce applicants to faculty, students, the programs and other prospective students. Share information about courses, assistantships, and career opportunities. Provide a tour and housing?
Strategies (cont’d)

• Faculty/students can travel to peer and select institutions to conduct presentations/information sessions/workshops with related programs.
• Consider opportunities for summer internships and mentorship opportunities.
• Develop a recruitment brochure for distribution to student organizations, undergraduate advisors and faculty at selected institutions.
• Develop a website that is appealing and targets prospective undergraduate students including underrepresented.
Strategies (cont’d)

- Arrange annual visits with departments by faculty to selected institutions. Include personal meetings with faculty and students to identify and encourage prospects to apply.
- Fund faculty visits to smaller colleges with the goals of creating pipelines of prospective students.
- Promote program at selected schools. Faculty and graduate students will visit schools to meet with faculty and students.
- Advertise/publish in campus publications
Strategies (cont’d)

- Opportunities for departments to bring students to campus for recruitment visit.

- Use professional networks - Departments can establish contacts with department heads at other institutions to generate a list of prospective students. Visit colleagues at institutions and send letters to colleagues to describe any student opportunities.
Questions/Discussion