

Original Question on International Undergraduate Student Recruiters

Do you have in your office or know of a university that has a person in an international programs office that has responsibility to recruit international undergraduate students?

It has real potential if a strong link is maintained with the campus admissions and enrollment management offices.

Responses

At Purdue, our ISS office was under the overall supervision of the Dean of International Programs. Our ISS Associate Dean had a "dotted-line" relationship to our Dean of Admissions, and worked very closely with them on policy and procedure matters. This worked very well for us, giving us the best of both worlds.

I also think, however, that it depends very much on the personalities involved, and on the institutional culture. We were very fortunate at Purdue to have good people in both ISS and Admissions, folks who were smart, energetic, and willing to collaborate and solve problems together. And, on occasion, willing to pool resources. And these folks could, on occasion, go together to the President or the Provost to make a case for policy change, which worked very well when needed.

I've worked in other places, where International Students was a part of either Research, or Student Affairs, and I can tell you that I don't think that works nearly as well.

At UC Denver, we have our own Office of International Admissions and it is located in the Office of International Affairs. We do not have enough recruiters (working on that), but we do work independently from the domestic admissions office. We are developing an international admissions plan, have successfully demonstrated to the administration that the requirements and knowledge required to recruit international students is NOT similar to the strategies and expertise needed to recruit domestic undergraduates. We have also used the demographic argument – the U.S. will not continue to provide a robust college age demographic to sustain the university over the long haul. Shame was also a strategy: it IS the 21st Century and we do claim we are global Research I University!! We are able to achieve high synergy between International Student and Scholar Services, Sponsor Organizations, and specific department/program international recruitment goals because of the housing of international admissions in OIA. I would be happy to discuss more details with you. I did a listserve query on AIEA recently and have not adequately reported “findings” on that, because it was a very mixed picture. I would say that most of the respondents represented universities that had combined international and domestic admissions offices located in the domestic admissions office, with International Affairs taking no particular role. Some found this to be wholly adequate. Others reported that arrangement but with great frustration that international was always under-represented and not understood. A few reported dedicated international admissions offices located in International Administration. That is the model I advocate.

Another option to think about is a split appointment between Admissions and International. This ties the two offices together and helps to educate each about the other.....I have seen it work well

We (Indiana University) DO have an international undergraduate recruiter in the international office, but then again, we also do the admitting of international undergraduates as well (in close coordination with the domestic admissions office). The advantage of having the recruiter in our office is that she is part of an overall communications stream from prospect to enrollment, nearly all of which is handled by our office.

At the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus, we have one person whose role is to recruit international students from around the globe (primarily, but not exclusively undergraduates), and we have found it to be a tremendous asset. He works closely with individual colleges and with the University's admission office on timing, places, processes, identification of particular high schools around the globe, our US information agencies overseas, etc.

Here at University of Alabama we have no formal recruiting mechanism for international undergrads but informally our English Language Institute recruits for the University as it recruits for itself.

Important topic and obviously very different approaches. Let me add some notes re what procedures we follow at Colorado State University:

- There is an international admissions person in the “admissions office,” separate from our Office of International Programs. The provost asked me 2-3 years ago if I wanted to consider switching the person to our office, but I like the current arrangement; it gives us an effective channel to the Admissions people. The international admissions person also feels closely linked to our office so that helps.
- Although the Admissions Office has a representative for international students, their office pays nothing for international recruiting. We finally developed a dedicated budget in our office for international recruiting four years ago. The current amount is around \$45K, but that doesn't reflect what we are spending in China. Those efforts are paid for from a separate account in our budget; thus far, I have to request one-time funds for the China money, but I expect the amount to be added to our base budget soon.
- The two most important developments for international admissions have been (a) the university's willingness to give us the ability to offer guaranteed \$8,000 scholarships to students from our international “strategic partners,” and (b) the university's agreeing to give us a revenue stream for international students who come through the new channels that we have developed [strategic partnerships, dual-degree programs, agents]. We had 30 new students just through these channels this year, bringing in revenue that is allowing us to add a staff position.

- We now have also opened an office in Shanghai with three part-time people, and we may open similar offices elsewhere in China.
- Finally, the university established a “Strategic Enrollment Committee” this year, and that’s where key decisions are made regarding domestic and international strategy. We all know how critical increased enrollments are for our cash-strapped universities, and the Strategic Enrollment Committee is so important that the members include the president, the provost, the VP for Enrollment and Access, the VP for Operations, and our three Vice Provosts (undergraduate affairs, graduate affairs, and international affairs).

In sum, for us the critical point was less how we organized efforts and more how to establish financial incentives both for our office and for potential students.