

WSU STRATEGIC ENROLLMENT PLAN 2021

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INTRODUCTION

Enrollment Management is both an organizational structure and a strategy based on the collection and analysis of data to help shape an institution's recruitment and retention of its desired class.

There are five elements to most enrollment strategies: Research, marketing, retention, financial aid, and admission.

HIGH SCHOOL VISITATION AND TRAVEL

Goal: WSU Admission staff will increase the number of high school visits by 5% this fall through a combination of virtual and in-person visitation. Pre-pandemic, the counseling and EM staff increased our presence in high schools in Massachusetts and out of state in the prior two years by attending 100 additional events.

Expand reach to areas of NY, and southern CT, and NJ if budget allows determined by application count.

Strategy: Counselors should be reviewing application volume and deposit volume by high school.

Determine effectiveness of the relationship and resources devoted to each visit.

Determine budget limitations for attending all events and prioritize accordingly.

Deliverables: Complete travel schedule, office coverage and priorities by August 15th.

CAMPUS EVENTS

Goal: Campus visitation is the most important affinity measure, and the best indicator of intent from the student and her family.

Create additional opportunities for BIPOC attendance.

Campus visits will be the first “call to action” in our communication plan for all five modes of contact.

School visitations should center around driving students to tour the campus and attend the planned Open House Events for the Fall, and to apply.

Strategy: Key points of distinction and areas of differentiation for WSU.

We are a residential campus that has a great inventory of different living styles including, suite, semi-suite, traditional, and apartment style residence halls.

WSU is situated between large urban areas (Springfield, Hartford).

WSU has immediate access to hiking and biking trails and cultural areas of the Berkshires and Northampton.

Located between an hour and two hours from population centers it defines the attitude of “just far enough away.”

Deliverables: Increase attendance to campus events and tours by 10% over our Fall 2019 and Spring 2019 totals.

Integrate campus events with other activities to increase the campus activity (Homecoming/Parent Weekend, CURCA events, Career Fairs, Athletic events, etc.).

Coordinate with Deans and Department chairs to provide ample opportunity for students to participate in the academic experience (open classrooms, discussions, presentations).

Increase percentage of BIPOC student attendance by 5%.

Schedule and agenda completed and communicated to the campus by August 1, 2021.

Yield Events: Schedule confirmed and set and communicated by September 1, 2021.

Goal: Convert accepted students to paid students by providing early opportunities for faculty, staff interaction.

First event should be scheduled no later than February 27, 2022.

Provide distinct activities different from fall events, smaller group interactions.

Call to action “deposit” for all communications in this cycle.

Provide areas to deposit throughout day.

Review and order t-shirts and other items for student gift bags.

Deliverables: Increase attendance by 10%. Increase deposits to 1,100 for FTFY.

Increase BIPOC attendance and deposits by 5%

EMAIL

GOAL: CRM communication plan should coordinate and work to support each step of the enrollment strategy.

Main themes should be centered on “Fit” “Affordability” and “Outcomes”.

Counselors should have working knowledge of how to access reports, deliver messages, track inquiries, applications and deposits.

Plan will transition leads from 3E Awareness and Conversion campaigns and drive students to deposit.

Reports will be made available at each stage of the conversion cycle by college and department. Staff shall communicate and support access to data.

STRATEGY: Refresh update content to coordinate with branding of website, social media, and direct mail.

Messaging should segment when appropriate, but appeal to widest audience possible.

Consistent messaging, majority of deposited students need weekly contact to engage.

DELIVERABLES: Refreshed and updated content with input from 3E channel reports.

CRM Communication plan submitted by July 1, 2021

SOCIAL MEDIA

GOAL: Social media plan should put students at center of messaging.

Provide support to email communications and to digital marketing with smart, topical, relevant and positive imaging.

Create a fun, open invitation to students to connect with campus informally.

STRATEGY: Staff should maintain social media accounts to interact and comment and direct prospective students.

Provide platform for faculty and staff to share accomplishments and information.

Posts should be “real” not feel edited and/or “polished.”

Provide timely responses to inquiries, monitor activity.

DELIVERABLES: Create 30 videos to support conversion activity and “calls to action.”

Postings that drive to visit, apply, deposit.

Creation of student and faculty advisory committee to review content and provide feedback.

New Social Media policy enacted.

DIGITAL MARKETING

GOAL: WSU’s prospective students are completely reliant on their phones for all aspects of their lives. The most effective way to get to them, interact, and influence them is to be present on the social media platforms.

Create relevant sustained digital presence throughout cycle.

Drive students to micro site.

Maintain “call to action” for each conversion activity.

Segment and score inquiries.

STRATEGY: Create digital ads that highlight “Fit, Affordability and Outcomes.”

Coordinate with email, direct mail, and visitation messaging.

Compile and update student interactions across all modes to create actionable activity for counselors, faculty and staff.

Measure click rates and open rates to measure effectiveness of strategy in real time and shape future content.

DELIVERABLES: Increase inquiries by 10%.

Increase application total to 5,000

Increase deposits to 1,100 for FYFT

Increase diversity of applicants by 5%

WEBSITE

GOAL: WSU website is the front door for our prospective students and is the most important element in presenting the campus to prospective students and their families. A new redesign has been developed and will be implemented and launched by fall of 2021. The number one purpose of the website is for recruiting prospective students to the University.

STRATEGY: Present relevant information for students searching the site for application information, visit information, calendar of events, athletics, program and major information. Forward facing information on all introductory pages should reflect the intention of the University to position itself as the best fit, most affordable institution that provides the best outcomes for its graduates.

DELIVERABLES: Improve navigation and user experience.

Provide additional data in regard to user experience.

Representation of student population should be accurate and diverse

Provide access to campus calendar to maintain central database for all campus activities.

Improve on average time on site, and sustained activity on site.

INTERNATIONAL RECRUITMENT

GOAL: Create new revenue stream for Westfield State University. As restrictions on student visas are relaxed and as the Covid-19 pandemic is less of a concern for international travel, there is an opportunity for WSU to increase its marketability to the international market.

STRATEGY: Develop relationship with EDCo, an international student recruitment firm based in Australia, and with 150 agents in over 100 countries worldwide.

Accelerator is a platform that is used by international students to find and apply to programs in the United States.

7% royalty fee for every student that is enrolled through the platform.

Low cost, low risk strategy to increase international enrollment.

Establish market position in various countries without investment in travel.

DELIVERABLES: Increase international recruitment by 100%.

FINANCIAL AID

GOALS: Improve yield.

Provide greater access to underserved populations.

Increase revenue by leveraging institutional merit and need-based awarding.

Create institutional discount rate goal, instead of fixed budget awarding for financial aid.

Drive students to apply for aid and filling out FAFSA.

STRATEGY: Target underperforming populations of the prospective student pool and improve yield.

Employ merit strategy to help maintain academic profile, market position, and improve yield on high achieving students.

Improve outreach to students and families to assist with financial aid processing.

DELIVERABLES: Improve student yield by 3%.

Increase outreach communications across all modes BY 5%(email, phone, texting, in-person)

Coordinate with segments of WSU enrollment cycle to offer additional incentives (scholarships).

APPLICATIONS/DOCUMENT WORKFLOW

GOAL: Improve student experience in applying and completing application process.

Provide Common Application access to prospective students.

Initiate electronic submission of application and supporting documents through Parchment.

Improve tracking and missing item communications.

Establish published deadlines for response time for acceptances, financial aid award letter.

STRATEGY: Improve access to WSU by eliminating separate application process.

DELIVERABLES: Increase applications to 5,000

Decrease response time for decisions for acceptance and financial aid awarding under two weeks after completion.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES NEEDED

\$100,00 NEEDED TO COMPLETE DIGITAL CAMPAIGN FOR 12 MONTHS.

\$60,000 NEEDED TO SUPPORT ADDITIONAL APPLICATION FLOW FROM COMMON APPLICATION IMPLEMENTATION.

\$25,000 FOR ADDITIONAL NAME PURCHASE

\$17,000 TEXTING APP

\$20,000 ONLINE VIEWBOOK

ADDITIONAL IT SUPPORT FOR COMMON APPLICATION SUPPORT
AND FOR CRM MANAGEMENT (Data Analyst position still open)

Program Development Needed

Additional fully online programs. This is the greatest need for non-traditional students.

Criminal Justice

Psychology

Communications

Social Work (BSW)

Business

MBA

RESTRUCTIONING PLAN

The Director of Admission is currently being filled by a temporary employee, whose contract expires on June 21, 2021.

See attached restructuring plan that should be implemented as soon as possible.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. RESTRUCTURING PLAN
2. 5 YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT (2021-2026)
3. CRM COMMUNICATION PLAN
4. FINANCIAL AID BREAKDOWN BY EFC
5. YIELD BY MAJOR FOR TOP 5 MAJORS AND APPLICATION TOTALS
6. UNDERSTANDING ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT AND EM AT WSU
7. SEASONAL TALKING POINTS FOR CAMPUS COMMUNITY
8. APPLICATIONS BY REGION DATA 2019-2021

