

# RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

TLT Round 2 – Process Sustainability Deliverable

Best Practice Research  
& EOU Current  
Practices

## Common/Best Practices & Trends

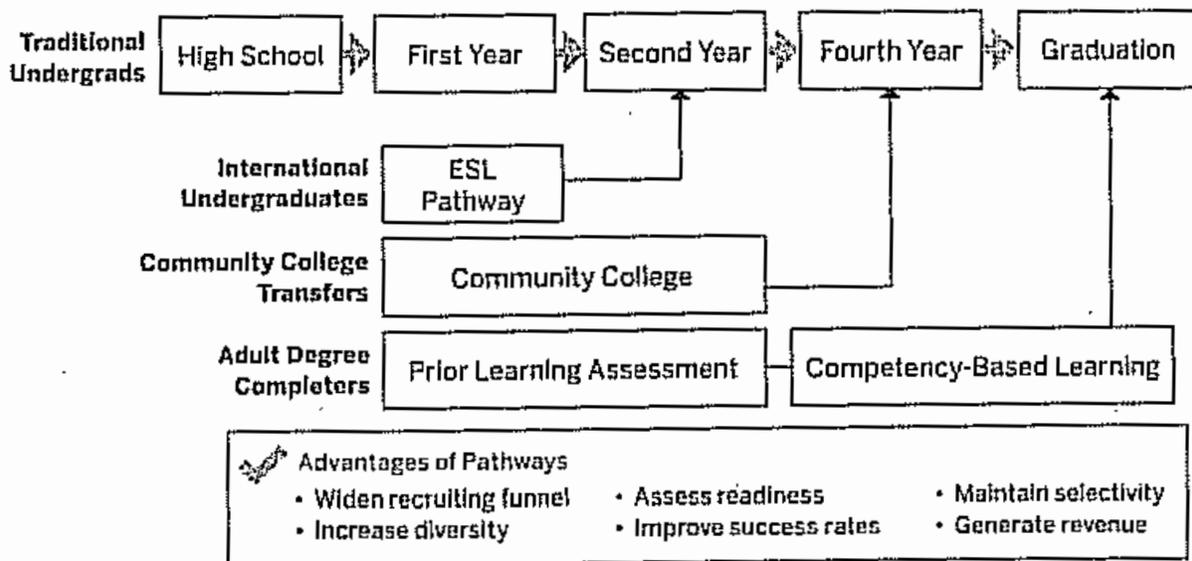
### Enrollment Management

Many institutions utilize a comprehensive enrollment management process which incorporates marketing, admissions, financial aid, student services, and advising resources to achieve optimum recruitment, retention, and graduation rates.

Based on trends, the ability of public universities, especially smaller institutions, to rely on the traditional student pipeline to meet enrollment and revenue needs will be severely strained. Over the next decade, universities will increasingly compete for traditional students. This will likely result in tuition discounting and decreased revenue from this student segment. Institutions will need to look at other segments to remain viable.

Community college transfers, international undergraduates, professional master's students, and adult degree completers have been identified as offering the best opportunities for enrollment growth and tuition revenue. However, each group will require supports that institutions serving traditional populations may not be adequately prepared to provide. Yet, some of this may be offset by the potential for online and hybrid educational offerings which may be able to serve these populations if done well.

### **A Model for Recruiting and Graduating Nontraditional Students**



([Education Advisory Board, 2012](#)).

### Marketing & Recruitment

One of the most notable trends in higher education branding and marketing is that institutions are dedicating far more attention to these functions than in previous years. Many universities have hired

marketing professionals from the corporate world, including CMOs, and have invested significant time and money to create strong institutional brands ([Hanover Research, 2014](#)).

Perhaps the largest area of innovation and growth in higher education marketing and branding, as well as in recruitment, is in the online and digital space. Although there is still some doubt that institutions are using technology to its full potential, particularly with social media and other emerging platforms, a recent survey by the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth indicated that nearly 100 percent of institutions polled use some form of social media as part of their marketing and overall operations ([Hanover Research, 2014](#)).

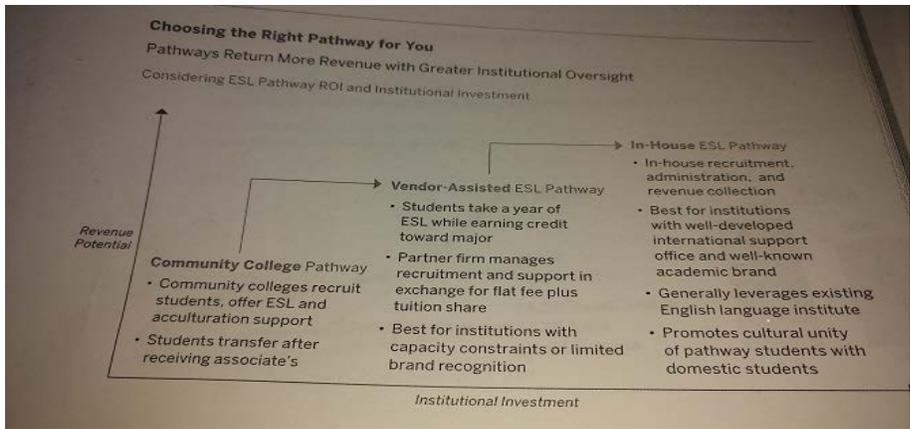
Among the most important tools for social and online marketing is an effective and intuitive website, which should be considered the “ultimate brand statement” for an institution. Websites often feature elements and layouts so as to streamline and highlight content, including navigation bars, engaging visuals such as slideshows, and prominent “call to action” buttons that encourage students to apply, for example ([Hanover Research, 2014](#)).

While in the US and the UK, Facebook is the most common social media application, it is worth noting that such is not the case in other countries. Marketing via social media in India or South American countries may be better served by using Orkut or Qzone, WeChat, or Weibo for reaching Chinese students ([ALT-C, 2010](#); [Ruffalo Noel-Levitz, 2016](#)).

Despite increased digital activity, a recent survey found that the most effective marketing strategies for universities are nevertheless events-based and involve direct interaction with potential students. Radio ads, asking current students or alumni for applicant referrals, and online college fairs were deemed least effective, while the most effective methods of outreach were open houses and campus visit days for high school students ([Hanover Research, 2014](#)).

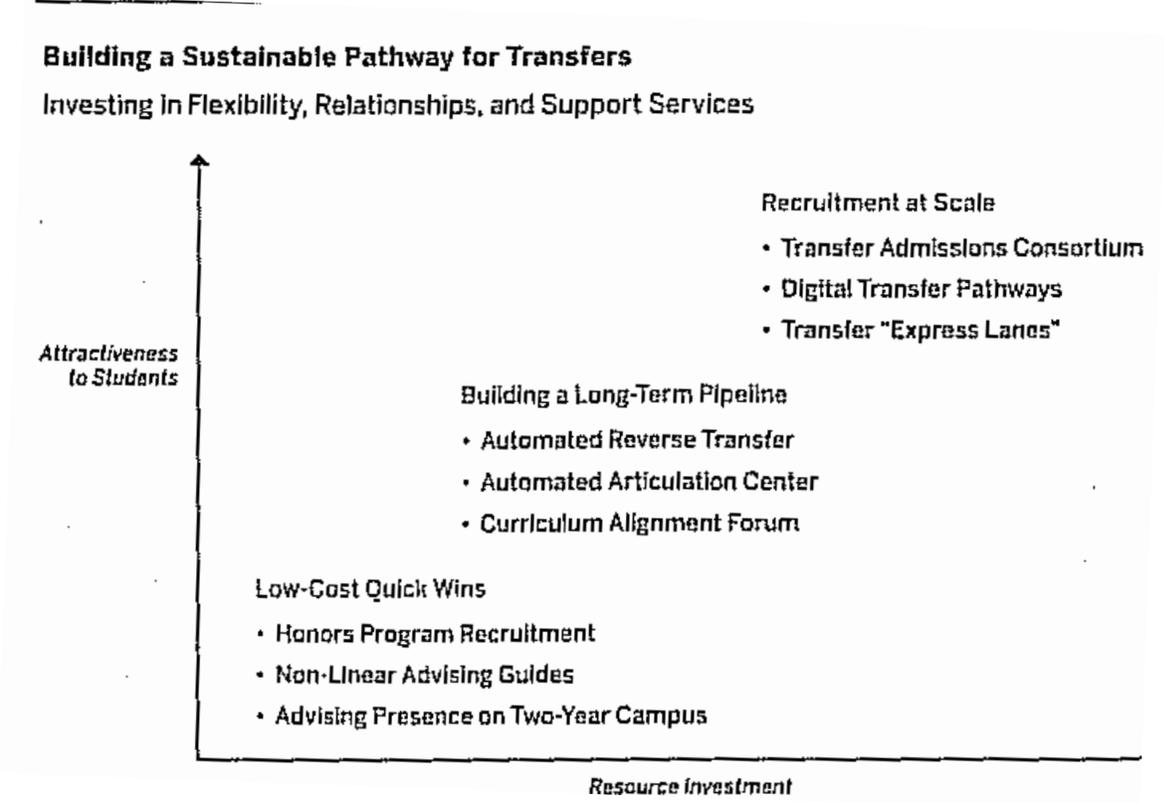
Use of digital media also varies by student segment. In a recent study of prospective adult learners, 76% indicate using friends, family, or colleagues as resources in their college search. Sixty-four percent indicated television commercials, billboards, or other ads, and 55% indicate college websites ([Inside Higher Ed articles, 2014](#)).

Recruitment strategies in higher education increasingly focus on international students and non-traditional and adult learners. Colleges and universities in both Canada and the U.S. are competing for international students on a growing scale, with Canada increasing its international enrollments by 94 percent over the last decade, and the U.S. increasing international enrollments by nearly ten percent over last year ([Hanover Research, 2014](#)). Yet, there are still many opportunities for international recruitment for institutions willing to support students whose English language skills need additional work.



(Education Advisory Board, 2012).

Community college transfers represent a large opportunity for enrollment at four-year institutions. Students earning associate degrees and subsequently pursuing a baccalaureate are more likely to complete than first year entering students. Yet, credit articulation and potential “empty calories” treatment of coursework remain major barriers to transfer students.



(Education Advisory Board, 2012).

Some recruitment strategies include increasing the pool of potential transfer applicants via:

- Use National Student Clearinghouse data to identify admits from the prior two years who chose to enroll at community colleges, then re-recruit them back to your institution.
- Use Collegefish.org to purchase Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) names from community colleges. Other sources for transfer names could include Zinch/Chegg. In addition to the purchase of names, ask the vendors for assistance in working the pool.
- Build strong relationships with your local community colleges and encourage them to share the names of their spring graduates with you. This works particularly well with campuses which have articulation agreements in place ([Monroe, 2014](#)).

Specific transfer recruitment strategies are:

- Make transcript evaluations a priority for all interested transfer candidates. Ensure admissions staff can conduct evaluations on the spot. Do not make students apply first to receive an unofficial evaluation.
- Make online transfer guides and articulation agreements easily accessible and understandable.
- Offer Phi Theta Kappa honor society (PTK) scholarships or continue the scholarships transfers first received from their previous community college when they enroll at your institution.
- Develop a distinct communication flow, publications, and web presence for transfer students.
- Create visit opportunities specifically for transfers. If possible, include career advancement offices, faculty advisors, and financial aid offices in these visits ([Monroe, 2014](#)).

And strategies for improving transfer yield include:

- Offer a one-stop shop service to transfers. Promote express application and enrollment days or appointments where transfers can begin with the application and leave with a course schedule in one appointment.
- Offer evening services and opportunities. What is your staff availability for students after 5:00 p.m.? Keep in mind that many transfer students, especially from community colleges, are also working (often full-time).
- Create a separate transfer student orientation and registration program. Transfers want to get down to business, and their time is important. By the same token, you can be inclusive of supporting family members during these events (parents, spouses, children) by offering something meaningful to them.
- Tailor your financial aid communications for transfer students. All students have concerns about financing, but transfers may also need help understanding how the aid package from your institution relates to any former aid they may have received elsewhere—particularly as related to eligibility for Pell grants and loans.
- Explain the housing options for transfers.

- Communicate available support services for transfers. Who is their academic or faculty advisor? What tutoring or other support services are available? How can they ensure they are on the most streamlined path to reaching their degree? ([Monroe, 2014](#)).

Newer methods of online and technology-enhanced course delivery, including “flipped classrooms” and gamification, are showing promising student outcomes. “Flipped” and gamified instruction models in particular have resulted in greater student engagement ([Hanover Research, 2014](#)).

## Student Lifecycle Activities

Recognizing and defining the different stages in a student lifecycle can be very beneficial to identifying barriers and addressing them ([ALT-C, 2010](#)).

The included infographic is one example of a student lifecycle. Another example from Georgetown University is located at the following [link](#).

## Special Populations

Minority students and military students are sub-populations which need specialized attention due to their unique needs. For military and veteran students, it is recommended to ensure communication of accurate cost of tuition, including the Yellow Ribbon program, will help attract veterans. Permitting joint services transcripts benefits both the student and the college. And having a holistic admissions process will help accommodate veteran students ([Sutton, 2015](#)).

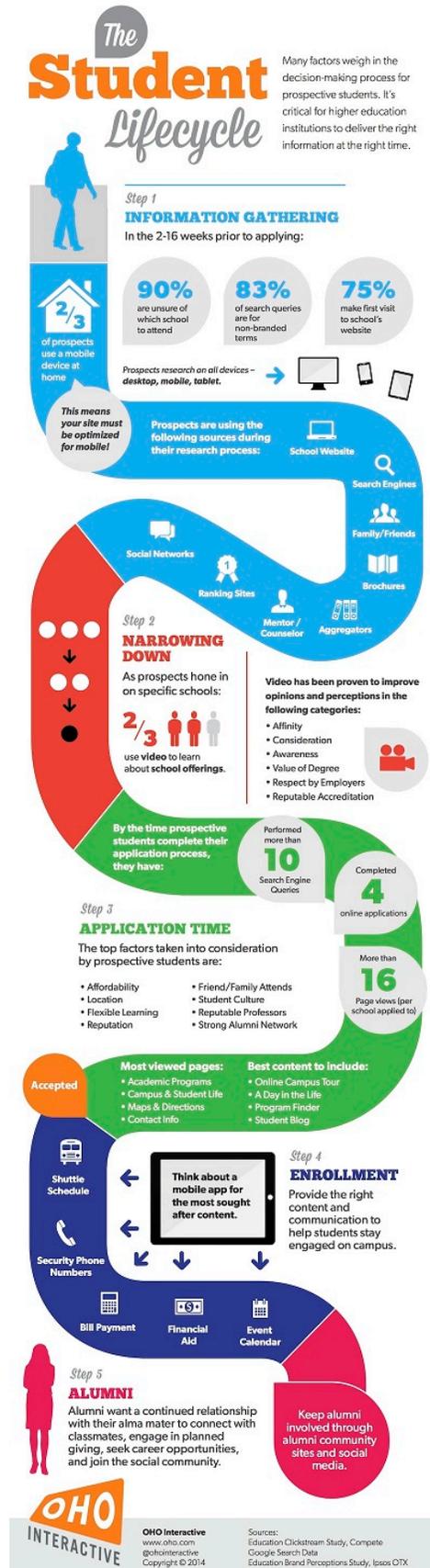
Strategies for recruiting students of color include: using minorities in the recruiting process, recruiting in minority, community, professional, and social groups or organizations, churches and other religious groups, providing an inclusive campus climate, providing materials which give evidence of minority success and are written in the language common to the group, beginning recruitment at middle school or earlier and continue through high school or community college graduation, and allowing for alternative admission requirements ([ASHA](#)).

## Retention

According to a recent benchmark report, “academic support programs, honors programs, and ‘giving students practical work experiences in their intended major’ emerged as the most effective practices,” for student retention. First-year student programs and one-on-one advising by professional staff were also effective ([Ruffalo Noel-Levitz, 2015](#)).

Financial literacy programs were rated “minimally effective”, but the most effective internal management operations were term-by-term persistence tracking and “identifying courses that are more difficult or less difficult to complete” ([Ruffalo Noel-Levitz, 2015](#)).

Suggestions for improving retention include:



- Study students' intentions.
- Focus advising on educational planning.
- Make counseling appointments for incoming students.
- Provide a reading lab.
- Keep working on affordability for continuing students ([Ruffalo Noel-Levitz, 2016](#)).
- Math Pathways (End the practice of using College Algebra as the default gateway math course for new entering students. Provide rigorous Math Pathways that align with the skills and knowledge necessary for success in students' chosen programs of study. Ensure that students complete the gateway math in the first year, increasing their likelihood of completion.)
- Co-requisite remediation (Default many more unprepared students into college-level gateway courses with mandatory, just-in-time instructional support. Combine reading and writing instruction. Align mathematics to programs of study, matching the curriculum to real-world career needs. For many more unprepared students, provide remedial help parallel to highly structured coursework.)
- 15 to finish (Incentivize students to attend full-time and ensure that full-time means 15 credits per semester. Use banded tuition so 15 credits per semester cost students no more than 12 credits. Cap degree credit requirements (120 for bachelor's and 60 for associate – semester-based thresholds) to ensure degrees can be completed on time. Ensure college credits can be transferred.)
- Structured schedules (Help working students balance jobs and school by using structured scheduling of classes to add predictability to their busy lives — doing so enables many more students to attend college full-time, shortening their time to completion.)
- Guided Pathways to Success (Enabled by technology, default all students into highly structured degree plans, not individual courses. Start students in a limited number of "meta majors," which narrow into majors. Map out every semester of study for the entire program, and guarantee that milestone courses will be available when needed. Use built-in early warning systems to alert advisers when students fall behind to ensure efficient intervention) ([Complete College America Conference](#))

### **Alumni activities**

Peer institutions have implemented strong linkages between career services and alumni relations.

### **EOU Practices & Processes**

#### **Enrollment Management**

EOU does not currently practice strategic enrollment management.

#### **Marketing & Recruitment**

General Promotion:

5th grade campus visits - promoted through Eastern Promise, but now other schools have obtained funding for grade school and middle school campus visits. This creates a college-going focus to younger students.

Eastern Promise, Dual enrollment, Summer Institute, Oregon Teacher Pathway – Partnerships with Eastern Oregon University.

Promote EOU at hosted events such as NBC camps, FBLA, Girls in Science, etc.

Admissions Specific:

Leads:

- Purchase College Board PSAT lists, CAPPEX lists, NRCCUA lists. The PSAT lists will contain high school sophomores. CAPPEX may contain a variety of student levels, NRCCUA may contain high school juniors and seniors. These names are added into our recruiting software as leads and send specific communications (postcards, emails, letters) intended for a purchased list.

Inquiries:

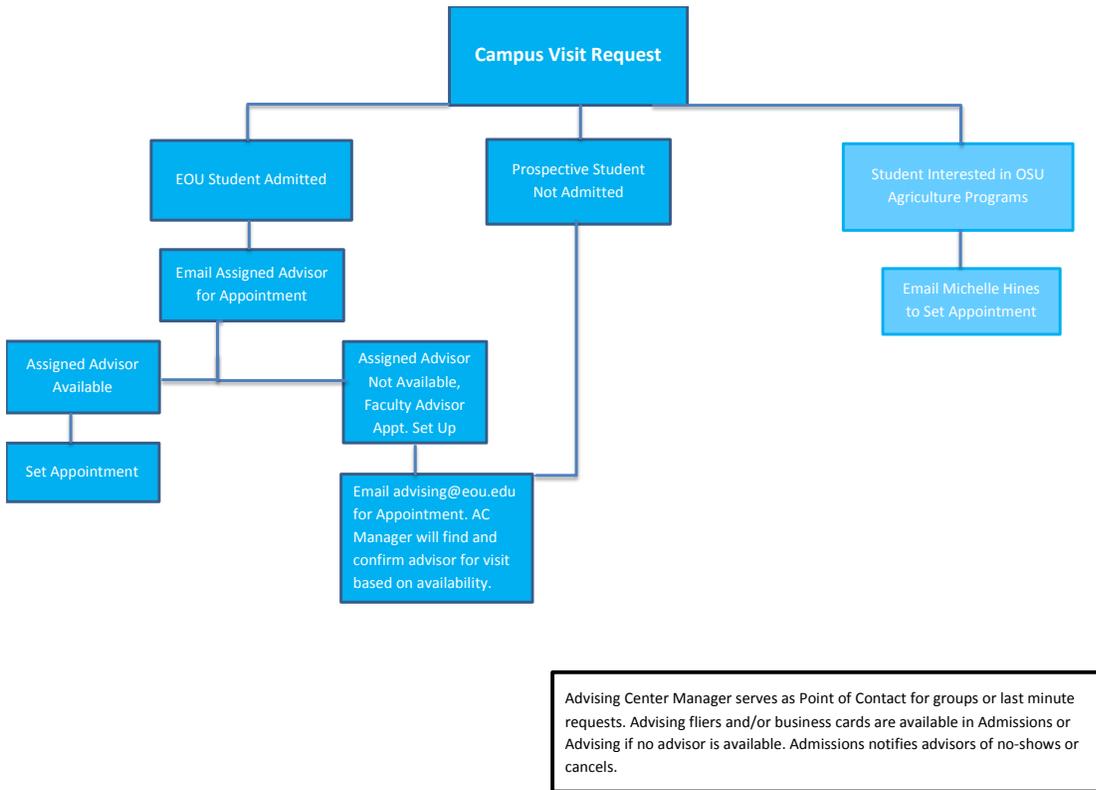
Travel related events, freshman student population:

Timeline for most activity September to February.

- All travel related contacts are noted as inquiries. These are collected from regional and national college fairs, high school visits, other outreach off campus.
- Travel related college fairs and high school visits mostly take place between September and December. College fairs attended are the PNACAC and NACAC regional fairs, college fairs in California, Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Hawaii, Alaska, Pacific Island, and Northern Mariana Island areas.
- High school travel is direct to high schools, typically attending 2-3 schools per day.
- Oregon Public University Tour is a travel related group tour across Oregon to reach all high schools by all 7 public universities. This typically begins in early March for 5 weeks.

Self initiated contacts:

- Individual campus visit



- Preview Day
- Web request for information
- Sport interests

Transfer and International student population:

Timeline for most activity late January to May.

- Oregon Transfer Days is targeted to students currently attending an Oregon Community College, these events take place in January.
- Other transfer events include the International Transfer Fairs in Portland and Everett and Seattle.

Other outreach Financial Aid Specific:

- Financial Aid Nights at regional area high schools to promote the FAFSA.

Graduate level:

- All graduate level recruiting is managed within the colleges.

All undergraduate inquiries receive a tailored communication plan appropriate to their entry year. High school underclassmen receive a few emails and postcards whereas the seniors and transfer students receive a full communication plan.

Admission counselors keep a list of “highly desired” students who have indicated a high interest to attend EOU. These top recruit students receive more direct follow up from the admission counselor.

All inquiries also participate in the tele-counseling campaigns, with targeted messages to either visit the campus, or notices to apply for scholarships and admission.

International students receive a small communication plan, and more individual messages direct from the International Student Advisor.

The Online population also receives a tailored communication plan, mostly delivered via email. This population is most often a self-initiated contact via web request for information.

Applicants:

- Upon submission of an application, the student changes stages from Inquiry to Applicant. This will drive a change in their communications. More specific messages are geared towards completion of their admission records and next steps.
- Admission counselors maintain a more solid communication with these students.
- Next steps continuously repeated within the communication plans: transcripts, scholarships, housing, pre-registration.

### **Student Lifecycle Activities**

EOU student lifecycle has been overlaid on the Georgetown University lifecycle. It is available [here](#).

### **Special Populations**

Per the Admissions Director Gina Galaviz-Yap, this is what EOU is currently doing for these special student populations:

#### Veteran Students:

Kerry Thompson will attend specific military college fairs in the region. Sometimes they are held on military bases. Outside of Kerry’s efforts we do not attend Veteran specific recruitment events. We do have materials in the welcome center that we offer to students who self-identify as a veteran. During our summer training the admission counselors get trained on general Veteran FAQ from Dorothy and ROTC so we can be more efficient when we do come across Veterans. The majority of recruitment for Veterans is done through the communication plan. New Base to Bachelors partnership with KCC.

Currently tracked via an object in the CRM to track the following items:

- Current Military Status

- Enlistment Date
- Separation Date
- Military Branch (Including multiple enlistments from other branches as well)
- Status of Active Duty

As part of the Phase 3 deployment of the CRM Scheduled to start in July 2017, IT would work with the current Veteran Coordinator to obtain what other useful information would be needed to properly assist these veteran students at EOU to ensure they have the extra services they need as they make their way through EOU. This object can also be used at Recruitment of a military student to ensure they are assigned the proper services.

#### Multicultural Students:

Bienvenidos Spanish events hosted in Hermiston, Ontario and Pasco HS targeted towards Latino students and their families. We also attend college fairs across the state such as Asian American Youth Leadership Conference, African American Youth Leadership Conference, Cesar Chavez Leadership Conference. We submit proposals to present at these conferences and also participate in the college fair portion. Increased programming in Marion County and Portland Metro, such as on the spots and more outreach work to build relationships with Community based organizations. This is our third year recruiting in Micronesia, building relationships with schools has been key with the assistance of Bennie Moses who has traveled and recruited for us, we have seen an increase in these student every year.

Currently tracked via:

- International
- Nation
- VISA
- Micronesians have additional tracking items because they don't require VISA's to enter the country (Needs further review)

#### International Students:

Partnership with McGovern. Agency that recruits for EOU in the international. We attempted to recruit in Canada last year, we found out that these students are looking for ranked/prestigious US institutions. We have decided to place our resources with McGovern.

#### Native American Students:

None at this time. With the vacancy of the Native American Student Coordinator there will be a recruitment component added. The person will work with admissions to develop a recruitment plan. My hope is that they will be able to do outreach within the Native Communities in Oregon to begin. Bring these students to campus and utilize our current Native students to assist with the recruitment and outreach.

Currently tracked via Tribe (current process needs to be improved upon)

## **Retention**

Retention Task Forces have been convened in 2013-2014 and 2014-2015, with the current TLT Process Sustainability: Round 2 Sub-team continuing this inquiry. The brief overview provided here should not be considered all-inclusive.

### **2013-2014 Retention Task Force Subcommittees**

March 7, 2014 – A subcommittee submitted “Summary Report for Student Retention Task Force – Supporting Students Regardless of Location: On Campus, On Line, On Site” (Source: Anna Maria Dill; see Appendix I). Recommendations focusing on the recurrent theme of “connectivity” were also submitted and have been or are continuously being implemented:

1. Developing a student referral system that allows faculty and staff to connect students to the appropriate resources.
2. Review of the Academic Standing appeal process.
3. A web-based training program in support of DegreeWorks.

March 14, 2014 – Another subcommittee reported items that could be done better (Source: Kathleen Brown):

- Scheduling: gaps in 100 level foundational offerings; courses in some programs are stacked in a way that students miss opportunities to take them; commonly sought courses scheduled at the same time, but by spring, finding courses to take is difficult for some students.
- Students feel pushed to choose a major.
- Students don’t understand the Liberal Studies major or Gen Ed (**Note:** Integrative Studies has replaced Liberal Studies).
- First Year Experience (FYE) needs an overhaul (**Note:** Accomplished with introduction of UNI courses in 2015.)
- Gap between what faculty expect students to know and do and what students actually know and can do.

### **Retention Workshop 2.2.15: Academic Advisors & CAS Program Chairs**

See Appendix I for lists of immediate, short term, and long term recommendations for retention improvement.

### **FYI on Retention 2015/2016 (Source: Kathleen Brown)**

Recommendations from the 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 Retention Task Force groups informed some of the approaches to retention improvement introduced by the Student Success Coordinator.

Key Factors:

- The tracking of students was the most successful piece for supporting the students. We were able to get to the ones struggling before week 4 and then check back to make sure everything was going well. This could be used with all students...

- Choice of coursework that was approved by the committee to have proven success with freshmen.

#### Retention efforts piloted Fall 2015

- Added week 3 and 6 tracking of reinstated Academic Suspension students to that of provisional admits.
  - Refer to retention activity calendar located [here](#).
- Notified housing for support with Mountaineer Student Referrals.
- TRiO worked closely with students in their program who were referred.
- Added previously unavailable targeted support for referred students.
- Worked on training orientation for online students to better understand the nature of online study.

#### **Alumni activities**

EOU does not currently have a strong linkage between career services and alumni relations.

#### **Recommendations**

1. Engage in comprehensive and strategic enrollment management (SEM). Suggested models for traditional SEM and advanced SEM which incorporates student learning and success into the approach are available at [SEM1](#) and [SEM2](#).
2. Complete a recruitment plan with clear targets identified by sub-population that includes action steps/tactics (examples located at [RECRUIT1](#) and [RECRUIT2](#)) and leverages opportunities available via on campus activities.
  - a. Create a universal activities calendar that includes activity categories for easier identification (see [categorized 2015-16 activity calendar](#)).
3. Develop and implement a plan to track and act upon the current data in the CRM for Enrollment Management and Student Success.
4. Strengthen the connection between alumni relations and career services to facilitate continued interaction and support for students.

## Appendix I

Below are recommendations compiled in a Retention Workshop led by Vice Provost Donald Wolff on February 2, 2015.

Retention Workshop 2.2.15:  
Academic Advisors & CAS Program Chairs

Attendance: 10 CAS Program Chairs, Donald Wolff (Advising Center), Ray Brown (Academic Standards Committee), 3 Campus Advisors, 3 Student Success Staff.

### Retention Recommendations/Plans

**Immediate:** What should we do immediately to increase Retention Spring 2015?

- Uniform Attendance Policy for First-Year Students
- Walk Policy: Faculty walk students to Support Services
- 100-Level Courses: Third- and Fifth-Week Grade/Performance Reports in Canvas, with copies to Students and Advisors
- Make coffee hour socials available for majors, minors, and interested-first-year students to help form communities and to help students see faculty as approachable.

**Short Term:** What should we do **AY 2015-16** to increase Retention?

- Mandatory Mountaineer Day Attendance with \$50 fee.
- Summer College Orientation for At-Risk Population
- Increased Focus on non-CORE students (Action Taken: HUM 101 has been increased to 3 credits as University Studies 101 starting Fall 2015.)
- Better coordination between HUM 101 (UNI 101 next year), 100-level instructors, and Advisors.
- Provide FTE for 100-Level Courses all 3 AY terms (Fall, Winter, Spring). (The Sustainability Plan undermines Retention in five ways: Reduces FTE that can be dedicated to 100-Level Courses; Reduces FTE for First-Year Friendly Courses [e.g., 100-level Geology & Geography]; Cuts Retention Positive-Impact Courses that enroll less than 15; Bunches 100-level offerings in Fall; cuts use of adjuncts, so faculty have less time for 100-level courses and community projects.)
- Work with Programs to establish 100-Level Course offerings, where none exist or where not enough exist. (Find out how many 100-level courses are needed each term to accommodate students. Refine program offerings accordingly.)
- Emphasize active, applied, project-based, perhaps community-oriented courses in additional 100-level offerings.
- All 100-level courses should meet for than twice a week.
- Train all faculty to recognize and work with at-risk students.
- Track and intervene with Non-Provisional Students not in CORE or HUM (UNI next year) more closely. (54% [34 students] of this group on Academic Probation did not return for Winter 2015.)
- Enforce prerequisites. (Do not allow 100-level students to enroll in 200-level courses, without a proven track record [university GPA] or without having met prerequisites, which again requires greater availability of 100-level classes through Fall, Winter, and Spring. Under no

circumstances should a Fall first-year students enroll in a two-level course—this creates issues for dual credit students; however, many are not prepared for college-level work.)

- Provide more Pre-College MATH intervention for struggling students.
- Introduce students to social events in La Grande, while increasing those events: EOU Discount Movie Night, EOU Discount Coffee House Nights, Enhanced Intramural Program, Coffee Hours/Socials for Programs, Link 100-Level Assignments to Arts, Cultural, and Sports Campus Events, Get Students Out of their dorm rooms.
- Increase outreach to students on Academic Probation as they move from Winter to Spring and Spring to Fall: Perhaps provide mandatory Bounce Back and Credit Recovery courses/programs.

**Long Term:** What should we do **after AY 2015-16** to increase Retention?

- Reduce number of Provisional Admits, while increasing number of higher achieving students.
- Move to semester system.
- Provide more two-year, applied pathways.
- Fund programs that will attract students. (Purportedly, upper division students transfer out of EOU as programs are reduced.)
- Establish Registration for a complete first-year set of courses (Fall, Winter, Spring), that new, first-year, full time students register for during Mountaineer Days.