

June 28, 2022

MEMORANDUM

TO: M. Katherine Banks, Ph.D.
President

FROM: Susan Ballabina, Ph.D. *Susan Ballabina*
Working Group Chair

SUBJECT: Implementation Memo – Working Group #6

Recommendation to be Implemented: Create an Office Focused on Improving Recruitment and Retention of Undergraduate Students. [modification]: Retention activities will remain in the Provost's Office.

Strategic Considerations:

The primary charge of the workgroup was to create opportunities to elevate and improve recruitment and retention for undergraduate students at Texas A&M. Emphases was placed on strategies to improve underserved and minority recruitment, centralized recruitment, elevating regional prospective student centers (PSCs), and increasing collaboration across the state and within system agencies. Supporting documents accompany this report to provide context, research and data for proposed recommendations. The primary recommendations from the work group are as follows:

1. Enhance current and future regional prospective student centers with technology, TAMU marketing and branding, more accessible locations, and appropriate staffing to meet the demands of current metropolitan markets, emerging suburban markets, and rural communities throughout Texas.
2. Establish Community Outreach and Inclusion coordinators (COI) to develop, support, and nurture strategic partnerships with school districts, community organizations, clubs, TAMU networks, and non-profits to support college readiness programs in communities served by PSCs.
3. Engage an educational consulting group to study how best to implement a shared services model for centralized recruitment.
4. Hire a full-time leadership position for centralized recruitment and additional staff to meet the demands of operationalizing SLATE (CRM) across all recruitment platforms.
5. Embrace, advance, and understand the opportunities, challenges, and expectations for being designated as a Hispanic Servicing Institution (HSI).
6. Increase support for transfer student recruitment and pathways to degrees by hiring new staff and aligning resources to improve transfer opportunities and readiness.

7. Create a parent/family engagement portal to increase parental/family engagement, awareness of policies and procedures, and access to resources to assist with prospective student enrollment at TAMU.
8. Reconvene the Undergraduate Admissions Advisory Committee to help guide institutional policies, programs and practices for targeted and recruited students.

The workgroup discussed in detail strategies for improving minority recruitment efforts. Presentations and research on transfer student recruitment, Hispanic student engagement, scholarships and financial aid, parent/family engagement, visitor experience and the admissions process assisted with understanding the complexities associated with enrollment management. Additionally, the workgroup studied a centralized services model currently in use on campus.

Logistical Issues Addressed:

A comprehensive review of the regional perspective student centers clarified the need to renovate, expand and address staff attrition. Centralized recruitment, targeted marketing and communication, transfer and parent/family engagement will require additional staff resources, space, and financial support. *These needs are detailed and explained in the supporting materials.*

Major Challenges Encountered and Resolutions:

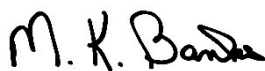
A centralized model will enhance core recruitment functions and efficiencies across the University while allowing flexibility for tailored recruitment in colleges, departments, branch campuses, and Corps. The creation of the Community Outreach & Inclusion unit will allow the University to engage with students and schools in middle school and early high school. This will create a more robust pipeline of college ready and admissible targeted and recruited students to engage with recruiters when they reach 11th and 12th grade. Expansion of regional PSCs increases the reach and access to sprawling metro, suburban and rural parts of Texas.

Key Logistical Issues to be Completed and Timeline:

- Expand regional Prospective Student Center footprint to better serve the needs of families in the Austin, Killeen, Temple, and Waco areas.
- Hire new transfer staff and COI staff for PSCs in major and emerging markets.
- Complete transition of colleges, departments, branch campuses, and Corps to a centralized shared services model.
- Create new marketing assets and update digital footprint for targeted and recruited students.
- Assess HSI recruitment strategy and resources.

*All of these tasks are slated for completion starting Fall 2022 through Fall 2024. The office referenced in the recommendation to be implemented has been established. It is Undergraduate Recruitment and Outreach.

Approved:



M. Katherine Banks, Ph.D.
President

August 12, 2022

Date

June 13, 2022

Supporting Document:

SUBJECT: Implementation Memo – Working Group 6 – Undergraduate Recruitment and Retention

Work Group #6 – Improve Underserved and Minority Recruitment

Recommendation to be Implemented: The workgroup discussed extensively goals and strategies to improve underserved and minority recruitment. The following recommendations are intended to provide short and long-term solutions for improving the yield of targeted and recruited students.

1. Increase transfer opportunities and resources to the University
 - a. Improve perceptions of transfer pathways
 - i. Provide guidance for students on Texas general education courses to take that are transferable to TAMU
 - ii. Expand and strengthen field of study curricula to majors that are in demand and meet the diverse needs of the Texas economy
 - iii. Explore statewide financial incentives and scholarships for efficient transfer
 - iv. Create marketing materials to highlight the benefits of pathways to the University and provide clarity about these pathways earlier in the application process
 - v. Leverage effective matriculation programs like LEAD Summit to increase engagement with admitted students and increase the confirmation rate for students receiving TEAM/TEAB offers
 - b. Increase staff support for transfer students on main campus and in PSCs
 - i. Create FTEs dedicated to establishing connections with community colleges and assisting students with transfer processes and policies on main campus, branch campus, and PSCs
 - ii. Identify student services resources that will assist transfer students first year transition
2. Create a parent/family engagement portal to increase parental engagement, awareness of policies and procedures, and access to resources to assist with enrollment at TAMU. A portal will:
 - a. Connect parents early and often with updates, actions, and reminders
 - b. Improves student yield by making parents aware of timelines, scholarship opportunities, and application gaps
3. Provide more scholarships early and timely in the recruiting process
 - a. Continue to work closely with the TAMU Foundation to increase scholarship offers for eligible high achieving and targeted students, including transfer specific scholarships

- b. Once students are admitted, explore how to package and designate scholarships more strategically for high achieving, targeted and recruited student groups
 - c. Study trend data on financial aid and scholarships awards for underrepresented students to understand the impact of early awards
 - d. Work with former student clubs on scholarship opportunities for students from their geographical areas
4. Embrace and advance the ideals of a Hispanic Serving Institution designation
- a. Work collaboratively with the Office of Diversity, Office of the Provost, Economic Development and Community Impact, Association of Former Students and other stakeholder groups to maximize funding opportunities and networks to expand recruitment programs/services for Hispanic students and communities
 - b. Explore how best to engage Hispanic faculty to meet the unique and diverse needs of Hispanic students and their families. Involve TAMU scholars and researchers with a vested interest in improving enrollment outcomes for targeted and recruited students
 - c. Begin building out an effective marketing and communication strategy in Spanish to minimize the language barrier in the recruitment process
 - i. Hire more bilingual staff to address communication challenges with print materials, media, videos, website, and social media.
5. Improve perception of Texas A&M nationally and globally
- a. Develop custom marketing assets for high academic achieving students, rural communities, and targeted and recruited students
 - b. Increase accessibility of content and information in both English and Spanish, including the ability to translate web content into Spanish
 - c. Improve the visitor experience and first impressions of the TAMU main campus by dedicating adequate space, staff, and technology to a world-class visitor center and continuing to focus on diversifying the membership of the Howdy Crew so that they are representative of our students and the State of Texas
 - d. Leverage Community Outreach & Inclusion resources to create more tailored campus experiences for targeted and recruited student groups that supplement the standards tour experience and highlight the diversity at the University
6. Create pipelines to the University by building purposeful partnerships, targeted programming, and conducting coordinated outreach efforts in the Brazos Valley and key markets across Texas through the work of the Community Outreach and Strategic Partnerships Unit.
- a. Create FTEs dedicated to early outreach and community partnerships in key markets to expand the reach of PSCs
 - b. Create content and in-school and on-campus programming to support college-going mindsets and engage targeted and recruited students as early as middle school
 - c. Continue to grow the Brazos Valley Promise program in local school districts and explore the potential to expand this program to key markets outside the Brazos Valley
 - d. Engage community partners to provide college knowledge and programming to students participating in programs like the Boys and Girls Club, 4-H, Gear UP, Trio programs, Posse Scholars, Upward Bound, YMCA, and others
 - e. Leverage Advise Texas near-peer model to assist in summer melt campaigns to increase the yield of targeted and recruited students

- f. Explore opportunities to engage middle schools that feed into Century Scholar and Century Scholar Plus schools to ensure these students are exposed to the opportunities offered by the University
 - g. Expand admitted student programming efforts such as LEAD Summit and Black Student Connection to create unique experiences that increase confirmation of targeted and recruited students to the University
7. Create new and strengthen existing partnerships, collaborations, and community engagement to support recruitment efforts across the state and nationally.
- a. Identify points of contact for system agencies, AFS networks and constituent groups in targeted market areas and engage them to create more structure around their engagement with and participation in recruitment efforts
 - b. Implement a yearly summit to inform, update, and receive input from stakeholders related to recruitment goals, policies, strategies, and priorities
 - c. Coordinate with Chartered A&M Clubs to disseminate information to their communities about scholarship opportunities, pathway programs, student organizations, and academic opportunities available at Texas A&M
 - d. Formalize MOUs with branch campuses and departments that have recruitment functions with the intent to streamline communication and the recruitment of minority students
 - e. Explore how to leverage the resources of the Office for Economic Development and Community Impact
8. Create the standing working advisory group of Texas A&M campus and community members to serve as a resource for improving the enrollment trends of marginalized student groups and to help guide institutional policies, programs and practices for targeted and recruited students.
- a. Organize, schedule, and participate in year-round prospective student events
 - b. Improve data sharing and archive electronic resources
 - c. Establish best practices in recruitment
 - d. Partner within to create new engagement opportunities

Strategic Considerations:

The workgroup discussed in detail strategies for improving minority recruitment efforts. Research on transfer student recruitment showed the highest yield for improving minority student recruitment. Presentations and resources on Hispanic student engagement and parent engagement assisted with understanding the opportunities, challenges, and expectations for HSI designation. Additionally, the workgroup received information about Texas A&M's financial aid processes and the types of aid awarded. The visitor experience, educating parents about Texas A&M, and leveraging the brand were also considerations that were deemed critical to enhancing recruitment efforts for minority and underrepresented communities.

Logistical Issues Addressed:

1. Transfer – the creation of FTEs in Admissions to review and coordinate transfer student processes between colleges, branch campuses, and community colleges.
2. Parent/Family Engagement – the creation of a parent/family engagement portal will increase communication, information sharing, and resources for parents. This portal will help provide timely and consistent access to information and provide parents with guidance to help their student meet deadlines. This will require funding and staff to implement and operationalize.

3. Improve perception of TAMU – Marketing and Communications have had success with third-party marketing vendors assisting with communication campaigns for targeted and recruited students and the Corps. Increased or sustained funding to the base budget is needed to continue these efforts.
4. Increase collaboration and relationships with school districts – the creation of Community Outreach & Inclusion has helped enhance and sustain partnerships and build relationships with school districts, extension agencies, and the Aggie Network. Continuing to adequately staff this new unit is crucial to future success of our targeted and recruited student initiatives across the State.

Major Challenges Encountered and Resolutions:

1. K-12 Early Outreach – the creation of the Community Outreach & Inclusion unit will allow the University to engage with students and schools in middle school and early high school. This will create a more robust pipeline of targeted and recruited students to engage with recruiters when they reach 11th and 12th grade. The potential expansion of Brazos Valley Promise and the placement of outreach coordinators in major markets across the state expands our footprint with our staff working directly in the communities where these students live and go to school.
2. Space Constraints – additional space has been recommended in our Vision for the Prospective Student Centers recommendation. This space would allow for the placement of outreach coordinators in our major markets, giving them more direct access to the communities and schools where our targeted and recruited students live.
3. Limited Transfer Specific Staff – additional staff and resources should be allocated to continue our efforts to recruit non-matriculated targeted and recruited first-time-in-college students and allow for more engagement opportunities for established relationships.

Key Logistical Issues to be Completed and Timeline:

Spring 2023

- Establish a standing working advisory group made up of members of the Texas A&M campus community

Summer 2023

- Host first annual recruitment summit to include on and off-campus recruitment partners, Texas A&M campus community stakeholders, and others engaged in our recruitment efforts

Fall 2023

- Hire new transfer staff to begin work for the 23-24 recruitment cycle
- Hire new COI staff to be embedded in PSCs in major markets and begin work for the 23-24 academic year (in alignment with the K12 school calendar)

Spring 2024

- Target date for potential expansion of BVP to additional markets with district partnerships and student nominations launching in Spring 2024 for the 24-25 academic year

Dates To Be Determined

- Formalize MOUs with branch campuses and departments that have recruitment functions
- Creation of new marketing assets and updating of webpages

Our workgroup continues to be engaged in assessing models from our institutional peers across the country, emphasizing minority recruitment. We will continue to work with the University, the System, and our partners on the feasibility of these new initiatives focused on our charge to enhance the recruitment and enrollment of minority students.

June 13, 2022

Supporting Document:

SUBJECT: Implementation Memo – Working Group 6 – Undergraduate Recruitment and Retention

Working Group #6, Vision for Prospective Student Centers (PSCs)

Recommendations to be Implemented:

The primary charge of the subgroup was to create a vision for the Texas A&M University Prospective Student Centers. The PSCs are the storefronts to Texas A&M University across Texas. A comprehensive review of the centers revealed a more uniform approach is needed to introduce, engage, and welcome prospective students, families, and communities served by the PSCs. Each PSC has its strengths and challenges based on physical location, and the size of the communities served. Large and urban metropolitan areas present different recruitment challenges than rural and suburban locations. There are five recommendations from this subgroup that are inextricably interdependent.

1. Address Staffing Needs in Houston and Dallas Ft. Worth – With nearly 1,000 high schools located in the Houston/DFW surrounding areas, our two largest markets must increase staffing to meet future demands.
2. Creation of the Austin Prospective Student Center - Create a Prospective Student Center to better serve the needs of families in the Austin, Killeen, Temple, and Waco areas.
3. Supporting Transfer Student Recruitment - Increase transfer recruitment team and strategically align staff and resources in areas of need across the state.
4. Renovations & Remodel - Focus on a model that consistently links all PSC marketing and branding strategies to reflect the university's core values, academic rigor, and traditions. Include and incorporate student testimonials and success stories through the lens of current/former Texas A&M students.
5. Establish Community Outreach & Inclusion Coordinators (COI) - The mission of attracting, educating, and preparing prospective students for college readiness should be assisted by strategic linkages to organizations, clubs, networks, and schools in the communities served by the PSCs.
6. Engage former students from across rural and large markets to help support Texas A&M recruitment efforts.

Strategic Considerations:

1. Houston and DFW – Increased applications for the last five years. Application numbers will increase as we incorporate the Common Application.
2. Austin – Not having staff dedicated in a center in the third-largest market creates challenges when looking to increase community engagement and provide adequate programming opportunities.

3. Transfer – Due to the increase of first-year applications, the transfer student needs continue to grow in the PSCs. Increased support for these populations will allow better customer service during the recruitment and application process. In addition, this showcases our dedication to transfer students and their unique pathways.
4. Renovations, vehicle leases, technology – The design and functionality vary based on when each PSC was built. A more intentional look with updated branding partnered with technological enhancements is needed to help better promote the visitors' experience. Appropriate transportation is required to participate in school visits and attend programs.
5. COI – This will enhance partnerships with school districts (K-10) and community organizations, for example, Aggie Moms, Former Student Association, College Access Programs, and Regional Non-profit organizations.
6. As a Hispanic- Serving Institution (HSI) we will promote events in partnership with our local networks at the PSCs to showcase opportunities and inclusion at Texas A&M University.

Logistical Issues Addressed:

1. Houston and DFW – These markets are based on the size of the markets we have identified strategic locations in Ft Worth and Dallas – The Texas A&M Research and Innovation Center – Education Alliance Building, and Texas AgriLife and Dallas Center.
2. Austin – Austin is one of the fastest-growing markets in the country and our third most prominent area for freshman applications. By working with TAMU System Real Estate Office, we will be able to identify optimal multi-use facilities to help create a world-class prospective student experience in Central Texas.
3. Transfer – Texas A&M University is committed to increasing the number of transfer coordinators in strategic areas to better serve diverse populations in the areas where we already have established PSCs. The additional transfer staff will seamlessly be able to integrate into our physical locations across the state of Texas.
4. Renovations – In collaboration with Marcomm and regional building lease managers will develop and implement a Texas A&M University strategy for branding/structural modifications in our older prospective student centers to create a singular student experience across all locations.
5. COI – By utilizing the established Prospective Students Centers, the new COI team will be able to successfully engage with their communities through creating partnerships and supporting local educational initiatives. In addition, to these efforts, a physical presence in the PSCs will allow the creation of year-round regional recruitment events and develop new engagement opportunities with our on-campus partners.
6. Colleges, Departments, Branch Campuses and the Corps of Cadets will have the ability to use the PSCs when collaborative programming occurs in the different regions.

Major Challenges Encountered and Resolutions:

As stated in the MGT Report, "TAMU should create a focused outreach and recruitment office that offers targeted outreach to prospective students, increases minority recruitment, and increases total

applications of new undergraduate students. There should be a significant investment in strategic recruitment efforts that recruit the best and brightest students from underrepresented areas of Texas and surrounding states by increasing outreach programming, leveraging connections with the Aggie network, and increasing scholarships." Through the efforts and recommendations listed above, these items will be prioritized. Adviser staff attrition is significantly higher in the higher yield markets due to cost-of-living increases and remote employment opportunities. Regional staff salaries are factored into the College Station Campus Texas A&M System-Wide Pay Plan Staff Salary Structure, effective since 12/1/2016. Engaging the MGT Consulting Group to conduct a cost-of-living analysis for staff located throughout Texas and the United States will provide a significant gesture of supporting our current team and future hires.

Key Logistical Issues to be Completed and Timeline:

- Increasing the visibility of the Prospective Student Centers in Houston and DFW is essential. Appropriating financial and physical resources for new staff will allow Texas A&M University to engage diverse populations in Texas's largest areas strategically. The MGT working group recommends dedicating additional undergraduate recruiters to serve Ft. Worth better by collaborating with Texas A&M Research and Innovation Center – Education Alliance Building and Texas AgriLife/Dallas Center. The Texas A&M Research and Innovation Center will be completed no later than August 1, 2024.
- The working group recommends that the Austin PSC be fully operational by August 2023 to better support recruitment efforts in Central Texas for the fall 2024 enrollment.
- A newly formed voluntary membership team, Undergraduate Recruitment Operations Committee (UROC), would establish a new partnership within university-wide recruitment stakeholders. UROC would be charged to improve data sharing, archive electronic resources, reduce duplication of effort, establish best practices in recruitment, and partner within to create new engagement opportunities to recruit students from all corners of our state and foster the rich tapestry of culture and backgrounds found across Texas and beyond. Our intensive and inclusive recruitment committee will focus on reaching prospective students who, in essence, look like Texas - a broad, diverse state with a rich treasure of cultures and ethnicities.
- The proposal for increased transfer staff in Texas is recommended for completion by August 2023 to allow onboarding and employee training.
- Given our current climate regarding labor/building costs, we anticipate completing the necessary renovations to the PSCs to be completed by August 2024.
- The proposal for new COI staff in Texas is recommended for completion by August 2023 to allow onboarding and employee training.

June 13, 2022

Supporting Document:

SUBJECT: Implementation Memo – Working Group 6 – Undergraduate Recruitment and Retention

Working Group #6, Centralized Recruitment Recommendation

Recommendation to be Implemented:

The charge of the subgroup was to develop an implementation plan for centralizing college/unit recruiters. A centralized recruitment model is recommended to increase communication, coordination, collaboration and reduce duplication of recruitment core functions and effort.

This recommendation will require:

1. Implementing a shared services model that centralizes recruitment functions and operations under one administrative unit.
 - a. Engage an Educational Consulting Group to study a shared services model to identify best practices, strengths, challenges, and opportunities.
 - i. Secure funding for Consulting Group for shared services analysis.
 - ii. Engage proper campus stakeholders to provide input and explore best practices currently in colleges.
 - b. Research peer institutions that have success with underrepresented student recruitment in centralized and shared services model.
2. Creation of MOAs with colleges, departments, and branch campuses with focused intent on university wide recruitment initiatives.
 - a. Formalize the role, functions, and services of recruitment efforts across the university.
3. Operationalizing SLATE across all recruitment platforms and implementing a communication plan and strategy.
 - a. Secure funding for SLATE expansion.
4. Cost sharing of FTEs and space – 60/40 percent effort between URO, colleges, branch campuses, and departments.
 - a. Shared services model engages recruitment partners in hiring, role development, unit specific functions, and accountability of staff responsible for recruitment.
 - b. Hard line reporting to URO with dotted line reporting to recruitment partners
 - c. Cross training of recruiters – provide pathways for job advancement for recruiters.

Strategic Considerations:

The Office of Undergraduate Recruitment and Outreach's mission and function is to connect prospective students, families, and schools to educational opportunities at Texas A&M.

A centralized model will enhance core recruitment functions and efficiencies across the university, while allowing flexibility for tailored recruitment in colleges, departments, branch campuses, and Corps.

A centralized recruitment model allows for:

1. Students
 - a. Decreases oversaturation of digital and print communications to prospective students, families, constituents, and school districts
 - b. More responsiveness from recruiters and staff
 - c. Consistent and standardized recruitment processes across all colleges and university
 - d. Enhances and streamlines the prospective student experience by providing information in a centralized model throughout the entirety of their recruitment to Texas A&M University
 - e. Increases the ability for Texas A&M University to host prospective students on campus at a more expansive scale and provides them with a more global opportunity to learn about academic pathways to other majors

2. Colleges and University
 - a. Sharing of best recruitment practices from across the university
 - b. Allows for replication of existing successful programs and services in the colleges
 - c. Consistent and coordinated messaging to prospective students
 - d. Focused recruitment goals and priorities across the university
 - e. Cross training, coordination, and accountability of recruiters
 - f. Eliminates competition internally and leverages resources from across the entire university, regional PSCs, and partnerships
 - g. Reduces staff attrition by creating better pathways for job advancement
 - h. Creates a synergistic network of recruiters across the university
 - i. Decreases travel to high schools, college fairs, career days, and community functions by recruiters
 - j. Cost sharing reduces some cost on salaries, travel, marketing, and technology
 - k. Increases TAMU brand consistency and presence in-state and nationally

Logistical Issues Addressed:

Currently, there is not a collaborative strategy or infrastructure that allows for consistent and transparent information flow and sharing between recruiters in colleges, departments, branch campuses, Corps, and the university. Texas A&M colleges, departments, branch campuses and the Corps of Cadets, currently have recruitment operations that specifically support those areas. A shared services model will enhance and streamline recruitment efforts to better serve and recruit prospective students.

Major Challenges Encountered and Resolutions:

Transitioning staff that have operated separately and with a singular recruitment focus is a challenge. Some recruiters in the colleges and units have different titles and responsibilities that serve as a percentage of their job duties. Keeping recruiters embedded in their current spaces and introducing a new administrative structure and culture will require additional resources and thoughtful analysis on how to create a collaborative model across various colleges, departments, branch campuses, and units. The transition should be implemented over a period of time as to not disrupt current recruitment processes and practices that have positive yields.

Key Logistical Issues to be Completed and Timeline:

- Transitioning timeline for recruitment staff from Texas A&M colleges, departments, branch campuses and the Corps of Cadets, will be based on recommendations from consultants, stakeholders, and university leadership.

- The creation of a full-time leadership position for centralized recruitment to aid in streamlining the roles of the campus-based recruiters and integration into the new model. Recruitment partners and stakeholders would be involved in the selection process. This position would be filled by Spring 2023.
- In partnership with Texas A&M colleges, departments, branch campuses and the Corps of Cadets meet to discuss current recruiter role, pay scales and areas of growth as they currently exist to better enhance positions as the shared services model evolves. These meetings would begin once the leadership position for centralized recruitment is in place.
- Reconvening and updating the membership for the Undergraduate Admissions Advisory Committee. Summer/Fall 2022
- Pay scales and position titles would be reviewed with the assistance of Texas A&M University Human Resources to create a new career ladder and pathways to help with a sustainable model with this process being completed by Spring 2023.
- Additional staff will be needed to meet the demand of operationalizing SLATE across all recruitment platforms. As URO is the hub for customer service/client-based support for the Texas A&M colleges and departments, additional staff will help train, elevate, and enhance platform use.
- Our work group continues to be engaged in assessing impactful and innovative models from institutional peers across the country with an emphasis on Centralized Recruitment.