Strategic Enrollment Management Plan 2019-2023

January 22, 2019
Need for Enrollment Management

• Within NIU’s mission of integrating educational opportunity, research and engagement, our over-arching enrollment management purpose is to:

  Attract and retain students representing the diversity of the region, nation, and the world

• Integral to fulfilling our mission and to sustainability

• Success in doing so requires a data-informed, multi-year integrated enrollment management plan
Enrollment Trends and Challenges

- More than a decade of declining overall enrollment
- Steady decline in state funding, which means higher dependence on student tuition and fees for revenue
- Increased competition from state and out-of-state universities
- Declining traditional student population in Illinois and Midwest
- Outmigration of Illinois students
- Admitted students who don't enroll at any college
Process and Methodology

GOALS

STRATEGIES

OBJECTIVES

TACTICS
Key Elements

• Stabilizes enrollment at 17,000 – 18,000 students
  • Profile of our students will change:
    • Hispanic Serving Institution by 2023
    • Increased online presence

• Focused attention to key populations that embraces diversity as one of the university’s greatest strengths

• Invest in a more modern approach to marketing

• Grow our online education offerings and enrollment

• Improve undergraduate retention and student success

• Evaluate current financial aid/scholarship practices and piloting new approaches.
Brand Penetration

Goal 1: Strengthen our distinctive identity as a public university that combines educational opportunity with student engagement.

• Strategy: Refine and reinforce our brand identity to best differentiate NIU to our target markets.

• Objective: Increase the financial investment in university marketing and advertising by fiscal year 2020 to stand out in the competitive market.

• Objective: Complete a comprehensive brand tracking study by spring 2020 to better understand NIU’s reputation and key branding and enrollment opportunities with key audiences.

• Objective: Centralize critical brand activities such as advertising, media buys and graphic design by fall 2019.
Brand Penetration

Goal 1: Strengthen our distinctive identity as a public university that combines educational opportunity with student engagement.

- Strategy: Leverage NIU’s brand and values to attract, retain and engage employees to serve as brand advocates.

- Objective: Define, articulate and celebrate the diversity of students who we serve, in alignment with NIU’s core values, and incorporate into all recruiting and onboarding activities for all new faculty/staff by spring 2019.

- Objective: Increase the number of faculty and staff who complete cultural competency training annually to 25 percent (current 15 percent annually).
Sample Brand Penetration Tactics

• Increase advertising to increase impact and reach
• Designate a trained brand manager for each college and division
• Conduct brand study
• Strengthen the role of the Clearinghouse
• Incorporate core values into hiring materials
• Continue growth of cultural competency and implicit bias training
Recruitment and Access

Goal 2: Achieve student enrollment that respects our mission and values while positioning NIU for fiscal sustainability.

Strategy: Clearly define recruitment targets and create tailored, comprehensive plans to drive action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% Growth</th>
<th>Fall 18</th>
<th>Fall 23</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Freshman</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>1856</td>
<td>2052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Transfer</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1577</td>
<td>1656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Graduate St.</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>851</td>
<td>894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>125%</td>
<td>773</td>
<td>1773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Latinx</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>727</td>
<td>1119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Out-of-State</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recruitment and Access

Strategy: Provide enhanced, responsive and effective scholarship and financial aid options that will attract students and ensure their success.

- **Objective:** Complete a comprehensive research study by end of spring 2019 on current undergraduate admission and scholarship criteria to consider implementing alternate options.

- **Objective:** Complete a comprehensive study by end of summer 2019 to analyze students who are admitted to NIU but do not enroll at any college in order to identify barriers to enrollment and strategies for re-engagement.

- **Objective:** Optimize the efficacy of financial awarding, including both institutional aid and Foundation programs, by fall 2020.

- **Objective:** Pilot alternative means of student financial aid support by fall 2020.
Sample Recruitment and Access Tactics

- Modernize communication management with prospects
- Engage new out-of-state markets through targeted recruitment activities
- Increase merit awards for transfer students
- Hire a full-time, dedicated product manager to India
- Engage a partner to provide marketing, recruitment and concierge service for students enrolling in online programs
- Ensure bilingual staff in key offices (advising, admissions, financial aid)
- Use data to optimize financial aid packaging
- Identify and pilot use of innovative aid programs such as income-share agreements and/or loan forgiveness programs
Retention and Success

Goal 3: Support equitable access, opportunity and success for students from diverse backgrounds where diversity is defined broadly.

Strategy: Clearly define retention and completion goals and create tailored, comprehensive plans to best support the specific needs of our diverse student population.

Objective: Increase the overall first-year retention rate from 73% to 75%

Objective: Improve the overall six-year graduation rate from 46% to 51%

Objective: Redesign the first-year experience to bolster student success.

Objective: All faculty and staff will complete training on compliance regulations and the needs of students with disabilities

Objective: Provide resources needed to ensure that reasonable accommodations for students are met

Objective: All new first-year and transfer undergraduates will complete cultural competency education

Objective: Develop a financial literacy program for students
Retention and Success

Goal 3: Support equitable access, opportunity and success for students from diverse backgrounds where diversity is defined broadly.

Strategy: Clearly identify gaps in academic achievement and create tailored and comprehensive plans to reduce these gaps.

Objective: Address gateway courses and courses with high equity gaps.

Objective: Address retention and graduation equity gaps:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Cohort</th>
<th>Reduce Gap to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Yr. Retention</td>
<td>Latinx and Asian</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Yr. Grad.</td>
<td>Latinx</td>
<td>5% or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Yr. Retention</td>
<td>Black new Fr.</td>
<td>10% or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Yr. Retention</td>
<td>Black new Tr.</td>
<td>6% or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Yr. Grad.</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>10% or less</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample Retention and Success Tactics

• Piloting income-share agreement as an alternative financial aid model

• Institute coordinated approach to developmental advising and high-touch intervention utilizing NIU Navigate (aka SSC Campus)

• Implement supportive interventions in gateway courses with high equity gaps

• Ensure that every student is engaged in at least two transformational experiences

• Engage with APLU’s *Power of the Publics* and Partnership for College Completion’s *Illinois Equity in Attainment Initiative*
## Total Enrollment Projections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Group</th>
<th>Fall 2018</th>
<th>Fall 2019</th>
<th>Fall 2020</th>
<th>Fall 2021</th>
<th>Fall 2022</th>
<th>Fall 2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Freshmen</td>
<td>1,856</td>
<td>1,883</td>
<td>1,918</td>
<td>1,961</td>
<td>2,012</td>
<td>2,073</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Transfers</td>
<td>1,577</td>
<td>1,593</td>
<td>1,613</td>
<td>1,637</td>
<td>1,665</td>
<td>1,698</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing Undergraduates + Others</td>
<td>8,994</td>
<td>8,309</td>
<td>8,032</td>
<td>7,994</td>
<td>8,035</td>
<td>8,088</td>
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<tr>
<td>Main Campus Undergraduate</td>
<td>12,427</td>
<td>11,787</td>
<td>11,569</td>
<td>11,606</td>
<td>11,737</td>
<td>11,892</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online Undergraduates</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>451</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online Graduates</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>736</td>
<td>898</td>
<td>1,060</td>
<td>1,223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Campus Graduate</td>
<td>3,699</td>
<td>3,739</td>
<td>3,779</td>
<td>3,819</td>
<td>3,859</td>
<td>3,899</td>
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<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Enrollment</td>
<td>17,169</td>
<td>16,748</td>
<td>16,749</td>
<td>17,005</td>
<td>17,358</td>
<td>17,735</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Impact of Enrollment Management Plan
Implementation

- Re-organizing SEM and creating working groups
- Supporting efforts
- Assessment
- Accountability
- Website & Visibility

https://niu.edu/enrollment-plan/
Major Investments

• Advertising, Marketing & Lead Generation
  • Name Buys and Lead Generation (on campus programs)
  • Marketing, Lead Generation & Recruiting (online programs)

• Modernizing communication management with prospects
  • CRM Upgrade
  • Recruiting Text-Messaging/Chatbot

• Advising & Retention Specialists
  • Advisor staffing levels
  • College-based retention specialists
  • Pay equity
Call to Action

• Serve on SEM working group if asked
• Support enrollment management efforts
• Be a “brand advocate”