

Recruitment Plan

University of Montana Western, Admissions Department

Introduction

The plan is divided into several major sections, including:

- Target Markets
- Travel
- Contact Management
- Faculty Relations
- General Messaging
- Data Management
- Timelines
- Ties to the Montana Western Strategic Plan
- Ethics and Practices

It is the goal of this plan to outline a tactical approach to the activities that must be completed in the Admissions Office. There is a section of this document that outlines the data collection necessary during the year so as to have a more informed planning process in future years.

It is also acknowledged that the Admissions Office completes other projects and initiatives during the year that may not be outlined in this document.

Position Descriptions

Admissions Director

The Admissions Director will provide visionary leadership and planning as well as tactical assistance to the department and staff. Job qualifications include, but are not limited to:

- Comprehensive knowledge of recruitment strategies in a university setting
- Knowledge of how to manage customer/prospective student relations
- Budget, personnel, and data management skills
- Demonstrated ability to liaison with campus constituents
- Task-oriented management style

Responsibilities of the Director include, but are not limited to:

- Providing leadership and inclusive management to the Admissions team
- Developing/Analyzing recruiting data
- Developing/Prioritizing travel schedules
- Personal contact with each recruit to Montana Western
- Creating/Managing a welcoming, consistent and comprehensive campus visit experience for prospective students and their families
- Developing/Implementing customer response techniques
- Awarding WUE scholarships to new students
- Leading/Planning campus visitation days
- Monitoring/Updating the admissions webpages
- Maintaining/Promoting contacts with HS counselors and national organizations
- Working in a Banner Environment
- Initiating and adapting communication plans

Admissions Representatives

Three recruiters, an Admissions Evaluator and an office manager provide support to the Admissions Department.

2 12-Month Admissions Reps (recruiters)

- Travel within Montana
- Travel throughout WUE states plus Minnesota & Texas
- Visit daily/weekly with prospective students
- Conduct data gathering to be analyzed by the Director
- Facilitate relationships with prospective students
- Manage customer relations & e-recruiting, including:
 - Distribution of Montana Western Printed Materials
 - Personal contacts with each applicant to Montana Western
 - Email recruiting efforts, such as a monthly Montana Western Admissions Newsletter, Twitter messaging, Instagram Messaging
 - Interest Follow-up Letters from clubs (developing)
 - Invitations to visit campus
 - Post-application confirmations of attendance

- Follow up on incomplete on-line applications
- Admissions email responses
- Shepherd late applicants through process
- Maintain and update on-line application

1 Office Manager

- Works as the campus operator
 - Phone
 - Email
- Campus visit coordinator
 - Update faculty list
- Work Study Supervisor/Trainer
 - 3 students
 - Office Work
 - Data Entry
 - Campus Training Manuals
 - Campus Tour
 - Data Entry
 - Office Work
- Process incoming and outgoing mail
- Oversee admissions budget
- Oversee recruitment inventory
- Oversee office supplies
- Articulation agreement liaison
- Oversee campus directory

Admissions Evaluator

- Reviews and processes incoming applications
 - New student applications
 - Re-Admit applications
- Processes admission materials for student files
- Facilitates communication with prospective students
 - Application communication plan
- Designated school official for international students
- Conduct data gathering to be analyzed by the Director
- Facilitate relationships with prospective students
- Work Study Supervisor/Trainer
 - 1 student
- Facilitates timely review of transfer student transcripts

Target Markets

The Admissions Office targets students from specific states most importantly Montana. In addition students from WUE states are targeted as well as states that show potential or high yield.

The Traditional Student

The majority of our recruiting efforts are focused on the traditional pre-college student, i.e., the student that is a junior or senior in high school. The travel we have designed, the messages that accompany our recruiting, and the focus of our resources are on this population.

The Non-Traditional/Transfer Student

Non-traditional students can include transfer students, students over the age of 21, students who have family, students who have full-time work commitments, etc.

Relationships with the Montana 2 year colleges are being nurtured and a strategy is in place to go to these campuses and meet with students who wish to transfer to UMW. Academic advising staff and admissions representatives have teamed up to visit campuses and do in person transcript evaluation and help with the file transmittal process.

The admissions staff has participated in transfer college fairs in California, Idaho, Texas, Nevada, Wyoming and Colorado. These fairs are hit and miss. Transfer college fairs will continue to be a part of the recruitment strategy.

There is not currently a formal plan in place to recruit non-traditional students who are not transfer students.

The Diverse Student

Montana Western recognizes that ethnic diversity in Montana, with the exception of Native American students, is limited. As well, the largest population of ethnic students on campus are athletes.

As such, Admissions has a desire to focus attention on continuing to develop these populations. Over the past 3-5 years we have worked diligently and consistently to try to grow a more diverse student population. We have added numerous college fairs and high school visits in both northern and southern California as well as adding fairs and visits to Alaska and Hawaii. Furthermore, UMW has participated in the Montana Tribal College Fair circuit since its inception in 2007.

Travel

- **High School Visits.** HSV's involve an admissions representative contacting each high school and setting up some time to visit with the college counselor and any interested students at that high school. It is time and travel intensive.
- **High School Counselor Connections.** Our goal is to make a personal connection with high school counselors around the state by visiting high schools and sending information and material about Montana Western.
- **College Fairs.** These fairs are often sponsored by NACAC (National Association of College Admissions Counselors) or regional chapters of the national organization. They involve having a representative staff a table during the fair and visiting with students that stop by. This is a high exposure activity which is less time intensive than visiting multiple area high schools.
- **Alumni Connections.** This is a developing recruitment strategy that involves setting up events for alumni in particular regions so as to share the latest news and recruiting efforts with them. In turn, it is hoped that they take that information back to their areas. These events would be coordinated in conjunction with Alumni Affairs.

We will deliver a consistent **message** to each state during recruiting creating a broader understanding of the brand of Montana Western. That message is:

“The University of Montana Western is the most innovative public university in the US. Through our block scheduling program (Experience One) our students experience the curriculum with hands on learning, research, exploration, field study and application of knowledge and skills in every class they take. Our award winning faculty have been named the best in their fields every year over the past 5 years. All this while remaining a best value in the West with affordable tuition for both in-state and out-of-state students.”

All of these travel plans will be designed by the recruiters. Designs should include travel timelines, locations, and costs.

MONTANA

HSV: Representatives should attempt to visit every feeder school (those that supply a healthy number of students to us each year) and to visit at least half of the schools that provide only 1-2 students to us each year. If time permits, more schools can be visited. We also support current student home to visit their home high schools over holiday break in a program called “Home for the Holidays”.

FAIRS: UMW attends the entire MPSEOC circuit and counselor update in the Fall and the full Tribal College Circuit in the Spring.

WYOMING

HSV: The cost of attending a Wyoming university does not make this an ideal market. We will therefore not do HSV's

FAIRS: We attend one to two weeks of HS and transfer fairs around WY.

IDAHO

HSV: ID is a major market. We do a variety of HSV's, in rural and smaller city areas.

FAIRS: We attend all of the ID fairs.

WASHINGTON

HSV: If time allows, we engage in HSV's.

FAIRS: We attend all NACAC and PNACAC Fairs plus we do a smattering of WA college fairs in most rural areas.

OREGON

HSV: If time allows, we engage in HSV's.

FAIRS: We attend all NACAC and PNACAC Fairs plus others if the schedule permits.

HAWAII

HSV: We visit 15-20 high schools each fall if budget allows.

FAIRS: We attend the NACAC fair in the fall.

ALASKA

HSV: We do not currently do HSV in Alaska.

FAIRS: We attend the Fairbanks & Anchorage CF. We are looking to expand to other areas.

CALIFORNIA

HSV: We do a variety of HSVs in Southern California and plan to spend some time in Northern California in the next recruitment cycle.

FAIRS: We attend a wide range of CF in northern & Southern CA

UTAH

HSV: We do not currently do HSV in Utah.

FAIRS: UT has closed all but 1 college fair to out of state colleges. We attend the fair in SLC.

NEVADA

HSV: If time allows, we engage in HSV's.

FAIRS: Las Vegas, Reno, and northern Nevada.

MINNESTOA

HSV: We do not currently do HSV in Minnesota.

FAIRS: We attend a range of fairs in and around Minneapolis in both the Fall and the Spring.

TEXAS

HSV: We currently do not attend HSV in Texas.

FAIRS: We attend a range of fairs in and around Houston, Dallas & Austin if budget allows.

OHIO

HSV: We currently do not attend HSV in Texas.

FAIRS: We attend the fall NACAC fair in Cincinnati.

INDIANA

HSV: We currently do not attend HSV in Indiana.

FAIRS: We attend the fall NACAC fair if resources allow.

ILLINOIS

HSV: We currently do not attend high school visits in Illinois.

FAIRS: We attend the fall NACAC fair.

WISCONSIN

HSV: We currently do not attend HSV.

FAIRS: We attend the fall NACAC fair.

Contact Management

Contact Management refers to the process involved in furthering a student's decision to apply and enroll to Montana Western. Once a prospective student shows an interest in Montana Western they enter our database driven communication plan. This communication plan is automated and is run out through a Banner process managed by the Admissions Director.

RECRUIT COMMUNICATION PLAN

- Step 1: First Contact. This contact may be through a phone or email inquiry, a campus visit, a "drop-in", a meeting with a recruiter in the field, or other method of inquiry. The student provides us with their contact information through an inquiry card, a college fair scanner, Web Request, or an additional process. We then enter that student's information into Banner as an inquiry/recruit.
- Step 2: New Communication Plan Brochure (REC NEW). Once a student has been entered into Banner they will receive this brochure ASAP. This brochure is sent weekly to students who are in a prime term (upcoming fall and spring term) and monthly to students who are in the pre-prime (future fall and spring terms) term. This mailer introduces the student to UMW highlights 6 unique aspects of the university.
- Step 3: Recruit 1st Letter (REC 1st). For students that are in the prime term they will receive this letter one week after the REC NEW letter. This letter identifies actions that the student needs to be taking in order to enroll for upcoming term.
- Step 4: "Your Future is Waiting" Rack Card. For students that are in the prime term they will receive this letter one week after the REC 1st letter. This communication has more information on UMW and encourages the student to complete an online application.
- Step 5: Faculty Information. For students that are in the prime term they will receive this letter one week after the Your Future is Waiting Rack Card. This is a letter from the department chair introducing students to their desired area of student. We currently have letters for all departments except NH and art. For undecided students and students in NH and art we mail a rack card that highlights Montana Western's location.

The purpose of the recruit communication plan is to drive the inquiry/recruit to submit an application for admission. Once a student has applied to UMW they are taken out of the Recruit Communication Plan and they are added to the Applicant Communication Plan. If a student does not apply they will receive continued monthly communication driving them to do so.

APPLICANT COMMUNICATION PLAN

- Step 1: Application Letter and Personal Contact. Once a recruit/inquiry applies they are sent a letter notifying them that we have received their application and identifies information that we still need to complete their file. During this time an Admissions Representative will contact the applicant by phone. The rep will thank the student for applying, inform them of the admissions process, timeline, and be the point of contact for them.
- Step 2: Current Student Letter. This letter is sent out one week after the student applies. It is a letter from one of our current students welcoming the applicant to Montana Western. The letter also highlights why the current student chose UMW and his/her experience here.

- Step 3: Parent Letter (in development). Sent to the parent or guardian of first time traditional freshmen students one week after they receive the Current Student Letter. The letter highlights the parent experience in the college selection process and mentions the benefits of Montana Western.
- Step 4: Application Post Card. Once a student sends in information for their admissions file but it does not change their status we send a post card notifying the student of the items received and what we still need to complete their file.
- Step 5: Acceptance Letter. Once a student has sent in enough information an admissions decision is made and we send an acceptance letter. There are 3 versions of this letter. One admits a student into a 2 year program, one provisionally admits a student into a 4 year program, and one fully admits a student into the university.
- Step 6: Fully Admitted Letter. This letter is sent once we have all final and official documentation for the applicants admissions file.

The purpose of the Applicant Communication Plan is to aid the applicant through the admissions process and increase yield from applied to enrolled. We are always looking for ways to improve our Database Driven Communication Plan.

In addition to the Database Drive Communication Plan we have a monthly communication plan wherein students receive time sensitive information from UMW depending on their status as an applicant or recruit, their term of entry, and time of year. We use several different forms of contact management for this process.

Traditional Mail: Campus visit brochures, ACT direct mailer, letters about admissions status and recruitment, scholarship information, information regarding the student's next steps for enrollment, Bulldog Bound and XDAY invitations, WUE information, Happy New Year postcard, birthday postcard, graduation postcard, and counselor packets.

Email: Monthly emails that highlight our general message and benefits of UMW, information informing applicants of missing items admissions material, email regarding admissions status and recruitment, scholarship information, and Bulldog Bound and XDAY information.

Phone: Calls are made to every applicant thanking them for applying and providing support, Operation Shepherd is a call campaign to shepherd in applicants who are more likely to enroll, and calls are made to all students who do not complete an online application.

There are some longer term contact management strategies that need to be considered. These include developing an online Virtual Tour, and an online portal where students can check on their application status.

Faculty Relations

It is widely acknowledged that the more participation from faculty in the recruitment process, the more successful Montana Western will be at attracting students. We are looking to implement the following strategies for the upcoming recruitment cycle.

Faculty Meetings

The Admissions Director should request time with the Director of Student Success and Department Chairs to visit with the Admissions Staff before each recruitment year. The benefits of this meeting would be to update the Admissions Staff on degree and career options to better recruit new students.

Departmental Input

The Admissions Director should solicit from each department the messages that they would like the admissions staff to convey to potential students about their program. It would be helpful if the departments could furnish a list of potential careers associated with their degree.

Designing Active Recruitment Strategies and Material

Many faculty have expressed interest in becoming more active with the Admissions Department in recruiting efforts. With faculty input, the Admissions Director should collaboratively design such opportunities. Furthermore, the Admissions Director should work with Department Chairs to design materials that highlight specific programs.

General Messaging

Beyond specific messaging determined for each department (as outlined in the Faculty Relations section) and each state (as outlined in the Travel section), there are five general themes that Admissions will use in recruiting each year. These are influenced by the marketing initiatives developed by the Marketing Director and briefs as to the components of these messages will be developed and delivered by Marketing to Admissions.

Experience One

This makes us unique. Admissions staff should emphasize experiential learning, one-class-at-a-time, hands-on experiences, and individual attention by faculty.

Visually Stunning Environment

Admissions staff should emphasize specific aspects of our natural environment and location.

“All About Fit”

Determining the needs of the student first, and then tapping into the specific reason why Montana Western fits their needs is the first recruitment strategy recruiters should employ. This means spending some time with a student determining the right program for them and if our environment is the right type for them. As well, all applicants from WUE states must be informed that they are eligible for the scholarship if they attend. This helps encourage students that Montana Western is a financial “fit” for them.

Quality Faculty

Admissions staff should highlight our award winning faculty and the personalized attention that students receive.

Affordability

Montana Western is the most affordable 4 year university in the state of Montana and one of the most affordable in the west. With our university scholarships, like the WUE, we are often the most affordable school for out of state students as well.

Data Management

There is a consensus that data must drive our recruitment planning. The importance of a relationship with the Registrar's Office is crucial to obtain recruitment data. This section articulates the needs of the Admissions Office and what data should be collected throughout the years for each recruitment cycle.

Data Needed (Student Profile)

- Transfer students
 - Where do they transfer from?
 - What programs are they in?
 - How many students are graduating?
 - What is our transfer student funnel?
- Traditional Students
 - What state do they come from?
 - What major (as a function of their state) do they choose?
 - What is the retention of first year students overall and by program (as a function of academic achievement)?
 - What is the admissions profile of each incoming class and of our graduating students (as a function of academic achievement)?
 - How many students are graduating?
 - What is our traditional student funnel?
- Contacts
 - How do students learn about Montana Western?
 - What is the first contact with recruits and applicants?
 - What contact has the highest yield?
 - How many first contacts result in applications being sent in?
 - How many first contacts result in a student enrolling?
 - What are the most common contacts we make?
 - How many contacts made at out-of-state functions result in an applied and/or enrolled student?
- Travel
 - What was the cost of the travel to each state (as a function of the number of students enrolled from that state)?
 - Break down of applicants and enrolled student by state.
 - What are the high school enrollment rates for specific states?
 - Montana Western students from out-of-state should be polled to determine what drew them to Montana Western, what messages were important, and why they committed to Montana Western.
- Graduation
 - What are our graduation rates?
 - What are the placement rates of programs?
 - What are our successful graduates doing?

Timelines

Fall Activities

- High School Visits, Round One (HS Seniors)
- College Fairs
- Start Communication Plan for Prime Spring and Fall Terms
- Information to HS Counselors
- Information to MPSEOC and participation in the Counselor Update
- Contact Management
- Fall Campus Visitation Day (may explore for future terms)
- Phoning to Prospects. Operation Shepherd.
- Begin Data Gathering
- Home for the Holidays
- Faculty Relations

Spring Activities

- College Fairs
- High School Visits, Round Two (HS Juniors & Seniors)
- Visit to MUS 2 Year Schools
- Scholarship Process
- Spring Campus Visitation Day (s)
- Spring Bulldog Bound Event
- Spring Phoning. Operation Shepherd
- Continue Prime Fall Communication Plan
- Continue Data Gathering

Summer

- Continue follow-up with students
- Engage in review of Admissions publications
- Plan Travel
- Bulldog Bound
- Orientation
- Summer Phoning. Operation Shepherd
- Continue Prime Fall Communication Plan
- Faculty Relations

Ties to the Montana Western Strategic Plan

This Recruitment Plan has distinct ties to the Montana Western Strategic Plan found at:

<http://www.umwestern.edu/images/stratplan020314.pdf>

In summary, the Recruitment Plan was developed with consideration of the following:

Missions Statement

The University of Montana Western provides innovative interdisciplinary education through experiential learning that combines theory and practice. Montana Western serves citizens of all ages with its academic, community service, and lifelong learning programs. As part of the global community, Montana Western encourages diversity, international awareness, environmental responsibility and mastery of technology as a gateway to the world.

Vision Statement

The University of Montana Western transforms students and its greater community through experiential teaching and civic, environmental and multicultural engagement. Students learn by engaging in the authentic practices of a discipline under the expert guidance of faculty members. Student success is maximized by providing the means for each student to identify and achieve their educational goals.

NWCCU Core Themes

The following Core Themes were developed to meet the requirements of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. Most of the goals and objectives found in this plan are closely related to these Core Themes.

1. Continuously improve undergraduate education and experiential learning.
2. Maximize campus-wide support for student success and completion.
3. Foster responsible campus efficiency and stewardship of resources.

Additionally this plan was developed with the following priorities and goals in mind:

PRIORITY ONE: Encourage academic excellence and innovation.

- GOAL 1B: Enhance and promote experiential teaching and learning across the curriculum.
- GOAL 1D: Promote and support academic innovation and an entrepreneurial spirit among students, faculty and staff.
- GOAL 1E: Deliver high-quality, innovative experiential education to the new generation of digital learners by anticipating and delivering the technology needs of the future.

PRIORITY TWO: Develop, strengthen and expand creative co-curricular programs and campus collaborations to promote student learning, development, retention and success.

- GOAL 2C: Coordinate programming that explores issues of personal health and safety, decision-making, and social responsibility for students, faculty and staff through collaborations across the university community.
- GOAL 2E: Demonstrate the power of experiential education by achieving greater student success than comparator institutions.

PRIORITY THREE: Develop enrollment management strategies that support the experiential mission and contribute to student success.

- GOAL 3A: Manage class enrollments to achieve optimal efficiency.
- GOAL 3B: Identify and recruit best-fit students.
- GOAL 3C: Increase the diversity of the student body.

PRIORITY SIX: Efficiently steward resources and operations to sustain the university for future generations.

- GOAL 6C: Engage alumni in the life of the university.
- GOAL 6D: Work with the UMW Foundation to increase extramural funding and support of the university.

PRIORITY SEVEN: Increase Montana Western's local, regional and national profile.

- GOAL 7A: Promote and enhance Montana Western's regional and national profile.
- GOAL 7B: Continue implementing an integrated marketing and communications plan that reflects Montana Western's mission.

Ethics and Practices

University of Montana Western Admissions Staff shall:

- conduct themselves in a manner that upholds the University of Montana Western's Mission and Vision Statement;
- promote and represent the university and its services in an accurate and ethical manner;
- follow applicable laws, regulations and rights of students and promote student privacy at all times;
- conduct themselves in a way that shows respect, honesty, and integrity towards students, parents, guests, co-workers, and the community;
- not accept gratuity or any reward from other organizations or programs that wish to influence the universities decision or the decision of the student;
- follow the universities policies and admissions requirements and do not guarantee placement or any other university decisions that is not printed in recruitment material;
- dress and behave in a way that represents the university and promotes it in a professional way;
- not use disparaging comparisons of secondary or post-secondary institutions;
- follow the regulations of national and regional associations of college admissions counseling;
- follow State Board of Regents and Office of Public Instruction policies.