BUILDING ON SUCCESS: MINNESOTA STUDENT RECRUITMENT
Office of Admissions
A Division of the Office of Undergraduate Education
May 2017-2018
Dear colleagues,

It is an honor to work side-by-side with University colleagues, community partners, and students and their families to enhance the diversity of the University of Minnesota Twin Cities undergraduate student body and to support student success at all levels. We are privileged to be a part of a transformative season in students’ lives. In our daily work, we have the honor of working directly with eager young students as they progress to focused high school scholars, to high-achieving leaders on our own campus, to proud graduates who become leaders and advocates in our community.

We are constantly developing and evolving our work to meet the needs of our students and their families. Staff in the Office of Admissions—in partnership and collaboration with staff and faculty from across the University—work tirelessly to connect with students and families, build personal relationships, and encourage students to take key steps toward enrolling at the University of Minnesota. This report provides a high level overview of some of the University’s comprehensive Minnesota student recruitment efforts. At the heart of each program and initiative described in this report is a strong campus-wide commitment to serving the state.

Land Grant University
As long as Minnesota has been a state, the University has been committed to providing educational opportunities to Minnesota residents, which is why Minnesota residents receive preference in our admissions process. Minnesota residents make up approximately two-thirds of the freshman class each year, and the University is committed to making certain that the enrollment of Minnesota students remains strong.

Demographic changes are making the recruitment environment even more competitive. As numbers of high school aged graduates in Minnesota have diminished in recent years, there are more competitors recruiting in our backyard. We have to work harder than ever to recruit Minnesota college-bound high school graduates. The University’s recruitment and enrollment efforts are proactive and personal to ensure a strong commitment to Minnesota residents.

In addition to a comprehensive recruitment and direct marketing effort targeting students and their families, we visit high schools across the state to ensure that we are connecting with Minnesota students. We host events and participate in college
fairs across the state, reaching both students and high school counselors. Our state recruitment efforts also include the recruitment of transfer students.

Communications, campus visits, and college fair participation targeting transfer students are key to supporting access and enrollment of transfer students. We work closely with community colleges to enhance transfer opportunities for Minnesota students, including providing advising and support throughout the enrollment process.

We thank our campus and community partners. Your collaboration and partnership is so important to recruit, enroll, and educate our leaders of tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Heidi Meyer

Executive Director
Office of Admissions
University of Minnesota Twin Cities
Recruiting bright and curious students

As the Office of Admissions at The University of Minnesota, we orchestrate the university’s campus-wide recruitment efforts in collaboration with campus partners. Enrolling an academically qualified, diverse student body is essential to the University’s mission.

A diverse student body greatly enhances the academic and social environment of the campus and helps prepare students to thrive in a global society. One of the University’s Student Learning Outcomes is that graduates are expected to “understand diverse philosophies and cultures within and across societies.”

As the flagship and land-grant institution, we have a commitment to serving the students of our state and enroll a first year class of 63-65% Minnesota students. To achieve this, we build close relationships with students and key stakeholders throughout the state and help students to take the next step in the admission cycle.

Student Success Is A Core Value

Student success is at the center of everything we do in the Office of Admissions at the University of Minnesota. Recruitment is the start of that focus. The University’s emphasis on student success over the last decade has resulted in an all time-high freshman retention rate of 93.2%.

We review each applicant for strong student preparation at the high school level, as academic preparation is key to a student’s college success. We require a student to report all courses and grades from their high school career to confirm they are ready for the U of M’s rigorous university courses.

Although academic preparation is the foundation for a student’s success on campus, we also consider other factors that may lead to a student’s preparation for success at the University. The University’s goal is to provide an educational environment that prepares our students “to be responsible and engaged citizens who, upon graduation, are ready to participate in and meet the challenges of a complex, diverse, and global society.”

Diversity: (Broadly Defined)

A core value of the University of Minnesota. Diversity includes students from different races, economic background, geographic origins, genders, religions, ethnicities, sexualities, talents and beliefs.
Our holistic review process ensures we look at the whole student, which allows us to admit students who are academically ready for University study and will also benefit from and contribute to our thriving and diverse campus environment.

We do not base our admissions decisions on an automated or numeric process. Our review process considers many factors, including a student’s likelihood of success at the University. We consider those characteristics that lend themselves to the success of our enrolled students and consider characteristics we know enhance success with a likelihood of timely graduation.

Because no two students are alike, students with similar academic credentials may have different interests and experiences. The pool of applicants and fit for a particular program at the U of M can vary by student and freshman-admitting college. Our holistic review allows us to get to know each applicant so that we can make the best admission decision possible for students and the University.

Using the holistic review process allows us to support students. Over the past decade the University has experienced record student satisfaction, retention, and graduation rates. These metrics inform our admissions practices as well as our recruitment and outreach practices.

Holistic review:
Emphasizes the importance of giving individualized consideration to every applicant and provides operational guidance to ensure that admissions processes and criteria are both mission- and evidence-based to promote diversity and use a balance of experiences, attributes, and academic metrics.
A decade of enrollment and academic growth

Enrollment progress
At the University of Minnesota, through the use of our strategic recruitment and enrollment management practices, the number of Minnesota students enrolling has continued to increase over the last 10 years.

Academic preparation
The academic preparation of the freshman class, and Minnesota students has continued to increase in the past 10 years. Increased high school academic preparation has shown to result in higher college retention and graduation rates.

Despite declining and shifting demographics in Minnesota, the Office of Admissions has consistently met the University’s enrollment targets and worked to enhance the diversity and academic preparation of the incoming freshman class. However, the recruitment environment is highly competitive.

We are recruiting a population of students who have numerous options for their college experience. The University’s ability to continue to meet enrollment goals—especially in the face of shifting demographics—requires that we evolve and improve our recruitment approach.
Recruitment Overview

A Competitive Landscape
Numerous enhancements made to the undergraduate experience and admissions program directly contribute to the University’s outstanding enrollment success. Despite declining and shifting demographics in Minnesota and surrounding states, the Office of Admissions consistently meets the University’s enrollment targets and enhances the diversity and academic preparation of the freshman class. College recruitment is highly competitive. We are recruiting students with numerous college options. To continue to meet enrollment goals—especially in the face of shifting demographics—we must continually evolve and improve our recruitment approach.

We follow three basic philosophies in our freshman recruitment to ensure we recruit and enroll a bright, curious and diverse (broadly defined) freshman class every fall.

CONDUCT EARLY, FOCUSED AND FREQUENT OUTREACH

Early Outreach
We develop relationships with prospective students throughout their high school careers and assist them with each stage of the college choice, application, and enrollment processes.

Focused and frequent outreach
We simultaneously target recruitment efforts to high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors to provide key information in the format they want it, when they want it. Managing three freshman classes at a time means

CONDUCT EARLY, FOCUSED AND FREQUENT OUTREACH

Conduct early and frequent outreach
Provide authentic customer service to make enrollment easy
Sustain campus and community partnerships
communicating with hundreds of thousands of high school students, their families, and high school counselors.

During each phase, we implement strategic marketing campaigns and relationship-building initiatives to encourage students and their influencers (such as parents and school counselors) to take the next step towards enrolling at the University. We also work with transfer students, communicating information about next steps for applying to and enrolling at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities.

**Recruitment and Communications** are interwoven to provide the most targeted and personal interaction possible with each prospective student and their family.

**Recruitment** is a campus-wide, collaborative effort led by the Office of Admissions in partnership with University faculty, staff, currently enrolled students, and alumni. Given that college-aged students are being aggressively recruited by colleges in Minnesota and across the country, it is essential that we make it easy for students to take key steps towards enrollment.

**Recruitment methods include:**

- **199** high school visits to schools across Minnesota, sending admissions counselors directly into the school buildings to build relationships with school counselors, career counselors, and college-bound students.
- **89** Minnesota college fairs attended across the state and a commanding and engaging presence at the National College Fair in the Minneapolis Convention Center.
- **45** presentations, panels and parent nights
- **18** High School Counselor events across Minnesota
- **15** scholarship surprise events recognizing exceptional students
- **8** application workshops hosted in local high schools

**Targeted communications** are designed to support a recruitment strategy to provide extra-mile customer service and develop personal relationships to bring a diverse and academically prepared student body to campus.

**Targeted recruitment communications include:**

- Showcase the benefits of attending the University of Minnesota Twin Cities
- Distinctly convey the inspiring tone surrounding curiosity and discovery
- Contain a clear call to action to facilitate next steps in admissions/enrollment process
- Use multi-channels and contain appropriate messaging to both students, families and high school counselors
Provide Authentic Customer Service

Our Admissions team is set up to provide exceptional customer service to build 1:1 relationships with students. This approach makes it easy to access and interact with the University and is often noted as a key differentiator for prospective students exploring our institution.

We strive to have personal outreach between students and our professional admissions counselors throughout the college search, application, and enrollment steps. This approach is strengthened by expansive communications outreach and cross-campus collaboration for events and visits.

Phone calls
A unique component of our Customer Service involves phone calls from our Admissions Counselors and Student-staffed call team. In addition to our tours, visits, mailing and emails, we reach out to students who’ve expressed interest in the University via phone for 1:1 communication and information sharing.

Minnesota student call outreach: 72,873

Dedicated Minnesota Recruitment Team
As the flagship and land-grant institution, we have a commitment to serving the students of Minnesota. Each freshman class consists of 63-65% Minnesota students from across the state.

While the entire Office of Admissions staff is committed to the recruitment of Minnesota

Examples of Recruitment Activities include:

» Community-specific recruitment events like Ski U Mah events in Duluth, Rochester and St Cloud

» Group visits coordinated together with partners like La Raza, Hmong Student Association, American Indian Student Cultural Center, TRIO Program and more.

» Alumni Ambassador outreach to connect recent alumni with prospective students within multicultural communities.

» High school counselor events, communications and outreach
students, there is a team of six full-time professional staff members dedicated to MN recruitment and 5 counselors working with communities of color in MN and nationwide.

The work of these staff members includes specific responsibilities for outreach to and recruitment of high school students of Minnesota students. These staff members serve as personal contacts for students and their families. They build relationships with students and frequently visit high schools students throughout the academic year. They also take the lead in coordinating the Office of Admissions’ involvement at community events.

Student staff component: Authenticity and engagement
The Office of Admissions also staffs a team of student territory managers. These currently-enrolled students build relationships with prospective Minnesota students. They refer questions to professional admissions counselors and work closely with the Minnesota and Multicultural recruitment team to ensure that students receive quick answers to their questions. Student territory managers also follow-up by mail and email with students they cannot reach by phone.

Student group partnerships
The Office of Admissions continues to work closely with several on-campus student groups and involves current students in all aspects of Minnesota student recruitment including:

» Student panels both on- and off-campus
» Recruitment Events
» Student calling outreach
» Student visit experiences.

One example of these partnerships is with the Minnesota Multicultural Recruitment Society, a professionally advised, registered student organization that was created in February 2015. The mission of the Recruitment Society is to incorporate the student voice into recruiting efforts to attract and retain underrepresented student populations at the University of Minnesota. Recruitment Society members work to recruit culturally diverse high school students to campus by participating in student panel discussions and connecting with prospective students at recruitment events.

Our admissions counselors serve as a highly visible connection point between prospective students and families, community leaders, and campus communities. Our admissions counselors’ relationship building efforts are at the heart of our work.
On-campus collaboration

In orchestrating the University’s recruitment efforts, the Office of Admissions collaborates closely with all seven of the University colleges along with key departments to plan events and communications with prospective students.

By working closely with the University’s colleges, we can leverage resources and increase touchpoints with students. Personal interaction with prospective students and collaborative efforts are central to effective student recruitment and enrollment efforts.

These partnerships have also been key to connecting prospective students with faculty, staff, and enrolled multicultural students, while also showcasing the academic, experiential and social opportunities at the University.

Specialized recruitment events

We coordinate targeted events to engage prospective Minnesota students and help them explore all that

Campus Partners:

» Seven U of M freshman admitting colleges

» Office for Equity and Diversity

» Research and Outreach Centers: Ten centers statewide support research to enhance the quality of agricultural production, human health, renewable energy and the environment.

» U of M Extension Offices: We partner with the extension offices to expand our reach into Minnesota communities.

» UMTYMP (University of Minnesota Talented Youth Mathematics Program): An accelerated credit-program for middle school and high school students who are highly talented in mathematics.

Community Partners:

Breakthrough Collaborative:
A community program that operates summer and school-year programming for students from under-resourced communities on their path to college.

College Possible:
A community based program to help students prepare for, apply to and succeed in college.

AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination):
A school support program supporting educators to help them prepare all students for college and careers.

FIRST Robotics:
A program to motivate youth to pursue education and careers in science, technology and math.

Project Lead the Way:
A program to transform the experiences for PreK-12 students and teachers to encourage real-world learning.

STEP-UP Achieve:
A community partnership with AchieveMPls, it connects Minneapolis youth.

St. Paul Public Schools Mentoring Excellence Program (MEP):
The Mentoring Excellence Program serves American Indian students and students of color in 10th-12th grade in the St.Paul Public Schools.

TRIO:
Federal outreach and student services programs to serve and assist low-income and first-generation college students.
the University of Minnesota has to offer. Events are family-oriented and showcase the University’s current students, faculty and staff, academic programs, and student groups.

This approach ensures everyone is working toward a shared focus of attracting Minnesota’s students to the University of Minnesota.

**Strong community partnerships**

We are proud to partner with many community colleagues and organizations in our expanding access to students and in support of the University’s enrollment efforts. A cornerstone of the University’s commitment to Minnesota student outreach and recruitment is a focus on working with community members to support student college exploration and preparation as we encourage students to consider the University of Minnesota for their college home.

Our community partnerships ensure that students gain important access to the opportunities that exist at the U of M, and provide the University with opportunities to connect and build relationships with students so they may fully consider the University of Minnesota as one of their college options. The interactions fostered through our partnerships provide students with the experiences and interactions that give students the information and tools they need to prepare for a successful undergraduate experience at the U of M.

**A path for the future**

The University has also teamed up with seven public two-year campuses around Minnesota to offer the Minnesota Cooperative Admissions Program (MnCAP), a guaranteed admissions program offered to transfer students only. Students who enroll in the program are guaranteed admission to select majors within University colleges so long as they complete an AA degree or the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum, complete appropriate prerequisite and introductory courses within the intended major while maintaining a minimum GPA, and meet the priority application deadline.

The University has also partnered with Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC) to offer a first-year experience course. Taught on the MCTC campus, Gopher Path FYST is designed for students planning to transfer. The course introduces students to college structure and expectations, resources, learning approaches, and provides academic and career exploration specifically as they relate to the student’s intention of attending the University of Minnesota.

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Even though great progress has been made in recruiting Minnesota students, further progress is needed. Recruitment of this critical community remains a top priority.

The Office of Admissions continually works to expand and enhance the effectiveness of its recruitment efforts.

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