EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND
One of University Relations/Enrollment Management’s goals is to ensure they understand college recruiters’ needs, challenges and priorities. Knowing this will enable UR/EM to offer guidance and support in the areas that are most important.

ENROLLMENT SUMMIT
The Enrollment Summit was not as successful as it could have been in helping college recruiters be more effective at their job. Though the keynote presentation – where participants learned about students’ mindsets and heard suggestions for targeted messaging – was, by far, the most appreciated part of the event.

Recruiters are anxious to hear about other topics at future summits, chief among them:

- Trends (research, national enrollment trends, behaviors): 27%
- Affordability (thinking beyond increases in scholarships): 18%
- Data/making data-driven decisions: 18%
- Best practices (enrollment, retention): 14%
- Collaboration (partnerships throughout the University/with other schools): 14%

RECRUITMENT
College recruiters have a good understanding of how their unit's plans roll into the University's overall recruitment goals and are knowledgeable about their college's specific benchmarks. However, aside from several individuals setting goals based on year-over-year improvement, there is little consistency between colleges' approach to goal setting.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RECRUITMENT (continued)
Specifically, college recruiters would like UR/EM to:

- Provide data/market trends
- Help establish realistic metrics that measurable
- Include recruiters in discussions regarding the University’s overall recruitment goals
- Provide information regarding their College’s capacity, etc.

CHALLENGES
While most college recruiters participate to some degree in creating marketing and communications for the unit, a significant number are not as involved as they should be. Even those who participate in this task find it a rather daunting process. They are also challenged with developing long-range recruitment plans, as well as having too much on their plate, which prevents them from being able to prioritize initiatives.

The aforementioned are areas in which UR/EM can lend support; other areas include:

- Communication - Listen to the Colleges more; dictate less
- Data - Provide information on competitors, students, etc.
- Recruitment - Provide samples of recruitment material sent from the University
- Collaboration – Ensure everyone is on the same page and expectations are managed
DETAILED FINDINGS
ENROLLMENT SUMMIT

All 46 college recruiters who responded to the survey attended the Enrollment Summit in January. About one in 10 (9%) found the summit “extremely helpful” to them being more effective at their job. Another 39% thought it was “very helpful;” Most (52%) rated it “somewhat helpful.”

The majority (62%) thought the keynote presentation was most valuable part of the event. Significantly fewer found campus updates (19%), interactive workshop (13%) or reports from the working groups (6%) the best part of the event.

Approximately 20 college recruiters had suggestions for topics they want addressed in the future.
ENROLLMENT SUMMIT
The verbatim suggestions for future summits are:

• “The funding concerns of our prospective students and how we can address them (thinking beyond increases in scholarships)’’
• “What is our approach to the "OK to poach recruits" change in ethics for higher ed admissions? How do we reach more students from beyond our traditional area?’’
• “Integrated marketing communication strategies to effectively promote our specific colleges’’
• “We need a lot more work on the strategy for individual colleges. We spend too much time and effort at the university level and very little time on the specific niche strategies for the colleges. We have a brand for All WVU but it does not speak to that students are looking for (specific majors/colleges experiences) we end up putting a message to everyone but not connecting with many.’’
• “Data on competitors, such as tuition, enrollment trends, etc. ’’
• “Idea sharing across units regarding best practices.’’
• “Staying on brand while meeting the unique needs of the sub-population you are recruiting. For example, we are all 1 WVU; however, each of our programs and the characteristics of the students who tend to come into many of our programs is quite specific. I believe only we can share our specific story in the best possible light with prospective students. I think ALL recruiters (i.e. those from enrollment management/UR) need to be trained annually on the various programs that they are representing. Programs change often as do workforce needs and we really need the front line undergraduate recruiters to be on the same page as the specific program. Getting incorrect/dated information from EM/UR recruiters has lost our college students to other institutions. Perhaps this doesn’t need to be a part of a summit, but it should be standard operating procedure to help us put our best foot forward.’’
• “Recruitment events, and how partnerships can work throughout the University. It was nice to sit with staff from our own schools/general areas, but it would be interesting to interact more with other schools to get a different perspective.’’
• “Nationwide enrollment trends, topics on college affordability and a broader discussion on awarding deferred scholarships. We are beginning to see students who are not eligible for FTF merit scholarship attend WVU, perform well and then leave because they are not eligible for merit aid.’’
• “How communicators can help the schools/colleges - is there a unified/coordinated approach or is each school/college to do their own communicating?’’
• “Higher ed recruitment, marketing and enrollment trends; analysis of competitors; overview of central marketing efforts and ways the colleges can plug into the 'gaps' and communicate specific college messages that coordinate with the central messages in both content and timing.’’
• “Affordability, the overall communication plan and how are communication plans should fit into that, maintaining the quality of student, continue tailored recruitment strategies based on the market trend.’’
RECRUITMENT
All but 6% of the college recruiters have a clear understanding of how their college recruitment plans support the overall recruitment goals for the University. All but 9% have a clear understanding of their college/school/unit’s recruitment goals. (n=35)

About eight in 10 (82%) indicated their college/school/unit establishes recruitment goals on a regular basis.* They determine appropriate recruit goals based on:

- Prior year’s enrollment (6)
- Capacity planning (3)
- Trends/data analysis (3)
- Overall growth goal (not major specific)
- Current trends in the job market, admission trends, budget needs
- Consultations with the administration and EM/UR teams
- The strategic enrollment management plan established several years ago
- They are dictated
- Consideration for advancing student learning and community outcome/standards

A few key communicators mentioned challenges they face in recruitment goal setting:

“While we do not have specific recruitment goals for each of our majors, we aim to demonstrate overall growth from year to year. Because of transition within the college related to the elimination of ACM, it is difficult for us to properly develop specific recruitment goals. Having said that, we have set our own internal goals for the new Health and Well-being major.”

“Mostly based upon previous recruitment and discussion. However, I don’t know that we have a great set of metrics to use to help with this process.”

*Statler, CPASS, Pharmacy/Communications do not establish recruitment goals on a regular basis.
RECRUITMENT
Recruiters made the following suggestions as to how UR/EM can help them establish recruiting goals:

- “Discuss with our leadership the importance of recruitment and the role that the communicator plays in the process. We need to set clear goals for the communicator's involvement in recruitment and a project calendar with deadlines for each project.”
- “UR/EM can listen to us more and give us the time to be in front of UR/EM recruiters annually for updates on the market, on trends, and on making sure these front line recruiters are sharing the correct information about our program. Although we have a college recruiter who does a great job, we believe that providing "training" to all recruiters under the UR/EM umbrella would make us all much better at recruiting students to our programs. This is a practice that used to happen years ago (predating current administration) that was very effective. I would strongly encourage it to come back into practice.”
- “This has always been a top down approach. Our college sets it's goals, but often we hear that UR has established it's own goals without consulting or at least speaking to us.”
- “Help us set realistic expectations given the external pressures we are facing as an individual institution and as HIED as a whole.”
- “Our college has 24 faculty lines and currently serves 1,335 majors at the undergraduate and graduate levels. That represents a 25.5% (n=270) increase from Spring 2016 (n=1065). I expect that the total head count enrollment could exceed 1,500 by this fall semester due to new majors and continued growth of our online programs. What is the appropriate enrollment target given that level of faculty resources?”
- “Give the colleges more freedom when it comes to cost. Provide more resources for recruiters, scholarships, etc. Provide more useful, current and accurate data.”
- “We need UR/EM to not look for colleges to align with the university-wide strategy but to help the colleges implement their individual strategies that adapt the WVU-wide strategy to the reality of each individual college.”
- “We could be involved to develop a long-term plan by considering the capacities of programs in the college
- “Maintaining current assistance and support should suffice for the near future.
- “Understanding we are smaller school and our goals will be different than a larger school.
- “Development of a solid set of metrics to use for development of metrics and ensuring that the metrics are clear and accurate.
- “We need help with our communication plan.”
- “Looking at historic inquiry/lead data compared to current data, helping us be realistic about opportunity in certain markets where we travel.”
RECRUITMENT

Just under half (48%) are extremely or very involved with their unit’s communication team in helping create recruitment marketing and communications. The reminder (52%) are somewhat or not very involved in the process.

*CPASS, Pharmacy/Communications, and an unidentified individual are not very involved.

Q. Which of these best describes the relationship you have with your unit’s communications team in helping create recruitment marketing and communications?
CHALLENGES
Developing a five-year recruitment plan and developing recruitment materials are the most challenging parts of their job. Conducting research on recruitment trends is the third biggest challenge followed by researching and identifying target populations for recruitment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ease of Duties</th>
<th>Extremely/very easy</th>
<th>Somewhat difficult</th>
<th>Extremely/very difficult</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conduct qualitative or qualitative research on recruitment trends</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop presentations for high schools, WVU parents or alumni chapters for recruitment purposes</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop a long-range (5-yr.) recruitment plan</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop recruitment materials</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and identify target populations for recruitment</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Q. How easy or difficult is it for you to fulfill the following expectations?
CHALLENGES
Other challenges college recruiters face include:

• “Collaboration. I enjoy working with our recruiter, but our schedules allow very little time to do so. I believe a higher priority needs to be placed on our working together as a team for recruiting purposes.” – Pharmacy/Communications
• “We have a wonderful communication specialist; however, this individual's time is swamped with other college communication that has severely limited the time we have been able to devote to getting recruitment materials and/or presentations developed.” – Pharmacy
• “I think external competition, financial issues, and the party school image/low quality perception by high achieving prospective students are the biggest challenges when it comes to attracting new freshmen (I'm not on the road very much anymore, but this is based on feedback from high ability non-resident students I met with at a DECA conference last fall, my last major recruitment event). I also find it challenging that there is less focus on growth through other methods such as online, 2+2, and non-traditional students. The demographic situation of the mid-Atlantic makes it clear that we need to focus on other pockets of students to grow enrollment and address the financial challenges. These are a couple reasons I put "developing a 5 year plan" as the most difficult.” – Chambers College
• “Making sure that all everyone understands public health, its a generally harder field to get across.” – School of Public Health
• “Records-Keeping and Reporting tasks; due to segmentation of and restrictions on free access to information about current students.” – Honors College
• “Presenting and having UREM listen to the challenges and opportunities that my college has. Not everything should be seen or strategized from a WVU wide perspective.” – Chambers College
• “In my role, I wear multiple hats where I am expected to prioritize many initiatives all at once (i.e. retention, recruitment, job placement, marketing materials). Balancing all of this at once can be overwhelming with a limited staff.” – CPASS
• “I think the most challenging thing for me is that every year the population behaves differently and expects more. I can look at trends but every year I've been here the students have behaved somewhat differently and there's not always an explanation for that. This year it's been increasingly harder to meet the demands of parents and students who want extremely customized experiences including "meeting a professor and meeting the dean" these are sometimes options but are not common options for us based on timeframes, classes etc. I am happy to accommodate when I can and we do try and tailor experiences to each students but some of the expectations of parents are somewhat ridiculous and a little hard to accommodate at times. The other challenging part is the conversation around financial aid. It's never easy to have those conversations.” – Reed College of Media
Q. What other areas of your job do you find challenging?

CHALLENGES
Other challenges college recruiters face include: (continued)

- “Having to find out information after students do (i.e. delays in financial aid, the fact that we no longer have a financial aid deadline, when housing fills up, basically anything they would tell an admissions counselor). Also realizing that while WVU as a whole can handle large numbers of students, individual colleges do have limits at events and NSO. Going beyond these limits WILL have an impact on quality.” – Statler College
- “The balance between recruitment and retention seem to be contradictory at times.” – CLASS
- “I think sometimes it feels like we just 'ride the wave' from week to week. Since students are people (and teenagers at that!), their decisions sometimes seem arbitrary or reactive. I wish there was a way to better identify students who might melt or to find out why some students do melt.” – Media
- “Effective collaboration with college enrollment management.” – Communications
- “Too many demands on different items.” – Statler College
- “Keeping up with the changes from UR. Feels like it’s the colleges versus central.” – Did not self-identify
- “Specific to our #1 Biggest Challenge, our marketing and communications team struggles with effective story telling through video.” – CPASS
- “Too much to do, too few resources.” – Chambers College
Q. In what ways can UR/EM better support you in your role as a College Recruiter?

SUPPORT
Suggestions for ways UR/EM can better support them include:

• “Let us train your people. Listen more to our unique population needs. Provide additional (low cost, high quality) support to help us develop recruitment materials.”
• “Support (borrowing materials and occasional financial support) for exhibits/travel. Regular meetings with college administration, recruitment team, and UR/EM (2-3x/yr.).”
• “Provide more accurate and complete data on competitors, students, etc. Provide more flexibility to the colleges in terms of cost.”
• “Listen and work with us on individual plans that we can deploy.”
• “It is helpful when UR/EM is cognizant of the fact that many in our roles are also balancing tasks related to recruitment and retention. A lot of times the "busy" times for both will overlap. I appreciate when UR/EM takes this into account when scheduling events (i.e. love how you guys took a look at Junior Preview Day to make that a bit more key recruiter friendly!). Additionally, many of the colleges' specific marketing and communications "teams" have differing PIQs. For some of us (it may be just me!), the role of lead on marketing materials can fall on our plates. It would be great if we could be involved in more workshops, support initiatives from UR/EM related specifically to marketing/communications efforts. Not sure if this applies to all, but felt it was worth mentioning since it is one of my role's biggest challenges.”
• “Develop materials that show WVU and West Virginia value diversity.”
• “Help to support HSC efforts with HSTA-especially the summer camp.”
• “EM has been very helpful in working through specific areas that may have caused issues in the past. I have appreciated open lines of communication, and staff willing to answer questions. I believe our goal is to ensure we are adhering to University guidelines, and your staff helping us clean up processes has been great. I hope that continues, and have appreciated the help.”


**SUPPORT**

Suggestions for ways UR/EM can better support them include:

- “It is helpful to have technology to ease the outreach portion to students as a college recruiter. Expanding the drip-campaigns through Target X takes out the work that can be time-intensive.”
- “Working together. Instead of meetings where we are just presented numbers, we should have a collaborative work group to talk about things that are difficult and how to help resolve issues. If the meeting can be an email, let's just send an email.”
- “I think being able to see the overall annual communication plan with examples from UR of what's going out would be so helpful because I am afraid we may be duplicating efforts or being overbearing/over-communicating with students because I don’t know what and when things are going out centrally.”
DEPARTMENTS
Survey respondents represent the following colleges/departments*:

- CPASS (4)
- Statler College (4)
- Chambers College (3)
- Pharmacy (2)
- Reed College of Media (2)
- Statler College (2)
- Honors College (1)
- School of Public Health (1)
- CLASS (1)
- College of Nursing (1)
- Communications (1)

Those who chose to identify themselves in the survey are:

- Rachel
- Sean Bulger
- Javier Reyes
- Lindsay Augustine
- Lauren Devine
- Caitlin Rexrode
- Tricia Petty

* One College Recruiter did not identify his/her college/department or provide his/her name.