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The Implementation of Enrollment Management at Two Public Universities Experiencing Demographic and Funding Challenges

Stephen Lee

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THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT
AT TWO PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES EXPERIENCING
DEMOGRAPHIC AND FUNDING CHALLENGES

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Doctorate of Education

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Indiana University of Pennsylvania

May 2010

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Title: The Implementation of Enrollment Management at Two Public Universities Experiencing Demographic and Funding Challenges

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The purpose of this study was to evaluate the implementation of enrollment management at two public universities. The theoretical framework was conceptual and centered on the effectiveness of the implementation process as a pivotal factor in the development of a comprehensive enrollment management operation. This multi-site case study included 14 participants from Valley University and 17 participants from Mountain University. Using a mixed-methods approach, the researcher administered a 33 question survey and conducted individual interviews with all participants. Survey data was analyzed using an independent sample t-test to determine the difference in mean scores between participants at both universities. A comparison of the perception of the implementation of enrollment management at each university was evaluated in this analysis. Interview data were evaluated using cross-case and trend analysis in order to assess reasons for success or failure in the implementation of enrollment management at each institution.

The implementation of enrollment management was found to be more successful at Mountain University because the support and understanding of the senior administration--most notably the president--was more resolute. By more effectively supporting enrollment management with human and budgetary

resources, Mountain University developed a more successful enrollment management plan, conducted more effective retention programs, and witnessed more developed communication and collaboration practices related to enrollment management. Consequently, Mountain University was more successful in achieving a comprehensive enrollment management operation than Valley University. As a result of more effective implementation, the Mountain University campus community proved to be more supportive and respectful of enrollment management. At both universities, communication and collaboration between administrative units was found to be more effective than between administrative units and faculty. Barriers to communication and collaboration between administrative units and faculty were identified in the study.

Further research on best practices in the implementation of enrollment management at public universities and on the correlation between resources and successful enrollment management is recommended.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

After a period of unprecedented enrollment growth, colleges and universities are now faced with an imminent decline in high school students and an enduring trend of reduced state funding. These confounding problems have elevated the importance of enrollment management at institutions across the country.

In 2009 colleges and universities in many parts of the United States experienced the beginning of a decline in high school graduates. The decline reversed a trend of increasing high school graduates over the past two decades, which resulted in enrollment growth in higher education across the nation.

According to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) report *Knocking at the College Door* (2008) the national trend of steadily increasing high school graduates began in the early 1990s. From 1994-1995 to 2004-2005, the number of public high school graduates rose by 23.1% nationally and reached its peak in 2007-2008. The WICHE report attributes this growth to the “baby boom echo” generation, which was making its way through high school and beyond. As the end of that generation transitions out of high school, the supply of students to higher education will decline.

At the national level, graduation rates will have three distinct trends between 2005–2022: “2.7 percent growth between 2004-05 and 2007-08; almost .07 percent decline between 2007-08 and 2013-14; and 1.2 percent growth between 2013-14 and 2017-18” (WICHE, 2008, p. 6). Overall, there will be an

increase in high school graduates from 3,189,538 in 2005-2006 to 3,361,696 in 2021-2022. While the national picture indicates an increase in high school graduates, the growth will not be uniform and certain areas of the country will experience significant decline (2008).

High school graduates in many areas of the West, South, and Southwest will increase, while graduates in most areas of the Northeast and the Dakota region will decline. The WICHE Report (2008) reveals a disparity of 20% growth in Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Nevada, Texas, and Utah to 10% decline in Kansas, Louisiana, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming.

Overall, states in the Northeast will witness a decline in high school graduates over virtually the entire period between the 2007-2008 and 2021-2022. This decline will amount to approximately 1% per year on average. By 2014-2015, the Northeast will produce fewer high school graduates than it did in 2004-2005. From 2009-2010 to 2019-20, all states in the Northeast but New Jersey will witness decreases in high school graduates.

According to Bontrager (2007), at public universities, a reduced flow of new students will add stress to institutions that are already challenged by a trend of declining state support. Between 1981 and 2000, state appropriations as a percent of all funds to degree-granting public higher education institutions nationally fell from 44% to 32.3%. Over the same period, the percent of revenue derived from tuition increased from 12.9% to 18.5% (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2003).

In 1997, the state appropriation to Lock Haven University, which is member of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, was 16.8 million dollars, while the portion of the university budget supported by tuition and fees was 14.2 million dollars. Nine years later in 2006, the state appropriation to Lock Haven University was 21.3 million dollars, while the portion of the university budget support by tuition and fees had risen to 33.5 million (McCarty, 2006).

As state funding has not kept pace with institutional costs, revenue from tuition and fees has become critically important to the fiscal health of colleges and universities across the country. With this reality, enrolling more students to increase revenue has become a hallmark of budget planning at many public universities. But what happens if revenue derived from tuition and fees decreases because there are fewer new students available? In this situation, ensuring an optimum enrollment of students suddenly becomes more challenging, and more essential. Because enrollment management has historically offered the most popular solution to this problem, its role in higher education today has become essential. From its roots in the late 1970s, enrollment management has been deemed to be the solution to similar demographic and funding challenges, and a format to better manage the enrollment process (Bontrager, 2004a; Huddleston & Rumbough, 1997).

But are public universities prepared to fully embrace enrollment management? Enrollment management originated with private institutions and it has a shorter history and less universal adoption at public universities (Bontrager, 2004a). Will the need for a more serious implementation of

enrollment management at public institutions be accompanied by the necessary paradigm shift in campus culture and practices? Will faculty at public institutions, who may not have previously played a prominent role in recruitment and retention activities, be at the center or at the fringes of the new enrollment management organization?

Background

Enrollment management typically includes both an administrative structure and a coordinated approach to achieving the optimum recruitment, retention, and graduation of students. By coordinating efforts in marketing, recruitment, admissions, financial aid, orientation, and retention enrollment management influences the size and make-up of the study body (Hossler & Kemerer, 1986). Although enrollment management has historically been a core feature at private institutions, it will likely be elevated to a more prominent role at public institutions in the near future.

According to Jim Black, enrollment management at many institutions, particularly public institutions, still is a fairly low level priority, meaning that there are not a lot of vice president-level, cabinet-level positions. Because the demographics are shifting, in many states enrollment efforts are becoming more intense, which is an opportunity to elevate the stature of enrollment management beyond where it is. I think that an essential next stage for the evolution of enrollment management is to become the centerpiece of the whole institutional strategy. (Burch, 2006, p. 50)

While the history of enrollment management has many success stories, it also has many examples of failed attempts at implementation. Without effective implementation of core attributes, enrollment management may not provide the solution that universities are expecting. The core attributes are: enrollment planning; effective recruitment and retention practices; inter-department collaboration and communication; and, enrollment management as a comprehensive effort.

Statement of Problem

Enrollment management offers a structural and organizational approach to achieving an optimum number of students. Implementation failures, however, often inhibit the development of a comprehensive enrollment management organization. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the implementation of enrollment management at two public universities.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study were:

- How successful is enrollment planning at the universities?
- What are the most effective recruitment and retention practices at the universities?
- Does enrollment management promote effective inter-department collaboration and communication at the universities?
- What department(s) are most successful? Why?

- Who is most responsible for promoting successful enrollment management on each campus?

Theoretical Framework

“In two decades, enrollment management has gone from a strategy practiced at a small number of private colleges to standard procedure at most public and private institutions. Yet few educators understand it” (Hossler, 2004, B3). In the challenging times colleges and universities are experiencing, there is a need to better understand enrollment management.

Although enrollment management emerged in higher education in a relative short period of time, it has had a profound impact on how colleges and universities operate. Research indicates the many colleges and universities that have implemented enrollment management appear to be satisfied with its influence. Huddleston and Rumbough (1997) conducted a survey of enrollment management practices at 226 four-year institutions, and found that 72% of public institutions and 76% of private institutions were either satisfied or very satisfied with enrollment management and that it had met expectations.

However, research also indicates the core attributes of enrollment management are not always effectively implemented, and the version that is practiced on many campuses does not represent a mature and comprehensive system. Dolence (1990) conducted a study of 22 institutions with enrollment management models and found that enrollment management practices were not being effectively implemented at those institutions.

The theoretical framework for this study was conceptual and included two positions: depending on whether core attributes are implemented, enrollment management works or enrollment management does not work. This study will evaluate this theoretical framework and determine if enrollment management is working or not working at two public universities.

Enrollment Management Works

The leading enrollment management theorists assert that it works. According to Michael Dolence (1990), enrollment management provides a comprehensive approach that integrates related functions to achieve the optimum recruitment, retention, and graduation of students. Hossler and Bean (1990) state enrollment management can increase the resource base for a college or university and improve its quality. Huddleston (2000) asserts enrollment management shapes and influences constituencies on campus that have an impact on a student's decision to enroll, persist and graduate.

Chapter II elaborates on the following case studies in which enrollment management has worked:

- Enrollment increased at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro after implementation of an enrollment management plan changed the culture of the university and faculty and staff became more knowledgeable and engaged in recruitment and retention (Black, 2004b).
- Applications for admission, net revenue, retention and graduation all improved after Dickinson College implemented a comprehensive

approach to enrollment management that included an integrated marketing campaign, new pricing and financial aid strategies, new academic and co-curricular programs, and a better utilization of data analysis in programs and activities (Massa, 2004).

- Muskingum College implemented a 29% price reduction plan that increased applications for admission and new student enrollment (Zellers, 2004).
- DePaul University increased enrollment after adopting an enrollment management model that created a single division to integrate financial aid strategies and recruitment and retention initiatives (Kalsbeek & McGrath, 2004).

Enrollment Management Does Not Work

“For over half of the institutions who try it, establishing an enrollment management program is less than successful” (Dolence, 1990, p. 1). As many institutions have discovered, implementing a comprehensive enrollment management operation is challenging. Chapter II elaborates on the theoretical position that enrollment management often does not work because of implementation problems.

In evaluating enrollment management practices at 22 institutions, Dolence (1990) found that many of the institutions had not implemented enrollment management effectively. For those institutions, implementation failed because of common pitfalls, including: basic design flaws; preconceived ideas that dictated the process; reliance on quick fixes; lack of adequate coordination; inadequate

decision-making processes; excessive focus on budgets; inadequate participation in enrollment management; and, an insufficient link between enrollment management programs and academics.

Other examples of institutions that failed to implement core attributes of enrollment management include:

- Parnell (2004) found that the 11 institutions of higher education in the North Dakota University System had not implemented key areas of enrollment management (goal setting, planning, and out-of-state recruitment).
- Simmons (2007) discovered a lack of college-wide commitment to enrollment management at the four California Community Colleges she studied. She also discovered a lack of cohesive enrollment planning, inadequate understanding of the importance of retention in enrollment management, and a lack of integration of the key elements of enrollment management.
- Huddleston and Rumbough (1997) found that retention outcomes had not met expectations for 226 four-year institutions with enrollment management operations.

The review of literature examines both positions within the theoretical framework and establishes a foundation for evaluating enrollment management practices at two public universities.

Definition of Terms

Admitted Student--A student who has been offered admission to the university.

Chief Enrollment Management Officer--The individual at a college or university who is responsible for overseeing those offices that are most influential in enrolling and retaining students. Typically, the offices include: admissions, financial aid, registrar, orientation, and retention.

Recruitment Programs--Activities conducted by the office of admissions that are designed to promote the university to prospective students and to positively influence yield.

Enrollment Management--“A process that brings together often disparate functions having to do with recruiting, funding, tracking, retaining, and replacing students as they move toward, within, and away from institutions” (Kurz & Scannell, 2006, p. 81).

Enrollment Management Model--An administrative structure that aligns offices in an enrollment management organization. There are four primary enrollment management models: committee, coordinator, matrix, and division.

Financial Aid--Financial assistance provided by colleges, universities, and private entities that supports the cost of attendance.

Inquiry--A student who has expressed interest in the university. At the inquiry stage, the student has not yet applied for admission.

Prospect--A student who has not inquired to the university but who is in a potential pool of candidates who have been identified as having a possibility of

enrolling. An example of a prospect would be a student on a mailing list purchased from the College Board who fits the parameters of a “typical” university student.

Retention Programs--University programs and activities that are designed to influence the retention of students from freshmen through graduation by identifying reasons for attrition and minimizing them to whatever extent desirable (Kurtz & Scannell, 2006).

Yield--The percentage of students converting from one status to the next. Typically, yield refers to students who transition from inquiry to applicant or from accept to enroll.

Significance of Study

This study was significant for several reasons. First, the immediate future presents many enrollment challenges and colleges and universities will likely rely on enrollment management for solutions. In this study, a framework was established for evaluating successful and unsuccessful attempts to implement enrollment management. This framework will be beneficial for colleges and universities who have implemented enrollment management or endeavor to do so in the future.

Secondly, this study added to the base of research on enrollment management. Enrollment management is a relatively young enterprise in higher education and there is limited empirical research on its effectiveness. According to Parnell (2004), although there are ample articles about the implementation of enrollment management, there are far fewer studies that look critically at whether

enrollment management has an impact. This study expands the base of research on the field of enrollment management and provides a foundation for further studies.

Finally, this study was significant because it evaluated enrollment management from many different perspectives. A diverse pool of faculty and administrators inside and outside the enrollment management model were interviewed. Because of this, data collected in this study had breadth and depth. Other studies on this subject (Lobasso, 2006; Huddleston & Rumbough, 1997) have evaluated enrollment management from the perspective of the chief enrollment officer. The methodology for this study provided a deeper context for examining the mechanics of an entire enrollment management organization.

Research Setting

In this study, enrollment management was evaluated at two public universities with very similar internal and external realities. The two institutions selected had the same state system governance and similar policies, procedures, and missions.

The institutions were also selected because they had both adopted enrollment management models. Both institutions had an enrollment management division model. The division model offers an infrastructure for delivering enrollment management and it is considered the highest level of institutional commitment to enrollment management.

Research Methodology

The researcher conducted a multi-site case study of two public universities and used a mixed methods approach to gather and analyze data. To gather preliminary data on enrollment management at both institutions, a 33 question survey was administered. Next the researcher interviewed a broad spectrum of people affiliated with enrollment management on both campuses. Interview questions were designed to identify the level of implementation of enrollment management on both campuses. Follow-up questions were specific to the position of the individual being interviewed and were used to clarify answers and probe for further information.

Research Subjects

To assess enrollment management from consistent vantage points, individuals in similar positions were interviewed on both campuses. Thirty-one individuals participated in this study. The participants included 14 from Valley University (VU), with 9 administrators and 5 faculty; and 17 from Mountain University (MU), with 11 administrators and 6 faculty.

All of the individuals selected to interview had a connection to enrollment management in some fashion. Some of the individuals were senior administrators or directors of offices that had an impact on recruitment and retention. Other individuals were from academic affairs and were affiliated with enrollment management through a signature academic program or through noteworthy recruitment or retention programs.

The following individuals were interviewed:

- President;
- Provost;
- Chief enrollment management officer;
- Director of admissions;
- Assistant and associate director of admissions;
- Director of financial aid;
- Director of institutional research (only on one campus);
- Registrar (only on one campus);
- Director of retention (only on one campus);
- Chairs of academic departments; and,
- Faculty members.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited by the scope and nature of institutions represented in the sample and by the number of individuals who were interviewed. Ideally, a broader sample of public universities and a mix of private and public institutions would be included. Having more institutions in the study would likely expand and reinforce the findings of the study. Having private institutions in the study would broaden the perspective gained. Public and private institutions operate enrollment management in different ways and this study only examined it through the public university lens. Additionally, a broader array of interview subjects would have provided more robust data with which to evaluate enrollment management. Unfortunately, additional institutions and interview subjects would

have presented significant challenges to the researcher's time and to the data analysis process.

This study was also limited by the extent to which individuals were willing to reveal problems in the enrollment management operations at their institutions. In some cases, individuals were reluctant to discuss problems because their criticisms would target particular offices or individuals. Collecting accurate and reliable data was challenging in this respect.

Summary

At colleges and universities across the country, enrollment management will be in the spotlight in the next five years. Administrators will likely expect enrollment management to provide the answer to demographic and funding challenges. While there is ample evidence to support this confidence, there is also research that indicates enrollment management can become so mired in implementation problems, that core attributes are never realized. Through a diversity of perspectives, this study examined if enrollment management was successfully implemented at two public universities.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review provides an overview of enrollment management and evaluates successful and unsuccessful attempts to implement enrollment management. The theoretical framework for this study is conceptual and centers on the premise that enrollment management can be beneficial for colleges and universities, if it is implemented correctly. If implemented incorrectly, however, enrollment management will lack core attributes that are required for a comprehensive operation. As discussed in this chapter, having a comprehensive operation is critically important to the success of enrollment management.

This literature review begins with an overview of the history and definition of enrollment management. An explanation of enrollment management structures and models and an overview of the four core attributes of enrollment management will follow. Case studies are provided to support the pivotal nature of the core attributes in an enrollment management organization. Finally, common pitfalls that often derail implementation of the four core attributes are explained. This literature review defines enrollment management and establishes a framework to evaluate the implementation of enrollment management at two public universities.

History of Enrollment Management

Enrollment management originated in a similar environment as higher education is presently experiencing. In the late 1970s, the years of robust

college enrollments were coming to a close. A substantial drop in the number of high school students occurred in the early 1980s as the last remnants of the baby boom generation graduated from high school. From that point through the mid-1990s, the number of high school graduates dropped nationally by more than 700,000 students--over 20% (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1996). Exacerbating the problem of fewer high school graduates was stagnation and/or decline of traditional support from federal and state resources, which contributed to a fundamental shift in the funding structure of higher education (Bontrager, 2007; Kurtz & Scannell, 2006).

The emergence of enrollment management was a logical response by colleges and universities when the marketplace changed from seller to buyer and admissions directors changed from gatekeepers to salesmen (Kurtz & Scannell, 2006). In adopting enrollment management, colleges and universities implemented more comprehensive approaches to enrollment that moved beyond marketing and recruitment to sophisticated financial aid strategies, data analysis, and retention programs (Bontrager, 2004a, p.11).

Definition of Enrollment Management

According to Dolence (1990), enrollment management is a campus-wide effort that includes the coordination of related efforts to achieve an optimum recruitment, retention, and graduation of students. By establishing more control over the characteristics and size of the student body, enrollment management offers a better way to manage the enrollment process (Hossler & Bean, 1990; Huddleston & Rumbough, 1997).

Enrollment management is designed to influence how many and which students enroll. Shaped by strategic planning and supported by institutional research, enrollment management deals with how students choose a college, how they make the transition to higher education, what leads them to stay or drop out, and what influences how well they do while enrolled. It affects recruitment and financial aid, student-support services, as well as curriculum development and other academic areas, all of which affect who enrolls and how well they do. (Hossler, 2004, p. B3)

Bontrager (2004b) provides a comprehensive list of the benefits of enrollment management:

- Establishing clear goals for the number and types of students needed to fulfill the institutional mission;
- Promoting academic success by improving student access, transition, persistence, and graduation;
- Determining, achieving and maintaining optimum enrollment;
- Enabling the delivery of effective academic programs;
- Generating added net revenue for the institution;
- Enabling effective financial planning;
- Improving service levels to all stakeholders: prospective and current students, other institutional departments, other institutions and coordinating agencies;
- Creating a data-rich environment to inform decisions and evaluate strategies;

- Creating and continuously strengthening linkages with functions and activities across the campus; and,
- Increasing process and organization efficiency.

Enrollment Management Structures

Enrollment management organizations typically include (formally or informally) the following offices that directly influence recruitment and retention: admissions; financial aid; the registrar; and, retention. Reporting lines of the offices within the enrollment management structure, leadership of the enrollment management organization, and role of enrollment management in the operation of the college or university can vary greatly from one institution to the next. On some campuses, enrollment management is at the core of institutional decision-making, while at other campuses it has a limited scope of influence and remains nebulous to the campus community.

Institutions often assume that creating an enrollment management structure is all that is necessary to achieve the benefits. Unfortunately, this approach is too limited and it reduces enrollment management to a grouping of services rather than a platform for goals and strategies (Bontrager, 2004a). Enrollment management is a comprehensive effort and linking several offices in a division does not guarantee that an institution is actually practicing effective enrollment management.

As enrollment management originated with private colleges and universities, it is common for those institutions to have more elaborate enrollment structures than public institutions. When Smith (2000) examined the perceptions

of 261 enrollment managers at regionally accredited undergraduate institutions, he found that enrollment management appeared to be more developed at private institutions than at public institutions. As they typically have less bureaucracy, private institutions are able to adapt to an enrollment management infrastructure and culture more quickly than public institutions (Bontrager, 2004a).

Private institutions also have affirmed the critical nature of enrollment management within the administrative hierarchy. As they are almost exclusively dependent on tuition revenue, private institutions have elevated enrollment management to the highest level of institutional decision-making. In a national study of enrollment management practices at 226 four-year institutions, Huddleston and Rumbough (1997) found that most enrollment management organizations at public institutions reported to academic affairs (51%), while at private institutions, reporting lines more typically went directly to the president (60%).

Enrollment Management Models

Enrollment management is a strategic and integrated set of activities that can be offered in one of four organizational models: the enrollment management committee; the enrollment management coordinator; the enrollment management matrix; and, the enrollment management division (Huddleston & Rumbough, 1997). Each of the models has benefits and each provides an avenue for an institution to implement enrollment management practices and programs. An institution usually chooses the model that satisfies their immediate enrollment needs. The following section provides an overview of each model.

Enrollment Management Committee Model

The enrollment management committee brings together key constituent groups to focus on enrollment issues. According to Hossler and Kemerer (1986), an enrollment management committee must be broad-based with representation from academic departments, faculty leaders, and core administrative areas. Offices represented on the committee normally include: admissions; financial aid; the registrar; institutional research; academic affairs; and, retention. The inherent value of the enrollment management committee structure is that it is easy to assemble and put into action.

According to Huddleston and Rumbough (1997), establishing a committee is the first step toward creating an enrollment management organization. The value of an enrollment management committee is its ability to improve communication and understanding about enrollment issues across campus (Hossler & Kemerer, 1986).

The drawback of the committee model is that it has little influence over institutional policy making and limited ability to facilitate change. Another drawback is that membership on the committee is likely to change every couple years, and more time may be devoted to educating new members of the committee than to addressing enrollment issues (Hossler & Bean, 1990). Finally, enrollment management committees often offer a mixed bag of recommendations, to which the administration devotes limited support, and then the committee disbands (Hossler & Kemerer, 1986). For the above reasons, a

committee model is not generally considered a long-term solution to managing enrollments (Hossler & Bean, 1990).

Enrollment Management Coordinator Model

The coordinator model assigns one individual, generally a mid-level manager, with the responsibility of coordinating the activities of key departments that impact enrollment (Huddleston & Rumbough, 1997). A coordinator is usually appointed by the president or provost to manage campus activities involving enrollment management. The coordinator can generally garner adequate visibility within the organization to act as an effective facilitator of enrollment management (Hossler & Kemerer, 1986).

One strength of the coordinator model is the assignment of responsibilities for enrollment programs and activities to a single individual. In addition, this model generally does not require significant organizational restructuring and administrative support, compared to more centralized models (Hossler & Bean, 1990). The coordinator model is relatively inexpensive to implement as the person appointed to this role is usually an existing member of the faculty or administrative staff. Finally, the coordinator model offers a better structure than the committee model to focus responsibility on the job of enrollment management (Hossler & Kemerer, 1986).

There are several weaknesses with this model. A coordinator has no line of authority and therefore must rely solely on personality, support from senior administration, and respect from the campus community to get the job done

(Hossler & Kemerer, 1986). In addition, this model does not link enrollment issues with senior administration decision-making (Hossler & Bean, 1990).

Enrollment Management Matrix Model

The matrix model is more centralized than the committee or coordinator model and it entails charging a senior-level administrator with the job of leading enrollment management efforts. As reporting lines remain in place, the matrix model does not require considerable realignment of offices--just that they become part of the enrollment management matrix. The value of this model is that it elevates enrollment issues to the level of senior administrative concern (Hossler & Bean, 1990).

The disadvantage of this model is that the senior administrator in charge of the matrix may not have adequate time to concentrate on enrollment management (Hossler & Bean, 1990). Another disadvantage of the matrix model is that it is complex and there is a drag on the system when so many disparate units are involved in a common enterprise. Finally, despite the fact that a senior administrator is in charge of the matrix, middle managers and faculty members may be more likely to follow the directives of their own superiors (Hossler & Kemerer, 1986).

Enrollment Management Division Model

In the division model, key offices and functions related to enrollment management are aligned under the purview of one senior level administrator, who typically sits on the president's cabinet. The offices within the model

generally include admissions, financial aid, the registrar, orientation, retention, career services, advising, and any other related area (Henderson, 2005). As offices are grouped together in the division model, strategies are easier to implement, and the goal of keeping qualified students moving into and through the institution is easier to achieve (Hossler & Bean, 1990; Hossler & Kemerer, 1986).

The value of the enrollment management division is that it utilizes the authority of a senior level administrator to create a centralized organizational focus (Huddleston & Rumbough, 1997). According to Hossler and Bean (1990), the enrollment management division is the most centralized of the four models.

The division model represents the highest level of institutional commitment to enrollment management and, arguably, the best structure for maximizing the benefits of enrollment management. The individual in charge of the division model has the authority to garner resources and to coordinate efforts between offices (Hossler & Kemerer, 1986). At public universities, the division is usually led by an associate vice president or an associate provost, while at private institutions leadership of the division normally resides with a vice president of enrollment management (Henderson, 2005).

There are disadvantages of the enrollment management division model. Political realities may prevent the extensive reorganization that is necessary to implement the model (Hossler & Kemerer, 1986). Another disadvantage is that realigning offices can create angst for the campus community--staff turnover can increase and moral can be impacted (Hossler & Bean, 1990). In addition, there

is a significant cost to the institution to hire a senior administrator to lead the division. Finally, universities experiencing severe enrollment declines may not be able to fully implement an enrollment management division in time to avert a financial catastrophe.

Implementing the right model depends on the characteristics of the institution and the unique enrollment challenges it faces. Hossler and Bean (1990) assert the enrollment management model has to align with the needs, organizational climate, and administrative skills of each campus. According to Kurz (2003), there is not one “right” model.

Core Attributes of Enrollment Management

The leading enrollment management theorists have outlined attributes that are integral to the success of enrollment management. For this study, the researcher has grouped those attributes into four primary areas. The attributes are foundational because they provide the required infrastructure, qualities and features of a mature enrollment management operation. The four attributes are: enrollment planning, effective recruitment and retention practices, intra-department collaboration and communication; and, enrollment management as a comprehensive effort. The following section explains why each attribute is important to an enrollment management organization.

Enrollment Planning

Effective enrollment management begins with strategic and comprehensive planning (Dixon, 1995; Hossler & Kemerer, 1986). Enrollment

planning starts with campus-wide discussions about the optimum number of students. Identifying the optimum number entails an evaluation of current enrollment, goals for the future, and how both relate to the institution's mission. An effective enrollment management organization is able to achieve the objective of identifying the optimum number of students (Jonas & Popovics, 2000).

When establishing goals, institutions usually start by identifying aggregate numbers and evolve to detailed assessments of the ideal "mix" of students (Bontrager, 2007). The mix of students refers to a breakdown of enrollment goals by a variety of categories: academic ability; major; undergraduate/graduate; demographic segmentation; extracurricular interests; part-time vs. full-time; resident/non-resident; ethnicity; etc. (Bontrager, 2004a; Ward, 2005). Goals for the mix of students may differ if an institution is private or public. According to Dixon (1995), enrollment goals for public institutions may hinge on a better distribution of students by major, a higher enrollment of in-state students, and an improvement in retention and degree completion.

A good example of the critical role of planning in enrollment management comes from Dickinson College, a small liberal arts institution in Pennsylvania. In 1783 Dickinson was the first college chartered in the newly recognized United States of America and it was named to honor John Dickinson, the penman of the American Revolution and a signer of the Constitution. Dickinson has a 308 acre campus located in Carlisle, a town of 20,000 people located in the Cumberland Valley of central Pennsylvania. Dickinson offers a liberal arts curriculum leading to Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees. Average class size at

Dickinson is 17 students and student to faculty ratio is 10:1 (Dickinson College Website, 2009).

In the period 1980s-1990s, Dickinson was in trouble. Admissions applications, net tuition revenue, first-year retention, and four-year graduation were all in decline. A new administration attacked the problem with a “cradle to grave” approach, which incorporated the traditional areas of enrollment management but also included institutional research, athletics, student life, alumni affairs, and communications (Massa, 2004).

The first step in Dickinson’s strategy was to develop a strategic plan that identified the college’s mission, vision, and environmental challenges. The plan also established objectives for the enrollment management division. Using the plan as a framework, the enrollment management division initiated a variety of new programs and activities, including an integrated marketing campaign, new pricing and financial aid strategies, new academic and co-curricular programs, and a better utilization of data analysis in programs and activities (Massa, 2004).

The plan inspired a comprehensive approach to enrollment management and an integration of processes that helped to improve enrollment, net revenue, retention, graduation, and alumni participation. Four years after implementing the plan, applications for admission increased 35% (a record level), net revenue increased 50%, first year persistence improved by two percentage points and four-year graduation rates improved by three percentage points (Massa, 2004).

Data and Research

Developing an enrollment management plan that is grounded in reality requires data (Black, 2004a). Data provides a means for ensuring institutional policies and decisions are derived in an informed environment (Hossler & Kemerer, 1986). Data also clarifies and explains the institution's understanding of the external and internal environment and the link between the two (Dolence, 1990). Finally, data helps to shape the university culture and facilitate system change (Sauter, 2005).

An enrollment management operation uses research to assess the broad scope of the enrollment cycle. On the front end, it combines information on college choice and institutional fit, which facilitates a better understanding of student markets, competition, and the types of students who are most likely to enroll. As students progress through the institution, research identifies factors affecting attrition, which helps to direct retention efforts (Hossler & Kemerer, 1986).

To be successful, an enrollment management organization must be willing to take risks and experiment, but only with a sound, data-driven framework as the justification (Kurz, 2003). The "culture of evidence" is a cornerstone of an effective enrollment management organization; it underpins the direction of the operation and supports effective decision-making (Kurz & Scannell, 2006).

Financial Planning--Net Revenue

Enrollment management also involves financial planning. Sound financial planning hinges on a principle of increasing revenue and decreasing costs.

While headcount goals are important, the net revenue goal, particularly for private colleges, which are completely dependent on tuition, is more important. According to Ward (2005, p. 11), “net revenue = gross tuition – discount (the amount of institutional tuition or other funding sources used to support financial aid).” Institutions must understand the concept of net revenue in order to make sound decisions regarding investments in enrollment management (Bontrager, 2004b).

An effective enrollment management organization uses pricing and financial aid strategies to enhance net revenue. These techniques are no longer the exclusive domain of private institutions; public colleges and universities are adopting these approaches as well (Bontrager, 2004a).

Muskingum College provides an example of the pivotal role that pricing can play as part of an enrollment management strategy. Muskingum College is located in East-central Ohio and it has a proud heritage dating back to the first half of the 19th century. Muskingum is a small, private, residential institution affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (USA). Approximately 1,700 undergraduate students are enrolled at Muskingum. Undergraduate programs of study are offered in 44 different Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Arts degree programs (Muskingum College Website, 2009).

In 1995, Muskingum College implemented a 29% price reduction plan to stimulate enrollment growth. The plan had an immediate impact as Muskingum gained name recognition at a national level and enrollment goals were achieved in the first year of the program; applications for admission increased by 36% and

the freshmen goal of 335 was exceeded by 59 students. In the first year of the program, Muskingum's freshmen class increased by 110 students from the previous year. With the pricing plan, steady and continued growth in applications and enrolled students continued through 1999-2000 (Zellers, 2004).

Recruitment and Retention Practices

Enrollment management provides an avenue to improve recruitment and retention (Hossler, 2004). It is common for colleges and universities to initially adopt enrollment management to increase enrollment. In their study, Huddleston and Rumbough (1997) found that the main reason that the 226 four-year institutions implemented enrollment management was to increase enrollment. In a similar study, Lobasso (2006) evaluated enrollment management models at 28 institutions in the Florida Community College system and also found that increasing enrollment was the strongest reason for implementing enrollment management and it was also the strongest benefit realized.

Recruitment

Recruitment starts with market research and market segmentation. Market segmentation identifies the unique characteristics (geographic, demographic, etc.) of the target market, and recruiting activities are developed that specifically focus on this segment (Hossler & Bean, 1990).

After identifying a target market, an institution must build a base of prospects and craft communication to establish the institution's image with the prospects. At this point, marketing and communication strategies have to

become more personalized so that prospects transition from one stage in the admissions cycle to the next, with a final goal of enrolling (Bontrager, 2004b; Hossler & Bean, 1990).

To achieve this goal, recruitment strategies need to be deployed to move students through the admissions process. Those strategies usually include: direct mail; radio and television advertising; open house programs; off-campus receptions; e-communication; chats; blogs; telemarketing; high school visits; college fairs; and, alumni recruiting activities.

A university that implemented enrollment management to improve recruitment was DePaul. With over 24,300 student, DePaul University was founded in 1898 and is the nation's largest Catholic institution of higher education and ninth largest private, not-for-profit university. DePaul offers over 260 undergraduate and graduate programs of study at six campuses located throughout the Chicago area. In fall 2008, freshmen from all 50 states and territories were enrolled at DePaul, 67% of whom were Illinois residents (DePaul University Website, 2009).

Between 1979 and 1983, DePaul experienced a 30% decline in students. As a response, DePaul adopted an enrollment management model, which was one of the first in the United States (Kalsbeek & McGrath, 2004). The initial steps in this process at DePaul involved creating a single division that integrated financial aid strategies and recruitment and retention initiatives.

Other steps in DePaul's approach included an integration of enrollment management with a larger strategic plan to develop a "suburban strategy." In this

strategy, satellite campus locations expanded access to graduate and adult programs and new majors were developed. Additionally, DePaul's curriculum was enhanced, a more residential campus was built and out-of-town recruitment was strengthened. In the period after the advent of enrollment management, DePaul's enrollment increased from 12,300 in 1984 to 15,700 in 1990 (Kalsbeek & McGrath, 2004).

Retention

Retention is typically part of an enrollment management organization, and in some structures the individual in charge of retention is a member of the enrollment management staff (Hossler & Kemerer, 1986). By including retention in the enrollment management operation, an institution is better able to coordinate efforts to improve it (Hossler & Bean, 1990). Kurz and Scannell (2006) assert that enrollment management provides an avenue for an institution to formalize a retention program by identifying reasons for attrition, managing them effectively, and enrolling qualified transfer students as replacements. As recruitment costs have increased, and net revenue has become more important, colleges and universities have realized that retention has to be an institutional focus.

Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) is a public university with over 8,000 students, and it is located on a 760 acre campus in Fort Myers, Florida. FGCU offers 44 undergraduate and 22 graduate programs of study. FGCU became a new member of the Florida State University System in 1991 and adopted enrollment management to meet student expectations for service and to

implement recruitment and retention programs (Florida Gulf Coast University Website, 2009).

Enrollment management at FGCU started with the development of a plan and the launch of an integrated marketing campaign in 2001 (Lynch, 2004). The campaign at FGCU included more personalized communication with prospective students and the initiation of a campus visitation program. Additionally, staff in the admissions and financial aid offices engaged in cross-training to promote mutual understanding and effective communication. Other recruitment efforts included: telecounseling; e-recruiting; demographic analysis; alumni recruiting activities; and, parent to parent outreach (parents of current students communicating with parents of prospective students) (Lynch, 2004).

Another area of enrollment management at FGCU involved retention. The retention management council was established in spring 2001 and was charged with developing retention strategies. The implementation of enrollment management at FGCU was a success. In the 2002-2003 academic year, the full-time equivalency goal was exceeded by 9%, while headcount enrollment increased by 24% over the previous year (Lynch, 2004).

Inter-Campus Collaboration and Communication

According to Huddleston and Rumbough (1997), colleges and universities are often considered “loosely coupled,” which refers to the fact that functional areas operate independently and even at cross purposes in attempting to achieve their specific goals. Enrollment management organizes departments in such a way that coordination of staff, flow of information, and integration of

decisions are “coupled” (Kurz & Scannell, 2006). Huddleston and Rumbough (1997) found that the benefits of internal and external communication were realized for 226 four-year institutions with enrollment management operations in their study.

An effective enrollment management operation relies on strong working relationships with virtually every department on campus. It also relies on departments working together to act as a team (Dolence, 1990). When the efforts of personnel throughout campus are synched, activities and services are more efficiently coordinated and customer service is promoted.

The University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) is an urban research university and is one of four institutions in the University of Missouri System. UMKC enrolls over 14,000 students from 50 states and 62 countries; 62% are undergraduate students and 38% are graduate students. UMKC offers over 50 majors in 13 schools (University of Missouri-Kansas City Website, 2009).

UMKC implemented enrollment management to improve inter-department communication and collaboration. At UMKC, silos were preventing unified recruiting and retention programs. Rather than connecting with prospective students, the office of admissions was focused on internal processes. The public image of the university was not positive and the relationship of the university and the city needed improvement (Tyler & Hamilton, 2004).

A new chancellor to the University implemented a collaborative program called *Our Emerging Future* that tapped into the talents of faculty, staff, students, and alumni. The vision for *Our Emerging Future* hinged on a “quantum

transformation” in which the efforts of the UMKC community were aligned with the program (Tyler & Hamilton, 2004). A diverse team of 170 UMKC staff was charged with building collaborative relationships across campus and providing feedback to the chancellor.

In 2000 the chancellor charged a group of individuals on campus with developing an enrollment management plan that was to include marketing, recruitment, and retention. The enrollment management plan eventually became the work of the strategic enrollment management team, which included a diverse group of individuals representing all 12 academic units and all four administrative divisions.

At UMKC, implementing enrollment management improved inter-office collaboration and business processes. In the first two years after implementing the enrollment management plan, UMKC exceeded expectations with record enrollments, which were even higher than the original enrollment projections (Tyler & Hamilton, 2004).

Enrollment Management as a Comprehensive Effort

In an effective enrollment management organization, enrollment, retention, and graduation are a central concern of everyone at the institution (Huddleston & Rumbough, 1997). According to Henderson (2005), enrollment management is a shared responsibility and no one individual is exclusively charged with enrollment strategies or outcomes.

Enrollment management endeavors to shape and influence constituencies on campus that have an impact on a student’s decision to enroll,

persist, and graduate (Huddleston, 2000). For a comprehensive approach, a wide array of departments and functions must be included (Bontrager, 2004a). Dolence (1990) states broad participation by administration, faculty, and staff is critically important to the success of enrollment management.

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG) is a public, coeducational, doctoral-granting, residential university chartered in 1891. It is one of the three original institutions of the University of North Carolina System. UNCG enrolls approximately 17,157 students (31% male, 69% female) from 49 states and more than 70 countries. UNCG is located on 210 acres in Greensboro, North Carolina (UNCG Website, 2009).

Although the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG) had a long history with enrollment management, by the 1990s the university had not established the planning, integrated processes, structure, and resources required for a comprehensive approach to enrollment management (Black, 2004b). In 1996, an associate provost for enrollment management was hired and the university launched its first comprehensive enrollment management plan. As part of the plan, the enrollment services budget was increased by one million dollars. The additional dollars were earmarked for strengthening existing operations, new initiatives, staff positions, and infrastructure. Funding to support the plan had to be extracted from the academic affairs division.

The associate provost for enrollment management presented his plan to the academic deans and they eventually agreed to support it. One year after implementing the plan, enrollment growth had generated nine million dollars in

additional revenue to the university, a portion of which was devoted to funding 44 new faculty positions. With the new enrollment management plan, budget allocations were based on enrollment growth or decline, and faculty and department heads had a strong incentive to become involved with recruitment and retention efforts.

Fully implementing an enrollment management plan changed the culture of the university as faculty and staff became more knowledgeable and engaged in recruitment and retention. The result of this change was an increase in enrollment of 2,500 students over a seven year period. Additionally, the average SAT improved by 37 points and the mean high school grade point average increased from 3.1 to 3.5 (Black, 2004b).

As illustrated by the UNCG experience, an effective enrollment management organization must have a good working relationship with academics. According to Henderson (2005), where the enrollment management organization is placed on campus is not as important as how it connects with academics. Bontrager (2004a) asserts that although an enrollment management organization aligns initially with the institution's mission, it succeeds or fails based on the strength of its links to academics and student success.

Enrollment Management Implementation Problems

For over half of the institutions who try it, establishing an enrollment management program is less than successful, largely because of flawed planning, insufficient participation, a seemingly insignificant oversight, or basic design flaws. Institutions where it is successful have one thing in

common - enrollment management has modified the decision-making process. (Dolence, 1990, p. 1)

While the benefits of enrollment management have been asserted by the leading theorists in the field, implementing a comprehensive enrollment management operation, to achieve those benefits, is not always successful. Many institutions fail in their attempt and do not achieve the core attributes of a mature enrollment management organization. Successful implementation of enrollment management requires a significant amount of planning, work, and organizational change. Many institutions are not able to complete the process.

Dolence (1990) studied enrollment management at 6 public and 16 private institutions between 1983 and 1989 using 13 criteria: leadership; comprehensiveness; timing; systems; resources; strategies; key performance indicators; definitions/classifications; participation; assessments; evaluation; and, documentation.

In his study, Dolence (1990) found that many of the institutions had not implemented enrollment management effectively. Fewer than half of the institutions met enough of the criteria to qualify as having a comprehensive approach to enrollment management. A comprehensive approach included an integration of related functions to achieve the optimum recruitment, retention, and graduation of students.

Hossler and Bean (1990) assert it is common for institutions to use the term enrollment management, when in fact their efforts are only focused on marketing and recruitment. Dolence (1990) states that what colleges and

universities call enrollment management is often just a marketing program that has been revised. Evolving from marketing and recruitment efforts to a comprehensive enrollment management operation is a challenging process, and for many institutions it never happens (Huddleston & Rumbough, 1997).

Bontrager (2004a) affirms the need for a comprehensive approach, in which “enrollment management is not a quick fix for achieving higher enrollments, solely an organizational structure, an enhanced admission and marketing operation or an administrative function, which operates separately from the academic mission of the institution” (p. 12).

Other findings from Dolence’s (1990) study included:

- Over half of the institutions had no formal written charge or they had a charge that was vague and confusing.
- Seven of the 22 institutions did not implement a major portion of the enrollment management plans that they had developed.
- Fourteen of the institutions reported that they had ineffective support systems (i.e. services that provided accurate and secure data and tools to help complete tasks).
- Virtually every institution in the study reported a lack of resources.
- Twelve of the institutions lacked adequate integration of management objectives at the budgetary level.
- Only two of the institutions had any written documentation of the processes and decisions related to enrollment management.

- Despite significant investments by 13 of the institutions, only 1 was able to significantly change retention in a positive way.

Huddleston and Rumbough (1997) discovered similar failures with retention in their study of enrollment management practices at 226 four-year institutions. For the institutions included in the survey, retention outcomes had not met expectations.

In a study of the enrollment management practices at the 11 institutions of higher education in the North Dakota University System, Parnell (2004) found that elements of enrollment management were being implemented with success. However, in other key areas--goal setting, planning, and out-of-state recruitment--the universities in the system were ill-prepared to meet the challenges of declining high school graduates in North Dakota. A lack of effective planning is a common problem with enrollment management organizations. According to Bontrager (2004a), all too often colleges and universities misguidedly allocate funds to address enrollment problems, but neglect to ensure that sufficient planning or accountability are in place to achieve the desired outcomes.

In a study of enrollment planning at four California Community Colleges, Simmons (2007) discovered a lack of college-wide commitment to the enrollment management process. She also discovered a lack of cohesive enrollment planning, which resulted in duplication of services. The colleges in Simmons' study also demonstrated an inadequate understanding of the importance of retention in enrollment management. Finally, some of the key elements of

enrollment management were not being integrated into the operation, institutional research being the most notable.

Dolence (1990, p. 12) generated a list of common pitfalls that had derailed attempts to implement a comprehensive approach to enrollment management for the 22 institutions in his study:

- The first pitfall was basic design flaws, most common of which was the tendency to move directly to action with no support or consensus.
- The second pitfall was the tendency to allow preconceived ideas to dictate the outcomes of the enrollment management process (e.g. writing or re-writing every publication on campus as a solution to an enrollment problem).
- The third pitfall was reliance on the quick fix. Typically, quick fixes were single strategy programs that were extremely attractive but did not have capacity for solving systemic problems (e.g. developing a new major, hiring an enrollment expert).
- The fourth pitfall was inadequate coordination. All too often, responsibilities for enrollment management were not assigned to one individual.
- The fifth pitfall was inadequate decision-making processes. The culture of decision making on many campuses all too often rewarded the status quo.
- The sixth pitfall was an overemphasis on budgets. In many cases, funds were allocated without an evaluation of whether there was justification for the funding.

- The seventh pitfall was an inadequate participation in enrollment management. To be successful, strategies and programs needed to include participation from the entire campus community.
- The eighth pitfall was an inadequate relationship between enrollment management and academics. Academics has to be linked to enrollment management for the system to work effectively.

There are other limitations of enrollment management. From their research, Hossler and Bean (1990, p. 63) identified limitations of enrollment management activities. According to Hossler and Bean, less-selective institutions are limited in the academic qualifications and geographic locations of the prospective students they can target. Therefore, less-selective institutions will not be as likely as more selective institutions to enroll highly qualified high school students. At such institutions, the probability of meeting faculty demands for better-qualified students will be low.

Additionally, less-selective institutions will not likely experience a high degree of success attracting students who are able to pay all or part of their college expenses (students from high socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to enroll at more-selective colleges and universities). Finally, less-selective institutions who desire to maintain their enrollments by recruiting out-of-state students will not likely experience a high degree of success.

According to Hossler and Bean (1990), in certain areas, enrollment management activities will also have limited success for more-selective

institutions. Most notably, these institutions will have limited success if they are targeting a more socioeconomically and racially diverse student body.

Summary

Declining demographics and state funding and rising operational costs are likely to present confounding and imminent challenges for public universities in the next five years. In the face of these challenges, maintaining stable enrollments will be critically important. Enrollment management may or may not be the solution to achieving this objective. As illustrated in this chapter, “enrollment management can either be a shot in the dark, a last-ditch effort at increasing numbers and revenue, or it can be a part of a conscious, university-wide strategic decision to change a culture of passive acceptance into one of passionate ownership” (Tyler & Hamilton, 2004, p. 61).

Institutions that embrace a comprehensive approach to enrollment management will likely be positioned to deal with external and internal challenges. To create an effective enrollment management organization, however, requires implementation of core attributes: enrollment planning; inter-department collaboration and communication; effective recruitment and retention practices; and, a comprehensive effort in managing enrollments.

While implementing core attributes is not an easy task, the benefits of enrollment management are only maximized when they are in place. Separating effective enrollment management organizations from those that are ineffective may hinge on the implementation of core attributes. Determining if enrollment

management helps an institution achieve the optimum enrollment of students
relates directly to the implementation of the core attributes.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Chapter III provides an overview of the methodology that was used in this study. First the research problem and research questions are defined. Next a justification for the use of a qualitative, multi-site case study is established. The research design, selection criteria and survey design are explained next. Finally, the validity and reliability of the survey instrument and the data analysis procedures are reviewed.

Statement of Problem

Enrollment management offers a structural and organizational approach to achieving an optimum number of students. Implementation failures, however, often inhibit the development of a comprehensive enrollment management organization. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the implementation of enrollment management at two public universities.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study are:

- How successful is enrollment planning at the universities?
- What are the most effective recruitment and retention practices at the universities?
- Does enrollment management promote effective inter-department collaboration and communication at the universities?
- What department(s) are most successful? Why?

- Who is most responsible for promoting enrollment management on each campus?

Choice of Method

Although a mixed methods study was conducted by the researcher, the methodology primary hinged on a qualitative data gathering process. A 33 question survey was used to collect preliminary information from participants at each university. On-campus interviews were then conducted to more deeply investigate the level of implementation of enrollment management on both campuses.

The researcher relied more heavily on a qualitative methodology for several reasons. First, enrollment management is a complex enterprise, incorporating multiple offices, processes, and procedures. Through a comprehensive study of two universities, a qualitative methodology offered an ideal format for effectively evaluating the complexity of enrollment management. According to Cresswell (1998) qualitative studies provide a “complex, holistic picture through a narrative that takes the reader into the multiple dimension of a problem or issue and displays it in all its complexity” (p. 14).

Second, a qualitative methodology provided an in-depth look at the intricate mechanics of enrollment management. Interviews with a diversity of representatives at two institutions helped the researcher develop a thorough understanding of the variables that influenced the success or failure of enrollment management. According to Patton (1987), qualitative research methods provide “a wealth of detailed data about a small number of cases through direct quotation

and careful description of program situations, events, people, interactions, and observed behaviors” (p. 9).

Research Design

The researcher conducted a multi-site case study to examine enrollment management at public universities. According to Cresswell (1998), a case study is an “exploration of a bounded system or a case (or multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context” (p. 61). Merriam (1988) asserts that case studies provide an important function in advancing the research base of a particular field. Through case studies, educational processes, and programs can be evaluated to improve practices.

Enrollment management by definition should be a campus-wide endeavor and this study evaluated how institutional infrastructure and procedures affected the recruitment and retention of students. The case study format therefore provided an effective means for identifying problems and successful practices in the enrollment management operations at two institutions.

Selection Criteria

Through purposeful sampling, the researcher selected two information-rich cases to include in the study. Information-rich cases provide an ideal opportunity to gain invaluable insight into the issues relevant to the study (Patton, 1987). To ensure the anonymity of the research subjects, the universities are referred to as Mountain University (MU) and Valley University (VU) throughout the study.

The institutions were selected because they shared many characteristics and because they both had enrollment management models. The institutions both had undergraduate enrollments between 5,500 and 8,000 students and were both accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (College Board, 2009).

The institutions also had many of the same majors that were deemed to be signature academic programs. MU was well known for quality programs in education, business/marketing, health professions, and parks and recreation; VU was well known for majors in education, business, health professions, and communication (CollegeBoard, 2009).

The institutions were also selected because they were located in similar demographic settings. MU was in a rural town with approximately 3,287 residents; VU was in a rural town with approximately 5,271 residents (United States Census Bureau, 2009). By selecting institutions from the same region of the Northeast, the researcher was able to evaluate enrollment management at two universities with similar recruitment challenges.

Finally, the institutions were selected because they both had an established history with enrollment management. Both universities had implemented an enrollment management division model. Within the enrollment management division, offices that directly impact enrollment (admissions, financial aid, retention) report to a senior administrator. This model represents the highest level of institutional commitment to enrollment management.

By selecting two institutions with similar characteristics, demographic profiles, and enrollment management operations, the researcher was able to isolate the focus of the study on the strengths and weaknesses of enrollment management at each institution. The purposeful selection of two comparable institutions helped to ensure the validity of the findings of the study.

Seventeen participants from MU and 14 participants from VU completed a preliminary survey and participated in on-campus interviews. All of the interviews but one were conducted on campus. One interview was conducted by phone. In addition, three follow-up interviews were conducted by phone.

The individuals selected to participate in the study represented senior administration, enrollment management, student affairs, and faculty. The following individuals were interviewed:

- President;
- Provost;
- Chief enrollment management officer;
- Director of admissions;
- Assistant and associate director of admissions;
- Director of financial aid;
- Director of institutional research (only on one campus);
- Registrar (only on one campus);
- Director of retention (only on one campus);
- Chairs of academic departments; and,
- Faculty members.

To identify participants to interview, the researcher requested advice from the dean of enrollment management at VU and the associate provost for enrollment management at MU. Merriam (1988) recommends asking a key person with institutional knowledge for references. Both individuals had been at their respective institutions for five or more years.

Survey Design

To collect background information, the researcher first administered a Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Health Assessment Survey. The survey was used to gather preliminary information about the difference in perception regarding enrollment management between the two universities.

The SEM Health Assessment Survey was developed by Dr. Jim Black. Dr. Black has an extensive background in enrollment management, including serving as the associate provost of enrollment services at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Dr. Black has produced extensive publications and garnered national recognition on the subject of enrollment management. Presently, Dr. Black is the President and CEO of SEM Works, a higher education consulting firm that specializes in enrollment management.

Dr. Black developed the SEM Health Assessment Survey in 2000 as an informal evaluation tool to use in consulting colleges and universities. Dr. Black administers the Health Assessment Survey to key stakeholders (administrators, cabinet, faculty) as part of the procedures for evaluating an enrollment management operation. Typically, Dr. Black has administered the survey prior to a formal consulting visit in order to determine what enrollment related issues

need to be explored in greater detail during interviews with key stakeholders on campus. Dr. Black has administered the survey to approximately 50 colleges and universities throughout the United States and Canada (J. Black, personal communication, July 30, 2009).

The survey was administered to participants in the study prior to the visit by the researcher. The second means of collecting data was through on-campus interviews. The researcher used a semi-structured interview format in which specific questions were asked of almost all individuals. The common questions were generated from an interviewing guide, which is an outline of a set of issues the researcher wished to explore (Patton, 1980).

In addition to questions in the interview guide, the researcher exercised latitude to probe topics in greater detail and to explore areas that were unique to the individual being interviewed. According to Merriam (1988), this approach ensures the researcher is able to adapt to the situation at hand and address new ideas on the issue being researched.

The following section provides an overview of the questions in the interview guide and the associated research question.

Research question: How successful is enrollment planning at the universities?

- Are you familiar with the enrollment management plan?
- Describe your level of input to the plan.
- Do you know the university's enrollment goals?
- Are the goals realistic considering resources--human and financial?

- Is the university's enrollment optimal?
- How do you use enrollment data in your job?

Research question: What are the most effective recruitment and retention practices at the universities?

- What are the most effective recruiting programs and activities at this university?
- What are the most effective retention programs and activities at this university?
- What could the university do to better recruit and retain students?

Research question: Does enrollment management promote effective inter-department collaboration and communication at the universities?

- Rate the quality of communication and collaboration between administrative areas? Why this rating?
- Rate the quality of communication and collaboration between administrative areas and faculty? Why this rating?

Research question: What departments are most successful? Why?

- Are their offices on campus that are more dedicated to enrollment management than their peers?
- Are their individuals on campus who are more dedicated to enrollment management than their peers?

Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability of the SEM Health Assessment Survey was tested extensively prior to this study. In his doctoral dissertation, Dr. Jim Black

beta-tested the Health Assessment Survey as part of the process of analyzing and evaluating the enrollment management operation at one institution.

Specially, Dr. Black used a case study format to evaluate an Enrollment Management Framework, instrumentation (including the Health Assessment Survey), and procedures designed for assessing enrollment management operations (Black, 2003).

Dr. Black defined an Enrollment Management Framework as including five core areas: recruitment; marketing; financial aid; student retention; and, student services (Black, 2003). In the first step for developing an Enrollment Management Framework, Dr. Black identified antecedents that are common to successful enrollment operations. Antecedents are conditions that precede the attainment of an enrollment objective and are thought to influence or cause the objective to be met (Vogt as cited in Black, 2003). In the Enrollment Management Framework, antecedents are the prerequisites that determine the degree to which each of the five areas of the Enrollment Management Framework can be realized. Antecedents include financial resources, staffing, training, technology, and specific activities that support strategies that are linked to enrollment objectives. For an enrollment management organization to evolve to a higher order level of development antecedents must be present and related strategies must be executed (Black, 2003).

Throughout his study, Dr. Black took great care to ensure the construct validity of the Health Assessment Survey and the Enrollment Management Framework. First, antecedents and the Enrollment Management Framework

were developed through an extensive review of literature. Pattern matching was used extensively in the identification process. Next, selected antecedents were converted to questions in the Health Assessment Survey. To further affirm construct validity, items in the Health Assessment Survey were evaluated by experienced enrollment management professionals (Black, 2003).

Twenty-seven full-time and part-time associate consultants from Noel-Levitz, Inc., a higher education consulting firm, reviewed the antecedents and noted any that lacked clarity or were considered to be irrelevant to achieving enrollment objectives. From consultant feedback, questions in the Health Assessment Survey were eliminated if they lacked clarity or did not measure operation matters that related to the concept of meeting enrollment management objectives (Black, 2003). According to Black (2003), inter-rater reliability for the Enrollment Management Framework instrument is interpreted as substantial using the Landis and Koch scale.

In the next phase of Dr. Black's study, four of the Noel Levitz consultants who reviewed the antecedents and Health Assessment Survey, conducted an audit of the Enrollment Services Division at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro using the Health Assessment Survey and the Enrollment Management Framework as a lens. The consultants were assessed in their use of the survey and their interview questions by independent evaluators. The overall evaluation of the enrollment management operation included the SEM Health Assessment Survey and the qualitative data-gather process conducted by the four consultants.

According to Black (2003), “the evaluation instrument used in this [dissertation] study may allow colleges and universities to conduct a self-assessment of their enrollment management efforts. No such tool currently exists” (p. 22). Dr. Black recommends further testing of the instrument to enhance its use as a means of evaluating enrollment management operations.

In addition to the work Dr. Black completed to test the validity and reliability of the instrument, the researcher conducted a pilot study and analyzed the findings to further test the reliability of the instrument. After quantifying answers from six participants in the pilot study, the researcher entered the data into a correlation formula. The researcher computed the sum for odd and even scores for all 33 questions in the survey. Using Excel, the researcher next computed a Pearson R score for the two sets of scores. The Pearson R computed to .848, indicating that the two sets of scores had a high correlation with each other. This computation supported the reliability of the instrument.

Content validity refers to whether the appropriate content is in the instrument (Cox, 1996). To ensure the content validity of the questions in the survey and the interview guide, two pilot studies were conducted by the researcher. First, the researcher interviewed the following individuals at a public university: director of student financial services; registrar; academic dean; chair of the health science department; chair of health and physical education department; and, a professor of psychology. Additionally, the researcher interviewed the following individuals at a private college: vice president of

admissions and financial aid and assistant vice president for planning and assessment.

In the first pilot study, the researcher asked the individuals if the interview questions were clear and if they would generate data to answer the research questions. Any questions that were interpreted in a manner different from that which was intended by the researcher, were revised or removed.

From the pilot study, the researcher also received feedback on the interview process and the methodology was adapted to improve data collection. First, it was suggested there were too many questions in the interview guide and a more limited group of core questions for each of the attributes of enrollment management was appropriate.

Second, it was suggested that enrollment management needed to be defined before the interview process. The researcher provided all participants with a one page overview of enrollment management prior to the interview process.

Third, it was suggested that the interview questions needed to be open ended. The researcher adapted interview questions to accommodate this request. Fourth, it was suggested that it might be possible to use a Likert scale to collect data on some interview questions. To accommodate this recommendation, interview questions regard communication and collaboration referenced the same Likert scale that was used in the survey.

In the second pilot study, six individuals completed the SEM Health Assessment Survey. After collecting the surveys, the researcher interviewed

each participant in order to gather information on the survey instrument. The six participants worked at a public institution in the following positions: director of student financial services; registrar; dean of students; academic dean; and, two faculty members. The researcher asked the participants about the clarity and appropriateness of the questions. From the pilot study, the researcher adapted the survey instrument by providing a definition of each subject area to better define the nature of each section. The researcher also adapted specific questions in order to clarify the intended goal of the question.

Triangulation offered a second means of ensuring the validity of the research methods. Merriman (1988) states that “triangulation combines dissimilar methods such as interviews, observations, and physical evidence to study the same unit” (p. 69). The researcher first gathered information from the SEM Health Assessment Survey. Next, the researcher conducted interviews in order to examine enrollment management issues on each campus. In triangulating these two sources, the researcher was able to evaluate how data collected through quantitative and qualitative methods supported the same findings. Multiple sources of data provided a comprehensive assessment of enrollment management practices at both institutions. By combining various methods of data collection, the researcher ensured that flaws in one method were improved with others, and that a wide range of evidence verified the interpretations and conclusions.

According to Cox (1996), an important challenge of the researcher is to design an instrument that will elicit consistent responses over time. To ensure

reliability, Yin (2003) recommends “making as many steps as operational as possible and to conduct research as if someone were always looking over your shoulder” (p. 38). The researcher developed clear guidelines for conducting interviews, collecting documents, and analyzing data. The guidelines established a framework for ensuring that consistency in the research process was maintained.

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), the skills of the researcher are critically important for ensuring the validity and reliability of the instrument. An effective qualitative instrument requires a researcher who has familiarity with the issue and setting being studied, strong conceptual interests, and good interview skills. The researcher in this study has worked in college admissions for 19 years. In addition, the researcher’s position requires highly developed interview skills, both for hiring purposes and for work with students, parents, and constituents on campus.

Data Analysis Procedures

The researcher used careful procedures to analyze the data that was collected through quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. First, to analyze data from the SEM survey, an independent sample t-test was used to determine the statistical significance of a comparison of the two university’s mean values for each question. An analysis of t-test results provided a context to examine the difference in perceptions of participants regarding enrollment management at each university.

Next, the researcher used several data analysis procedures to evaluate information collected through the qualitative research methodology. Using procedures recommended by Cresswell (1998) for multi-site case study analysis, the researcher evaluated information collected through a within-case analysis (an evaluation of the enrollment management attributes at each institution), followed by a cross-case analysis (a comparative analysis of enrollment management across both campuses). The researcher evaluated data by looking for patterns in answers within each institution and between each institution.

Cresswell (1998) also suggests developing a table to show relationships between categories. Merriam (1988) recommends using an “unordered meta-matrix” (p. 155)--a large chart organized by variables of interest to the research that contains bits of narrative such as key phrases, quotes, or other illustrations of the category.

To organize and analyze data, the researcher developed a table that was sorted by university and by research questions. In the table, the answers offered by one participant were compared to the answers provided by other participants at his/her institution and the participants from the other university. General themes and important issues emerged from the analysis of this chart.

Summary

The methodology for this study provided an ideal means for conducting a detailed analysis of enrollment management. By carefully selecting and interviewing individuals who provided valuable insight into the implementation of core enrollment management attributes, and comprehensively analyzing the

operations at both institutions, the researcher was able to confidently answer the research questions. The methodology for this study ensured that an effective evaluation of enrollment management was conducted at two public universities.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Chapter IV presents data collected in this study through quantitative and qualitative research. The chapter is organized into six sections that provide data to help answer the five research questions. The sections are: enrollment planning; recruitment; retention; highly successful departments; communication and collaboration; and, responsibility for enrollment management. Five of the six sections in this chapter include quantitative and qualitative data; one section, highly successful departments, includes only qualitative data.

Thirty-one individuals participated in this study. The participants included 14 from Valley University (VU), with 9 administrators and 5 faculty; and 17 from Mountain University (MU), with 11 administrators and 6 faculty.

In this study, the title “administrator” included any individual who was not a faculty member. A range of administrative levels were represented at both universities, including: president; provost; associate provost; dean; director; and, assistant director. Administrators represented a variety of different areas of campus: senior administration; enrollment management; admissions; financial aid; registrar; retention; orientation; residence life; and, institutional research.

In this study, the title “faculty” included any individual who was a member of the faculty at either university. Three of the faculty members at VU and four of the faculty members at MU were department chairs. Faculty members included representatives from five different academic disciplines at VU and six different disciplines at MU.

Presented first in five of the six sections, are data from the SEM (strategic enrollment management) Health Assessment Survey. Data from the SEM survey was assigned to one of the six sections based on the nature of the survey questions. All 31 participants were emailed the survey prior to the interviews. Twenty-seven participants completed the survey and provided it to the researcher during on-campus interviews; four participants completed the survey and emailed it to the researcher. Participants were instructed to assess the enrollment management activities at their university using the following Likert scale:

1= poor or nonexistent;

2= functional but needs significant improvement;

3 = average in relation to national practices in SEM (strategic enrollment management);

4 = above average and meets current institutional needs;

5 = a national model or best practice in the profession; and,

n/a = not applicable.

SEM survey results are presented in 33 tables throughout Chapter IV.

The SEM survey question is listed as the title of each table. Four tables in the section on communication and collaboration provide data from questions asked in person during the on-campus interviews. These questions also used the Likert scale previously mentioned.

An independent sample t-test was used to determine the statistical significance of a comparison of the two university mean values for each question.

An analysis of t-test results provided a context to examine the difference in perception of enrollment management implementation at each university.

Thirty-one participants completed an interview. Thirty participants conducted the interview on-campus; one participant (from MU) completed the interview by phone. Two follow-up interviews were conducted with MU participants; one follow-up interview was conducted with a VU participant. An examination of the interview data allowed for a deeper exploration of why there were differences in mean values between the universities. With this approach, the researcher identified themes that emerged from the interviews and used quotes to provide an individual perspective related to each theme. The goal of the researcher was to use survey data to identify if one of the universities appeared to be more successful in implementing enrollment management, and to then use interview data to determine why this was the case and to answer each of the research questions.

Statement of Problem

Enrollment management offers a structural and organizational approach to achieving an optimum number of students. Implementation failures, however, often inhibit the development of a comprehensive enrollment management organization. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the implementation of enrollment management at two public universities.

Research Questions

- How successful is enrollment planning at the universities?
- What are the most effective recruitment and retention practices at the universities?
- Does enrollment management promote effective inter-department collaboration and communication at the universities?
- What department(s) are most successful? Why?
- Who is most responsible for promoting successful enrollment management on each campus?

Enrollment Planning

Effective enrollment management begins with comprehensive and strategic enrollment planning. According to Hossler and Bean (1990), enrollment planning impacts a college or university through resources (tuition revenue) and the quantity, quality and character of the student body. Enrollment planning also impacts academics and the mission of the institution. Universities that are successful with enrollment planning are able to enroll a student body that is optimal for the institution.

This section provides an overview of enrollment planning at VU and MU. Included in this section is information on: the enrollment planning process at each institution; the success of each institution in achieving an optimal enrollment; the student profile; and, the extent of evidence-based decision making at each university. The first part of this section presents nine tables with findings from the SEM Health Assessment survey related to enrollment planning.

As shown in Table 1, there is a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward a core set of goals that were designed to move the institution toward the realization of a SEM vision. A mean value of 3.69 for VU and 4.52 for MU indicated that MU participants rated this area of enrollment management higher than VU participants. MU participants had a very positive assessment of their institution's enrollment goals, while VU participants had a somewhat neutral assessment of their institution's enrollment goals.

Table 1

A Core Set of Goals that are Designed to Move the Institution Toward the Realization of a Strategic Enrollment Management Vision

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	13	3.69	-4.5	28	.000
Mountain	17	4.52			

As shown in Table 2, there is a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward a written implementation plan for all facets of the SEM enterprise. A mean value of 3.30 for VU indicates that the written implementation plan for SEM was perceived as average, whereas MU's mean value of 4.62 represents a very positive overall assessment of the implementation plan.

Table 2

*A Written Implementation Plan for all Facets of the Strategic Enrollment**Management Enterprise*

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	13	3.30	-4.8	27	.000
Mountain	16	4.62			

As shown in Table 3, there is a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward accountability measures and sufficient quality control to ensure successful implementation of SEM. A mean value of 3.21 for VU indicates participants rated their accountability measures and quality control as just average, while a mean value of 4.47 for MU indicates participants rated this area of enrollment management as well above average.

Table 3

*Accountability Measures and Sufficient Quality Control to Ensure Successful**Implementation of Strategic Enrollment Management*

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	3.21	-6.4	29	.000
Mountain	17	4.47			

As shown in Table 4, there is a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward effectiveness measures or key performance indicators that are used to gauge the success of SEM initiatives. A mean value of 3.33 for VU indicates participants rated this area as being average, while a mean value of 4.70 for MU indicates participants had a very positive opinion of their university's effectiveness measures or key performance indicators.

Table 4

Effectiveness Measures or Key Performance Indicators that are Used to Gauge the Success of Strategic Enrollment Management Initiatives

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	12	3.33	-7.6	27	.000
Mountain	17	4.70			

As shown in Table 5, there is a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward a systematic method of continuously improving SEM activities. A mean value of 3.42 for VU indicates participants had a somewhat neutral opinion of the continuous improvement activities related to SEM, while a mean value of 4.62 for MU indicates participants believed continuous improvement activities were more effective on their campus.

Table 5

*A Systematic Method of Continuously Improving Strategic Enrollment**Management Activities*

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	3.42	-5.2	28	.000
Mountain	16	4.62			

As shown in Table 6, the two universities do not differ statistically in their opinion of a student information (computer) system that supports enrollment management efforts. A mean value of 3.35 for VU and 3.87 for MU indicates both VU and MU participants rated this area of enrollment management as average to a little above average.

Table 6

*A Student Information (Computer) System that Provides Quality Service to**Students, Timely Information to Those Who are Serving Students, a Streamlined**Workflow for Users, and Strategic Information to Decision-Makers*

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	3.35	-1.6	28	.113
Mountain	16	3.87			

As shown in Table 7, there is a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward decisions to add, revamp, or eliminate academic programs being driven by market demand along with other factors such as cost and existing faculty expertise. A mean value of 3.15 for VU indicates participants rated this area of enrollment management as average, while a 4.00 for MU indicates a more positive assessment by participants, who believed this area was above average.

Table 7

Decisions to Add, Revamp, or Eliminate Academic Programs are Driven by Market Demand Along with Other Factors Such as Costs and Existing Faculty Expertise

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	13	3.15	-2.6	28	.014
Mountain	17	4.00			

As shown in Table 8, there is a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward the capacity of the institution as well as the ability of the institution to meet student demand for courses. A mean value of 2.71 for VU indicates participants assessed this area as needing significant improvement, while a 3.52 for MU indicates participants felt their institution was a little higher than average in this area.

Table 8

The Institution has the Capacity as well as the Ability to Meet Student Demand for Courses

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	2.71	-2.6	29	.013
Mountain	17	3.52			

As shown in Table 9, there is a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward courses being offered at times and places that are convenient to students. A mean value of 3.14 for VU indicates participants rated this area as average, while a 3.76 for MU indicates participants rated this area as a little higher than average.

Table 9

Courses are Offered at Times and Places that are Convenient to Students

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	3.14	-2.4	29	.022
Mountain	17	3.76			

It appears that MU participants perceive goals, a written implementation plan, accountability measures, effectiveness measures, a method of continuous

improvement, student information system, and decisions to add, revamp, or eliminate academic programs as being above average. MU participants also perceive the institution's capacity to meet student demand for courses and the convenience of course offerings as higher than average.

It appears that VU participants perceive goals, a written implementation plan, accountability measures, effectiveness measures, a method of continuous improvement, student information system, decisions to add, revamp or eliminate academic programs, and the convenience of course offerings as average to higher than average. VU participants also perceive the institution's capacity to meet student demand for courses as needing significant improvement.

Enrollment Planning--Valley University

Enrollment planning at VU originates with the enrollment management division and is integrated into the strategic planning process. Since 2006, the enrollment management plan has been a primary component of the university's strategic plan. The president has five priorities that are "non-debatable" in the strategic plan. Enrollment management is number three on that list.

Every year, the enrollment management plan is updated, with input coming from two primary areas. First, administrators within the enrollment management division update five year goals that relate to their area of the plan (admissions, financial aid, academic enrichment, etc.). Updates include each unit's progress toward goals that are in the plan and any revisions to goals that are no longer appropriate. The updated enrollment management plan is then provided to the president, who incorporates selected sections into the strategic

plan. On a yearly basis, the president provides an update to the campus community on enrollment goals that are within the strategic plan.

The second area of input to the enrollment management plan comes from committees related to enrollment. These committees include: the retention committee; the enrollment management coordinating committee; and, the Transitions Committee.

Eight administrators out of nine were familiar with the enrollment management plan and had some level of input into the plan. One administrator commented, “we all wrote goals that related to aspects of the enrollment management plan.” While another stated, “each one of us has a mission statement, our goals and objectives. The plan is updated in conjunction to strategic planning.” One administrator provided a perspective on his role in the development of the plan, “I update and edit the enrollment management plan every year. We have targets every year and we receive updates on where we are from the dean of enrollment management. It’s also modified with changes that are needed.”

Three faculty members out of five were familiar with the enrollment management plan at VU. While only three faculty members were familiar with the plan, all five faculty members had some level of input to the plan through a committee or through their specific college-based enrollment management plan. One faculty member commented, “I’m familiar with the enrollment management plan through the retention committee.” Another had a similar experience and

added that although she was not familiar with the plan, “she did have input to the plan through the retention committee.”

Although faculty and administrators provided input to the plan, they appeared to have a vague understanding of the content, scope, and purpose of the plan. All five faculty members interviewed, in particular, were uncertain of any substantial details in the plan. Many administrators were also unclear about specific topics within the plan. Five year goals for offices within the enrollment management division provided general direction to that administrative area, but four of the six administrators who worked outside of the enrollment management division had very little knowledge of details in the enrollment management plan. Faculty 3 alluded to this problem when describing her familiarity with the enrollment management plan.

I don't know if there is a written document, like a 5 year master plan. A written document kind of thing. I've never actually seen that. What I'm learning about administration is they like to make these big documents that nobody reads.

At VU, final decision-making on enrollment goals and the profile of new students occurs at a senior administrative level, and is very budget-driven. Primarily, goal setting occurs after the dean of enrollment management provides reports on enrollment trends and issues to the senior administration. The president and the vice president for finance, ultimately, establish the enrollment goals.

As VU is located in an area of the state with a declining population of students, enrollment planning for the past four years has included a goal for modest growth (1% to 1.5% per year) in the traditional population of students. The percentage increase is not an absolute maximum however, and exceeding 1% to 1.5% growth is encouraged by the senior administration. In fall 2009, the enrollment goal was achieved.

In anticipating a decline in traditional students, the senior administration at VU has planned for enrollment growth primarily in non-traditional and graduate students. According to a VU administrator, graduate enrollments at VU have increased by 40% in five years. In addition, VU has the highest population (22%-23%) of non-traditional students in the state university system. Many non-traditional students are taking courses on-line and at off-site locations. With 1 branch campus and 12 other satellite locations, VU is able to offer courses and programs to students who otherwise would not likely be able to enroll at the main campus. Administrator 2 described VU's unique enrollment base.

Valley University has the biggest footprint of any state system universities; we have a geographically dispersed market. Only 4500 of our enrollment of 7800 are students on this campus. It's been that way for 15 years. All of our growth has been elsewhere--a branch campus with 1000 students and sites in other cities and towns in the state.

Achieving Optimal Enrollment--Valley University

Perceptions were varied as to whether VU's enrollment was optimal. Four out of seven administrators asserted VU's enrollment was optimal, including Administrator 2.

One of the advantages of doing things off campus is that you don't have the fixed costs that you do on campus (buildings, computers, technicians, librarians). All those services are available, but they are delivered in a different way. Off-campus based resources are solid.

Three VU administrators, however, felt the university's enrollment was unmanageable. One administrator stated, "we have more students than we have resources." Another administrator agreed and commented on how growth was impacting residence life and academics.

We have more students than we can probably handle, living is tight as we have temporary housing and we're having trouble providing classes. Also classes are bigger. There is a point at which you are big enough; I thought we were big enough at 5,000, now we're at 5,600.

Four of the five faculty members also indicated VU's enrollment was too large. One faculty member said, "we can't handle the students. The ratio between faculty and students is not good, considering the type of student we are admitting." Another faculty member stated, "enrollment is not ideal, because it's about getting bodies."

New Student Profile--Valley University

One faculty and three administrators commented that the profile of new students was appropriate considering the access mission of the university. Faculty 2 commented, "I'm not concerned with our mix. By virtue of our mission, we understand that we are going to get some students who we have to bring as far forward as we can, so they might need remediation." Several individuals commented that the diversity of the student body needed to improve; however the rural location of the university was identified as a challenge to this goal. Administrator 6 stated, "because of location we can't recruit enough for diversity. When we get them here, we can't keep them. Students who come from larger cities struggle."

Three faculty and two administrators expressed concern the profile of students was not appropriate because VU was enrolling too many students with academic deficiencies. One faculty member explained why this was perceived as a problem:

We get a lot of bodies. Their needs are not being addressed. If that is the kind of student you are going to enroll, you have to take care of their needs. Otherwise, you take their money for a semester and then they are gone, and that's unethical.

Faculty 3 was concerned that 50% of the students in her major did not persist into their sophomore year. This faculty member's frustration about the profile of students in her program was very high.

I know they are publishing statistics that the SAT is not changing and that our quality is the same, but I feel that for the freshmen that I teach, the quality is going down. We get a lot of first generation college students who don't realize what they are getting into and what is expected. They don't know how to be college students. The level of output is very different from what they have experienced before. The statistics that I have heard is that almost 30% of our students are in these special categories. I worry because many of these students end up in large lecture halls as freshmen.

Faculty 5 agreed with this statement and offered a perspective she felt was shared by most faculty:

The feeling that faculty get is that enrollment management is basically just get them in. No tie to quality. This is a perception that many faculty share. I think VU accepts anybody and everybody.

Evidence-Based Enrollment Planning--Valley University

Enrollment reports at VU are generated by the enrollment management division. A weekly enrollment report is provided to all directors in the enrollment management division. Other constituencies on campus (deans, faculty chairs, senior administration, and directors) receive the enrollment report on a monthly basis. The report compares the number of applications for admission, offers of acceptance, paid deposits, and students by major to the previous year. The dean of enrollment management also verbally communicates enrollment statistics to the president's executive council and the dean's council.

In addition to weekly reports, every three years, the dean of enrollment management provides an overview of enrollment statistics to the faculty senate, president's executive council, and dean's council. The enrollment management division also generates additional reports on retention of students in special admissions categories. These reports attempt to identify factors that influence persistence. Geographic information system (GIS) reports, which identify yield of VU students by region of the state, are also used by the enrollment management division.

There appears to be varying use of enrollment reports by VU faculty and administrators. Of the 12 individuals who were asked a question about enrollment data, two faculty members and five administrators indicated they were familiar with the enrollment reports and use enrollment data in their job. Faculty members mainly use enrollment data to plan for sections and courses. Administrators use enrollment data to plan and coordinate activities in their specific area. Three faculty and two administrators indicated they did not read enrollment reports or use enrollment data in their jobs.

To evaluate the extent to which enrollment goals were shared across the institution, participants were asked if they knew the goals for new students. For fall 2009, those goals were 1,400 freshmen and 300 transfers. Only two administrators were able to identify the enrollment goals, one with the exact number of freshmen and transfers, and the other with an exact percentage increase in new student enrollment that was targeted. Three of the seven administrators who answered this question did not know the enrollment goals,

while two provided numbers that were not accurate. Four faculty members did not know the goals, and one member provided numbers that were not accurate. Overall, there appeared to be limited awareness of new student goals by VU participants.

Enrollment Planning--Mountain University

Enrollment planning at MU also originates with the enrollment management division. Of the 17 people interviewed, 15 were familiar with the enrollment management plan. Only two individuals, both faculty members, indicated they were not familiar with the plan.

At MU, the enrollment management plan has been foundational to the university's strategic direction for the past 10 years. In 2000, while serving as provost, the current president of MU was charged with developing the university's first enrollment management plan. Over 100 individuals participated in the process and the collective effort yielded 114 ideas that were included in the original plan.

A trend of diverse participation in the development of the enrollment management plan still exists today as 10 of 11 administrators indicated they had input to the plan. In particular, individuals within the enrollment management division are required to update their section of the plan annually.

While only one faculty member provided input to the plan, all felt comfortable with the enrollment planning process and the administration's ability to establish enrollment goals. Faculty 6 stated, "if we wanted to help establish enrollment goals, we could." Although Faculty 1 indicated she would like to have

input to the plan, she expressed confidence in the associate provost for enrollment management: “she is topnotch; she knows where we need to be. She is leading us in the right direction.”

At MU, establishing new student goals primarily resides with the president and provost, but the associate provost for enrollment management has a very influential voice in the process. She described her role this way:

If the administration said we want to increase our enrollment by 10% I would sit down with the provost and president and say, why? Let’s talk about the impact of that on courses, class size, quality and what we would have to do to serve our students well in that environment.

In this decision-making process, the individual on campus who is most responsible for achieving enrollment objectives has a valued opinion in what goals are established and how the goals will impact university resources.

In the early periods of the first enrollment management plan, the fundamental goal was to increase enrollment. Growth was integral to the plan because the university had experienced nine years of enrollment decline. After 2000, and the implementation of an enrollment management model at MU, a period of significant growth occurred. Once enrollment stability was achieved, the enrollment planning process changed direction. The current five year enrollment management plan targets a modest growth every year of approximately 1.5% to 2%. The current plan calls for incremental growth in transfer students and a stable goal for freshmen enrollment, with a focus on improving quality.

MU's approach to enrollment planning is not conventional in the state university system. According to Administrator 4, in 2009 the state system experienced a 4% enrollment increase, while MU increased by only 1.2%. Administrator 10 stated:

We made a decision not to grow. There were only two universities in the state system that did not grow in 2009. We decided to focus on retention--we started at 69% (freshmen to sophomore) when enrollment management was first introduced and it's over 80% now.

The administration's plan to maintain stable enrollment, despite the potential to increase at the state system average, reflects long-term strategic planning to prepare for an imminent decline in high school graduates in the state. In a period of challenging demographics, the senior administration at MU believes that it is better to control growth and preserve university resources at a static level.

Achieving Optimal Enrollment--Mountain University

When asked if the university's enrollment was optimal, four faculty members answered "yes," while two were not sure. Seven of the eight administrators, who answered the question, believed enrollment was appropriate, while only one did not.

Faculty 2 commented, "yes, some faculty will not agree. There are still plenty of seats even up to the day before classes begin." Faculty 4 said, "yes, with 8,000 students, with size and facilities, our only increases come through

graduate and on-line programs.” Faculty 1 stated, “we’re comfortable with the number of students that we are given.”

Faculty 6 agreed and offered the following:

Yes, we could probably even handle more. There are departments with high numbers, but departments with low numbers. Our biggest problem on campus is the size of our classrooms, which are physically too small to handle more. The university built classrooms that only accommodate 45 or 50 students.

Faculty 5 provided a candid assessment of the university’s current enrollment.

The period of low enrollment (1990s) at MU spoiled faculty. Small classes, teach what you want. We had a great time. This is tough if you were here in those days. But MU was headed for disaster. Selfishly, it’s hard to deal with the current state, class sizes have increased by four-five students. It’s a lot easier to grade papers in smaller classes. It makes a difference if the class is smaller.

Faculty 1 was unsure if enrollment was optimal because she was concerned about some class sizes.

I feel badly for some of the students that some of the classes are larger. I think that it is harder for student to learn in larger class setting. When I first started here, we maybe had a couple classes that were larger than 100, and the past few years we have increased the number of these classes.

Administrators were generally positive in their assessment of the university's enrollment. Administrator 3 stated, "MU only has managed growth, we don't have resources to handle more."

Administrator 4 believed that MU was effectively using resources to manage the enrollment of students:

For three-four years, our faculty productivity was the second highest in the state system. Our credit hours generated indicate that we are at capacity with human resources, facilities and residence halls. There is a temptation to line students up in the aisles. Soon as you do that, you start your own death spiral. Student go home and tell their friends, this place stinks, don't go there. We don't want to create a message that hurts the institution. We can grow a little, but not haphazard or randomly--planned controlled and gradual growth. The problem with growth is that every student added has other needs besides faculty. Have to consider this in planning for growth as well. Resources are not there to sustain a 5% growth--that would be bad--would strain resources, drop in quality and hurt satisfaction.

Administrator 10 explained MU's current philosophy relative to enrollment: We're playing a high risk game; the reality is we should have growth of one-tenth of 1% of the state average--anything less will cause us to lose money in the allocation from the state. Here's why we take the risk--when we were predicted to die back in 1999 because the state system saw the demographic studies and saw that high school graduates would drop in

the state, our calculated analysis was that you couldn't increase your enrollment above where you needed and then fall back to a certain level. That strategy ignores the psychology of students when you are falling. They ask, "why are students leaving that institution?" You don't want to be in a death spiral. We dealt with nine years of declining enrollment. Our new strategy is to create demand and then adjust the value to make it tougher to get in.

Administrator 9 provided a perspective on why it was important for the university to maintain a measured and controlled approach to enrollment.

People look at us and say, but state system university X and Y grew? We say, "good for them." They opened their doors. What does it cost to do that? Students leave and close the door on higher education.

Administrator 6 agreed and provided further perspective on why MU's approach was effective.

We get the right number of students to fill the seats that are open in the classrooms and be able to advise them appropriately and have the quality to come in the way we want it.

For Administrator 8, MU's enrollment was appropriate, with one caveat. According to this administrator, 63% of transfer students are admitted with freshmen or sophomore standing and they need housing and first-year courses that are not available.

Only one administrator asserted that MU's enrollment was not optimal.

The perspective of that individual follows:

If we are to be a premier residential living and learning community, I don't know how we can do this when we have 165 students in classes that many freshmen take. Students from bread and butter high schools with graduating classes of 69 are put in classes with 160 people and we tell them--you are going to get individual attention. It's impossible for that to occur. We used to have as required for graduation two intensive writing courses--we're doing away writing intensive classes. Faculty can't grade all the papers. The borough of our town is not big enough to handle 8,000 plus students. Nothing is provided for transfers. The message we send is that we're this small, caring campus community--how can you care with 160 students in a classroom. The message is something that we can't deliver.

New Student Profile--Mountain University

Five faculty members and five administrators believed that MU's student profile was ideal. Three individuals commented that quality had improved. For example, one faculty member said, "quality is increasing; more students are using MU as a first choice." Another remarked, "from what I understand, it appears that the SAT has been going up. GPA has been going up. We have a higher caliber student." An administrator added that "faculty here are universally

more excited about the students we are bringing in--42% of our students come from the top 25% of their class.”

Some of the individuals, who answered “yes” to this question, also cited specific areas of concern relative to the enrollment profile. Two faculty and two administrators commented that MU needs to improve the diversity of the student body. The university’s rural location was noted as a major challenge to this objective. Faculty 5 provided a perspective on this problem.

We are recruiting and retaining a more diverse student body but we still need to improve Hispanic enrollments, they won’t come over the mountain. It’s important to have a diverse campus but I understand that there will be challenges for students to feel good when they are here.

Two participants felt MU was not doing enough to accommodate transfer students. One faculty member commented, “I don’t think we are giving nearly enough attention to transfer students. Half of my new students are transfers. That is a change for this department.” One individual offered an opinion that MU’s persistence and graduation rates for minority students needs to improve.

Evidence-Based Enrollment Planning--Mountain University

Evidence-based decision-making is a cornerstone of MU’s enrollment management operation. A data-driven culture at MU resulted from a commitment by the administration to provide the necessary resources to ensure reports are readily available to key decision-makers and the campus community at large. In recent years, an upgrade in the quality of reports has occurred with the adoption

of SAS, which is a software package that provides sophisticated enrollment reporting. Through SAS, extensive reports are available with data such as the number of applications, the number of acceptances and the number of enrolled students. Additional reports provide data on students by profile (race, quality, demographics, gender, etc.) enrollment by major, persistence by major, and faculty productivity.

To leverage the power of the reporting capabilities of SAS, MU created a portal on the university's website that provides dashboard reports to the campus-community. All chairs, deans, senior administrators, and other member of the executive council have access to the reports on the dashboard. The office of admission has one individual who works exclusively with enrollment reports and trains faculty and staff on how to extract and use dashboard reports. A culture of using dashboard reports has evolved at MU and consequently enrollment decisions occur in a data-rich environment. Administrator 10 stated, "if it moves, we measure it."

An example of the culture of evidence-based decision making at MU is the academic affairs executive committee. Serving on this committee are the associate provost for enrollment management, associate provost for technology, director of institutional research, and academic deans. According to Administrator 4, this group includes "the people who collect the data, interpret the data, and the deans, who have to create the programs, map data, and make plans. Almost all decision we make are numerically focused."

Fifteen individuals indicated they use enrollment reports in some fashion. All six faculty members use enrollment data to plan for future courses and section offerings.

Faculty 6 provided an example of how data helps him manage his department:

This year I paid a lot of attention to the freshmen offers and deposits. We found out early that our numbers were bigger than expected. When we were done with spring registration, we realized that we were going to run into trouble--therefore we opened up additional sections.

Faculty 3 evaluated admissions data on quality measures (SAT and class rank) because the number of students in his departments had declined and the administration asked him to provide feedback on the types of students they should target.

Many individuals commented they use admissions data to monitor the university's progress toward new student goals and to help in their area of responsibility. One faculty member used enrollment data to plan for future sections and courses to offer. Enrollment data was important for this faculty member, who was a department chair, because, "students don't always follow a normal sequence and planned courses don't always fill. Students don't always follow their degree audit in lockstep." Another faculty member used enrollment data to plan for first year seminar sections. Enrollment data was critical for this

individual as the number of majors dictated the necessary staffing of freshmen seminar courses.

Administrator 10 stated, “we had a 15 day stretch when our dashboard showed that we were losing students--we were able to adjust the valves.” Another administrator described how data was used to evaluate applications for admissions and to make strategic decisions about recruitment.

Any of the admissions staff can tell if we are up or down. So right now we have a bunch of incomplete applications to call--just a friendly reminder from MU. The enrollment portal has helped us evaluate applications, quality, etc. It’s also helped with planning admissions counselor travel. We are not blanketing the state and doing 85 high school visits per admissions counselor like we did back in the day. We’re doing strategic travel. So if a guidance counselor calls and ask why we don’t visit their school, we can explain in terms of data.

When asked if they knew enrollment goals for new freshmen and transfers, five faculty members answered “yes,” although some were not able to provide definitive numbers. Two faculty members commented they knew there was a goal for 1% to 1.5% growth in the new student class. Faculty 6 commented, “heck yes--we hear it all the time. Anytime we have meetings that involve the associate provost for enrollment management or the provost, we talk about numbers.”

Nine of the administrators knew the goals for new student enrollment. Five of the nine commented that there was a goal to increase overall enrollment by 1% to 1.5%. One individual answered that the goal was to increase the overall enrollment by 2%. Six individuals were able to identify the freshmen goal as being around 1,550-1,570 students. Four individuals were able to identify the transfer goal and one offered a goal that was not accurate.

Recruitment

Recruitment activities are integral to enrollment management. This section examines the most effective recruitment activities at Valley University and Mountain University. Provided first are 10 tables with SEM Health Assessment Survey findings related to recruitment.

As shown in Table 10, there is not a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward a consistent and distinctive marketing message and look. A mean value of 3.85 for VU and 3.58 for MU indicates participants from both institutions rated the marketing message as slightly higher than average.

Table 10

There is a Consistent and Distinctive Marketing Message and Look

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	3.85	1.00	29	.322
Mountain	17	3.58			

As shown in Table 11, there is not a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward frequent and systematic communication of marketing messages to prospective students. A mean value of 3.84 for VU and 3.88 for MU indicates participants from both institutions perceive the frequency of marketing messages as being almost above average.

Table 11

There is Frequent and Systematic Communication of Marketing Messages to Prospective Students

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	13	3.84	-.15	28	.879
Mountain	17	3.88			

As shown in Table 12, there is a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward the university's search for potential prospects. A mean value of 3.41 for VU indicates participants believe their institution is slightly higher than average in the use of historical data to identify prospects most likely to enroll, while a mean value of 4.47 for MU indicates participants are more positive about their university's efforts in this area.

Table 12

The Search for Potential Prospects is Based on Historical Data, Identifying Those Who are Most Likely to Enroll

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	12	3.41	-4.3	27	.000
Mountain	17	3.47			

As shown in Table 13, there is not a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward information to prospective students shifting from general to specific as their interest level increases. A mean value of 4.00 for VU and 4.17 for MU indicates both institutions were positive in their assessment of information to prospective students shifting from general to specific.

Table 13

Information to Prospective Students Shifts from General to Specific as Their Interest Level Increases

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	12	4.00	-.639	27	.528
Mountain	17	4.17			

As shown in Table 14, there is a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward the university's success in establishing contacts with prospective students at the right time, through and effective medium, from the most influential person. A mean value of 3.46 for VU indicates participants perceived this area as adequate while a 4.17 for MU indicates participants had a more positive perception.

Table 14

Contacts with Prospective Students Consist of a Targeted Message, Communicated at the Right Time in the College Decision-Making Process, through Effective Medium, from the Most Influential Person

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	13	3.46	-3.3	28	.003
Mountain	17	4.17			

As shown in Table 15, there is not a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward the institution's effectiveness in establishing relationships between prospective students and others at the university. A mean value of 3.92 for VU and 3.94 for MU indicates participants from both institutions perceived this area positively.

Table 15

Relationships are Built Between Prospective Students and Others at the University

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	3.92	.051	29	.960
Mountain	17	3.94			

As shown in Table 16, there is not a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward the institution's effectiveness in establishing contacts to bond students to the institution. A mean value of 3.78 for VU and 4.18 for MU indicates participants from both institutions perceived this area positively.

Table 16

Contacts, Like Those in the Recruitment Process, are Designed to Bond the Student to the Institute

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	3.78	-2.0	28	.060
Mountain	16	4.18			

As shown in Table 17, there is a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions regarding the training of university's professional and volunteer recruiters to communicate marketing messages, answer questions and respond to objections. A mean value of 3.90 for VU and 4.31 for MU indicates that while participants from both institutions rated this area positively, MU rated it above average, while VU rated it slightly lower than above average.

Table 17

Professional and Volunteer Recruiters are Trained to Communicate Institutional Marketing Messages, Answer Frequently Asked Questions, and Respond to Objections

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	10	3.90	-2.4	24	.024
Mountain	16	4.31			

As shown in Table 18, there is not a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward the quality of the campus visit experience. A mean value of 3.85 for VU and 4.25 for MU indicates participants from both institutions rated the campus visit experience positively.

Table 18

The Campus Visit Experience is Choreographed to Ensure Quality

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	3.85	-1.4	28	.176
Mountain	16	4.25			

As shown in Table 19, there is a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward the effectiveness of the campus tour route in conveying the best image of the university. A mean value of 3.72 for VU and 4.33 for MU indicates both institutions rated this area positively but MU participants rated it above average.

Table 19

The Campus Tour Route Conveys the Best Possible Image of the Institution

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	11	3.72	-2.2	25	.036
Mountain	17	4.33			

At a statistically significant level, MU participants were more positive than VU participants in their assessment of the university's efforts to search for prospects, establish contacts with prospective students, train admissions recruiters, and establish an effective university's tour route. On 9 out of 10

questions related to recruitment, MU participants expressed a more positive opinion than VU participants; however the mean values for both indicated a generally positive opinion.

Recruitment--Valley University

Recruitment at VU hinges on effective visitation programs, broad-based support from faculty and administrators, and a reputation throughout the state for providing a quality education.

Two faculty members and five administrators identified on-campus visitation programs as being very important to recruiting a new class of students. According to Administrator 2, "87% of the students who visit campus will eventually enroll at VU." In addition to hosting families at normal weekday visits, VU conducts several other effective visitation programs.

Open house programs are offered to all prospective students in the fall and spring, and attendance at each program generally includes about 700 to 800 students. The president's reception, which targets high achieving accepted students, typically attracts about 70 students. In the spring, major-specific visitation programs are offered to accepted students who have not paid their enrollment deposit. Typically about 15 different majors are represented on these days. The initiative and interest of faculty appears to be the determining factor in whether a major is included in the program.

Conducting quality on-campus recruitment programs at VU requires the support of the administration, faculty, and staff. The VU president actively participates in on-campus programs and he has a positive influence on visitors.

Administrator 6 commented, “the president is heavily involved with recruiting. If he is here, he always goes to the open house program and speaks at it. He was doing it even as dean, he is passionate.” Other staff members at VU were equally supportive. Administrator 8 stated, “the people in admission and in general are most effective in recruiting students here. The people who work here, like to be here and have a good philosophy about VU.”

VU faculty members also appear to be heavily involved with visitation programs. In some cases, departments have been represented by more than one faculty member at open house programs. According to Administrator 4, “the faculty are really interested in reaching out to students to show them how good their programs are.” Faculty 2 stated, “enrollment management permeates what we do. Should it be my responsibility to recruit students? My answer would be ‘yes.’”

The final attribute that is instrumental in recruiting students to VU is reputation. According to Administrator 4, “the message we get out there is about how strong our academic programs are, how good our placement and internships are. What faculty have done to build 28 nationally recognized programs.”

Recruitment--Mountain University

Many individuals mentioned the interaction of faculty and staff with prospective students as being foundational to recruitment efforts at MU. While the university’s website was noted for being effective in establishing an initial contact with prospective students, the human interactions that occurred after that point were more essential in determining if students enrolled at MU. Positive

interactions at MU start with the admissions office. Six individuals mentioned the ability of the admissions staff to establish good rapport with prospective students. Faculty 1 observed, “the personalities of the staff are very appealing to students.”

To recruit the best students, the admission counseling staff communicates a message that MU is a quality institution with a good reputation. Administrator 2 stated, “admissions communicates the message--‘we are a higher quality institution than we were ten years ago.’” According to faculty 5, “reputation is key, students plan to come to MU and if they can’t get in, they go to another state university with a plan of transferring here.”

Administrator 1 commented on the importance of the university’s reputation with guidance counselors.

Frankly, what serves us best is word of mouth. People going back to high schools and saying good things about MU. Certain perceptions of guidance counselors about MU are changing.

Students are telling guidance counselors that they didn’t get into MU and guidance counselors are saying “what?” This is not the same MU that it was 20-25 years ago.

In addition to the admission staff, it was mentioned that alumni and current MU students are also important in affirming MU’s reputation with prospective students. Faculty 6 provided a perspective on the role of MU’s alumni in recruitment.

Your alumni speak volumes. You send an alumnus out there and they may be an atypical one--if they are bad--that employer will

think they are all like that. If they're good, they will be happy that they are good. It takes one bad one to hurt your reputation but it takes many good ones to establish a good reputation.

Administrator 4 noted that it is highly effective when "students at MU talk to family and friends--going home--talking to local high schools. That is powerful recruitment--it creates an image for the institution, a public image."

To connect MU faculty, administrators, and staff to students, the admissions office conducts several different on-campus visitation programs. Daily visits are offered to all prospective students and include a meeting with an admissions counselor and a tour of campus. Minority students have an opportunity to participate in an overnight visitation program, at which they stay in the residence halls. According to Administrator 11, about "80 to 90 minority students visit campus on a Thursday night and they stay overnight. All are admitted or have paid their deposit. The students that visit are genuinely interested."

The campus visitation mentioned most often by participants, however, was the open house program. MU offers three open house programs in the fall and two in the spring. These programs provide prospective students with a showcase of all of the various facets of the university. Broad participation and support by faculty, staff and administration is a cornerstone of these programs. Five faculty and eight administrators cited open house programs as being the most effective recruitment activity. Faculty 3 attended an open house program as a parent and he was impressed.

You know it's interesting; I have two daughters and my oldest went to my alma-mater so she didn't do many visits. My second did the whole tour and visited probably six or seven colleges. And I have to say that I went away impressed with what we do here. Open house programs are very well done--from the president doing the greeting, faculty are very involved. Every department has a representative or two. We have students who volunteer to come in here in their natural habitat. From a parent and faculty perspective, they do that very well.

Faculty 4 stated, "the open house programs are highly effective recruiting tools--faculty members visit with students in small groups." Administrator 2 noted, "Saturday open house programs are very well done. Very effective. [they build] relationships that bond the student to the institution, one-on-one relationships. They connect a faculty member to the students." According to administrator 4, the "strongest variable after establishing image is a connection with faculty. At the open house programs students and parents come and all departments are there. Student can talk to faculty from every department."

Retention

Another foundational aspect of an enrollment management operation is retention. According to Hossler and Bean (1990), retaining students has become a critical job for enrollment managers. This section provides an overview of the most effective retention programs and activities at VU and MU. The first part of

this section presents nine tables with findings from the SEM Health Assessment survey related to retention.

As shown in Table 20, there is not a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward the orientation process. A mean value of 4.00 for VU and 4.47 for MU indicates participants from both universities have positive perceptions about the orientation process.

Table 20

The Orientation Process Prepares Students for the Transition into College and Helps Them to Make Friends

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	4.00	-1.6	29	.111
Mountain	17	4.47			

As shown in Table 21, there is not a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions regarding university efforts to integrate students socially and academically. A mean value of 3.85 for VU and 4.35 for MU indicates participants from both institutions have positive perceptions about this area but the perceptions of MU participants are more positive.

Table 21

Proactive Efforts are Made to Integrate Students Socially and Academically

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	3.85	-1.6	29	.111
Mountain	17	4.35			

As shown in Table 22, there is a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions regarding the availability of early intervention support services. A mean value of 3.78 for VU and 4.52 for MU indicates MU participants were more positive about this area than VU participants. MU participants believed early intervention support services at their institution were well above average.

Table 22

Early Intervention Support Services are Available to Assist Students Experiencing Academic or Social Difficulties

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	3.78	-2.9	29	.007
Mountain	17	4.52			

As shown in Table 23, there is not a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions regarding university efforts to provide accurate advising and meaningful mentoring. A mean value of 3.38 for VU and 3.64 for MU indicates that advising may be an area for improvement on both campuses.

Table 23

The University Provides Accurate Advising Along with Meaningful Mentoring

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	13	3.38	-.82	28	.417
Mountain	17	3.64			

As shown in Table 24, there is not a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward university policies and procedures being student-centered. A mean value of 3.42 for VU and 3.88 for MU indicates participants from both institutions rated this area somewhat neutral, but MU participants rated it slightly higher.

Table 24

University Policies and Procedures are Student-Centered

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	3.42	-1.6	29	.113
Mountain	17	3.88			

As shown in Table 25, there is a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward the institution's service standards. A mean value of 3.28 for VU and 3.94 for MU indicates MU participants rated service standards on their campus higher than VU participants.

Table 25

The Institution has Service Standards that Permeate the Culture

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	3.28	-2.0	29	.054
Mountain	17	3.94			

As shown in Table 26, there is not a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward exceptional student service being recognized and rewarded. A mean value of 3.23 for VU and 3.70 for MU indicates participants from both institutions rated student service somewhat neutral, but MU participants rated it slightly higher.

Table 26

Exceptional Student Service is Recognized and Rewarded

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	13	3.23	-1.4	28	.173
Mountain	17	3.70			

As shown in Table 27, there is not a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward employees being required to treat all students with dignity and respect. A mean value of 3.71 for VU and 3.76 for MU indicates participants from both institutions rated this area as slightly higher than average.

Table 27

Employees are Required to Treat all Students with Dignity and Respect

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	3.71	-.14	29	.888
Mountain	17	3.76			

As shown in Table 28, there is not a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward employees considering students to be the purpose of their work. A mean value of 3.71 for VU and 3.88 for MU indicates participants from both institutions rated this area of enrollment management slightly higher than average.

Table 28

Employees Consider Students to be the Purpose of Their Work

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	3.71	-.66	29	.517
Mountain	17	3.88			

At a statistically significant level, MU participants had a more positive assessment of early intervention support services and service standards than VU participants. On all nine questions related to retention, MU participants had a more positive assessment of retention practices on their campus compared to VU participants. However on seven questions, scores between the two institutions were similar.

Retention--Valley University

According to one administrator, over the past five years, first to second year retention at VU has been around 73%. Considering the rural nature of the institution and the large number of first-generation, low-income students, that figure reflects a concerted effort by the administration, faculty, and staff to promote the success of first-year students. At VU, a caring campus community helps students succeed. Administrator 1 offered a mantra that reflects the university's approach to student success: "take students where they are and help them achieve what they expect."

Transitions

All of the faculty members and six of the nine administrators claimed that the Transitions Program was VU's most effective retention effort. As the Transitions Program was discussed extensively by participants, a broad perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of the program was acquired by the researcher.

According to Administrator 2, "we stopped talking about retention, what we do is not retention, it is called Transitions--managing transitions--cradle to grave connection." The philosophy of the Transitions Program is to provide appropriate courses and support services for four years that will fully integrate students into VU and to help them "transition" through the institution.

Transitions starts with a new-student orientation program. New freshmen can attend orientation as early as the spring semester but orientation sessions are offered throughout June and one is available in August. Administrator 2 indicated the orientation is primarily focused on the most important administrative functions (advising, scheduling, etc.) necessary to prepare students for their first semester. After the orientation program is Discovery Weekend, a student affairs and faculty-led program that occurs just before the start of the fall semester. This day and half program helps students make the shift from home to college by establishing relationships with faculty and staff.

After Discovery Weekend, students move into the Explorations Program, which includes a half credit course in the fall semester and half credit course in the spring semester. Although freshmen are not required to take these courses,

Administrator 7 stated that approximately 980 freshmen were enrolled in the first Explorations Course in the fall 2009 semester. The first course of the program includes seven different sessions, presented by student peer leaders, faculty, and student affairs staff. Faculty members generally lead at least three of the sessions and also oversee assessment. Topics covered in some of the sessions include: registration mechanics, how to talk to your professor, and diversity.

A unique feature of the Transitions Program is that student facilitators lead sessions in the residence halls, the library, and other locations. Some participants, however, stated this aspect of the program was problematic. According to Administrator 7, because the sessions are not consistently taught by faculty, there is a perception that the courses are not legitimate.

After the first year, students move on to the Focus Program. This part of Transitions includes a one credit course that focuses on civic engagement. According to Administrator 7, because Transitions is not mandatory, only 13 students were enrolled in the second year course in the fall 2009 semester. The junior and senior years of the Transitions Program are currently under development, but they will deal with mentoring, leadership development, career exploration/graduate, and professional school preparation.

While the theory guiding Transitions is good, the program is currently in a state of flux. The Transitions Committee would like to do something different to put “more teeth into the program” but inadequate resources and questionable administrative support have inhibited change.

According to Faculty 1, the idea for the Transitions Program came out of the retention committee. The original leadership of the program resided with an assistant provost and a senior administrator in student affairs. With positions of authority and respect, these two individuals were able to garner faculty and administrative support for the program and buy-in from the campus community. Unfortunately, when they left the university the Transitions Program lost direction. The director of academic services and the interim director of campus life currently provide leadership for the program as co-chairs of the Transitions Committee.

The Transitions Program appears to have inherent value but several participants expressed an opinion that it needs to be re-worked. One faculty member offered the following assessment:

The Transitions Program is good in theory but I don't think students get it or they just don't buy into it. Students are like, this is kind of stupid. The Explorations Course is turning them off and so they are not going on to other courses.

Another faculty member also expressed concern about the quality of the program.

I originally thought Transitions was good. I'm not sold on it now. We have this concept; it's a good concept. But, it has sort of fallen by the wayside. The problem is that there is no ownership for the program. The original creators of the program left and there is no one who has been there to take over.

Another area of campus that was mentioned as being essential to the university's retention efforts was the academic enrichment department. With 18 faculty members, this department provides services for many low income and at-risk students. A concern for some participants was that many students with academic deficiencies did not meet the specific guidelines (income, academic profile, etc.) to qualify for programs in the department. One administrator believed that the university could do more to help at-risk students if the academic enrichment department could be expanded.

We need to replicate what the student support service program [a program within academic enrichment] does and be intrusive with a couple hundred more students that are not in the SSS program. Our retention rate for SSS programs rivals the university average, if it's not better. We have 200 to 250 students who are not in a program but have been identified as needing academic support. They get a newsletter. We need to engage them more than just a newsletter. It would take a couple faculty members to engage them.

Retention--Mountain University

Retention programs and activities at MU are extensive and almost all have a collaborative element that links enrollment management with academics and student affairs. A focus of retention efforts is the first-year experience, which has proven successful as the university has experienced a significant improvement in first-year retention since 1999-2000 (the period when an enrollment management

model emerged at the university). Two faculty members and three administrators remarked that MU's first year retention rate is around 81%, which is one of the highest in the state system. The following section provides an overview of retention programs that emerged at MU after enrollment management was adopted.

Mapworks

One faculty member and five administrators identified Mapworks as being an instrumental retention program. Implemented just a few years ago, Mapworks has quickly become a key tool in the university's efforts to identify and address problems first-year students encounter. Mapworks is an early intervention program that includes a survey that is sent to all first-semester freshmen. According to Administrator 7, the response rate for the fall 2009 survey was 95%. The survey evaluates how MU students are adjusting to college life and identifies social and academic problems they may be experiencing.

A wide variety of individuals on campus have access to the survey responses, including first year seminar faculty, resident life staff, enrollment management division staff, and the director of retention. Mapworks serves as an early alert system for the university administration to identify and address problems individual students are having and determine if there are broad issues that are affecting retention.

Learning Communities

Learning communities integrate the social and academic aspects of college life for first-year MU students. Five administrators cited learning communities as being a key component of MU's retention efforts. According to Administrator 1, MU has 900 students involved with learning communities.

Administrator 9 described the organization of learning communities.

Learning communities include three courses that are the same for all students plus a freshmen seminar course. We have 62 sections of freshmen seminar, 59 have peer leaders, who are upper division students in the major or just students who are hired to work alongside the faculty member. Living/learning communities are organized by major or student interest area. For example it may be students with the same major, students who like the outdoors or dance or students in the honors program. We have eight or nine living/learning communities in the residence halls. There are entire floors in halls or two floors in halls; such as chemistry, biology, physics together or performing arts together. Programming ties into it--we will bring in speakers, faculty fellows or upper division students who serve as mentors.

First Year Studies Program

Every freshman at MU starts in the First Year Study (FYRST) program. The FYRST Program is modeled on a university college format, and it provides

an area of oversight for freshmen as they make the transition through their first year. A myriad of support service offices are integrated into FYRST, including: retention services, the office of students with disabilities, EOP/ACT 101, and Student Support Services. These offices provide tutoring, supplemental instruction, retention services, and many other support services.

Students in FYRST receive academic advising from a faculty member in their major, but are required to achieve a prescribed grade point average and complete required courses to transition through the FYRST program. Every major has a specific grade point average and credit requirement for completion of the FYRST program. The program serves to help students transition into the university by establishing benchmarks for success and by ensuring support services are available to all FYRST students. According to Administrator 5, the program was initiated by a former MU vice president, who received guidance from nationally acclaimed retention expert, Dr. John Gardner.

First Year Seminar

Administrator 8 stated that 98% of freshmen are enrollment in a first year seminar course. Taught by faculty from all departments, this one credit course facilitates retention by establishing an early relationship between students and faculty members in their department. In addition to a connection to the major, first year seminar classes impart important college success skills (study skills, note taking skills, time management skills, etc.)

Orientations

Orientation Programs are conducted throughout the summer and serve to assimilate students into campus life and smooth the transition from high school to college. Administrator 8 described the benefits of the orientation programs for new students.

Orientations are run extremely well. It's a full day of programming for parents and students. It's a connection piece; the students get a chance to meet everyone--counseling, safety, financial aid, deans. They also learn about their schedule and get an ID. It seals the deal.

Highly Successful Departments

Throughout the interviews, the researcher asked individuals to identify departments on campus that were most successful with enrollment management. The intent of this question was to determine if there were departments and individuals on both campuses who demonstrated an extraordinary dedication to enrollment management. This section provides an overview of four departments that met this standard.

Valley University

At VU, the business and biology programs stood out among their peers in their commitment to enrollment management. Administrator 8 commented, "the business department is top notch. They will go out of their way to help. The chair of management is really good." Administrator 1 stated, "the business

program is always on-board. They send faculty to receptions to do presentations.” Administrator 4 commented, “historically over the years just about everybody in that biology program has really bought into the idea that they want the best students they can get and they are willing to go and get them.” Administrator 3 said “the sciences are phenomenal.”

Business Department

The Business Department at VU includes 40 faculty and 1,200 students, making it the second largest major on campus. Enrollment management efforts in the college of business start with an enrollment plan. Every year, the dean and assistant dean work on the plan and share it with the six department chairs in the college. A matrix is developed from this planning process and it includes yearly enrollment management activities, with staffing assignments and budgeting. According to a faculty member from the college of business, this plan is then used by the chairs and the assistant dean to guide recruitment and retention efforts throughout the year.

The representative from the college of business described the philosophy of the department in this way:

We are constantly aware of where our enrollments are. We have historical numbers and a broader, strategic plan that includes demographics, competition and accreditation. A lot of what is driving the plan is enrollment. We’re pretty conscious of where we are at and our challenges. We ask ourselves, how are we going to differential ourselves from our competition?

To promote retention, the college of business conducts several unique programs and activities. A mentoring program offers every freshmen business major an opportunity to connect with an upper division student prior to the start of the fall semester. Through mentoring, upper-division students help freshmen transition into the college of business and the university at large.

Another proactive effort adopted by the college of business is a requirement that sophomores are prohibited from registering until they first clear their schedules with an advisor. While the standard university policy requires all freshmen meet with their advisors before they can register, the college of business emphasizes the importance of the advising process by mandating it through the sophomore year as well. The college of business also developed a leadership minor that is offered to any student on campus. According to the faculty member from the college of business, “this fits into enrollment management because it gets students plugged in and they get into networks. [students say] ‘hey don’t take professor X in the afternoon, you will never make it through.’”

Through planning and programming, the college of business faculty exhibit a commitment to enrollment management. The faculty member in the department summarized it this way:

What is the ultimate objective of students but to go out and make us look good? Don’t we have a stake in that? “Hey so and so has a vice president job now and we hope they contribute back to the foundation. Bring them back as a guest speaker.” Enrollment

management is the same. We have a division of enrollment management and I can be a part of that--having some understanding is important.

Biology Department

As VU's fourth largest major, biology is another department that has embraced enrollment management. A commitment by the biology department to recruitment is part of the formula, having faculty who are dedicated to their students is another. At VU, major-specific visitation programs are conducted in the spring semester. Although biology is one of the largest majors on campus, faculty from this major still actively participate in these programs. According to an individual from the department, approximately 60-75 students attend the major-specific programs. At the events, prospective students meet with faculty and current students, tour the science building, and eat lunch with representatives from the biology department.

The biology department is also dedicated to their role in open house programs. According to a faculty member in that department, "we had three faculty and several students at the table at the general open house a couple weeks ago. For three house total we always had representatives at our table."

The participant in this study from biology described the characteristics of the faculty in the department in this way:

We have a lot of young faculty with energy. We have a lot of faculty who are active with research and visible in terms of presentations

and getting students involved with research. All of our faculty are very student-focused and love to teach. I think that comes out.

The chair of the biology department demonstrated a passion and dedication to teaching that was a model for the department. In addition to her work with recruitment, she developed a freshmen seminar course that was unique to biology students. This faculty member described how the course helps biology students.

I developed a freshmen seminar course to try to connect students to our major and the extracurricular side of things. Try to get them engaged and involved. Students really don't know where services are. It's not required and is only for students from my department. It's focused on just what biology majors need. Our students now show up with a degree audit in hand to get advising. They are much more informed and aware because of this course.

Mountain University

At MU, the exercise science and biology programs demonstrate a high level of dedication to enrollment management. In examining why these departments are successful, a theme of dedicated faculty emerged. Faculty in both majors are dedicated to their students and dedicated to their role in enrollment management.

Biology Department

In describing the helpful approach of faculty in his department, an individual from the biology program stated “the old faculty--‘look to your left and right’--have retired and a kinder, gentler and more nurturing faculty is here. This faculty is more connected with students than the people they replaced.” A caring approach to teaching has translated into satisfied students and a major known for its quality. The faculty member from biology explained the importance of program quality in recruitment: “a quality program sells itself. Alumni speak volumes, good alumni will get more students, bad alumni will ruin it.”

Proving a model for his department, the biology chair consistently demonstrates a commitment to recruiting the best students and retaining them through graduation. Faculty 3 described the chair’s commitment in this way: “he impresses me. He takes it upon himself. He goes to all of the open house programs.” Several years ago, the chair volunteered to participate in a Foundations of Excellence university self-study. In this study, the university examined policies and procedures that impacted first year retention at MU.

The biology program also offers unique recruitment programs to prospective science students. At the Academy of Sciences Day, 500 7th through 12th grade students visit MU and engage in a science competition. MU scholarships are given out to students who win the competition.

Exercise Science Department

Another major noted for successful enrollment management practices at MU was exercise science. In a relatively short time period, exercise science has

grown into the biggest major on campus. This growth was not accidental. When asked to identify departments that were successful with enrollment management, Administrator 11 commented, “it’s clear--exercise science. They have 250 students, 20 years ago, they had less than 50. They are the model department.” Administrator 10 stated, “exercise science, they absolutely understand it.” Faculty 3 claimed, “exercise science has got to be doing something right in the way that they promote themselves.”

The success of exercise science appears to be directly related to faculty, who are highly dedicated to promoting the major. Faculty 2 said, “exercise science has the best people. Part of the reason they have been successful is they send the best people to open houses, not just the new people.”

Administrator 6 observed that there are “faculty in that department that at every open house we can count on.” Administrator 11 praised the exercise science department’s commitment to enrollment management and provided a perspective on why the program is so successful.

Exercise science brings five or six current students to represent the department at the open house programs. Other departments say, “exercise science has the biggest table, why can’t we?” What they are doing is working. If a prospective student sits in on a class in exercise science, we’re going to get them. A member of their faculty comes from a business background and he runs it like a business. They get it. They have an excellent product but they also

work hard at it. They see that their work is paying off and they are getting something out of it.

Communication and Collaboration

An effective enrollment management operation relies on strong working relationships with virtually every department on campus. It also relies on departments working together to act as a team (Dolence, 1990). This section provides an overview of communication and collaboration at VU and MU.

The first part of this section presents Tables 29, 30, and 31, which provide data from the SEM Health Assessment Survey related to communication and collaboration. Tables 32, 33, 34, and 35 provide data from questions about communication and collaboration that were asked of participants during interviews. For all seven questions, participants used the Likert scale in the SEM Survey to assess the quality of communication and collaboration.

As shown in Table 29, there is a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward a commonly shared vision or strategic direction at each university. A mean value of 3.23 for VU and 3.58 for MU indicates participants from both institutions have somewhat neutral perceptions regarding a shared university vision or direction.

Table 29

A Commonly Shared Vision or Strategic Direction

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	13	3.23	-6.7	28	.000
Mountain	17	3.58			

As shown in Table 30, there is a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward a core set of values everyone involved with SEM embraces. A mean value of 3.50 for VU and 4.47 for MU indicates that MU participants were more positive about core values compared VU participants, who were somewhat neutral.

Table 30

A Core Set of Values that Everyone Involved with Strategic Enrollment Management Embraces

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	12	3.50	-4.0	27	.000
Mountain	17	4.47			

As shown in Table 31, there is a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward a formal structure that facilitates effective enrollment management. A mean value of 3.07 for VU indicates participants rated this area of enrollment management as average, while a 4.35 for MU indicates participants rated it above average.

Table 31

A Formal Structure that Facilitates Effective Communication, Planning, Decision-Making, Workflow, Student Services, Use of Technology, and Utilization of Resources

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	3.07	-5.3	29	.000
Mountain	17	4.35			

As shown in Table 32, there is a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward the quality of communication among administrative areas. A mean value of 3.42 for VU indicates participants rated this area as slightly higher than average, while a 4.29 for MU indicates participants rated it above average. MU participants were more positive about the quality of communication among administrative areas than VU participants.

Table 32

Rate the Quality of Communication Between Administrative Areas Regarding Enrollment-Related Issues

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	3.42	-4.9	29	.000
Mountain	17	4.29			

As shown in Table 33, there is not a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions towards the quality of collaboration among administrative areas regarding enrollment-related issues. A mean value of 3.57 for VU indicates participants rated this area as slightly higher than average while a 4.05 for MU indicates participants rated this area as above average. MU participants were more positive about the quality of collaboration among administrative areas than VU participants.

Table 33

Rate the Quality of Collaboration Between Administrative Areas Regarding Enrollment-Related Issues

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	3.57	-1.7	29	.100
Mountain	17	4.05			

As shown in Table 34, there is a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward the quality of communication among administrative areas and faculty regarding enrollment-related issues. A mean value of 2.85 for VU and 3.58 for MU indicates an issue with communication between administrative areas and faculty is apparent. MU participants were more positive about communication between administrative areas and faculty while VU participants felt communication was below average and needing improvement.

Table 34

Rate the Quality of Communication Between Administrative Areas and Faculty Regarding Enrollment-Related Issues

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	2.85	-2.2	29	.033
Mountain	17	3.58			

As shown in Table 35, there is not a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward the quality of collaboration between administrative areas and faculty regarding enrollment-related issues. A mean value of 3.21 for VU and 3.35 for MU indicates participants from both universities rated this area somewhat neutral.

Table 35

*Rate the Quality of Collaboration Between Administrative Areas and Faculty
Regarding Enrollment-Related Issues*

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	3.21	-.41	26	.682
Mountain	14	3.35			

At a statistically significant level, MU participants had a more positive assessment than VU participants on a commonly shared vision, core set of values, a formal structure, communication between administrative areas, and communication between administrative areas and faculty. On all seven questions related to communication and collaboration, MU participants had a more positive assessment than VU participants. However, this section of questions revealed the least positive perception of enrollment management practices for both universities.

For both universities, there was a more positive assessment of communication and collaboration among administrative areas than among administrative areas and faculty. Interviews revealed that communication and collaboration between administration areas and faculty were challenged by university infrastructure and an inability to establish consistent faculty support for enrollment management.

Valley University

At VU, positive assessments of communication and collaboration between administrative areas were offered by a number of individuals. Faculty 1 commented “they really do talk to each other. Nobody operates on their own.” In giving a score to this area of enrollment management, faculty 3 stated, “it’s a ‘4’ within the enrollment management division. I think those groups communicate very well with each other. Faculty 4 added, “within enrollment management, there is a high level of collaboration. Once it leaves this division, it’s a ‘3.’” Faculty 2 offered this assessment, “communication is a “4” and I would say improving. A few years ago it would have been a ‘3.’”

Several administrators cited specific examples of positive areas of communication. One said, “there is a good amount of communication in an on-going basis. Admissions is always talking to financial and academic departments and our departments are always talking to students.” While another offered, “dialog between financial aid and admission is strong, more limited correspondence between admissions and registrar and academic enrichment. Admissions collaborates well with financial aid and deans and academics.”

Administrator 8 said, “communication is average. Collaboration is better, they work well together. Once they are together, they work well together.”

Administrator 9 commented, “healthy communication with units here.”

While communication and collaboration between administrative areas was deemed effective at VU, communication and collaboration between administrative areas and the faculty was not rated as high. Several reasons for

this phenomena emerged. First, faculty and administrators believed information related to enrollment was not filtering down to faculty from the administrative areas (senior administration in particular). Blame for this problem was assigned depending on the individual's position--faculty blamed administrators, administrators blamed faculty. Faculty 1 provided a perspective on the problem.

Communication is a "2." People in our department learn about enrollment through the chair, who hears about it through the dean's meeting with chairs. It's been filtered down. I don't think it's clear why certain things are being done. We are told about numbers or told what we need to do with recruitment, but there is really no explanation of how that fits into a larger picture. It just seems like more work being passed down the line. People get so frustrated in departments meetings and then they become critical.

Faculty 2 agreed that there was a barrier to communication and offered further insight.

Our president will send out the plan and communication but there is a block in there, some faculty are not getting it. It's [block] not at the dean's level, constantly getting information at that level.

Faculty 3 felt that enrollment information that was communicated from the administration to the faculty was not always clear.

Communication between faculty and administration is definitely an area that needs improvement. The enrollment management division

sends out these reports [prospective student contact information] and faculty are asking--“what am I supposed to do with it?”

A second problem identified throughout the interviews was a perception that faculty were not interested in communicating and collaborating with administrative areas. In describing collaborative efforts between the two groups, a faculty member said, “average collaboration--programs are there, what we are doing is good. If we can get involvement and buy-in on those programs, communication and collaboration will improve.”

Administrator 3 stated, “communication is good going out [from administration to faculty]; it’s more criticism coming back. The president does his annual speech twice a year, the provost sends out communication.” This individual believed that faculty were receiving information from the administration, but they were only offering complaints in return. Despite the administration’s attempts to communicate in a positive way, faculty were only criticizing the administration’s approach to enrollment management.

Administrator 5 said, “communication is average because faculty tend to expect information to come to them. Also, chairs hear the message, faculty do not. There is a lot of room for improvement.” This comment was similar to one offered by Administrator 7, “communication is poor. Faculty want to complain but don’t want to be part of the solution.”

Another faculty member identified apathy as being a problem as well, “we get admissions reports on applications once a month but I don’t think there is a huge faculty outpouring.” Although enrollment reports were provided to faculty,

there was very little interest among faculty to take action. Similarly, several individuals complained that apathy among faculty stifled attempts to better integrate academics into enrollment management programs and activities.

Faculty do their job, they are in their departments, but they lose touch beyond that. The ones that are collaborating are doing a good job. But the ones that are not, are teaching their classes and going home. Some departments do a good job.

Another administrator agreed with this and provided further insight into the extent of the problem.

They'll [faculty] show up when they have to; they do what they have to. But for 80% of them, it's pulling teeth. When you have convocation and commencement and only 35 faculty show up to each, that sends a message. "We want to be heard, we are important, but don't ask us to do anything outside office hours." I am truly thankful for the other 20% that are involved. We have some wonderful faculty members on this campus who do what it takes.

When identifying issues that affected collaboration, an administrator remarked that there was a tendency for faculty to not take responsibility for their role in retention.

Collaboration is average because there is a divide between faculty and administration. We have not found a mechanism of embracing faculty as part of the process of recruitment and retention. When

faculty have a problem with a student, there is a tendency to direct them to an office that helps students--they don't see themselves needing to help students.

Mountain University

As with VU, the assessment of communication and collaboration between administrative units at MU was more positive than between administrative units and faculty. Comments from participants indicated communication and collaboration might be rated higher between administrative units because of the influence of the enrollment management division and, in particular, the associate vice president of enrollment management.

One member of the faculty observed, "the associate provost for enrollment management is all about communication and getting the information." Another faculty member agreed, "the associate provost for enrollment management makes them communicate and collaborate. She is focused on them being seamless." When rating the quality of communication and collaboration, a faculty member credited the associate provost for enrollment management, "[it's] a '4' because of the frequent and comprehensive nature of communication. Attribute this to associate provost for enrollment management."

Administrators also observed the positive influence of the associate provost for enrollment management. One administrator described the associate provost's efforts to promote communication and collaboration among offices in the enrollment management division.

The associate provost for enrollment management is constantly sending out information. Formally, the offices within the enrollment management division meet a couple times a month--this is a good way for us to collaborate. The associate provost for enrollment management forces us to communicate.

Another administrator also observed the positive working atmosphere within the enrollment management division that has been created by the associate provost.

Within the enrollment management division, there is a great of respect for the other directors and no hesitancy to pick up the phone with a question. I don't think that there is a weak link in this division. The associate provost for enrollment management strives for collaboration.

Other administrators commented on the constructive environment within the enrollment management division, "collaboration within the enrollment management division is a '5.'" Two other administrators supported this claim, one said, "collaboration is good within the enrollment management division" and another commented, "within the enrollment management division it's a '5.' We always get collaboration."

Another catalyst for effective communication and collaboration was the university's enrollment management culture. A mature enrollment management culture inspired people to work together toward a common goal. One administrator noted, "we have set relationships in motion and they have been

established and there are a number of things that we collaborate on.” Another agreed, “we all see the rewards for our students when we collaborate.” One administrator described why communicating is effective, “everyone talks to everyone and understands where they play into it.” Another administrator agreed, “communication across lines is a huge part of success. Everyone pulls together.”

Another administrator described the comprehensive nature of communication and collaboration, “the associate provost talks to the deans, chairs, and enrollment services. The president does an outstanding job of updating. Enrollment is everyone’s business. People see what happens when good collaboration happens.” Similarly, another administrator observed, “communication is a ‘4’ because there are collaborative meetings with student life directors [and the enrollment management division] a couple times a year.”

As with VU, however, a less positive opinion was offered by participants when the evaluation of communication and collaboration included administrative areas and faculty. While a variety of reasons might explain this phenomenon, a prominent theme in the data emerged--many faculty and administrators assigned the blame to faculty.

One faculty member observed there was not a consistent level of dedication among faculty--“it [supporting enrollment management] depends on the faculty. Some faculty buy into it and see the importance of it, others do not. As more and more return, we are seeing less of this.” Another faculty member

also believed that many individuals were not interested in enrollment management.

It's all there. They try to communicate but we don't listen. Faculty don't pay attention. There are some faculty who don't have a clue about enrollment management, but they don't feel they need to. Department chairs have people from the enrollment management division who come to our meetings. Talk about the portal and recruitment activities. Once you get beyond the chair level, it's a need to know basis. Faculty at state universities are spoiled.

Another faculty member agreed with this statement, but did not apologize for the faculty's position. For this individual, the need for communication and collaboration related to an individual's role and responsibility in enrollment management.

It's a "1." I don't think it exists at all. They give us enrollment information. We know how many students are coming here and we know what their SATs are, but I don't think anyone cares about that. Don't think that is a bad thing. They have their job to do, I have my job to do. Why would I worry about it if I have very little control over it? We have control over students once they are here--that is really where it matters. Collaboration is also a "1."

Many administrators also faulted faculty for communication and collaboration problems. One administrator stated, "information is there for faculty--the associate provost for enrollment management communicates--but do

they use it? Faculty are in their own little world.” “Another administrator agreed that faculty do not seem to want to engage in the process, “below average for both communication and collaboration. Faculty’s approach is--I teach. Don’t collaborate and communicate.” One administrator believed that the problem related to the minority of faculty who were the most opinionated that they did not have responsibility for enrollment management, “faculty is not a singular concept --will always have the cranks--can’t get rid of them. You will always have some who look at it as someone else’s problem.”

One administrator observed that because many newer faculty lacked perspective on the university’s previous enrollment challenges, they were not committed to their role in enrollment management.

Our problem right now is that 60% of the faculty has turned over since 2000. The new faculty didn’t suffer during the years of decline. There is greater likelihood of apathy and disconnect because we’ve been so successful and most of these people only know success. They think this is bad.

In the opinion of another administrator, the problem was a barrier that existed between department chairs and faculty.

Good job with top layer, deans, and chairs. Not very good from chairs to faculty. Collaboration has gotten better over the years but still have a way to go. Relationship of chairs to faculty may be part of the problem.

Responsibility for Enrollment Management

Enrollment management involves many constituencies on campus. In evaluating interview data, the researcher identified four primary units that were mentioned most frequently by participants: the enrollment management division; senior administration; faculty; and, student affairs. Based on interview data, it was clear that these four units all have an important role in the success of enrollment management. This section evaluated survey and interview data to determine which of the units was most responsible for the success of enrollment management.

To achieve that objective, the researcher evaluated interview data and SEM survey data. The first evaluation of data entailed a quantified and qualified assessment of participant comments relating to the four units. To gather this data, the researcher first quantified the number of times participants cited one of the four units in their answers. This data did not completely answer the research question, however as expected the enrollment management division would be cited quite frequently in a study of enrollment management implementation.

The second evaluation entailed a deeper assessment of data and a qualification of comments into three categories: positive; negative; or, neutral comments. Related to enrollment management, did the participant make a statement that was positive, negative, or neutral about one of the four units? By quantifying the number of times a unit was cited and by qualifying comments into positive, negative, or neutral categories the researcher was able to establish a framework to identify which of the four units might be most important. If an area

was cited frequently, it had potential to be important. If it was cited in a positive or negative manner frequently, a question of why would then lead into an answer of how this area was important. Table 36 presents data on participant comments.

Table 36

Participant Interview Comments by Frequency of Qualification

Division	Valley University			Total
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	
Enrollment Management	66 52.3%	55 43.6%	5 3.9%	126
Senior Administration	42 31.8%	89 67.4%	1 .07%	132
Faculty	47 54.6%	36 41.8%	3 3.4%	86
Student Affairs	25 47.1%	25 47.1%	3 5.6%	53
Division	Mountain University			Total
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	
Enrollment Management	191 82.6%	24 10.3%	16 6.9%	231
Senior Administration	82 71.3%	28 24.3%	5 5.3%	115
Faculty	77 65.8%	30 25.6%	10 8.5%	117
Student Affairs	26 61.9%	11 26.1%	5 11.9%	42

In the next evaluation of interview data, the researcher examined themes to determine why a unit was cited more frequently in a positive, negative, or neutral manner. This analysis would explain why a unit was more responsible for enrollment management than other units.

In evaluating the frequency of responses, it became obvious that certain units received more comments. Senior administration at VU had the highest number of comments (132) and the highest number of negative comments (89). At VU, 67.4% of the comments about the administration were negative. The enrollment management division had the second highest number of comments (126) and the highest number of positive comments (66).

At MU, the enrollment management division had the highest number of comments (231) and the highest number of positive comments (191). Comments about the enrollment management division at MU included 82.6% that were positive. The senior administration at MU had the second highest number of positive comments (82). Only 24.3% of the comments about senior administration at MU were negative, while 71.3% of the comments were positive. A prominent question emerged from an analysis of Table 36--Why was the senior administration at VU perceived in a negative manner while the senior administration and enrollment management division at MU were perceived in a positive manner?

In evaluating the interview data relating to the enrollment management divisions and senior administrations at both universities, a theme emerged-- participants evaluated the success of enrollment management implementation

within the context of resource allocation. If participants believed that the senior administration devoted adequate resources, enrollment management was more likely to be perceived as being successfully implemented, if participants believed that senior administration did not allocate adequate resources, the implementation of enrollment management was more likely to be deemed unsuccessful.

At VU, participants complimented the senior administration's verbal support for enrollment management, but criticized the reluctance of senior administration to provide the necessary financial support to make it a success. Resources were a very big concern for VU participants. Four of the five faculty members expressed concerns resources were insufficient to support academics and student services in a manner that would advance enrollment management efforts.

A faculty member complained that the administration was myopic about the importance of resources.

At what point do you spend money to make money? And specifically, spending money in terms of hiring enough faculty and offering enough courses so students can actually get what they need to graduate. How do you keep students, they are frustrated they can't get the courses they need. That is our biggest deficiency. More resources are going into cosmetic things--new dining hall, new science building, new apartment complex, etc.

One faculty member expressed concern that resources were inadequate to meet the needs of at-risk students through the Transitions Program.

We have some great programs and courses through Transitions but a lot of the high risk students can't get into them because we do not have enough faculty and resources. We don't have enough tutors; it takes three weeks to get a tutor. We also need remedial math. Math 050 (basic algebra) has 50-60 students in a class, it's ridiculous. We have a lot of students who need English 101 (Writing I) but we don't have enough sections.

Another faculty member expressed a similar concern:

I think that resources are being stretched about as thin as they can be right now. I need more time; I could stay here until 7:00 every night. The administration supports the Transitions Program but they are not willing to hire more staff to teach a first year course to 1200 students when they need faculty to teach their own classes. People here are nice and they are willing to do as much as they can to help students. Quantity of service, however, is comprised. Quality is not.

A faculty member in a department that serves at-risk students also mentioned inadequate resources as an obstacle for helping students with academic deficiencies.

We had a 20% cut in our department. How do you service students with a cut? I had to cut tutoring. If you are cutting service people, that's not good. I did a study and came up with 437

students that can't be serviced by our department, but they have needs (low SATs, grades, etc.). They are totally on their own. A survey conducted by the provost found out there was a need for better funding in student support services. A lot of faculty believe that our area needs to be funded better.

A faculty member in a major with a large number of students was concerned about the administration's expectations for faculty involvement in enrollment management activities despite his department's limited resources.

We have enough staff but some are adjuncts, who are not involved with certain things--activities, advising. We have done pretty well with what we need, but it falls on a limited number of people because of adjuncts. I receive no resources for enrollment management as department chair.

Administrators at VU also expressed concern about how human and budgetary resources were being allocated to enrollment management. One administrator claimed that because enrollment was not aligned with resources, the university was not able to meet student needs and expectations.

We need to create balance on this campus between undergraduate and graduate. How many students can be accommodated? Right now, all those levels are being stretched. We don't really have the ideal resources to meet the demand. I wish we could say that when you come (as a new student) you will get all the classes you need.

Several administrators observed that human resources in several key areas were not meeting university needs. One administrator stated, “there is not enough teaching faculty. There is faculty, but not enough teaching faculty.” Another administrator claimed that the enrollment management division could be more productive with more help.

I think that the enrollment management division could probably use more resources. I think we could probably double the number of new students if we had more resources--human as well as financial.

With a similar concern, another administrator asserted that retention efforts could be expanded if more help was available.

Can we do more [with retention]--yes, but it all relates to what kind of resources you put into programming. We have kids that get to mid-term and still don't have a book. We have a hiring freeze, so we're doing more work with less people, and 20% budget cuts.

For several individuals, a primary concern was the university's unwillingness to fill several key positions in the enrollment management division. One administrator expressed frustration about this problem.

We need to have a director of retention and a director of admissions. The university can't do either area justice. Formal proposals have been submitting with these requests twice, and the president is supportive, but the budget went south and it couldn't

happen. We also need a couple more faculty members to do intrusive outreach through the academic enrichment department.

Another individual also expressed frustration that insufficient human resources weakened the enrollment management operation.

There is no central person to deal with retention problems and at-risk students. A lot of different offices and services but no central coordinator. Some times at the upper levels, this university is run more like a business than an institution of higher education. What does something, cost, how will it affect our bottom line? With that type of mentality, sometimes programs get pushed to the side.

For several individuals, the concern was not the amount of resources, but the allocation of human resources. In the opinion of these individuals, the administration was not willing or able to make prudent decisions about staffing. One administrator identified academics as an area where this problem was revealed.

We're not at a level of enrollment management where you phase out programs that are not productive. That's the issue that has never been addressed here. What about these majors that don't have any life to them. Do you move resources around? I don't see resources being moved around. I don't see it being examined.

Another administrator, who expressed a similar concern, said "quite frankly I could look at five areas where new programs could be developed that

aren't. There also are existing programs that have been around a long time and need re-working.”

A faculty member also expressed concern that undeclared advising was ineffective because it was not assigned to an office that had sufficient staffing.

All undeclared students are advised in an advising center that is staffed with only one half time person, who has 350 advisees. In the five year enrollment management department review it was recommended twice to make it full-time but it was not changed because of budget. This function should be shifted to the academic enrichment department, which has four tenure track faculty and other faculty on soft money and grants.

The issue of resource allocation came up repeatedly at MU as well; however, an opposite opinion was obvious. Most MU participants believed the senior administration strongly supported enrollment management efforts by providing adequate staff and resources. In particular, MU's senior administration established an enrollment management division that included all of the key positions. Participants also believed the senior administration identified and promoted the best candidate to lead the enrollment management division.

One faculty member credited the senior administration with ensuring resources were available for the enrollment management division. “The associate provost of enrollment management, the provost, and the president are the key decision-makers. The enrollment management division gets what it does because of them.”

Another faculty member gave credit to the senior administration for providing the right courses and services to promote retention.

If it wasn't for support of enrollment management, we wouldn't have 60 sections of freshmen seminar that are paid for by overload and we wouldn't have tutoring. The tutoring budget is very high. There is monetary support behind verbal support. The president, provost and associate provost of enrollment management are very collaborative and knowledgeable about strategic enrollment management. The associate provost position places the importance of enrollment management in the administration.

Other individuals also observed the administration's unwavering financial support for enrollment management. One administrator said, "when I go to the associate provost for enrollment management and ask for programs that will help [with retention], she funds them." Another administrator agreed by saying, "budget and resources follow enrollment management too. I haven't seen that something that was needed, wasn't provided."

Many individuals specially mentioned the role of the president in the prioritization of enrollment management through resources. One faculty member offered the following comment, "the administration supports it [enrollment management]. The president gives us a good role model, make priorities." Another faculty member agreed with this position by saying, "before the president and provost came, the associate provost of enrollment management position didn't exist. Creating a division was indicative of the president's support of

enrollment management. The associate provost of enrollment management is known nationally.” An administrator also gave credit to the president for his high level of support for enrollment management.

Very, very high level of support for enrollment management by the administration. I have not seen a president participate in strategic enrollment management activities like this one. He attends conferences--and has been a keynote speaker at the Strategic Enrollment Management Conference.”

Providing the right resources was a key feature of MU’s success, but equally important was the president’s ability to allocate human resources in a manner that had the most positive effect on the enrollment management operation. In establishing a successful enrollment management model, the president identified an individual on campus who was highly qualified and promoted her to the senior leadership position in the enrollment management division. A visionary allocation of human resources was a critically important step in MU’s development of an enrollment management model. One administrator observed the pivotal nature of this step.

The associate provost for enrollment management is fabulous-- she was an assistant professor in academics, three levels down. I think she is the top strategic enrollment management person in the country. She is far more innovative than a lot of the guys in enrollment management.

Another administrator also specifically mentioned the impact of the president's decision to promote a talented individual to the senior leadership role in the enrollment management division.

High support by administration for enrollment management. The president's vision brought the associate provost for enrollment management into the mix. He was willing to support it, he pushed it out to the deans. The president and associate provost for enrollment management are an amazing 1-2 punch. The right person can turn things around.

Similarly, another administrator agreed and provided further insight into why the president's vision was so pivotal in the success of the enrollment management operation.

The first thing that the president did right was appointing the associate provost for enrollment management. She is an absolute workaholic. Set the position by the qualities of the person. The president gave her freedom to learn enrollment management. She got behind enrollment management. The president gave her carte blanche to explore and start building an enrollment management plan. Providing the associate provost for enrollment management with resources and letting her do whatever she wanted, was the key. Every year but one our retention has improved.

Another individual mentioned the influence of the president and the associate provost for enrollment management in the development of the model at MU.

Look at data and look at where we were in 2001 and look at where are now. With the associate provost for enrollment management coming on board and with the president, something has lead to the success that we believe we have had.

Tables 37 and 38 presents data from two questions in the SEM survey that relate to administrative support for enrollment management.

As shown in Table 37, there is a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions toward support of SEM efforts by key decision-makers on campus. A mean value of 3.75 for VU participants indicates a somewhat positive opinion of the administration’s support for SEM, while a 4.70 for MU participants indicates a more positive opinion.

Table 37

Support of Strategic Enrollment Management Efforts by Key Decision-Makers on Campus

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	3.75	-4.9	29	.000
Mountain	17	4.70			

As shown in Table 38, there is a statistically significant difference between VU and MU opinions regarding the availability of adequate resources for the implementation of SEM initiatives at a high level of quality. A mean value of 3.00 for VU indicates a perception resources for SEM initiatives are average, while a 4.17 for MU participants indicates a more positive perception about resources.

Table 38

Adequate Resources for the Implementation of Strategic Enrollment Management Initiatives at a High Level of Quality

University	N	Mean	T	df	p
Valley	14	3.00	-4.3	29	.000
Mountain	17	4.17			

Considering the critical role of resources in an enrollment management operation, the department that is most responsible for successful enrollment management, is senior administration; which decides how resources (human and budgetary) are allocated.

Summary

This chapter presented findings from the quantitative and qualitative research methodologies conducted in this study. Chapter V provides a summary of the findings and recommendations for further research in enrollment management.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATION

Introduction

Chapter V provides a summary and discussion of the findings of this study. An answer to each research question is provided first, followed by conclusions and recommendations for further research in enrollment management. The theoretical framework is integrated throughout the chapter.

Statement of Problem

Enrollment management is designed to offer a structural and organizational approach to achieving an optimum number of students. Implementation failures, however, often inhibit the development of a comprehensive enrollment management organization. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the implementation of enrollment management at two public universities.

Answering the Research Questions

Research Question 1: How Successful is Enrollment

Planning at the Universities?

In this study, three facets of enrollment planning were evaluated: the enrollment management plan; achieving an optimal enrollment; and, data-driven decision making. While Valley University (VU) was successful with certain elements of enrollment planning, Mountain University (MU) was successfully in achieving a comprehensive enrollment planning process.

The SEM (strategic enrollment management) Health Assessment Survey provided a preliminary indication enrollment planning was more successful at MU than VU. At a statistically significant level, MU participants had a more positive assessment of enrollment planning than VU participants on eight of nine questions. On all nine questions, MU participants had a more positive assessment of enrollment planning than VU participants. On six out of nine questions, MU participants evaluated enrollment planning as being above average at their institution, while VU participants did not rate any area of enrollment planning as above average.

The Enrollment Management Plan

Participants from MU rated the enrollment management plan on their campus as above average (4.62). The enrollment management plan at MU was a comprehensive document that included input from a wide range of individuals on campus. Ten out of 11 administrators were aware of the enrollment management plan and had contributed to it. Only one faculty member, out of the five who were interviewed, had input to the plan. However, all felt comfortable with the process of developing the enrollment plan at MU. One faculty member said, "I probably would have input if I cared to give it, but I don't think I should have a voice because I feel comfortable with the administration. The administration has a plan." Relative to enrollment planning, a high degree of trust was evident between the faculty and the administration at MU.

Participants from VU rated the enrollment plan as just above average (3.30). While the plan at VU did include input from a wide range of individuals, it

appeared to provide less direction for university personnel relative to enrollment compared to MU. Three faculty members out of five and eight administrators out of nine had input to the plan. However, all five faculty members and four of the six administrators, who worked outside of the enrollment management division, had very little knowledge of the details in the plan.

Achieving an Optimal Enrollment

Universities that are successful with enrollment management are able to plan for and enroll the optimum number of students to support the mission and effectively use the resources of the university (Bontrager, 2007). Measured against this benchmark, MU was more successful than VU at attaining an optimal enrollment. While both universities were successful in meeting new student goals (modest increases in traditional students being most notable), MU was more successful in achieve an optimal enrollment.

There was a statistically significant difference in the opinion of participants at each university regarding the core set of goals within the enrollment management plan. Participants from VU rated the goals in the enrollment management plan between average and above average (3.69), while MU participants rated enrollment goals well above average (4.52). In assessing the data, it is evident MU participants had more positive perceptions of the goals in the enrollment management plan than VU participants.

Many individuals at VU perceived enrollment was not optimal because the size and quality of the student body were not appropriately aligned with the resources of the university. Four faculty members and three administrators

asserted enrollment was too large for the university to meet the needs of its students. In a section of the SEM survey related to enrollment planning, VU participants had their most critical assessment on a question related to the institution's capacity to meet student demand for courses. At a statistically significant level, VU participants perceived their university was almost below average (2.71) in this area, while MU participants perceived their university was slightly above average (3.52).

Another concern for VU participants was the high number of academically at-risk students who were admitted to the institution. Three VU faculty members and two administrators believed more students with academic deficiencies were being admitted than the university could effectively service. One faculty member expressed her concern:

We get a lot of bodies. Their needs are not being addressed. If that is the kind of student you are going to enroll, you have to take care of their needs. Otherwise, you take their money for a semester and then they are gone, and that's unethical.

MU seemed to be more successful in achieving optimal enrollment. The enrollment at MU seemed to be appropriate for the mission and resources of the institution and probably contributed to a first year retention rate above 80%. Four faculty members and seven administrators believed the enrollment was ideal. Only one administrator felt the enrollment was not optimal, and two faculty members were unsure.

One administrator stated:

We get the right number of students to fill the seats that are open in the classrooms and be able to advise them appropriately and have the quality to come in the way we want it.

Data-Driven Decision Making

Developing an enrollment management plan that is grounded in reality requires data (Black, 2004a). The “culture of evidence” is a cornerstone of an effective enrollment management organization; it underpins the direction of the operation and supports effective decision-making (Kurz & Scannell, 2006).

While both universities used data in enrollment planning, MU seemed to have an established culture of evidence-based decision making. Through SAS and a web portal, MU faculty and staff were able to access and use admissions reports and data. Fifteen out of 17 participants indicated they used enrollment data in some fashion. Five faculty members were familiar with the enrollment goals, nine administrators knew the goals for new student enrollment, and many gave accurate retention statistics.

At VU, while enrollment data was shared within the enrollment management division, it did not seem to be used as extensively with other constituencies on campus. Only two faculty members and five administrators commented they read enrollment reports and used enrollment data. None of the faculty members and only two administrators were able to provide a new student enrollment goal that was accurate. The individual responsible for the main retention program did not know the university’s first to second year retention rate.

MU seemed to be more successful with enrollment planning than VU. The enrollment plan at MU included goals that were more appropriately aligned with resources. Also, the plan at MU was more widely distributed and used by university personnel and the culture of using enrollment reports and data was more established compared to VU.

*Research Question 2: What are the Most Effective
Recruitment and Retention Practices at the Universities?*

Effective recruitment practices existed at both universities, but personnel from MU had a more positive opinion of recruitment efforts than VU personnel. In addition, retention practices seemed to be more extensive and more effective at MU. On 9 out of 10 questions related to recruitment and all 9 questions related to retention, MU participants witnessed more positive perceptions of enrollment management compared to VU.

For both institutions, the university's reputation for quality was very important in establishing a positive image with prospective students. On-campus visitation programs were identified as the most effective recruitment activity. Both institutions had highly successful open house programs, weekday visits and other on-campus programs (minority visitations, major-specific visitation days). According to one administrator, "87% of the students who visit campus will eventually enroll at VU." An Administrator at MU noted, "Saturday open house programs are very well done. Very effective and they build relationships that bond the student to the institution, one-on-one relationships."

By including retention in the enrollment management operation, an institution is better able to coordinate efforts to improve it (Hossler & Bean, 1990). Through successful implementation of enrollment management, MU seemed to have more effective retention practices than VU. First to second year retention at MU was 81%, while VU's retention was 74%. Through enrollment management, MU was able to deliver collaborative retention programs that linked the efforts of the enrollment management division, the academic affairs division, and the student affairs division. The FYRST program, learning communities, freshmen seminar courses, and Mapworks were all highly successful first-year retention programs that were implemented through an enrollment management infrastructure.

At VU, the retention program mentioned most frequently by participants was also the most problematic. As a cornerstone of retention efforts at VU, the Transitions Program offered curricular and co-curricular activities to facilitate a comprehensive approach to retention. Despite the program's importance, a big problem with Transitions was a low persistence rate as very few students continued with the program after the first year. According to one administrator, although 980 students were enrolled in the first-year course in 2009, in that same year, only 13 sophomores were enrolled in the second year course. In interpreting this data, there is clearly a problem with students choosing not to continue with the Transitions Program after the first year.

Many participants identified areas of weakness with the Transitions Program. The leadership of the program was not as strong as when the program

started. The original founders of the program, who were highly respected on campus and in positions of authority, left the university and the new leaders were not in positions that were as influential as their predecessors. Hence, leadership of Transitions was weaker than when the program started. The support of senior administration for the Transitions program varied. Although senior administrators expressed verbal support for the program they did not provide the necessary resources to make it a success. They also did not provide adequate oversight to ensure problems with the program were corrected. Although Transitions was perceived to be ineffective, the campus community appeared to be apathetic about improving the program. It was evident that participants were frustrated by the deterioration of Transitions, but they were also not compelled to attempt to improve the program.

*Research Question 3: What Department(s) are
Most Successful? Why?*

The Biology and Business Departments at VU and the Biology and Exercise Science Departments at MU were the most successful with enrollment management. Throughout the interviews, these departments were frequently mentioned for their active participation in recruitment and retention activities. In evaluating why these departments were successful, one important attribute emerged--faculty dedication. Faculty in all four departments were very dedicated to their role in enrollment management. Evidence of this attribute emerged throughout the interviews.

Although biology is one of the largest majors at VU, faculty in the department still actively participated in major-specific visitation programs. While not all majors volunteered to participate in these recruitment events, the biology faculty appreciated having the opportunity to connect with prospective students. Faculty from this department also demonstrated their dedication at open house programs. According to a faculty member in that department, “we had three faculty and several students at the table at the general open house a couple weeks ago. For three hours total we always had representatives at our table.” To promote retention, the chair of biology developed a freshmen seminar course that was unique to biology students. This course helps freshmen navigate through their first year at the university and it helps with degree planning.

The business program at VU had a highly organized enrollment plan that included goals and recruitment and retention activities that were assigned to faculty in the department. A mentoring program offers all freshmen business majors an opportunity to connect with upper division students prior to the start of the fall semester. In addition, business faculty members actively participate in programs where they have an opportunity to recruit students. An administrator stated, “the business program is always on-board. They send faculty to receptions to do presentations.”

At MU, the biology program is distinguished by faculty who are dedicated to recruiting the best students possible. This attribute is best represented by the chair, who sets a high standard for other members of his department to follow. A faculty member described the chair’s commitment in this way, “he impresses me.

He takes it upon himself. He goes to all of the open house programs.” The chair also coordinates a unique recruitment program for prospective science students called the Academy of Sciences Day. At this program, 500 7th through 12th grade students visit MU and engage in a science competition.

Almost exclusively through the recruitment efforts of faculty, the exercise science major at MU grew from being very small to being the largest major on campus. Faculty in exercise science take advantage of the opportunity that is afforded at every open house program to connect with prospective students. A faculty member from another department said, “exercise science has the best people. Part of the reason they have been successful is they send the best people to open houses, not just the new people.” An administrator observed that there are “faculty in that department that at every open house we can count on.” A member of the exercise science faculty has a business background and he has influenced other faculty members in the department to actively participate in recruitment programs.

A culture existed within all four departments that valued enrollment management as a means of enhancing the quality of students within the major. In some cases, the culture derived from one or more faculty members who served as leaders and mentors for others in their department. The individual efforts of these faculty members had a profound impact on the quality of enrollment management efforts for the whole department. In other cases, the department’s efforts were collective and a comprehensive approach was the key to the success of the department. Whether individual or collective, intrinsic

faculty dedication was the key attribute that set the departments apart from the rest. Although all of these majors already had robust enrollments, faculty members were still motivated to work hard so that their success continued.

*Research Question 4: Does Enrollment Management
Promote Effective Inter-Departmental Communication
and Collaboration at the Universities?*

Enrollment management organizes departments in such a way the coordination of staff, flow of information, and integration of decisions are “coupled” (Kurz & Scannell, 2006). The findings of this study support the theoretical position that enrollment management does promote effective interdepartmental communication and collaboration. By effectively implementing enrollment management, MU seemed to have more success in promoting inter-departmental communication and collaboration than VU.

In the SEM survey, MU participants rated all seven questions about communication and collaboration as effective on their campus. The administration and faculty at VU perceived that communication (3.42) and collaboration (3.57) were better than average, while MU participants perceived communication (4.29) and collaboration (4.05) in a more positive manner. The ratings were in part reflective of a well developed enrollment management model at MU. While participants from VU assessed the university’s enrollment management structure as average (3.07), MU participants rated it well above average (4.35). These results indicate that MU participants perceive their

enrollment management model as highly effective, while VU participants were not as confident in their model.

The enrollment management model at MU included all of the key offices and positions normally associated with a mature enrollment management organization. Because the model was more comprehensive, an infrastructure was in place to promote effective communication and collaboration. That infrastructure included a defined hierarchy in which the senior leader (associate provost of enrollment management) was able to facilitate communication and collaboration between the offices in the division. The infrastructure also included key positions to facilitate effective communication and collaboration practices, including: director of admissions; director of retention; director of financial aid; registrar; chair of academic services; and, several other key support service positions.

In VU's model, the dean of enrollment management also served as the director of admissions and director of retention. Consequently his ability to communicate and collaborate with offices across campus was limited by the extreme demands on his time. Another flaw in the enrollment management model at VU was the registrar's office reported to the vice president for academic affairs, rather than the dean of enrollment management, a problem which inhibited open communication and collaboration between the two areas.

In addition to an ideal structure, MU also relied on the dynamic personality of the associate provost for enrollment management and a well established enrollment management culture on campus. A faculty member at MU described

the influence of the associate provost saying, “the associate provost for enrollment management makes them communicate and collaborate. She is focused on them being seamless.” Another faculty member agreed, “The associate provost for enrollment management is all about communication and getting the information.”

An established enrollment management culture was cited by participants as being another catalyst for communication and collaboration. An administrator said, “everyone talks to everyone and understands where they play into it;” another replied, “communication across lines is a huge part of our success - everyone pulls together.”

*Research Question 5: Who is Most Responsible for
Promoting Successful Enrollment
Management on Each Campus?*

Four different units on each campus were identified as having responsibility in promoting successful enrollment management: the enrollment management division; senior administration; faculty; and, student affairs. After assessing all of the quantitative and qualitative data collected in this study, one unit emerged as being most responsible for the success of enrollment management--senior administration, and most importantly, the president. At both institutions, senior administration had the most responsibility for allocating resources and endorsing enrollment management efforts, which directly related

to positive perceptions of the enrollment management operation at MU and average perceptions of the enrollment management operation at VU.

Two questions on the SEM survey supported the conclusion that the senior administration was integral to the success of enrollment management. On the survey, VU participants rated resources for enrollment management as being average (3.0), while MU participants rated resources above average (4.17). In addition, VU participants felt support for enrollment management efforts by key decision makers on campus was higher than average (3.75), while VU participants believed the support was well above average (4.70). Related to enrollment management efforts, MU participants perceived that they had more resources and a higher level of administrative support than VU participants.

On both campuses, senior administration decided how human resources were allocated, which positions were staffed and which were not. At MU, the administration developed a comprehensive enrollment management model and ensured that all of the key positions were included in the model. The administration then identified and promoted an exceptional staff member to the key position in the enrollment management model. As stated by Administrator 5, the administration “set the position by the qualities of the person.”

The administration also ensured that the number of faculty and support service personnel was appropriate for the enrollment. Finally, the administration continually affirmed a message that enrollment management was everyone’s business and was critical to the health of the institution. For these reasons, the

senior administration was most responsible for the successful implementation of enrollment management at MU.

At VU, the senior administration did not allocate the necessary resources to achieve a full implementation of enrollment management. Staffing and funding to support the enrollment management division, academics, and support services were not adequate for the needs of the university. Because of this, recruitment and retention efforts were restrained and a comprehensive enrollment management operation was not realized. While senior administration gave verbal support for enrollment management, the necessary resources to ensure the success of the operation did not follow.

Conclusions

This study provided an assessment of the implementation of enrollment management at two public universities. While enrollment management has a long history with private institutions, it is still evolving at many public institutions. In a study of 261 enrollment managers, Smith (2000) found that enrollment management appeared to be more developed at private institutions than at public institutions. I discovered this reality at one public university in this study, but not the other. While this study indicates public universities are more aware of the importance of enrollment management, it also indicates successful implementation of enrollment management is still a work in progress at some institutions.

VU provided an example of an institution at which enrollment management was still developing. One faculty member commented, “the feeling that faculty

get is that enrollment management is basically just get them in.” At MU, enrollment management was developed more extensively and was integral to the university infrastructure and culture. One administrator noted, “we have set relationships in motion and they have been established and there are a number of things that we collaborate on.” Another agreed, “we all see the rewards for our students when we collaborate.”

When implemented correctly, enrollment management offers a comprehensive approach that integrates related functions to achieve the optimum recruitment, retention, and graduation of students. Unfortunately, for many of the institutions who attempt it, implementing an enrollment management program is less than successful (Dolence, 1990). The two universities in this study provided examples to illustrate both ends of the spectrum that Dolence describes. For example, at VU I found enrollment management concepts seem not to have filtered to all departments. MU ensured that enrollment management was implemented successfully by assigning the necessary resources and adopting a comprehensive university approach that included the senior administration, academics, and student affairs.

VU seemed to skip these very critical steps because the necessary resources and comprehensive university approach were missing, and enrollment management did not filter into senior administration, academics, and student affairs. Without adequate resources and without a comprehensive university approach, enrollment management did not change the culture of the VU campus, especially at the departmental level. While the term enrollment management

was known on the VU campus, and faculty and staff talked about the importance of enrollment management, a comprehensive university approach to effectively managing enrollment was not a reality. At VU, enrollment management appeared to be more of a concept, and less of an embedded practice.

Huddleston and Rumbough (1997) assert evolving from marketing and recruitment efforts to a comprehensive enrollment management operation is challenging and for many colleges and universities, it never happens. Dolence (1990) states that what colleges and universities call enrollment management is often just a marketing program that has been revised. For many institutions, enrollment management is a limited enterprise that only focuses on recruitment, rather than a broad-based university effort that includes participation from faculty, student affairs, administration, and alumni. Hossler and Bean (1990) posit that all too often enrollment management efforts are focused mainly on marketing and recruitment and not on the essential elements of a comprehensive university approach to managing enrollment.

Implementation Problems--Enrollment Planning

In this study, four problems seemed to emerge in the implementation of enrollment management. The first problem was ineffective enrollment planning at VU. Achieving an optimal enrollment begins with setting goals for the number of new students which, according to Bontrager (2007), can be one of the biggest challenges in developing a strategic enrollment management plan. Individuals involved in planning have to rely on prioritization during the goal setting process to establish the tradeoffs that exist relative to the mission (e.g., access versus

quality) of the institution. MU carefully planned enrollment to ensure the university was able to effectively promote the retention and graduation of the students who were admitted.

At VU, the enrollment management plan did not provide clear direction relative to enrollment. The plan included goals that were extremely flexible in the direction of growth and not tied to university resources. The dean of enrollment management was required to take advantage of any opportunity to increase enrollment beyond established enrollment goals, despite any strain this would cause on university resources, despite the challenges this would cause other areas of campus, and despite the low academic quality of students admitted late in the enrollment cycle (summer). Unfettered growth was not in the enrollment plan, but was an unspoken university approach to managing enrollment.

Problems with enrollment planning have been discovered in other studies previous to this one. In Dolence's (1990) study of enrollment management practices at 22 institutions, over half of the institutions had no formal written charge or they had a charge that was vague and confusing. Parnell (2004) found the 11 institutions of higher education in the North Dakota University System had not implemented goal setting and planning in their enrollment management operations. Simmons (2007) discovered that cohesive enrollment planning was non-existent at the four California Community Colleges she studied.

Implementation Problems--Resources

A second problem seemed to be the implementation of a plan at VU without the allocation of sufficient resources to support the enrollment

management operation. This was also found in Dolence's study (1990), where virtually all of the 22 institutions reported a lack of resources. Resources to support enrollment management include human and budgetary. Positions in administration, academics, and student affairs have to be staffed for enrollment management to have a positive influence. Also, budgets have to be adequate to support recruiting activities (marketing, admissions counselor travel, financial aid, etc.) and retention programs (tutoring, mentoring, etc.).

At VU, important enrollment management programs and activities were ineffective because resources were not sufficient. The academic enrichment department, which provided critical support services to at-risk student, experienced a 20% cut in budget and 437 at-risk students did not receive needed services. The absence of director of admissions and director of retention positions impaired recruitment and retention efforts. A critical position in academic advising was only half time, which resulted in an overwhelming advising load (350 advisees) and a high burn-out of individuals in that position.

The weakness of the enrollment management operation at VU and the strengths of the enrollment management operation at MU were both directly related to resources. This study revealed that senior administration has to recognize that resources are critically important in the implementation of enrollment management. Without resources, enrollment management cannot become a comprehensive effort and cannot change the culture of the campus in a positive manner.

Implementation Problems--Communication and Collaboration

A third implementation problem related to the ability of the institutions to achieve a comprehensive level of communication and collaboration in which administrative areas and faculty worked seamlessly. As was found with Huddleston and Rumbough's (1997) study in which the benefits of internal and external communication were realized for 226 four-year institutions with enrollment management operations, communication and collaboration between administrative areas at both universities in this study were enhanced by enrollment management. At MU a more comprehensive enrollment management model, that included all of the key administrative offices related to enrollment, facilitated communication and collaboration among administrative units.

However, achieving a comprehensive level of communication and collaboration on each campus was challenging. At both VU and MU, communication and collaboration were less effective when the scope of areas was expanded beyond administrative units to include faculty. Participants from VU rated communication between administrative areas and faculty as functional and needing improvement (2.85) while participants from MU rated it between average and above average (3.58). Participants from both VU (3.21) and MU (3.35) rated collaboration between administrative areas and faculty as slightly higher than average.

While MU participants rated communication and collaboration between faculty and administrative areas more positively than VU participants, both institutions rated it lower than communication and collaboration between just

administrative units. Participants cited this area of enrollment management as needing improvement on both campuses.

At the institutions in this study, comprehensive communication and collaboration have to improve for the full benefit of enrollment management to be realized. In this study, many faculty complained that they were not receiving information (in many cases the blame was assigned to the deans and chairs), while many administrators asserted that faculty were not interested in communication and collaborating. In part, this phenomenon appears to be related to the challenges of communicating and collaborating on a college campus, where silos are a constant obstacle. At the highest level of implementation, enrollment management is designed to break silos down; traditional and entrenched university culture will always present challenges to this being achieved.

Implementation Problems--Housing

A final problem in implementation related to residence life. On both campuses housing was identified as an obstacle to enrollment management efforts. At VU, it was alleged that the residence life office was forcing new students to live in an expensive housing complex to ensure that it was full. Several participants worried that this could cause retention problems because many students could not afford the higher cost of the rooms in the complex. Private university housing is typically financed through bonds, which puts pressure on the university administration to ensure that the apartment units are

fully occupied. As public institutions gravitate to private university housing, this will likely be an on-going problem in the future.

On both campuses, residence life was also noted for poor customer service and ineffective communication practices. Participants at both institutions complained that residence life staff did not consistently answer their phones and did not help students in need of assistance. Residence life was also identified as an office that did not demonstrate interest in working collaboratively with other offices on campus.

An administrator at VU commented, “communication and collaboration are a ‘3,’ but are a ‘4’ if it excludes housing.” Another administrator rated communication on campus as average because, “the problem is a lack of communication with residence life. Other than the residence halls, collaboration is a ‘3.’ I think it’s [residence halls costs] going to be a problem with retention.” Another administrator at VU said, “housing is a problem,” while a faculty members commented, “housing--no collaboration.”

When assessing collaboration at MU, an administrator said, “housing is not good,” while another commented, “If there was one area that could improve-- it would be housing.” Still another administrator commented, “housing ‘issues’ seem to be surfacing.”

Housing at public institutions has been evolving over the past decade. More privately owned housing and greater demands by parents for safety and housing choices have intensified the importance of this area to enrollment management. The quality of communication and collaboration between housing

and other areas of campus needs to improve, as does the level of customer service of housing staff.

The Influence of Leadership

This study revealed that the implementation of enrollment management was more successful at MU than VU because of the influence and the commitment of the president. Faculty and staff at MU were more invested in enrollment management because the president's leadership in implementing and promoting a comprehensive operation was unwavering. By endorsing enrollment management as a critical university priority, and by ensuring that all of the support and funding were available to make it a success, the MU president promoted a campus culture that strongly supported enrollment management. Through a charismatic personality and practical, hands-on knowledge about the mechanics of enrollment management, the MU president was extremely instrumental in the success of enrollment management.

On the other hand, VU's president did not seem to promote or implement an enrollment management plan for the university. Therefore, critical attributes of the operation were missing and a comprehensive approach was non-existent. For example, resources to support retention efforts were insufficient to ensure the success of the enrollment management operation.

It appeared that VU did not have a successful enrollment management operation because the president did not seem to make implementation a top priority. As a result, faculty and staff at VU did not seem to have an interest in enrollment management and a campus-based effort was clearly missing. In

short, the president's leadership in enrollment management makes a difference. It seems imperative that the president must not only articulate the need for an enrollment management plan, she/he must make sure the plan is implemented at all levels of the university. The president must also continually evaluate the mechanics of enrollment management and ensure the on-going success of the operation.

Recommendations for Further Study

After evaluating the findings from this study, there are several areas that warrant further research. First, it is recommended further research on best practices in successful implementation of enrollment management are needed. If state funding for higher education continues to erode, enrollment management will likely grow in prominence at public universities. As implementation is pivotal to the success of enrollment management, failure could be debilitating. Research on proven steps to ensure a successful implementation of enrollment management will help institutions avoid problems like VU experienced. With additional research, public universities will be more likely to implement enrollment management comprehensively so that the full benefits will be realized.

Second, it is recommended further research be conducted on the correlation between resources and successful implementation of enrollment management. Research that affirms the critical role of resources in an enrollment management operation will help institutions during the implementation process. In this study, it was discovered that adequate resources were directly

related to the successful implementation of enrollment management at MU and inadequate resources were directly related to implementation problems at VU.

In the future, as public institutions are forced to make important decisions on how to prioritize precious resources, enrollment management will be in a tenuous position. Public universities have a limited history with enrollment management, and therefore, less of a perspective on which to draw. Because of this, public university administrators may be myopic about the critical role of resources to an enrollment management operation. If resources are not sufficient, enrollment management will likely experience problems. Additional research on this topic will therefore help to educate administrators on the importance of resources.

Finally, it is recommended further research be conducted on the correlation between faculty involvement with recruitment and retention activities and the success of enrollment management. Studies to evaluate the benefit of faculty involvement in recruiting and retention programs will help to better define the important role of faculty in an enrollment management organization. Henderson (2005) asserts where the enrollment management organization is positioned on campus is not as important as how it connects with academics.

With more research, administrators will be better able to convince faculty they have an essential role in recruiting and retaining students. Through this study, it was discovered that faculty have to be better informed of the positive influence they have on the success of enrollment management. Faculty on both campuses questioned why they were required to be involved with recruitment

and retention activities. It was stated by faculty on several occasions, “don’t we have a department of enrollment management that is responsible for recruiting and retaining students?” This disconnect appears to be related to a shift from a period when public universities were not as pressured to conduct recruitment and retention activities, and faculty were not required to be active participants in the process.

The need to better educate faculty on their role in enrollment management has become more important as fiscal challenges in public higher education have intensified. At public institutions, budgetary pressures have prompted administrators to consider consolidating or eliminating academic programs. This unfortunate reality has forced faculty to feel increasing pressure to recruit and retain students or face the possible elimination of their program.

Measured by per-student spending, Pennsylvania’s appropriation for higher education has decreased by 20% during the period 1998-1999 to 2008-2009. At the same time, tuition has increased by 16%. While the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) has already decreased spending by \$200 million, a potential for further reductions in the state appropriation has forced administrators to look for other cost savings--academic programs have become a target (Kelderman, 2009).

A hotly debated recommendation that the state system is considering is eliminating low enrolled programs at some universities. The plan includes having low enrolled programs offered at only certain institutions and having multiple institutions share the costs of instruction. By delivering courses on-line and using

fewer faculty members, the state system hopes to teach low enrolled programs more efficiently. Almost 43% of the 903 academic programs in the Pennsylvania State System granted 10 or fewer degrees or certificates in 2008. An effort to eliminate majors is not new, since 2001 PASSHE universities have eliminated 126 programs (Kelderman, 2009).

With budgetary pressures, enrollment management has increased in stature on most campuses and consequently has become more of a responsibility for faculty. Better education on the comprehensive nature of enrollment management is critically important to ensure a higher level of faculty buy-in. The overarching goal for every university embracing enrollment management is to achieve a comprehensive effort in which enrollment, retention, and graduation become a central concern of everyone at the institution (Huddleston & Rumbough, 1997).

Summary

Enrollment management has become increasingly prominent at public institutions across the country. While this study revealed the positive influence of an effectively implemented enrollment management operation, it also demonstrated implementation problems continue to plague the efforts of some institutions. In a climate of unstable state funding and demographic challenges, the critical need for successful implementation of enrollment management at public institutions has been intensified.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Informed Consent Form

A Study of Enrollment Management at Two Public Universities Experiencing Demographic And Funding Challenges

I am currently a doctoral student at Indiana University of Pennsylvania in the Administration and Leadership Studies Program. Additionally, I am the director of admissions at Lock Haven University. I am writing to invite you to participate in my dissertation study. The following information is provided in order to help you to make an informed decision of whether or not to participate.

The purpose of my study is to evaluate the implementation of enrollment management at two public universities. I will be interviewing a variety of faculty and administrators in order to determine the extent of implementation of enrollment management on each campus. Your involvement in this study will entail completing a 33 question survey and participating in an interview, which will last between 30 and 60 minutes. The survey and the interview will solicit your perspective on a variety of questions related to enrollment management on your campus. The questions will include topics such as: enrollment planning, recruitment and retention activities and intercampus communication and collaboration efforts. I will also ask you to provide any supplemental information (reports, studies, etc.) that may provide additional data on the implementation of enrollment management on your campus.

Enrollment management is a relatively young enterprise in higher education and limited research is available on this subject. Your participation in this study will help to expand the research base on the field of enrollment management. Your perspective on this subject will help to provide findings that will enable colleges and universities to implement enrollment management in the most effective manner possible.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time. If you choose to withdraw, all interview notes will be immediately shredded and will not be included in the study. There are no known risks to you to participate in this study. All information recorded in the interview will be confidential. The universities included in the study will be given fictitious names and all participants will remain anonymous.

If you have any questions about this study or your participation, please feel free to contact me at the phone number or email address below.

Contact Information:

Researcher: Stephen Lee
Doctoral Candidate

Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Administration and Leadership Studies

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Robert Millward
ALS Program Coordinator

Indiana University of Pennsylvania
136 Stouffer Hall

This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: 724/357-7730).

VOLUNTARY CONSENT FORM:

I have read and understand the information on the form and I consent to volunteer to be a subject in this study. I understand that my responses are completely confidential and that I have the right to withdraw at any time. I have received an unsigned copy of this informed Consent Form to keep in my possession.

Name (PLEASE PRINT)

Signature _____

Date _____

Phone number or location where you can be reached

Email address _____

Best days and times to reach you

I certify that I have explained to the above individual the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this research study, have answered any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signature.

Date

Investigator's Signature

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

APPENDIX B

Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Health Assessment

The following self-assessment instrument is intended to be a tool for reflecting on your institution's relative evolutionary stage in strategic enrollment management (SEM).

Please answer the questions in this survey using a scale from 1 to 5 by circling the appropriate response:

1= poor or nonexistent

2= functional but needs significant improvement

3= average in relation to national practices in Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM)

4= above average and meets current institutional needs

5= a national model or best practice in the profession

n/a = not applicable - unable to answer

The following questions assess strategic enrollment management (SEM) as a comprehensive system at your university. At your university is there:

1. A commonly shared vision or strategic direction for SEM?
1 2 3 4 5 n/a
2. A core set of values that everyone involved with SEM embraces?
1 2 3 4 5 n/a
3. A core set of goals that are designed to move the institution towards the realization of a SEM vision?
1 2 3 4 5 n/a
4. A written implementation plan for all facets of the SEM enterprise?
1 2 3 4 5 n/a
5. Accountability measures and sufficient quality control to ensure successful implementation of SEM?
1 2 3 4 5 n/a
6. Effectiveness measures or key performance indicators that are used to gauge the success of SEM initiatives?
1 2 3 4 5 n/a
7. A systematic method of continuously improving SEM activities?
1 2 3 4 5 n/a

1= poor or nonexistent, 2= functional but needs significant improvement, 3= average in relation to national practices in SEM, 4= above average and meets current institutional needs, 5= a national model or best practice in the profession, n/a = not applicable – unable to answer

At your university is there:

8. A formal structure that facilitates effective communication, planning, decision-making, workflow, student services, use of technology, and utilization of resources?

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

9. A student information (computer) system that provides quality service to student, timely information to those who are serving students, a streamlined workflow for users, and strategic information to decision-makers?

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

10. Support of SEM efforts by key decision-makers on campus?

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

11. Adequate resources for the implementation of SEM initiatives at a high level of quality?

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

The following questions assess **marketing** at your university. (scale at top of page)

12. Decisions to add, revamp, or eliminate academic programs are driven by market demand along with other factors such as costs and existing faculty expertise.

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

13. The institution has the capacity as well as the ability to meet student demand for courses (e.g., number of sections, physical space, adequate number of faculty, faculty with related expertise, faculty available to teach, course is in keeping with the academic mission and accreditation standards).

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

14. Courses are offered at times and places that are convenient to students.

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

15. There is a consistent and distinctive marketing message and look.

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

<p>1= poor or nonexistent, 2= functional but needs significant improvement, 3= average in relation to national practices in SEM, 4= above average and meets current institutional needs, 5= a national model or best practice in the profession, n/a = not applicable – unable to answer</p>
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16. There is frequent and systematic communication of marketing messages to prospective students.

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

The following questions assess **recruitment** at your university. (scale at top of page)

17. The search for potential prospects is based on historical data, identifying those who are most likely to enroll.

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

18. Information to prospective students shifts from general to specific as their interest level increases.

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

19. Contacts with prospective students consist of a targeted message, communicated at the right time in the college decision-making process, through an effective medium, from the most influential person.

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

20. Relationships are built between prospective students and others at the university.

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

21. Contacts, like those in the recruitment process, are designed to bond the student to the institution.

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

22. Professional and volunteer recruiters are trained to communicate institutional marketing messages, answer frequently asked questions, and respond to objections.

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

23. The campus visit experience is choreographed to ensure quality.

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

24. The campus tour route conveys the best possible image of the institution.

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

1= poor or nonexistent, 2= functional but needs significant improvement, 3= average in relation to national practices in SEM, 4= above average and meets current institutional needs, 5= a national model or best practice in the profession, n/a = not applicable – unable to answer

The following questions assess **retention** at your university. (scale at top of page)

25. The orientation process prepares students for the transition into college and helps them to make friends.

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

26. Proactive efforts are made to integrate students socially and academically.

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

27. Early intervention support services are available to assist students experiencing academic or social difficulties.

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

28. The university provides accurate advising along with meaningful mentoring.

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

29. University policies and procedures are student-centered.

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

The following questions assess **student service** at your university. (scale at top of page)

30. The institution has service standards that permeate the culture.

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

31. Exceptional student service is recognized and rewarded.

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

32. Employees are required to treat all students with dignity and respect.

1 2 3 4 5 n/a

33. Employees consider students to be the purpose of their work.

1 2 3 4 5 n/a