

Strategies for the Recruitment of Domestic Students into the PSM

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The Self Fulfilling Prophecy

Insufficient numbers of U.S. students are interested in advanced education and careers in science and mathematics.

UConn's experience with the PSM debunks this myth.

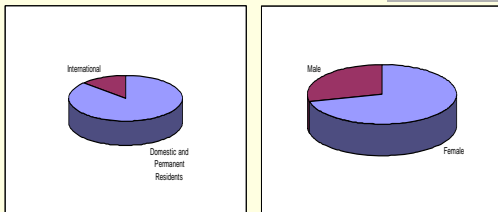
Recruitment and Marketing: PSM programs in *Applied Genomics and Microbial Systems Analysis*

To greater or lesser degrees, most of the matriculating students (63%) in our program had exposure to someone with prior knowledge of the PSM programs.

Renewed interest in domestic students

- NSF Master's initiative under American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009
- Local/Regional Workforce Enhancement
- Projected interest of other federal funding agencies
- Public State University mandate

Characteristics of Matriculating Biology PSM Students ($n=84$)



ACADEMICALLY TALENTED AND MOTIVATED POOL OF SCIENCE STUDENTS

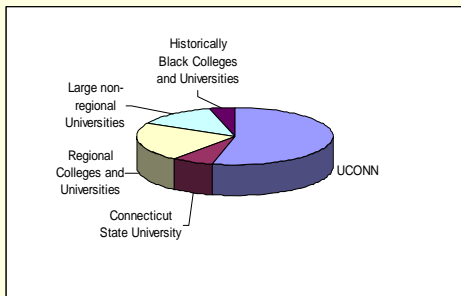
Average GPA (under standard admissions) = 3.51

UConn's "GPA-Challenged" Experiment

- Interesting motivated and "entrepreneurial spirited" student applicants with GPA <3.0
- Admit 1-2 such students per year and track progress.
- 12 admitted over 7 years:
 - Performance in courses, internships, employment similar to standard admits
 - 7 completed program, including successful internships and employments (2 post-employment return to doctoral programs)
 - 5 currently enrolled (2 of these have completed internships)

"SECOND CHANCE" STUDENTS: POOL IS DEEPER THAN IMMEDIATELY APPARENT

Undergraduate Institution of Matriculating Students

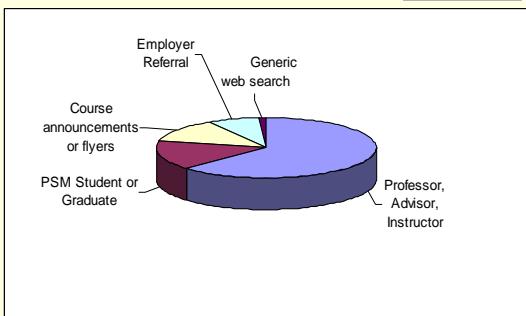


Recruitment is a 2-step process

- 1) Students learn about the PSM degree opportunity (many avenues).
- 2) Students research the PSM program to learn details about its focus and requirements (websites).

The critical step is the first one – how do students learn about the PSM?

How do UConn students learn about the PSM programs?



How do non-UConn students learn about the PSM programs?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 70% websites, internet searches ■ 20% prior knowledge of PSM from home institution ■ 10% direct recruitment by someone from UConn | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ REGIONAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 60% websites and internet searches ■ 40% PSM student, employer, faculty ■ Of 16 local/regional schools represented in our student cohort, 15 have hosted PSM presentations or receive annual targeted mailings |
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Keys to Success

- Home institution faculty and advisors beyond the PSM program need to be aware of the PSM opportunity.
- Positive relationship with unit admissions committees (redirection of appropriate applicants).
- Outreach to regional institutions.
- Build upon existing diversity initiatives.
- Enthusiastic cohort of current and former PSM students.

Keys to Success

- Well-designed and informative websites
 - *Regardless of the undergraduate institution or how the student initially learns about a PSM program, the majority of students will use the internet to gather information on the PSM programs.*
- Invest in creating institutional memory that will impact “multiple generations” of students as opposed to focusing on “single generation” individual student outreach

**The Goal Remains the Same:
Educate more faculty,
advisors, employers, and
students about the PSM.....**

As long as the PSM remains a relatively unknown degree, it is not surprising that the most effective approaches are direct interactions, which provide opportunities to better explain and explore the nuances of this new and innovative type of graduate education.