Framingham State University

International Students Recruitment Strategies

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Introduction:

- International students are steadily becoming a significant and highly sought-after component of student bodies.

- International students not only diversify campus communities and further institutional goals, they also contribute significantly to the economy of the host country.

- The US Department of State utilizes over 400 EducationUSA centers around the world to connect international students with U.S. higher education institutions.

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Overview:
Location: Framingham, Massachusetts (20 miles west of Boston)

Founded: 1839

Status: Public, four-year coeducational (undergraduate and graduate)

Campus: 73 acres, traditional New England campus

Degrees: BA, BS, BSEd, MA, MS, MEd, MBA, MSN

Programs: 26 undergraduate majors; 25 graduate programs; 45 minors

Enrollment (Fall 2014):
Undergraduate: 4328
Graduate: 1,890
Total: 6,218

Student to Faculty Ratio, Fall 2014
16:1

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Framingham State University Mission

- Framingham State University prepares students for a productive life, enhanced by learning and leadership that will contribute to the culturally diverse world of the twenty-first century.
- Established by Horace Mann in 1839 as America's first public teacher preparation school, Framingham State University today offers undergraduate and graduate programs encompassing the arts and sciences and professional studies.
- The University serves as an important educational and cultural center in the MetroWest region of Massachusetts.
- A Framingham State University education cultivates thoughtful, responsible local and global citizens, prepares students for a career, and positions them for success.

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Historical Context:

Despite having significant international activity at many levels, until now FSU lacked a strategic international recruitment plan.

Under the leadership of the new president Dr. Javier Cevallos, we decided to take an aggressive approach to international student recruitment that would drive additional internationalization efforts across campus, while simultaneously allowing revenue generated to be reinvested.

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A Reality Check Questions:

1. What does FSU have that would make it attractive for international students?
2. How do FSU's programs, facilities and location relate to the price/value continuum of higher education in the Metro west, Greater Worcester region or Boston metropolitan?
3. Where did our past and current international students come from and what did they study?
4. Are there any ethnic communities near FSU and have we engaged with them?
5. Do we have the infrastructure in place to support international students?
6. Have we used our ESL program to attract international students?

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Initial Steps:

1) Interview current international students and ask them how they found out about, applied to, and enrolled at FSU.

2) Ask FSU faculty that have international connections.

3) Ask visiting scholars or faculty for advice.

4) Reach out to international community sources and promote FSU to them through international events on campus and visits to different cultural centers in the region.

Promote FSU as a perfect location for students and professionals seeking quality education, training and cultural opportunities in the Boston metropolitan region.

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Current Challenges & Solutions:

1) Adjusting the university culture that recognizes and encourages the growth of graduate education in addition to excellence in undergraduate education .

Solution:

- Support the one university concept.
- Integrate graduate and undergraduate education through the 4+1 years programs, academic departments ‘ownership of graduate programs, and allowing full time faculty to teach graduate courses as part of their teaching load.
- Support students' research and professional development.

2) Lack of residential space and human resources.

Solution:

- Allow single international students under the age of 25 to live in the dorms, and help older and/or married students with family to find suitable apartment in the neighboring apartments complexes which are available within 3-15 minutes walking distance.

- Hire a full/part time administrative and hospitality person within the international education office who will perform the following tasks:

A- Welcome new comers and help them to find housing, campus orientation, and living adjustments.

B- Arrange meetings with academic advisers, registration and other students 'services.

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3) Limited staff and resources for extensive travel.

Solution:

Engage the entire university in the recruitment strategy by leveraging student/faculty travel specially those who have international connection through field trips, courses, research , friends and family ties, and affiliation with foreign institutions including IEP sites.

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4) Most attractive programs at capacity or extremely competitive. Also, it is tough to place international students in internships or practicum in certain fields (Dietetics, special education, and counseling psychology).

Solution:

- Identify new and needed coursework-based programs (MBA,MPA,MHA, Computer Science, and Spatial Environmental Studies).
- Accept internationally based internships or practicum.

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5) Only accepted TOEFL for admission and *could not offer conditional admission.*

Solution

- Follow most Universities that accept IELTS, PEARSON, ELS Language Services, degree from English speaking institutions, SAT or ACT scores .

- Offer conditional academic admission for students accepted to the ESL program.

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FSU International Recruitment Model:

We must manage this model by strategically investing in:

1. On-campus intensive English programs.

FSU provide international students support, ESL classes, study skills
patient with graduate admission committees concerning GRE, TOEFL for conditional admits.

2. Countries with students who qualify for our targeted programs (MBA, MPA, MHCA, and Nutrition) and have the resources to pay for these programs without financial aid (Saudi Arabia, South Korea, China, India and Latin America).

FSU established good and reliable relationship with SACM which manages the progress of Saudi students.

3. Countries where we offer Master Degrees through the IEP.

FSU utilize the IEP coordinators as reliable overseas counseling resources which are cost effective (a variable expense) .

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The IEP coordinators offers specific information about FSU which is needed by:

1. Students need help to choose a university that best meets their needs and professional aspirations.
2. Many student candidates do not yet speak English proficiency and need information and advice in their own language.
3. Most parents have not had the benefit of studies abroad and many do not speak English.

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The Programs

Four distinct programs to meet the needs of immigrants, international students, and foreign-born professionals.

- Intensive English Program: Courses are all content-based with rigorous academic goals and teach reading, writing, grammar, listening, and speaking, but also American life and culture, cinema, American literature, TOEFL preparation, and public speaking.

- Bridge to university and professional success: To help students beyond ESL to continue to hone their linguistic and cross-cultural communication skills. Prepares students for academic and professional success by or advancing their skills in writing, making effective presentations, and accent modification.

- Community ESL Classes: Level classes that advance students through 4 levels and then provide "focus classes" to continue studying and improving their skills and knowledge of English. Classes are content-based to help adult learners reach their goals and participate more fully in American society through improved communication skills. Course content includes the four language domains (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) and adds public speaking, business English, accent modification, intercultural communication, and TOEFL preparation.

- Specialized Tutoring: Students study one-to-one with a teacher on whatever skills they want to develop. Includes English for Special Purposes (ESP) to study language usage prominent in a specific field such as biology, pharmacology, business, etc.

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English Language Programs Enrollment (per class counts)						Enrollment Percent Change	
	Community	Intensive	Bridge	Specialized Tutoring			
2012 Students Served	534	149	21	1	709	Fall 2011—Fall 2013	+32%
2013 Students Served	656	207	18	9	890	Spring 2012-Spring 2013	+14%
						Total 2012--2013	+25%

Summer & Fall 2012=division of DGCE which caused drop in enrollment.

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ELP Survey Highlights Fall 2013 (Combined Programs)						
How did you hear about the English classes at FSU?	Friends/Family	FSU Website or Internet	Radio	Other		
	62%	12%	11%	15%		
What is your home country?	Brazil	Mexico	China	Germany	Columbia	Other*
	60%	6%	4%	3%	3%	24%
How long have you lived in the U.S.?	Less than 1 Year	1—3 Years	3—5 Years	5—10 Years	More than 10 years	
	24%	14%	6%	28%	28%	
Did you study English before you came to FSU?	Yes	No				
	66%	34%				
Did you study English in your home country?	No	Less than 1 year	1-3 years	More than 3 years		
	42%	11%	19%	22%		
How many years of education did you complete before attending the English language program?	Less than 10 years	Finished high school	College or university			
	7%	24%	31%			
What is your gender?	Male	Female	No answer			
	33%	61%	6%			
Do you have children under age 18?	Yes					
	32%					
Are you currently working? (Full or part-time)	Yes	No				
	78%	22%				

*Other Countries include: Portugal, Dominican Republic, Poland, Czech Republic, Japan, El Salvador, Guatemala, Paraguay, Turkey, Switzerland, India, Sweden, Egypt, Japan Ukraine, Israel, Bolivia, Japan, Sweden, Thailand, Costa Rica, Sri Lanka, Peru.

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IEP Degree Programs

Degree	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
M.Ed. Int. Teaching	423	444	351	311	358
M.Ed. TESL	46	46	24	48	50
M.Ed. SPED	0	0	0	0	0
M.A. Educ. Leadership	18	0	19	18	18
Total	487	490	394	377	426

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The current program site locations are:

Brazil, Sao Paulo(previous sites in Brazil)
Started 1989 3 Cohorts

Costa Rica, San Jose
Started 1990 15 Cohorts

El Salvador, San Salvador
Started 1999 7 Cohorts

Guatemala, Guatemala City
Started 1997 9 Cohorts

Honduras, San Pedro Sula
Started 2002 7 Cohorts

Korea, Gyeongju
Started 2014 1 Cohort

Korea, Gyeonggi-do
Started 2014 1 Cohort

Korea, Seoul
Started 2001 7 Cohorts

Korea, Suwon
Started 2008 4 Cohorts

Mexico, Guadalajara
Started 1996 9 Cohorts

Mexico, Monterrey
Started 1996 12 Cohorts

Nicaragua, Managua
Started 1997 9 Cohorts

Northern Marianas Islands, Saipan
Started 2000 10 Cohorts

Taiwan, Taipei
Started 1998 8 Cohorts

Thailand, Bangkok
Started 2000 7 Cohorts

Venezuela, Maracaibo
Started 1999 8 Cohorts

West Indies, Port of Spain Trinidad
Started 1997 9 Cohorts

Xiamen City, China
Started 2013 1 Cohort

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Net Revenue to Framingham State

Fiscal yr 2010	Fiscal yr 2011	Fiscal yr 2012	Fiscal yr 2013	Fiscal yr 2014
$170,940	$174,440	$169,820	$139,280	$150,560

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Implementation Plan:

1. Work with well-established and reputable commission-based agents.

2. Be creative in our thinking about potential strategies for recruitment and overcoming current barriers to our strategies

3. Follow a performance based allocation of support approach, in order to reinvest in the infrastructure necessary to succeed (staffing, marketing, recruitment, scholarships, etc.)

4. Join the American International Recruitment Council (AIRC) which was formed by the University of Cincinnati, Ohio University and Cleveland State University in 2008 to develop plans for schools looking to recruit international students and a Certification process for international recruiting agencies. Currently, AIRC has 130 members.

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5. Join the Federation of Education and Language Consultant Associations (FELCA). It is an international association of associations representing agencies and other organizations who are active in promoting language travel and studies abroad. Their member associations each have their own professional standards for membership qualification and therefore have professional standards which are transparent if not necessarily audited by third parties.

Commission based Agents:

1. It is legal –it doesn't violate federal regulations
2. It is ethical when done properly
3. Understand it will require substantial investment
4. Pay commission based on success (Most Universities pay 10% of the first year's tuition paid by the student)
5. Establish careful selection and vetting protocols for new agents (application; references; AIRC Certification, site visits.)