

The **ADMISSIONIST**

Fall 2019

by **LIAISON** 

DOING MORE WITH LESS



Inspiring Each Other to Do Even More



As you may know, summer was an exciting time for Liaison, our clients and our partners in the world of higher education. Hundreds of peers from around the country gathered in Boston in June to attend the largest and most successful Liaison User Conference to date, and I believe we all came

away from it with inspiring new ideas about identifying and overcoming the shared challenges we all face.

Regardless of your institution, department or program, your strategies for admitting best-fit classes were sure to be made stronger by the insights gained during the conference. We offered so many compelling interactive sessions, networking opportunities and presentations by experts in higher-ed marketing, recruitment and technology that some attendees said their only regret was not being able to be in more than one place at the same time.

Reflecting on the conference, I realized that its success was a direct result of the desire, shared by all who attended, to do more at every turn for their institutions and students — despite limited resources and increased competition. Needless to say, “doing more with less” remains a top priority for admissions professionals everywhere.

For more than 20 years, Liaison has worked with over 31,000 programs on more than 1,000 campuses — and with more than 30 educational associations — to do exactly that.

Our goal for this issue of *The Admissionist* is no different. For example, on pages 8-9, Dr. Christopher A. Smith, executive director of enrollment management, marketing and financial aid at Kansas State University Polytechnic Campus, talks about how his school worked with Liaison to increase the number of female and minority students by 45% and 33%, respectively. On a related note, the article on pages 18-21 (“Doing More with Less in Admissions and Enrollment”) highlights the efforts of several different programs to rethink the way they recruit students while

simultaneously demonstrating their commitment to institutional excellence.

Of course, there is more to discover in this issue of *The Admissionist* as well, including testimonials and examples of best practices offered by esteemed Liaison clients and associates. For example, the article on page 6 features an interview with Dr. Daniel S. Michalski, associate director for graduate and postgraduate education and training at the American Psychological Association. Dr. Michalski, who oversees the recruiting of college and university psychology programs to participate in PSYCAS™, Liaison’s Centralized Application Service (CAS™) for graduate psychology programs, shares tips for success that are relevant in every field of study. He also articulates the benefits of PSYCAS for individual programs as well as the field of psychology overall.

You will also find timely, action-oriented discussions about how to use social media in your outreach efforts and how to transition from a paper-intensive to a data-rich admissions process. Additional articles include success stories about Liaison’s highly regarded CAS, EMP™, Time2Track™ and SlideRoom™ products and services as well.

Please let us know what you think about this issue of *The Admissionist*. Our content team can be reached at editorial@liaisonedu.com, and they would love to hear your feedback.

Also keep in mind that if we did not get a chance to meet you at this year’s Liaison User Conference, we hope to see you next time, in the summer of 2020.

Thank you for reading, and thank you for allowing Liaison to serve you.

Best,

George Haddad
Founder and CEO

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HIGHER ED BY THE NUMB3RS

Application rates may be declining, but the work facing admissions offices is not easing up. Students are applying to more schools than ever before, due in part to an attempt to “hedge their bets” and gain admission to at least one of their choices. In this issue of Higher Ed by the Numbers, we look at what this means for admissions offices.



MORE APPLICATIONS IN AN HOUR

At the University of Pennsylvania, swamped admissions staff have figured out a more efficient way to review applications. In teams of two, admissions officers can complete an initial review of as many as **15** applications in an hour, which is up to three times the number of applications that used to be reviewed in the same amount of time. Both members of these two-person teams review the application on their own screens and talk through the review, making quick notes. The application then goes on to be grouped and to undergo a final review.

Source: *The Chronicle of Higher Education*



APPLYING EVERYWHERE DOESN'T HELP

Today's high school graduates are applying to a greater number of schools. Almost **1 IN 5** students apply to over **NINE** schools. The median number applying to and visiting schools is much lower, at **FOUR** and **THREE**, respectively. But while students get accepted to about **THREE** schools, only **8%** of those who apply to at least **NINE** schools receive acceptance letters from all **NINE**.

Source: *Niche*



THE “ADVERSITY SCORE” IS OUT BEFORE IT WAS IN

With the introduction of the “adversity score,” the College Board aimed to set SAT scores within the socioeconomic context of the student taking the test. Though it was set to expand to over **100** colleges in 2019, the College Board has abandoned its plan to introduce this new quantitative factor. Why? Because the organization realized it had “erred in distilling the challenges faced by college applicants to a single number.”

Source: *The New York Times*



ADMISSIONS EVALUATORS OFTEN PRESSED FOR TIME

With the goal of reviewing **FIVE** applicants an hour, evaluators report having just **12 MINUTES** to spend on each individual packet. Those packets include the application, test scores, transcripts, personal statements and multiple essays. And the evaluation also requires notes to be taken to help make admissions decisions.

Source: *Business Insider*



TIME SPENT PLAYING DETECTIVE

Since 2001, admissions officers for the University of California have been required to double-check that those on the admit list are telling the truth. Things like transcripts and final grades are easy to verify, but extracurriculars are harder. A random sampling of students is asked to prove that they coached a soccer team, starred in the school play or held down a part-time job. A very small number, **LESS THAN 1%** in fact, are caught lying or just don't respond to the request for additional information and find themselves rejected from UC.

Source: *LA Times*



MORE HELP NEEDED, BUT NOT AS MUCH AS BEFORE

Case Western Reserve University admissions officials followed the University of Pennsylvania's method of using a two-person review team, and they are glad they did. Over the past two years, applications have increased by **4,000**, leaving them with **25,000** applications to review this year. In the past, they would have hired part-time readers, as many colleges do, to help with the load. Instead, they've been able to cut the number of part-time readers by **ONE-THIRD**. This new method not only saves Case Western Reserve University time but also the cost of part-time employees and the management of extra, outside staff.

Source: *The Chronicle of Higher Education*



SURFING THE WEB

College admissions officers admit to visiting the social media profiles of applicants to learn more about them. About **35%** of colleges surveyed say they check and almost half of them say that what they see shows students in a positive light. But, **42%** of them say there have been negative impacts on applicants after someone viewed their profile. How much time admissions officers actually spend scouring social media for applicants is unknown, but **25%** admitted that they looked "often" in 2016, up from **11%** in 2015.

Source: *Kaplan*



A FINAL DECISION IN MINUTES

At Georgia Tech, applications are assigned to admissions teams based on regions. Then one half of the two-person team looks over the transcript and test scores and the other looks at recommendations, essays and activities. In less than **10** minutes, an initial decision is made to add to the admit, deny or waitlist pile and **85%** of the applications are never reviewed again. Georgia Tech's **12 TWO-PERSON** teams can work through about **500** applications a day.

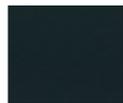
Source: *Wall Street Journal*



PRIVATE SCHOOLS HAVE SLIGHTLY FEWER APPLICATIONS TO REVIEW

The Admissions Trends Survey shows the growing strain on admissions offices as students apply to more and more colleges, increasing the applications submitted. Excluding administrative staff, public institution admissions offices averaged **791** applications during the Fall 2017 cycle and private institutions averaged **426** applicants.

Source: *NACAC*



What Does APA See in PSYCAS™?

“An Expansive Set of Solutions for Applicants and Programs”

Daniel S. Michalski, Ph.D., is the Associate Director for Graduate and Postgraduate Education & Training at the American Psychological Association (APA). In that role, he oversees the recruiting of college and university psychology programs to participate in PSYCAS™, the Centralized Application Service (CAS™) for graduate psychology programs. That puts him in a unique position to share recruiting tips with members of other professional associations and to articulate the benefits of PSYCAS for individual programs as well as the field of psychology overall.

He recently spoke with Liaison about the reasons why APA launched PSYCAS and how he thinks it can help the organization achieve its key goals.

Liaison: What led your association to develop a CAS?

Daniel Michalski, APA (DM): Faculty members had become increasingly frustrated with sending multiple recommendation letters and creating accounts on multiple websites, so they asked the APA for a solution. While investigating our options, it became apparent that PSYCAS offers not only benefits for faculty recommenders, but also an expansive set of solutions for applicants and psychology programs as well.

We're currently in our third admissions cycle, with 70 programs enrolled at 28 institutions.

Liaison: What goals does your association have for PSYCAS?

DM: The primary goal is to leverage technology to better understand the nascent psychology workforce. That, in turn, allows APA to develop data-driven resources for psychology programs, faculty and applicants.

Liaison: What outcomes have you seen from PSYCAS so far? How are

these aligning with your goals?

DM: We wanted PSYCAS to become a source of data that would help us make well-informed decisions about recruiting and enrolling students as well as about advising programs on important trends and good practices. Now that we are receiving data that produces sufficient insights into segments of our education and training pipeline, we're able to use that information to advise applicants and psychology programs on how to make themselves more competitive and potentially successful.

Liaison: How does your association manage PSYCAS? For example, do you have one staff member dedicated to it full time, or do you have multiple staff members in this sort of role?

DM: I work full-time managing PSYCAS and integrating it with other APA products; in the past year, I also hired a marketing associate to assist part-time with the CAS. I report to an executive manager who is charged with the strategic alignment of PSYCAS with APA's organizational mission and goals.

Liaison: Can you please share more about how the recruitment of new members has gone for you?

DM: Many people hold the traditional view of psychologists as individuals who provide direct health services to individuals. However, psychology is both a profession and a discipline. Graduates of master's and doctoral psychology programs go into a variety of careers, ranging from research and academia to consulting and direct human service. They do this across multiple types of work settings. Correspondingly, psychology education and training vary greatly between — and within — degree types and levels. Peer communities, by geography or training, may be small. But as success stories are shared within

certain segments of psychology education and within particular geographic areas, we tend to see enrollment growth occur in those areas.

Liaison: What do you find to be the greatest challenge when it comes to recruiting new members to your CAS?

DM: Introducing change is a challenge. Many people would rather struggle with a current process they know than shift to an unknown process. Creating a community of users to share their experiences and the benefits they have enjoyed from PSYCAS has really helped minimize the anxiety of change.

Liaison: What are the most common objections that you hear from potential PSYCAS members?

DM: We have found that while there is often interest in the CAS at the program or department level, the faculty in charge of admissions sometimes face hurdles that inhibit an easy process through administrative approval channels.

Our current PSYCAS partners are without a doubt our best resource when it comes to overcoming common objections. They use the product daily and are candid in sharing their observations with prospective users. I think that really demonstrates to potential members that PSYCAS creates a meaningful, collaborative peer community for themselves and their institutions.

Liaison: What CAS benefits have you found to resonate most with your potential members? Why do you think these benefits are the most powerful?

DM: Once people realize that CAS-collected data can improve their work processes and attract high-quality applicants, the benefits of PSYCAS become clear. The fact that users can see the tangible benefits of adoption is a big selling point. ■

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY POLYTECHNIC INCREASES FRESHMAN ENROLLMENT BY NEARLY 50%

How Liaison's marketing services helped the University
achieve its ambitious enrollment goals

“There is nobody else doing what Liaison is doing right now in terms of their partnerships and marketing pieces. Working with Liaison is like having a combined enrollment and marketing department.”



Dr. Christopher A. Smith is clearly passionate about the work he does at Kansas State University Polytechnic Campus in Salina, Kansas. The first clue? His LinkedIn profile describes his role as, “working my dream job as executive director of enrollment management, marketing and financial aid” at the University.

It should come as no surprise to learn that, upon taking the position in 2017, Dr. Smith made it a top priority to usher in changes designed to bring immediate and lasting improvements to the institution. He specifically focused on the ability to recruit and admit students who will thrive on campus — and who will help the University continue to thrive for years to come.

“When I came on board, we essentially did a complete overhaul of how we recruit students,” Dr. Smith says. “We really needed to step outside the box. Our admissions representatives were still spending a lot of time standing in high school gyms with 75 other recruiters. Speed to response time was three months. We basically had a cookie-cutter approach, and that needed to change. I had lofty goals when I got here.”

A CONSULTATIVE, PERSONALIZED APPROACH

One of Dr. Smith’s first initiatives was to implement what he calls a “consultative approach” to admissions. It applies to the way Kansas State University Polytechnic works with potential applicants as well as its marketing partner, Liaison.

“A big part of that strategy involves taking a very personalized approach to communicating with students, making sure that we focus on their individual needs, motivations and concerns,” Dr. Smith says. “Liaison understands that. I was very intrigued by Liaison’s personalized approach to focusing on individual students, particularly through the use of variable print strategies.

“We went through a period of time when Millennials didn’t necessarily respond to print material. But that’s changing, especially with younger Millennials. So, I wanted to find one strategic partner I could work with throughout the entire 15-month lifecycle of my admissions process. Liaison was the right fit. Using their variable print services really separated us from the rest of the pack. There is nobody else doing what Liaison is doing right now in terms of their partnerships and marketing pieces. Working with Liaison is like having a combined enrollment and marketing department.”

HITTING LOFTY GOALS, FILLING SEATS

Within one year of working with Liaison, Dr. Smith was able to begin quantifying the tremendous success the partnership has produced.

“We had 589 personalized campus interviews and visits in 2018, a 49% increase over the previous year,” he says. “In just eight months, our total application volume increased by 23%. Our enrollment for freshmen was up nearly 50%, making it the largest freshman class we’ve had in five years. Twelve out of our 16 programs grew enrollment in 2018.”

Dr. Smith continues: “Delivering personalized messages about each program a student was interested in played a key role in our success. For example, we saw a 118% increase in applications to our professional pilot program. For the first time in seven years, our flight program was at capacity. On top of that, the number of students living in our on-campus residence halls increased by 32%. Our female and minority populations — two big focuses of mine — went up 45% and 33%, respectively.

“Liaison played a very important role in getting us where we needed to be. At every stage, Liaison was the icing on the cake that set us apart from everybody else.” ■

Dr. Lucinda Maine and AACP:

Implementing a Transformative Vision for Pharmacy Education and Practice



During her nearly three decades holding senior leadership roles for professional associations in the pharmacy discipline, Dr. Lucinda Maine has both witnessed and helped drive the sweeping transformation of the field as a whole and more specifically, its educational model.

Since Dr. Maine began her current role as Executive Vice President and CEO of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACCP) in 2002, the number of pharmacy schools in America has grown from 84 to 144. That created a need to fill a greater number of seats in those programs and ultimately, to serve a population of patients that Dr. Maine believes will benefit from increasingly viewing pharmacists as providers of direct health care rather than exclusively as dispensers of prescription drugs.

Prior to her position with AACCP, Dr. Maine served as Senior Vice President for Policy, Planning and Communications with the American Pharmacists Association (APhA). She served on the faculty at the University of Minnesota, where she practiced in the field of geriatrics and was an associate professor and associate dean at the Sanford University School of Pharmacy. Her research includes projects on aging, pharmacy manpower and pharmacy-based immunizations.

In the following interview with Dr. Maine, Liaison dives deeper into her multifaceted perspective on the shifting landscape of pharmacy education and practice, as well as on AACCP's contributions to that ongoing transformation.

Liaison: AACCP's vision is that "academic pharmacy will work to transform the future of health care to create a world of healthy people." Can you share more about how the Association is working to realize this vision?

Dr. Lucinda Maine, AACCP (LM): In pharmacy we tend to have a bias that medication use is central to quality patient outcomes, but we also know that pharmacists have not yet had as much of an opportunity to exercise their knowledge and skills as would be ideal. The profession has really recognized this and has grappled with it, and it propels us to continuously change our educational model.

Medication use is more important today than it's ever been. There's a lot of attention paid to how expensive it is. But actually, the most expensive medicines may actually be the ones you're not taking or not taking correctly. If pharmacist education and accessibility were optimized, then we have good evidence that overall health care costs would be easier to control and that patient outcomes would be better. The way we operate in that place is to continuously keep the framework of curricular competencies up to date and synced with where the accreditation process is pointing.

But in 2016, we released a new four-point strategic plan, which was modestly updated in 2018. It really tells the story. One of the key issues that determined and continues to shape our strategic priorities is that there appears to be less interest among the potential cohort of learners in health careers than there has been historically. We know that beyond the demographic reasons and the concerns about debt burden, one of the reasons why people seem to be less interested in pharmacy is that they really don't understand what pharmacists do and how that education prepares them to really help people. Part of that is the perception people have of the classic pharmacist — whether it's in the grocery store or at CVS or Walmart or wherever else, that they don't look like they're having a really good time. And it's hard for them to communicate to the public what's really going on behind the scenes,

whether that's advocating for more affordable medicines for their patients, making sure the patient has the education or monitoring tools to optimize their health.

Our first strategic priority, therefore, is focused on the pipeline. We know that if we don't have the right quality and quantity of learners, the profession will suffer, and patient care will suffer. This inspired our 'Pharmacy is Right for Me' campaign and other initiatives in recent years, which support our member institutions and get the word out to the potential applicant pool.

Strategic priority number two is focused even more broadly on the public, including through the 'Pharmacists for Healthier Lives' campaign. The audience for that effort is comprised of suburban parents ages 35-55 and caregivers ages 45-65. We target them with paid advertisements through social media channels. We've managed this national campaign not ourselves, but in partnership with seven national pharmacy organizations and a growing number of state pharmacy organizations. Very rarely does an organization embark on a significant project by itself and see that project become successful. The most successful projects are collaborations. And the profession has never undertaken a campaign quite like 'Pharmacists for Healthier Lives' in any meaningful way, which is one of the reasons why people don't know what pharmacists do and how they're educated.

The third strategic priority is really going to kick into the highest gear in the coming year. We have to transform both education and practice in order to fully position pharmacists in the right practice activities. We're not asking pharmacists to completely give up on the drug distribution responsibility, because they can't delegate that. But they can oversee it differently so that they have time to perform direct patient care, especially with complicated patients who have multiple chronic conditions, and with people with lower literacy who need more help than the average educated consumer to understand how to use their medications properly.

The fourth priority is about expanding research and graduate education. Our Association's incoming president is

passionate about making sure we have a strong cadre of researchers across the whole spectrum of pharmacy-relevant research, but especially implementation science, to support and affirm the value of practice and education transformation.

Liaison: What have you learned is key to ensuring that professional associations make the greatest impact for their constituents?

LM: As a national organization, AACP can't transform practice. But when we identify priorities that are clearly as highly strategic as the aforementioned issues are right now, we have to understand that our priorities should focus on what our members need help with. Then, we work very closely with our members. We have recruitment champions at most all of the schools in order to help them expand the applicant pipeline, as well as brand ambassadors at the schools who have expressed an interest in working with us to extend the reach of public awareness about the pharmacy profession.

We feel that now is an essential time to equip our schools with action plans that will allow them to enhance, enrich and expand their transformation. It's all about understanding member needs, and then it's being realistic about how a national organization can channel resources that will enable our members to be successful.

Liaison: What are the most surprising changes in pharmacy education that you've witnessed during your time serving this industry?

LM: When I started at AACP in 2002, there was a documented national shortage of pharmacists, and that impacted our members because when attractive non-academic job openings started to arise, we began to recognize that there was an acute shortage of leaders and faculty. We launched several projects in the early part of that decade to address the vacuum of leadership, as well as some programs designed to attract current students and younger practitioners into faculty roles. These programs reminded the schools that they have a responsibility to cultivate an interest in faculty positions, to cultivate leaders.

Across that decade, things began to equilibrate as there were new school openings. And when we started

PharmCAS™, the Centralized Application Service (CAS™) with Liaison, the schools received more applicants than they could possibly efficiently process without us.

But now, we are in a situation where there aren't the same number of applicants for our available seats. There were only 84 schools of pharmacy when I started at AACP and there are 60 more than that now, which means that we still have to look for new leaders and new faculty.

We also certainly can't ignore technology. We've tried to stay on top of how technology was going to influence both higher education and practice. That change is going to happen much more rapidly in the future. I predict that the next shortage of pharmacists is going to come because physician offices and health systems have begun to see the value of integrating pharmacists not in dispensing roles, but in direct patient care roles as part of their interprofessional team. In turn, pharmacy schools need to make sure they're equipping current graduates — and maybe past graduates — with the skills and the understanding of how to be successful in that relatively novel practice model.

Liaison: Based on your experience, what would you say are the trends that must be addressed in order to provide better patient care and better health for the world?

LM: We need the complete maturation of the concept of interprofessional teams. Pharmacists recognize that medication use is a team sport, and we just want you to understand the role we play on that team.

Technology is also crucial, in terms of fully understanding that transformation and how to make sure that medication use doesn't get lost in the shuffle, that it doesn't get ceded to Amazon because they can get drugs very efficiently from point A to point B. Because that's not the whole story. The whole story is making sure the right drug is used for the right patient and that the patient is equipped to manage it properly, especially when you start talking about some of these hyper-expensive agents that won't all necessarily be managed by pharmacies. For instance, gene therapy won't necessarily be managed by a pharmacy, but pharmacists still need to understand the impact that

those cutting-edge therapies have.

Liaison: *The American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education* recently published your commentary on the workforce dynamics over the last 20 years. Can you speak more about the long-term perspective that you take in the piece?

LM: I think that the shortage of pharmacists from the early decade of this century did damage to the profession because it stifled innovation — especially among the most notable and most visible pharmacy sector, which is the chain corporate pharmacy sector.

When I was at the American Pharmacists Association, one of the significant things that we embarked upon was pharmacy-based immunization. At that point in time, 20 years ago, you could probably count on two hands how many pharmacists felt they were authorized and empowered to administer a flu shot. And today it's over 300,000. If APhA and our state partners hadn't taken that on seriously, it would never have happened. But the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) was very frustrated with the low percentage of senior adults who had their annual flu shot and their pneumonia vaccine after the age of 65, and it was killing people. When they were able to see that pharmacists could do this and opened up countless access points, they really became champions for us, and the rest is basically history.

Now we need to ask, "What are those other things that pharmacists might be able to do?" It will help relieve the burden from complex chronically ill patients in physician offices, and by doing that, they're probably keeping many of those people out of hospitals and emergency rooms.

I think that things are really aligning for health care. When you walk away from the fee-for-service payment model and we begin to get pharmacists compensated for providing patient care, I think it's one of the things that can change relatively rapidly, with value-based reimbursement and pay-for-performance approaches being implemented across much of the rest of the health care landscape. We just need to figure out how to share those savings and share those resources in order to be able to support the pharmacists in that practice model. ■

5 Things to Expect When Taking a Liaison Academy Virtual Course



We know that professional development, especially when traveling, can be costly. Liaison Academy is committed to providing you with accessible professional development and training opportunities. We've been working hard to convert all our in-person workshops to a virtual format. So, if you can't attend a course in-person, you can still gain the benefits that the workshops provide, which include:

1. Online Networking

Our online discussion boards allow you to meet other WebAdMIT™ users in your class and participate in group discussions. They're a great way to meet new people and learn from each other.

2. Reasonable Time Commitment

Each virtual course takes four weeks to complete. Once a week, you'll meet with the course instructor and other classmates in a live teaching environment for 1.5 hours.

3. Interactivity

Being in an online course doesn't mean you'll just sit there and listen. You can actively participate in each class through a variety of polls, chat sessions and virtual hand-raising.

4. More Retention of Information

No more information overload! Because you'll have a week between each class, you have time to digest all the information presented and can start applying it immediately. At the start of each class, you'll review material from the previous class and have the opportunity to ask questions you may not have thought of before.

5. Increased Knowledge

On average, learners participating in a virtual course said their knowledge about the subject increased by almost 40%.

Develop your
personal learning plan at
academy.liaisonedu.com



**IN THE
CUTTING-EDGE
BIOMEDICAL
SCIENCES FIELD,
BIOMEDCAS™
DRIVES AN
ADMISSIONS
REVOLUTION**

It's an exciting time in the biomedical sciences, with the recent 2019 Pew annual meeting revealing biomedical researchers' cutting-edge explorations of new approaches to flu, cancer and cell division. In the quest to cure disease and enhance human health, the biomedical sciences sector appears to be on the cusp of a golden age.

At the same time, the field's progress hinges on the success of the academic programs which produce the next generation of biomedical sciences researchers — and those programs, particularly their admissions offices, are facing unprecedented pressure due to more competition for applicants.

That's where BioMedCAS™, the first and only Centralized Application Service (CAS™) for biomedical sciences programs, can help. BioMedCAS offers an improved way to recruit, enroll and admit best-fit students while saving money and better allocating staff resources each admissions cycle.

Launched in July 2017 and developed

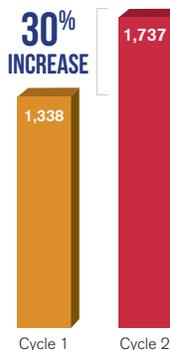
BioMedCAS: Results from 2017/18 and 2018/19 Cycles*

Cycle 1 **10** Programs

Cycle 2 **29** Programs

1.2
average applications per applicant

Unique Applicants Per Cycle



Participating Programs



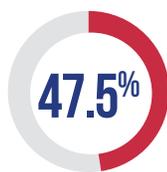
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
MILLER SCHOOL
of MEDICINE



Training Grant Eligible applicants went from



of applicants were domestic



increase in applicant pool between cycles 1 and 2

Application completion rate of



114% INCREASE
in female applicants (472 to 1,009)

*Cycle 2 data from the Aug-May 2018-2019 cycle as of 3/28/19

in partnership with biomedical sciences program directors, BioMedCAS is primarily geared towards Ph.D. programs, but any BioMedCAS participant that offers an approved Ph.D. in biomedical sciences can also accept master's program applications through the platform.

Several factors are contributing to a diversity renaissance in the biomedical sciences and other STEM disciplines — including #GREexit, the trend of graduate programs increasingly removing the GRE and other standardized tests as a requirement for admission. This has opened the door for a more holistic standard of application review that leads to greater admission for women, African-Americans and other underrepresented demographic groups in the biomedical sciences.

On a parallel track with this shifting admissions landscape, member schools are seeing strong results from participating in the BioMedCAS community as the platform's second admissions cycle nears its completion.

"Through the BioMedCAS program, our admissions office and faculty are both seeing time and effort savings," said Matthew Brandon, associate director of the Office of Graduate Studies at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. "Now, our prospective students are met with an application that's far more intuitive and easier to use than our prior application service. As far as processing goes, BioMedCAS eliminates a lot of the work on our side, and it makes it easier for our various committees to review their applicants."

The number of programs participating in BioMedCAS nearly tripled by the end of the second cycle. Participating programs have seen an application completion rate of 94%, average application volume growth of 34% and an average of 1.2 applications submitted per applicant.

What's even more significant, though, are the improved results for participating programs from cycle 1 to cycle 2. Year over year, BioMedCAS participants

have seen a 47.5% increase in total applicant pools, a 30% increase in unique applicants per cycle, a 114% increase in female applicants and an 18% increase in applicants who are eligible for training grants.

While the average admissions professional might think that such game-changing results would require sweeping, time-consuming institutional change, the Miller School of Medicine's Brandon praised the smooth experience of transitioning to a CAS.

"The setup process is very easy for administrators who just need to make their own minor customizations and set up their own local statuses [the labels given to applications at various stages of the application process], reports and lists," he said.

Brandon added that the school can "segment our applications by programs much better than before. This helps us ensure that the faculty see information that is relevant to their specific programs. That's been very helpful." ■

Time2Track™ Connects High School Students to Careers

How the experience management tool helped Kenton High School seniors document and report on internship experiences

“Time2Track is an essential component of the internship program. Thanks to the online tracking tool, we can instantly know how many required hours the students have completed to date for their internship and how many hours they have left to fulfill.”

Ohio-based Kenton High School (KHS) used to have students manually track their hours for its Wildcat Community Connectors (WCC) Internship Program. Students who participate in the program had to record the time they spent working in the field, interviewing with their mentors, job shadowing, receiving training and completing their capstone projects. Mentors, in turn, had to approve their interns' hours. It's a daunting amount of information to record on paper — and for KHS, it was unsustainable.

In the spring semester of 2016, when Christina Cross was preparing to assume her role as WCC's new coordinator, she researched potential solutions online. She discovered Time2Track™ and introduced it as the program's new recording mechanism.

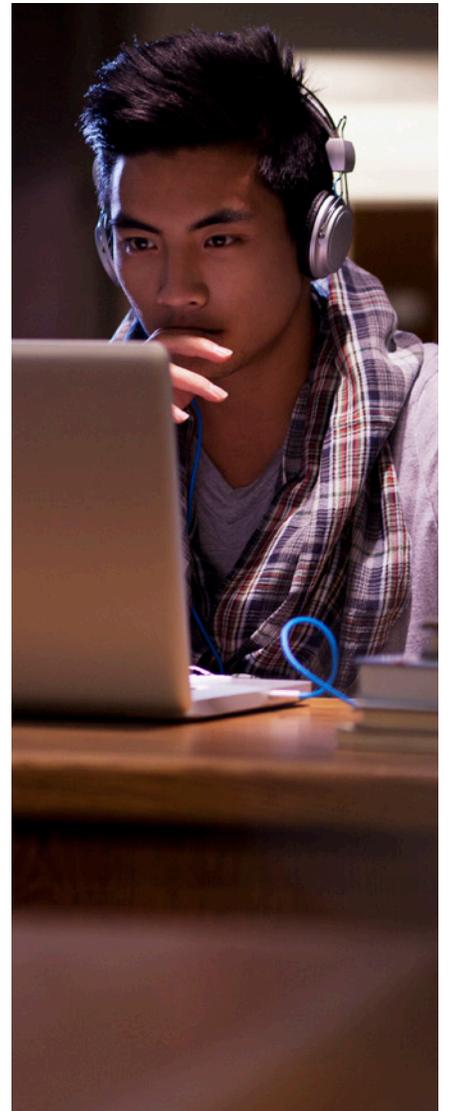
“Before Time2Track, students kept paper logs, which were quite easy for our students to misplace,” Cross recalled when she first took over the program. “I thought, ‘There's got to be a better way, a technological way, to capture their hours so that

everyone is on the same page about where the intern is in terms of fulfilling their hours requirement.”

Before implementing Time2Track, the former program coordinator had difficulty determining whether students were fulfilling the required hours at their internship sites. This was a problem considering accurately documenting students' hours, and then reporting that information to the school district and the state, is a requirement for students to obtain course credit for their internship.

“We needed something to prove that these students were at their internship sites and that they were fulfilling the requirements of the program,” Cross said.

Cross herself, who also teaches American Government courses at KHS, needed an efficient, paperless and online time tracking solution to manage the students' hours without dealing with paper internship timesheets. In the past, those timesheets needed to be presented to — and signed-off by — internship mentors. To make matters worse, they were also often lost or not filled out accurately.



Seamless, Technology-based Tracking with Real-time Updates

Time2Track offered WCC one place where internship hours could be recorded and reviewed in real-time, by everyone involved with the program. Students gained the ability to conveniently enter hours from their smartphones or laptops.

“At any time, day or night, I can go in and see exactly where a student is,” explained Cross, who uses the information to follow up with students who are falling behind in either fulfilling or recording their hours.

KHS students feel Time2Track keeps them organized, while mentors enjoy the new streamlined process of using the software to approve interns' hours, which frees them from the burden of reviewing and submitting physical timesheets.

“The school purchases the students' subscriptions to the program which includes the mentor approval piece — when the hours are input by the students, an email is sent to the mentor to approve of them. So, the mentors like using the program because it is not something they have to purchase and it's a convenient tool for them to see how many hours their intern has completed,” Cross noted.

Accountability, Improved Attendance and a Coherent Narrative

Time2Track has helped introduce a sense of trackable accountability within the internship program, which ultimately improves students' actual attendance.

Cross said she sends the mentors electronic updates on their interns' hours so they can know, for instance, if half the class has 40 hours and their particular intern only has 20, meaning the student needs to start coming in more to the internship site because they're behind.

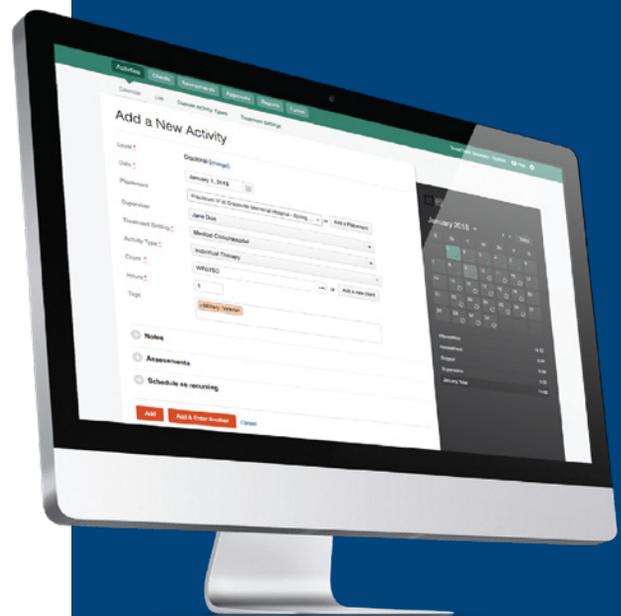
“I'll also print out that report so my interns can see exactly where they are, or I'll compare their performance to others in the class,” she said. “That helps either motivate them to turn in their hours or to get over to the internship site because there's only so much time in the semester to complete their internship.”

Further, KHS students use Time2Track as a de facto diary in which they reflect on their day-to-day activities at the internships. They revisit these entries when compiling their capstone projects for the semester.

“Time2Track helps them piece together their experience, and they incorporate that narrative into their paper or presentation about the internship,” said Cross. “Overall, Time2Track has helped students keep track of when they did things for their internship, so that when they talk about it or prepare their capstone projects, their work is more accurate.” ■

ABOUT THE WILDCAT COMMUNITY CONNECTORS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Wildcat Community Connectors (WCC) Internship Program is a semester-long, career skills course and internship program for Kenton High School juniors and seniors. Students meet local business leaders who influence hiring in their companies; learn about educational/training requirements for careers of their interest; and develop job skills that help them qualify for employment opportunities. Through the skills developed and the contacts they make during this program, KHS students increase their opportunity to be accepted into post-secondary programs and/or obtain quality, full-time employment following graduation from high school.





From a bull market to a bear market, or from the private sector to the public sector, it's almost impossible to find a company or institution that isn't concerned about its bottom line. This means that efficiency — and more specifically, achieving greater results with fewer resources — is a core objective for any business and in any industry.

That's especially true in today's evolving higher education landscape, as declines in institutional budgets and state funding underscore the need for schools to do more with less.

Ruffalo Noel Levitz's 2018 "Cost of Recruiting an Undergraduate Student" report found that nearly one-third of four-year private colleges and 7% of four-year public colleges had a budget decrease for the 2017-18 academic year. Nearly one-quarter of public institutions reported that their traditional marketing budgets went down, although 61% of all campuses said their digital marketing expenditures increased.¹

At the same time, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities reported that total state funding across the U.S. for public two- and four-year colleges during the 2017-18 academic year was more than \$7 billion below the 2008 funding level, with the consequences of this development including rising tuition fees as well as low-income families' struggles to meet those costs.²

How, then, can today's colleges and universities — and particularly their admissions offices — achieve the institutional progress which their key stakeholders expect when the options of increasing the budget and adding staff simply aren't on the table?

Among the various cloud-based tools and platforms that Liaison offers higher education institutions, its Centralized Application Service (CAS™) and Enrollment Marketing Platform (EMP™) empower schools to do more with less, growing and shaping enrollment while reducing overall effort and costs.

Today, more than 31,000 academic programs on over 1,000 campuses use a CAS. Liaison has partnered with more than 30 professional associations to create over 40 discipline-specific iterations of the CAS. As a result, associations can now better support their

members by promoting best practices and the adoption of a transformative tool in the admissions process. By joining a CAS, institutions receive a wide array of benefits at no cost, including program promotion; support throughout the on-boarding process and applicant cycles; and the scanning, processing and packaging of application materials. CAS enrollment management software includes program-specific workflows, scoring rubrics, interview resources and cutting-edge data reporting and analytics tools.

EMP, meanwhile, functions as a full-service extension of a school's marketing team. EMP creates integrated web, email, text, print and voice messaging campaigns within one convenient platform, enabling schools to scale their efforts without scaling admissions resources. The platform tracks and scores all activities and interactions and provides easy access to data at all times, providing staffers with critical knowledge of prospects' interest in a school, based on their behavior. Institutions benefit from a 360-degree view of their enrollment marketing plan and results through an easy-to-use web interface.

The following academic institutions are changing the game for their admissions and enrollment operations by leveraging CAS and EMP — and perhaps most importantly, they're doing more with less.

STRETCHING LIMITED RESOURCES

Minnesota State University (MSU), Mankato needed to increase enrollment without growing its admissions budget. To stretch limited resources, the school decided to evolve its communication strategy, using data to determine which students were most likely to enroll so its team could focus their outreach efforts.

With EMP, admissions staffers at MSU were able to track student behavior and assign engagement scores based on interactions with the University, then follow up with targeted multichannel marketing campaigns. MSU learned that 61% of accepted students with an engagement score of 300 or more enrolled — a much higher rate than the University's 32.5% yield overall.

This new insight enabled MSU staff to target the students most likely to attend with incentives such as application fee waivers or scholarships.

"EMP has helped us amend our communication strategy to ensure greater return on investment. We're now able to save costlier admissions tactics for those prospects most likely to enroll," says Director of Admissions Brian Jones.

In its first admissions cycle using EMP, the University experienced a 9.8% increase in enrollment for domestic freshmen over the previous year, welcoming 200 more first-year students and garnering over \$1.1 million in additional tuition revenue.

Like MSU, Temple University's School of Social Work (SSW) faced a daunting misalignment between its big-picture admissions goals and the resources it possessed to accomplish that mission.

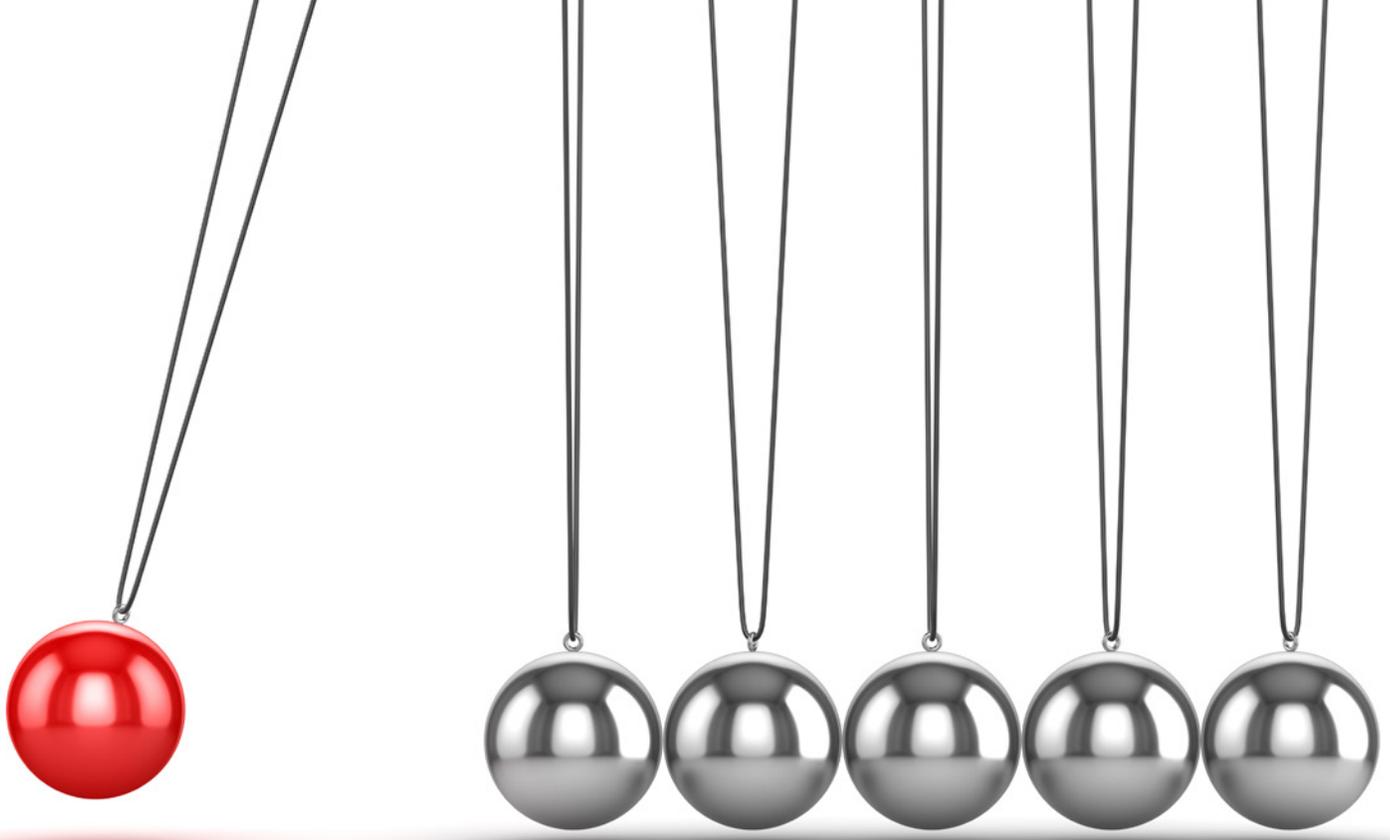
With a shortage of administrative support, admissions staffers at SSW were spending most of their time managing applications, leaving little left over for any other tasks.

"Having to do everything manually, including sending physical files out to faculty for review — and then hoping that faculty would return them — was a very tedious, long and cumbersome process," recalls former Academic Coordinator Erin Brosious.

By transitioning to SocialWorkCAS™, the CAS for graduate social work programs, and its cloud-based system, SSW saw a 75% reduction in the time it took to move applications through its review process. Now freed from routine administrative tasks, SSW staff can devote more attention to other important responsibilities, including the development of targeted messaging and communication plans.

"SocialWorkCAS is going to make you more available to your students, and it's going to make the relationships you have with your students more personable," she says. "The reality is that students want this. Students are becoming more familiar with a central application as they're applying to even undergraduate programs, so they're going to want this when they go to graduate school."

The same conundrum of limited resources — alongside a seemingly



limitless ambition for growth — loomed over Trinity Baptist College.

Trinity wanted to grow enrollment without having to hire additional admissions staff. The College needed to identify which students were most likely to attend and focus its marketing efforts on them. President Mac Heavener sought to improve his staff's ability to make meaningful connections with prospective students by automating the outreach process and putting tools in place that would help the College locate the most likely prospects.

With EMP, Trinity was able to continually collect information via form captures that were used to personalize campaigns. A microsite dynamically adjusted messaging and student checklists, keeping students fully engaged as they moved from inquiry to applicant to accepted student, and finally, to enrolled student. In addition, the system allowed admissions staff to track student interaction with campaign materials and assign points, helping staff determine which students were most interested in the College. The ability to view history quickly allowed admissions staff to manage prospects more easily.

THE GIFTS OF EFFICIENCY AND CENTRALIZATION

Samford University wanted to combine its various health-related degrees — more than 30 programs — to create its new College of Health Sciences. At the same time, the school wanted to maintain quality while increasing efficiency and growing enrollment.

Dr. Marian Carter, assistant dean of enrollment management and student services, worked to implement Liaison's CASs across the College's schools and programs to help admissions committees identify, evaluate and enroll right-fit students more efficiently. For programs unaffiliated with a national CAS, the University licensed UniCAS™, which delivers powerful enrollment management capabilities and supports a comprehensive view of enrollment efforts by program, by school and across the institution.

With a CAS, Samford's McWhorter School of Pharmacy increased its applicant pool by 125%. Jon Parker, assistant director of admissions at the McWhorter School, explains that "other solutions have the capability to pull in the application and let you see transcripts in

their original form, but with PharmCAS™, the CAS for Pharm.D. programs, that same information is displayed in a format that is more directly associated with what we need to see during the application process. That makes admissions committee meetings work a lot more smoothly."

Carter adds that the CAS platform's automatic GPA-calculation feature means she's "not spending her time typing every grade and every credit hour into an Excel spreadsheet and then calculating GPAs herself."

A more efficient recruitment process — driven by centralization and customization — was also the recipe for success at the Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE).

MSOE's Dean of Admissions Seandra Mitchell partnered with EMP to develop a holistic campaign strategy with multiple touchpoints across each stage of their funnel. Search campaigns, event promotions and drive-to-apply campaigns leveraged data on each student to deliver personalized communication across channels. Focusing on students' special interests, such as athletics or clubs, was instrumental in connecting with them.

“Internally we worked with athletics and student life to identify high-level buckets based on whether a student says they’re interested in club sports, playing a musical instrument or things like that. Then, we worked with the Liaison team to plan ways to promote MSOE to students based on their interests,” Mitchell says.

Using EMP, the engineering school increased enrollment by 15% from 2017 to 2018. EMP’s robust analytics made it clear which messages were resonating with applicants. Mitchell says that in the past, an admissions officer may have been reaching out to a student with no response, while a coach was meeting with that student and knew he or she planned to attend MSOE.

“Since EMP has helped us centralize our communication on a single platform, we can make sure we’re not duplicating efforts or missing anyone,” she says.

But does a traditional CRM (customer relationship management) solution have those same capabilities? That was the question for James Barrett when he came on board as director of admissions at Northeast Ohio Medical (NEOMED) University — and the answer was a resounding “no.”

NEOMED’s College of Pharmacy needed to grow its number of verified applications. Yet the College’s existing CRM possessed limited outbound email capabilities and an out-of-date user interface.

“NEOMED doesn’t only compete in this sphere with other colleges of pharmacy — we compete with Instagram and Amazon. Our user experience has to be seamless and intuitive,” Barrett says.

EMP helped grow NEOMED’s verified applications by 42%, while deposits increased by 39%. Barrett calls EMP “our one-stop shop prior to students entering the application phase. We also use the event manager to have students set up their visit experience and schedule their interviews. We’ve been using the e-commerce feature to have them deposit. Basically, we’ve gotten a ton of mileage out of EMP.”

Increasing its number of applicants also allowed the school to be more selective while producing a better yield.

“This was the rising tide that lifted all boats — it gave us a more predictable

interview pool, which in turn gave us a more predictable admissions committee decision set. We’ve become less reliant on a fairly unpredictable market,” says Barrett.

EXPANDING GEOGRAPHIC REACH

The College of St. Scholastica’s remote location in northern Minnesota makes it difficult for the school to reach far enough to maintain a healthy level of growth for its programs.

“As a small private school with fairly big programs, we were reaching only a very regional audience,” says Chad Oppelt, assistant director of graduate, extended and online admissions.

After it joined the CAS community, St. Scholastica’s number of applications for graduate programs rose by 30% — but the progress was about more than just the size of the applicant pool. “Our diversity has gone up, both in terms of culture and gender,” Oppelt says. “As a result of implementing NursingCAS™, the CAS for nursing programs, our minority and male acceptances to nursing programs increased by 10%. And our quality — average GPAs and average GRE scores across all CAS programs — has gone up, too.”

Similarly, the University of La Verne had its sights set beyond the school’s own backyard. Located in Southern California, the University seeks to draw applicants from all over the country as part of its institutional commitment to diversity, a core value for the University and all of its programs. The problem is that less than 25% of La Verne’s Psy.D. applications were coming from out-of-state prospects.

“As an APA-accredited program, we have to show deliberate work towards diversifying our applicant pool,” explains Jerry Dr. Kernes, Ph.D., the Psy.D. program’s chair. “It’s not good enough just to say that we have a diverse student body. We have to show how we’re working to attract applicants with unique perspectives.”

At first, Dr. Kernes says he was hesitant about introducing Liaison’s PSYCAS™, the CAS for psychology programs, “because I didn’t want to turn over control to an outside agency.” Yet he “found just the opposite has been true. I

feel like now we’re in better control of our application process.”

“We can easily pull all of the information that goes into the PSYCAS application, whether it’s related to applicant gender, diversity in different factors or geographic area,” he explains. “We also poll our applicants on where they hear about us, so we have a good base of knowledge [related to] where they’re hearing about our program.”

University of La Verne’s result has been a 10% increase in total applications and a 21% increase in out-of-state applicants.

“I would say to my colleagues at other universities, don’t be afraid to try it!” Dr. Kernes says. “If you’re similarly focused on increasing diversity and would benefit from more transparency into recruitment and enrollment trends, you stand to benefit greatly from PSYCAS.”

Dominican University represents yet another CAS success story in the realm of expanding geographic reach. Following its implementation of PostBacCAS™, the CAS for postbaccalaureate programs, the University’s postbac pre-medical program saw a tenfold increase in applications with no additional investment in advertising.

Carsi Hughes, the program’s director, was surprised by how CAS helped her admissions operation cover a much broader geographic range than Dominican’s typical reach.

“That’s impressive to the higher-ups,” Hughes says. “CAS has enhanced visibility and interest in our program — the numbers are unbelievable.”

MISSION: POSSIBLE

Before they implemented CAS or EMP, the common narrative for Liaison’s partners was the need to achieve sweeping goals without a corresponding pool of increased resources. In other words, it felt like *Mission: Impossible*.

Yet with Liaison’s cloud-based solutions, these academic institutions have flipped the script. In an era of dwindling financial and human resources, doing more with less is possible, after all. ■

1. 2018 Report: Cost of Recruiting an Undergraduate Student, Ruffalo Noel Levitz
2. Unkept Promises: State Cuts to Higher Education Threaten Access and Equity, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

LESS PAPER MORE DATA BETTER WORK

How Postbac Programs Rise to the Admissions Marketing Challenge

Applicants to postbaccalaureate programs are looking for an opportunity to enhance their academic credentials in order to continue pursuing a career in health care or medicine.

To attract the best of those students — and to help transform departmental operations at their institutions — today's postbac admissions professionals need to improve their own outlook as well. How? By embracing pioneering new marketing strategies that lead to better results through less work.

Just ask those who are already doing it. Cassidy Chambers, assistant director of admissions at Rocky Vista University, and Courtney Klipp, health professions advisor at Loyola Marymount University, recently participated in a Liaison webinar to talk about the improvements they made to recruitment and marketing initiatives at their programs. They spoke about what needed to change, how they implemented change and the benefits that followed.

Identifying Problems

"When I took over our Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences program, we were still managing paper files," Chambers said. "That was not going to work. Everything was done in-house and it just took a lot of staff time, whether it was tracking documents by hand or contacting applicants when things were missing. I was also working to standardize GPAs for all of our applicants before the faculty

review. It was hours and hours of work, and we knew that was not sustainable. That's why we started looking for some kind of application service to help us."

Chambers and her colleagues at Rocky Vista discovered that PostBacCAS™ — Liaison's Centralized Application Service (CAS™) for postbac programs — was a natural fit.

Klipp and her peers arrived at a similar conclusion after looking for ways to improve the recruiting and application experience at Loyola Marymount.

"Our pre-process was not great," Klipp says. "We were using a survey program, not an admissions program. On more than one occasion, we decided to open up applications again for late applicants, and we actually lost applications. This was a complete deal-breaker for me. That's just not acceptable.

"In addition to that, we were also using a paper system," Klipp continues. "That's obviously very cumbersome. Our admin was spending hours putting all the details in an Excel document. We also had some issues with our mail system. Transcripts and letters of recommendation weren't always going to the right office because the people who were looking at applications were in different buildings. It always seemed to be the case that if I was looking for a file, it was in someone else's office, which is three buildings over. And we faced challenges calculating GPAs, too."

Convinced they needed something else, Loyola Marymount also implemented PostBacCAS.

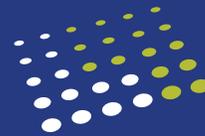
A New (Better) Way to Do Things

"I'm happy to say all of those issues are resolved now," Klipp adds. "We estimate that implementing PostBacCAS saved our admin about 90 hours of work. In addition to that, one of my favorite features is the ability to automatically do multiple GPA calculations. Now I have my BCPMs [biology, chemistry, physics and math grades], I have cumulative GPAs across multiple schools, GPAs for non-science courses, graduate work, postbac work. It's just amazing that I can see all of that in one place. It made this application season so much better."

Chambers shares Klipp's enthusiasm for PostBacCAS. She also points out that it has helped attract a more diverse pool of applicants to Rocky Vista: "We've definitely seen a greater diversity in the kinds of applicants we're getting," she says. "We're starting to see more applicants from all over the place. Even if they're not looking for Rocky Vista specifically, when people see us on PostBacCAS, they can dig in for more information and decide we might be a good fit. That's been great to see. PostBacCAS been very easy to use and has freed up a lot of time. It's just been a great transition for us overall." ■



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Three Reasons to Include Social Media in Your Admissions Outreach

Most admissions professionals inherently understand that social media is a crucial component in connecting with prospective students. Often, however, it can be a challenge to get administrators on board. It can be difficult to demonstrate value — especially in the early stages of a social media marketing program. Here are three compelling reasons for admissions to use social media:



1

There's an opportunity for big reach on a small budget.

Facebook has more than 2 billion users, including 81% of U.S. 18-29 year-olds. A whopping 91% of people in that age group use YouTube, 68% are on SnapChat and 64% are on Instagram. The vast majority of teens are using social media as well. Whether you're looking for undergraduate or graduate students, your prospects are online — and social.

There's no cost to set up an account or post

on social media channels (though most also offer paid advertising opportunities). And in many cases, colleges and universities have already created content that can easily be adapted for social media — event announcements, photos, blog posts, videos and the like. In addition, many of your current students and alumni are on social media creating content you can leverage. With a little time and effort, you can connect with a vast audience.

2

It's an opportunity to humanize your brand.

When students choose a school, the connections they've made with the institution's people have a tremendous influence on that decision. Social media offers a behind-the-scenes look into life at your school and an opportunity to get a sense of what it's like to be part of your community. Social media also presents an opportunity to listen to what your students and prospects are saying and to engage with them.

In a recent webinar, Dr. Leila Samii, assistant professor of marketing at Southern New Hampshire University, said many people “forget the ‘being social’ part of social media.” That includes interacting with students, alumni, faculty and others online, sharing their content and inviting them to engage. “It's all about empowering people to join the conversation,” Samii explained.

3

Students expect you to be there.

Students have grown up conducting research via social media and purchasing online. Students aren't just connecting with their friends on social media — they're following the coffeeshop down the street, sharing videos by their favorite bands and recommending products they love. They're

accustomed to being able to interact with businesses, brands and organizations via social media.

Odds are high that your competitors are on social media, engaging with prospective students. Don't give them an unnecessary advantage.

“A Stab in the Dark”

Dental Hygiene Programs
and the Quest to Predict
Student Success

Over the last five years at Virginia Commonwealth University School of Dentistry (VCU SOD), Michelle McGregor, RDH, B.S., M.Ed., has witnessed a seemingly paradoxical trend when it comes to the intersection of student recruitment and student performance.

McGregor, director of the dental hygiene program at VCU SOD, reports that incoming students' average math and science GPAs have steadily risen from 2.97 in 2015 to 3.01 in 2017 and stayed above 3.20 for the past two years — yet her students “seem to be not as academically strong” in the program itself despite their higher pre-enrollment GPAs.

This absence of a correlation between applicants' GPAs and their eventual performance in dental hygiene school isn't isolated to VCU SOD. According to McGregor many of her peers feel that “it's a stab in the dark.” She says, “You see these students with low GPAs who seem like they struggled in school but are successful, and then you see students with high GPAs who are struggling.”

But perhaps it's actually no paradox, after all. VCU SOD's dental hygiene program is among the growing number of programs across disciplines that are adopting a mission-driven process known as individualized “holistic admissions” or “holistic review” — by which balanced consideration is given to an applicant's experiences, attributes and academic metrics as a whole in order to determine how the individual might contribute to the academic program and the field of dental hygiene. This admissions approach allows for a review and inclusion of unconventional application materials and interviews such as auditions or portfolios.

Specifically, the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) defines holistic review as “a flexible, individualized applicant assessment tool” which “provides admissions committees a balanced means of considering candidates' personal experiences, attributes and academic credentials, along with qualities and characteristics that would prove valuable in both dental school and the oral health profession.”

The VCU SOD dental hygiene program's admissions rubric features seven criteria for

evaluating applicants, including their GPA, community service, leadership, course selection in math and science, letters of recommendation, views about teamwork and personal statements. Applicants can view these criteria once they log in to ADEA DHCAS™, the Liaison-powered Centralized Application Service (CAS™) for applicants to all levels of dental hygiene education programs.

Additionally, because individuals from diverse backgrounds contribute to the learning experience, the VCU SOD dental hygiene program also takes into consideration multiple intersecting factors— academic, non-academic and contextual — that in combination uniquely define each applicant. Examples of non-academic factors include special talents (e.g., musical and athletic) and whether a student is the first generation in their family to go to college, has won awards and honors or done community service. It also takes into account their socioeconomic status and work experience. For instance, did the applicant hold jobs while going through school, thus exhibiting an exemplary level of work ethic and tenacity? Or how did the applicant balance the demands of schoolwork and working a part-time job?

"I've seen 4.0 GPA students who come in here and struggle, and 2.8 students who excel because they have all these other skill sets that they bring to the table, and they work hard and have tenacity. Sometimes it's hard to tease that out of an application," says McGregor.

She continues, "We like to know whether prospective students have done volunteer work in the oral health community or outside of it prior to applying. We have so many volunteer opportunities in our program and a huge service-learning component, so civic-mindedness is something that we value in an applicant."

In this respect, an increasingly

holistic process for admissions can help dental hygiene programs like the one at VCU SOD begin to better predict student success, by first acknowledging that conventional academic criteria such as GPA are pieces of a larger puzzle and subsequently designing more well-rounded admissions processes accordingly.

It's also widely understood that one of the primary goals of a holistic admissions approach is cultivating greater diversity at academic institutions, while simultaneously expanding the definition of the word "diversity" itself to encompass not just race and ethnicity, but a complete picture of the applicant.

In fact, Monica L. Hospenthal, RDH, B.S., M.Ed., director of dental hygiene programs at Pierce College, notes that the program had its most diverse incoming class ever this past year in terms of gender and ethnicity. What spurred that development? As potential factors, Hospenthal cites both college-wide initiatives and her program's participation in ADEA DHCAS.

"There are not many baccalaureate programs in dental hygiene, so ADEA DHCAS is helpful because it helps prospective students see all their options," says Hospenthal.

Being part of the ADEA DHCAS network has lent dental hygiene programs at Pierce College increased national visibility.

"It's important to have this increased exposure, and links well with where our program is going," she says. "I'm looking forward to watching this to see if ADEA DHCAS has had an effect on the diversity of our student body."

McGregor, meanwhile, lauds how ADEA DHCAS has streamlined the logistical side of her admissions operation.

"As I send applications out to the faculty, they can go online and review the files," McGregor says. "With ADEA DHCAS, I can pull out various comprehensive

reports to look at how many items applicants are missing, and which items are missing, ultimately helping us communicate better on our website or during our open houses. That way, students know what they need in order to apply and can have all the requirements met."

Similarly, Hospenthal says the cloud-based ADEA DHCAS platform boosts the effectiveness of her two-person admissions staff. "Since dental hygiene programs are smaller than their counterparts in dentistry, as most of them are affiliated with community colleges rather than universities, they have less personnel to perform application processing work. ADEA DHCAS helps us extend limited resources."

Nonetheless, dental hygiene programs' quest to improve their projections on student success is far from complete.

"Our programs have continued to add components to our curriculum based on the scope of practice changes, new technologies, accreditation requirements and new research over the years, but we're still doing it in the same academic timeframe," she says. "Today's students are still learning everything that I learned as a dental hygiene student, and more. They're having to learn how to use nonsurgical lasers, how to use CAD/CAM technology and intraoral cameras. They participate in interprofessional education. We didn't take anything away from their plates, yet we're adding things into the program. Students still need the basic foundational knowledge, so it's difficult to take anything out of the curriculum."

Hospenthal agrees: "Washington state has had expanded dental hygiene since 1971, which includes local anesthesia and filling and placing amalgam and composite restorations. Balancing this robust curriculum, and what is necessary for 'entry level safety' against the ever-expanding knowledge of

practice and science, is not only stressful for students, but also for the faculty who must determine how to guide the teaching of the students. Any opportunity to streamline and work more efficiently in our processes is a positive move forward, like using ADEA DHCAS."

How can dental hygiene programs determine which students will successfully cope with today's more rigorous requirements? Since grading and GPA tabulation varies for every school and program, McGregor argues that there needs to be better standardization of evaluation mechanisms.

"We need a better way to assess critical thinking skills and reading comprehension to help us better determine how well our applicants will do once they're admitted," says McGregor, noting discussions she's had with colleagues who've reported that applicants who score higher on reading comprehension assessments tend to be more successful in dental hygiene school.

What further muddies the waters of predicting student success, McGregor explains, is the limited number of dental hygiene programs that are using ADEA DHCAS for application processing.

"Where is that discipline-wide information to assess trends in dental hygiene, like we have in dentistry?" McGregor asks. "We'd gain valuable insights from data on more nuanced metrics like how many first-generation students are applying to dental hygiene school, how many students are relocating out of state for programs and how many applicants are pursuing dental hygiene as a second career."

Indeed, as ADEA DHCAS continues to expand by adding institutional partners, such new data points could be on the horizon — making the prospect of predicting student success in dental hygiene less of "a stab in the dark." ■

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With Liaison, Boston University Re-Ups on Success, Refocuses on Metrics And Fine-Tunes Its Graduate Admissions Goals

By Renewing Its Commitment to Robust Online Graduate Admissions and Marketing Tools, Boston University Simplifies Recruiting in More than a Dozen Graduate Schools

Inspired by results achieved while working with Liaison in recent years, Boston University (BU) recently finalized its plans for the continued implementation of two key Liaison solutions: UniCAS™, a cloud-based platform for centralized application management that offers benefits to applicants and admissions professionals alike, and the Enrollment Marketing Platform (EMP™), a marketing and CRM solution designed to transform student engagement for admissions, enrollment and recruitment professionals.

"We are very excited to continue our partnership with Liaison," says David Cotter, BU's assistant provost for graduate enrollment management. "The Liaison UniCAS and EMP products have helped us to successfully manage a dynamic, growing graduate admission and recruitment effort in a decentralized environment."

The University initially implemented UniCAS and EMP in 2015. At the same time, BU strengthened its commitment to recruit, admit and yield high-quality graduate students. BU experienced a 22% increase in graduate applications and a 30% increase in entering first-year graduate students between 2014 and 2018.



Liaison's GradCAS™ Fuels a 382% Increase in Applicants in the past Nine Months

Dozens of Institutions Drive Significant Admissions Outcomes with Centralized Application Service (CAS™) for Graduate Schools Without National Affinity Programs

With GradCAS™, programs gain access to a marketplace designed specifically to meet their admissions needs. The service includes a student-facing application and application management software, along with scanning and packaging services and applicant phone and email support. The comprehensive combination frees graduate staff to focus on more important tasks, such as recruiting and advising prospective students.

Compared with its inaugural year, GradCAS is already reporting such results as a:

- 382% increase in unique applicants.
- 471% increase in participating schools.
- 451% increase in applications submitted.

The Graduate College at Missouri State University in Springfield was an early adopter of the service. "GradCAS is helping us implement best practices across all of our programs," shared Dr. Julie Masterson, the College's associate provost and dean. "With it, we're on top of all the admissions practices our programs are using. We're able to understand them, defend them or modify them if needed. That level of control wouldn't have been possible without this proven admissions technology.



COAMFTE Partners with Time2Track to Standardize Clinical Training Management

Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education Works with Clinical Training Management Leader to Benefit Students and COAMFTE-accredited Programs

As a part of the collaboration, COAMFTE-accredited programs and programs in the process of seeking COAMFTE accreditation can now leverage Time2Track™ to track student achievement and the relational and systemic experiences provided by their students.

"Time2Track formalizes clinical experience tracking. The structure it offers helps programs determine if their students have acquired the skills they'll need to be successful in the field," shared Tanya A. Tamarkin, COAMFTE director of accreditation. "For COAMFTE-accredited programs using Time2Track, students will save time tracking their experiences, and programs will save time analyzing and reporting that data to stakeholders, including COAMFTE."

Mercer University's master's of family therapy program is one of many COAMFTE-accredited programs that have already begun leveraging Time2Track to benefit students and the program. "Using Time2Track has ensured our students meet our expectations, and it has the added benefit of offering our students post-graduation access to information that's stored on the platform," shared Janette D. Carter, M.Ed., program specialist in the Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences Department at Mercer.

To read full news articles, visit liaisonedu.com/news

THE FOURTH QUADRANT



In each edition of *The Admissionist*, a Liaison team member joins us in The Fourth Quadrant to share their unique perspective on issues facing higher ed today. With nearly 30 years split between industry

and ed tech, Liaison's Executive Vice President of Sales and Marketing, Craig Stanford, has spent his entire career collaborating with, and learning from, clients and strategic partners. Craig joins us to share how understanding their needs and challenges has helped Liaison to grow, change and evolve over the last couple of decades.

Liaison's Clients Inspire Our Solutions

I've lost track of how many times people have commented on the incredible depth and breadth of the partnerships Liaison has created across higher education over the years. I've lost track because it's such a consistent conversation that I've had with the deans, admissions leaders and professional association directors dedicated to ensuring that the best students are matched with the best institutions year after year. But really, it isn't hard to understand why. For more than 20 years, Liaison has demonstrated our ability to adapt, grow and thrive in helping institutions achieve their most important admissions and class-shaping goals. And we've done this while keeping you — the client — in mind.

Today, Liaison proudly serves more than 31,000 programs on more than 1,000 campuses nationwide, managing more than 2.5 million applications each year. And as we continue to grow, we continue to evolve our offering, while at the same time pioneering new solutions to overcome your ever-changing challenges. Of course, we couldn't have achieved such success if we only cared about signing new clients each year. On the contrary. The reason we're able to continue our growth is because we have focused on one primary goal — our clients' satisfaction. As a result, we have become an integral part of our partners' success, and we've grown to become the nation's leading provider of strategic enrollment management solutions.

Here's why I think we were able to accomplish this:

We ask you the right questions. This all starts with our consultative approach, which involves a detailed discovery phase at the beginning of every campus engagement. Our field team goes door to door, spending time with you and your staff to understand how your institution's operations are truly unique. This allows us to shape and configure a solution that fits with your existing infrastructures and is tailored to ensure a successful cycle launch and finish, year after year.

We seek to deeply engage with you. In order to understand your business as well as you do, we commit to understanding the details of your operations. It's how we learn why you may be challenged to reach your

goals and, based on our experience from thousands of engagements, know exactly which knobs to turn in order to help you make progress. Our consultative approach is informed by engaging with thousands of clients at institutions large and small, public and private. When making recommendations, we keep your risk tolerance in mind to ensure we maximize your results while we keep you out of harm's way.

We ensure your goals continue to be top of mind with our account management and support teams. Often, when a new project goes live, other providers move on. We don't. Instead, we include a dedicated account manager as an extension of your team. Just as the majority of our field and account management teams have sat in your seat on a campus like yours, so has your account manager. They understand strategic enrollment management and our technology. They have the experience of working with hundreds of higher ed leaders to inform their practices. This firsthand experience is a main reason why we retain 99% of our clients year after year.

How else does Liaison help provide leadership to our community of clients and partners?

We engage directly with admissions leaders on a continuous basis to develop thought leadership content. We work with our advisory boards and with our association partners in your discipline to gain critical knowledge that helps us develop best practices. We share those regularly through weekly webinars and at 60 higher education conferences throughout the year.

We convene some of the greatest admissions minds in our industry each year to share their insights at our Liaison User Conference. This conference was created to provide learning opportunities — not just for you to hear from our team about how to get more from our software and shared services, but also directly from your peers, who provide a majority of the conference's content.

We put all the pieces in place for an "omni-channel" approach. Whether you want to drive application completion while reducing overall effort and costs, deliver personalized digital and print communications

or evaluate and enroll "best-fit" students, Liaison can show you the way through our admissions management and enrollment marketing tools and services that complement our Centralized Application Services (CASs™). Our solutions were developed to manage and support the full strategic enrollment management funnel in order to drive yield on your campus.

We treat admissions like an art and like a science. The art of admissions involves crafting customized communications and marketing initiatives designed to garner the attention of best-fit applicants, then drive them through the application process to get the exact result you want: matriculation. The science involves informing the art with strategic data, evolving the technology you require, understanding the strategies you'll employ and then leveraging the data you'll mine in order to ensure that all of your efforts pay off. From product development, to customer service, to information technology and marketing, Liaison meets our clients' needs, based on their unique priorities and requirements.

I didn't sit down to write this article with the intention of suggesting you implement a one-size-fits-all solution to address your most complex challenges. In fact, I recognize the opposite to be true. What works for one institution may not make the most sense for yours. I did, however, want to remind you that Liaison's comprehensive suite of enrollment marketing and application management services, paired with our data analytics tools, will empower you to do whatever is necessary to build your best class, year after year. I also wanted to remind you that our success is contingent upon your satisfaction. We know it's how we have built — and will continue to build — our community, year after year. ■

How has Liaison helped you build a better class? Share your answer by tweeting @liaisonedu and using #buildabetterclass.



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