



MN State College – SE Technical

Title: Sealing the Deal: *Improving enrollment*
Date Begun: 10.01.07 **Status:** Undetermined
Project Length: 2 years

Description 

This project will impact how our college reaches out to and connects with our prospects and applicants initially by fostering data collection and management practices that gives our college a more complete picture of who are students are, where they are coming from, and what impacts their decisions to attend, or not to attend Southeast Technical College. Results will propel a comprehensive analysis and improvement of current enrollment services and marketing practices.

All employees at Southeast Technical interact with students directly or indirectly. This project will also address instilling enrollment management as a college-wide responsibility; laying the groundwork for increasing SE Technical’s prospect to application and application to enroll percentages.

Anticipated results include:

- Creating program student profiles of where Southeast Technical students are coming from and why
 - Learning, program by program, what truly “seals the deal” for students attending SE Technical
 - Learning, program by program, why prospects or applicants chose not to enroll
- Creating program profiles of what makes each program truly distinctive among its competitors
 - Including planning steps to attain distinction
- Evaluating and revising the interactions with prospective students to ensure return on college investment (time and resources)
- Foster college-wide understanding of enrollment as a collective responsibility
- Foster college-wide understanding of the role our facilities (classrooms and labs) plays in converting prospective students to enrollees
- Better integration of instructors and program advisory committees in determining marketing (free and purchased) and prospect interaction opportunities
- Evaluation and revision of college and program informational/promotional materials and media

Scope: This project is projected for two years; its purpose to set in motion practices that will foster continual evaluation of the data we collect to learn of our students needs as a path to understanding the role each employee plays in fostering enrollment at SE Technical.

Related AQIP Criteria 

Primary	Category 3: Understanding student and other stakeholder needs
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Related AQIP Principles 

Principle	Leading
Principle	Information
Principle	Learning
Principle	Agility

Principle

Involvement

Rationale for Action 

From Fall 2001 to Fall 2006, college enrollment increased 60% at Southeast Technical. With a slight decline in Fall 2007 (-4.8%) the college FYE's, in FY08 are project to be 2% higher than FY07, this despite the closure of two college academic programs. While the prospect to application percentage has risen from 15.6% in FY04 to 20.2% in FY07, the applicant to enrollment percentage has declined, from 51.8% in FY04 to 39.3% in FY07. With increased competition by neighboring in-state and out-state institutions, a shrinking pool of available high school graduates, rising costs, and increased financing of a college education, this college is acutely aware that both maintaining and growing enrollment is critical to long-term institutional success and viability. But enrollment for enrollment sake is not motivation enough. Past college growth lies primarily in general education, allied health and online offerings; there are viable trade and business programs, as well as new programs in development (on-site and through distance learning) where college capacity has yet to be reached or explored.

This project demonstrates enhanced collaboration among Enrollment Services and Marketing. In years past, the focus of marketing shifted away from marketing programs to marketing the college as a whole. While successful overall, the college is looking to balance its marketing approach to include more program-specific marketing.

This project directly addresses college strategic goal 2.1: Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing plan for the college and its educational programs.

Areas Affected 

Primary: Student Services (enrollment services, admissions, registration, learning support services, and financial aid), and Academic Affairs. Secondary: All college areas.

Processes Affected 

Recruiting, marketing, admissions, financial aid, and any admission processes/interactions within academic programs to prospective, admitted, and enrolled students.

Process Measures 

Process measures are to include:

- Enrollment results from high schools within the college's service region; these data broken further down by category: non-traditional, under-represented, ethnic background, income, gender, etc.
- Program by program student profiles (ages, gender, education background, ethnicity), including yearly attrition data
- Results of evaluation of the customer service processes we provide to students (prospective or otherwise)
- Results of evaluation of the appearance of college classrooms and labs
- Results of evaluation of communication processes and modes used to reach prospects, applicants and enrollees
- Results of evaluation of current promotional materials and media

Outcome Measures 

Quantitative measures include: % of Prospects to Applicants, % of Applicants to Enrollees (college totals and by program), and the number of general public relations items disseminated within the college service region. Qualitative measures include the ACT student opinion survey.

Selected process data will likely be adopted as permanent outcome data (student profiles, H.S. recruitment results, customer service evaluations, facility evaluations).

Performance Targets 

Phases

Quantitative and Qualitative Stretch Targets

One	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Action Step: Identify and recruit core team <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. establish timelines 2. Action Step: Present to Academic Leadership Team 3. Action Step: Data review and analysis <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What do we currently collect and what do we need? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. What is useful? 4. Action Step: Additional data identification and analysis <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What specific data should be included in a program-specific student profile? b. What specific data should be included in a program profile? c. Which H.S.'s are netting results? Why? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Which H.S.'s are not netting results? Why? ii. Students from H.S.'s outside our contacts: why are they coming? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. non-traditional/under-represented, students of color, low income, etc. d. E-brochure traffic <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Is it working? ii. Is the current website impacting it? e. Attrition rates by program f. Student interviews: What sealed the deal to attend your program? g. Non-apps/non-enrollees: Why not that program? Why not Southeast Technical? h. Other as determined 5. Action Step: Materials review <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. From the student's perspective <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Catalog ii. View pieces iii. Course schedule iv. E-brochure v. other 6. Action Step: Dissemination of results: Who needs to learn of results to make decisions? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. To support assertion that we are all recruiters <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. workshop presentations ii. faculty/staff facilitation opportunities 7. Action Step: Project evaluation - Are we on track?
Two	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Customer Service Evaluation <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What is the prospect's impression of SE Technical from interest to inquiry to on-site visit? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Recruiting atmosphere review <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Customer service evaluation 2. Classroom/lab evaluation 3. All-facilities evaluation 9. Action Step: Identify and enact improvements 10. Action Step: Project evaluation: Are we on track? 11. Action Step: Create "Student Profile" by each program <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. faculty and student involvement 12. Action Step: Create "Program Profile" for each program

	<p>13. Action Step: Dissemination to all faculty and college leaders a. “What are our jobs as recruiters?”</p> <p>14. Action Step: Identification and enacting of program-specific marketing opportunities a. Pay and free i. Involved: faculty, advisory committees</p> <p>15. Action Step: Middle School mentoring results i. Is it making a difference?</p> <p>16. Action Step: Automated Enrollment Management Systems a. Pursue possible Hobson pilot b. E-options to communicate with students (<i>status of e-mail account at application?</i>)</p> <p>17. Action Step: Project evaluation: Are we on track?</p>
Three	<p>18. Action Step: Identify RW-/Winona-centric marketing opportunities a. Where do the differences lie? b. How best to reach each community/region</p> <p>19. Action Step: Alumni Services Promotion</p> <p>20. Action Step: College services promotion a. the college as community partner - services beyond education for employment</p> <p>21. Ensuring long-term success: What next?</p>

Timeline for Completion

Phase I: October 8, 2007 - February 1, 2008

Phase II: February 4, 2008 - June 2, 2008

Phase III: June 3, 2008 - May 1, 2009

Keeping Focus

Accountability structures for action projects include regular reporting to both the college Institutional Effectiveness committees as well as the college Executive Council. Project managers directly report to the Vice President of Student Affairs.

Anticipated involvement by individuals and groups includes:

Phase 1: Data gathering and interpretation will involve Institutional Research, V.P. of Student Affairs, Academics, H.S. Counselors, select faculty, students, IT staff, high school guidance counselors, area high schools students and non-traditional students. Presentation of results review and analysis to decision makers, including the President’s cabinet, college Executive Council, Academic Leadership Team, as well as all staff via staff meetings, workshops and in-service days. Includes collaborative decision-making with the college Vice President of Student Affairs and the Vice President/Chief Academic Officer.

Phase 2: Actions will involve college recruiters, counselors, select college faculty, program advisory committees, college students, deans and coordinators, institutional research, and senior college leaders. Phase 2 will also foster collective decision making though facilitated discussions among program faculty and advisory committees, faculty within departments, and through discussions at senior levels within the college.

Phase 3: Will involve the college Foundation, community leaders, and related college personnel

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Opportunities

- Profile of programs to be fine tuned
- Involve more people in marketing
- Virtual tour of new campuses programs
- Custom training in advisory committee meetings
- Partnerships w/businesses
- Good communication between staff & faculty
- Attractive facilities – both campuses
- Help to advertise to community and unemployment
- Unique programs should be promoted outside of region, these details will find info
- Prepare for HS shortage
- Knowledge to increase marketing outreach
- Find out personal stories
- Marketing strategies
- Better advising gen ed students
- Step into Hispanic cultured students
- Create stronger ties with industry
- Increase enrollment
- Retention & returning students into more degrees
- Track what we do to see what students want
- Variety of instructors
- One stop shop
- Personal contacts/visits
- Gather new data for new students to modify existing programs
- Local positives
- More summer offerings & evenings
- On-site feel, personal visits
- Mkt to non-traditional students and offer more programs in demand
- Close to dense pop – more housing opportunities
- Wider, more diverse group of students
- Increase outdoor showcase
- Online marketing
- Program profiles in website
- Get people into newly remodeled bldgs
- Get new programs that competitors don't have
- Affordable tuition
- Adaptation to changing job mkt
- Steel first two yrs away from 4 yr college
- Auto enrollment
- Connection between great instructors & relationship with industry
- Have instructors go to schools
- Have state of art equipment
- Figure who are real prospects
- Newer material
- Unique programs availability
- Friendliness of faculty/staff, helpfulness, customer friendly
- Get to business to give awareness of what we offer
- Market more to the non-traditional students
- Class times available evenings, weekends, off-site, etc...
- Give credits for experience
- Evaluate trends & understand who our student populations
- An opportunity to better our services to students
- PSEO – concurrent enrollment, honors online
- Increase scholarship opportunities
- Programs specific marketing
- New program development
- In demand programs/unique programs
- New & improved internships & partnerships w/business and industry
- Sell environment & geographical area we are in
- Emphasize out cost of living being lower than our competitors
- Excellent student services
- Faculty/staff get along well; friendly environment
- Easier to receive information
- Flexibility of starts
- Evening classes
- Future change from hours to credit
- Adult learners out in industry
- Bring custom and college closer
- Valid data where students came
- Replenish corporate market & partners
- Tradeshow – get attention of potential students
- Continue trade and tech days
- Pushing advertising
- Concentrate on “honey holes”
- Implement a referral program w/reward
- Tapping knowledge of existing staff
- Child care services
- Baby boomers retiring – need to look at openings

Challenges

- All taking ownership
- LRC needs to have time extended
- Expensive
- Expensive
- Willingness to change
- Flexible class schedule available
- Higher tuitions, gas costs
- Online courses taken from on campus students
- Students aren't being matched to appropriate programs
- Find out why students are choosing MSC-ST
- Money
- Increased competition
- Marketing focus to include instructors & specific programs
- Lack of overall plan right now, but that could be changed
- Fewer high school students
- Instructors are stretched so thin
- Funding – start up costs, equipment
- Time commitment
- Students perception of concept of 4 yr vs 2 yr college
- Money
- Need to run registration reports
- Online distance learning is not as organized and easy as should be
- Retention is still hard to do, but important
- Multiple apps to college
- Less business industry partners
- Cost to develop new programs
- Increase summer courses, generals & online
- Market may be saturated, workforce moves out of town
- Become a business rather than educational facility
- Resources – time, money, facility
- Competition in area
- Attitude toward sales
- Number of students needed to get something new
- Students don't have the correct info
- Space offerings
- Time to develop data
- Student participation
- Address rising gas/housing costs to get from school to home
- Money
- Competition
- Not enough staff
- Personal stories of each program
- Data itself, will it serve purpose
- Collaborate effort of everyone on campus
- Facilities of campuses (not up to date)
- Funding
- Competition
- Lack of housing
- Time and resources needed
- Changing environment
- Challenge of maintaining data

Volunteers: “Sealing the Deal: Improving Enrollment”		
Sue Frosch-Erickson	Melissa Carrington-Irwin	Scott Jenson
Nate Emerson	Sarah Gatzaff	Christine Braun
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