

Creating A Campus That **OWNS** Admissions

Adapted from questions asked and answered during a ValueBased.com webinar featuring Dr. Al Cureton, President at the University of Northwester-St. Paul.

Q1

When you oversaw enrollment, was there anything you wished your President had done to support a culture of "Admissions Readiness" or "everyone owns Admissions"?

ANSWER: DR. CURETON'S WISHLIST

- **Be The Champion** - Presidents would stress that enrollment belongs all over campus—everybody needs to "own" this.
- **Be A Part Of Recruiting Process** - Presidents would stop and talk to students on tours, ask questions, and get out of the office.
- **Create A Realistic Culture** - Promise realistic goals and reach them —don't promise "pie in the sky" and then fail to achieve. That enables us to have trust and confidence in each other.
- **It Starts At The Top** - You create trust by the relationships you build at the top and then make sure it trickles all the way down.
- **Make The Hard Decisions** - It's our responsibility to make the hard decision to let people go when it's not working out.

When it comes to enrollment—how important is it to have your missions statement and campus ethos aligned across campus?

It's critically important that the President and the VP of Enrollment work together to make sure there is an alignment. This is also why it's important for the Chief Enrollment Officer have a seat at the table, right next to the Provost or the Chief Student Affairs Officer, and that it's a team approach to ensure Enrollment matches the Mission, which drives everything and it needs to match the ethos of the campus.

Q3

What is the President's role and responsibility in initiating and reinforcing the "All In" campus attitude?

- **Reflect Commitment To An "All In" Culture** - President's need to reflect a commitment to empower the rest of the campus to buy-in.
- **Establish Expectations Up Front** - Set the expectations up front to all new hires: We're in this together—we're tuition-driven. We all benefit from this.
- **Take Advantage Of Strengths/Skills** - Equip different personalities with questions and tasks that maximize their gifts and strengths.
- **Share Data** - Share who is coming, who is not (and why) to learn from the situation, etc. The data doesn't lie! Then each department sees the correlation—particularly over history—and feels the need to do something about it.

How much, and what kind, of data do you recommend to launch, manage, and monitor the success that prioritizes enrollment campus-wide?

All of it! The transparency cuts through any established silos...there's always some place we can learn. Or possibly salvage one or more.

Q5

When we say "Everyone" does that include people who answer the phones and mow the lawns?

- **YES!** We try to encourage EVERYONE, across the board—whether it would be someone in the library, Student Life, Support Services, groundskeepers—to understand they have an opportunity to have a significant impact on students. And they want that!
- It's a part of everyone's responsibility to make sure students have a positive experience.

How do you gain the attention and/or buy-in from Faculty?

1. **We're In This Together** - You can't teach if there are no students here. You are the heart and soul of this institution. Alumni will always say that their relationships with faculty were the most important/impactful thing that happened to them at the institution.
2. **It's Not A Job, It's a Calling** - (Most) Faculty are at the institution because they want to be —because they are drawn to the Mission. Those are the individuals you want to capture to have a part of the recruiting process.
3. **Everyone Has A Role/Impact** - Even faculty who are just not comfortable with the recruiting process, there's still an opportunity for them to make an impact...even if it's a simple follow up note. (Maximize everyone's gifts and strengths.)
4. **Go Back To The Data** - It's hard to argue with the stats and trends.

Q7

How do you see the differences between the role of the President and the directors of enrollment?

- A President wants the enrollment officer to drive enrollment BUT...
- The President must realize that he/she is the Chief Enrollment Officer.
- The President must also give the enrollment officer every tool they need to succeed and then come alongside them to help.

Can you give examples of ways you affirm or reinforce the different departments and their involvement in enrollment?

1. Ask the President to provide expressions of gratitude or affirmation to members on the Enrollment Team (or Faculty or Staff) who are succeeding. People always appreciate genuine affirmation.
2. Acknowledge people's impact.
3. Create a culture that we're all in this together, such as bonuses with finances do well.
4. Consider affirmations that we're all in this together, such as bonuses with finances do well.

Q9

You are passionate about TRUST. Can you talk a little bit about building a culture of trust?

Creating trust is absolutely critical. The benefits of trust are 1) that we know who are as a community; 2) we know our niche; and 3) we know our mission and there's uniformity as to what that is across the organization. That's an advantage to us. But that comes from trusting each other.

We also have to be realistic: Flat is the new "up."

