

# ENROLLMENT MANAGER

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## OKAY, BUT WHAT HAVE YOU DONE FOR ME LATELY? (*ROOSEVELT UNIVERSITY INCREASES FRESHMEN ENROLLMENTS BY 70% IN A SINGLE YEAR*)

John W. Dysart  
President  
The Dysart Group, Inc.

Mary Hendry has earned a fine reputation in Illinois higher education. Her long career in enrollment management has been stellar and many top administrators throughout the state and beyond owe their careers to her training and mentoring. Active involvement in professional associations over the years has provided another outlet for her to share knowledge and encourage young people new to the profession.

Mary serves currently as Vice President for Enrollment Management at Roosevelt University in Chicago. Under her leadership and with the assistance of her enrollment team, Roosevelt University has experienced unprecedented growth and improvement. Consider the following accomplishments from 2002-2007:

- Total FTE at Roosevelt University increased by 9%.
- New FTE increased by 29%.
- New, full-time undergraduate enrollment increased by 43.8%.
- The number of students living in residence halls increased a whopping 123%.
- Mean ACT scores increased from 20.9 - 22.4.
- Average high school grade point averages jumped from 3.04 - 3.14.

- College grade point averages for new transfer students rose from 2.77 - 2.83.

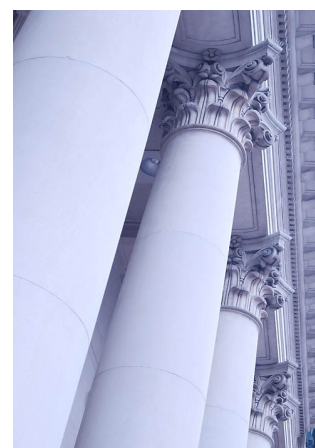
Mary demonstrated an extraordinary record of accomplishment at a time when many schools in the region had been struggling due to changing demographics and increased competition.

After another record year in Fall 2007, the President and Board of Trustees decided to not only continue enrollment growth, but tasked Mary with increasing new student enrollments by at least another ten percent by Fall 2008. Anyone in enrollment management understands the difficulty of double-digit increases in a single cycle, especially coming off an historical record year! Despite years of effective recruitment, Mary sought outside counsel to assist her in the development of a plan to increase the number of new, undergraduate, full-time freshmen and transfer students for Fall 2008 by at least ten percent.

That is how I met Mary Hendry. She asked me to come in and meet with her and her enrollment team to discuss the possibilities. I had recently assisted another University in the Chicago area achieve historical record growth.

We worked collaboratively with key members of the enrollment team to rethink nearly every aspect of the successful admission and financial aid strategies that had served Roosevelt University so well. We hoped to build on the successful tactics already in place, but also to (*see Lately p.2*)

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### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

ENROLLMENT GROWTH IN ROANOKE, VIRGINIA	4
GROWING AND GREEN IN FERRUM, VIRGINIA	5
KEEPING IT GREEN IN ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT	6
CONGRATULATIONS	7

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## LATELY CONTINUED:

implement new initiatives.

The most important element in the creation of the new plan was the full participation of the talented leaders at the University. Change is not possible without the full support of the President and Dr. Charles Middleton provided the resources and moral support necessary for new approaches. We met with members of the Board of Trustees, Deans, Vice Presidents and faculty leaders to outline intended changes in order to garner their buy-in. Opportunities were provided to ask hard questions and evaluate resource investments.

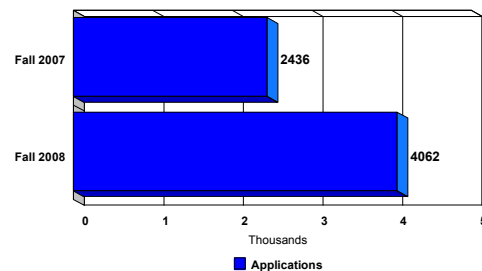
Included in all discussions regarding the new plan were the chief individuals supervising the admission operation, the Assistant Vice President for Financial Aid, the enrollment data analyst and the chief student services officer. Individuals from the academic side of the house provided insight and suggestions. We found that regularly scheduled roundtable discussions resulted in the best decision-making. The benefits of getting the perspective of admissions people on financial aid policies, the ideas of student services professionals on recruitment issues and the thoughts of financial aid staff on recruitment strategies cannot be underestimated. Full participation by select faculty contributed significantly to the development of the plan. The value of systematic institutional research and real time comparative reports, history and projections proved to be extremely important.

Roosevelt University had historically generated a strong inquiry pool and customer base. Traditional travel to college fairs and visits to high schools were reduced under the new model, while new technologies were utilized to more effectively communicate with prospective students in an individualized manner. The results of this more targeted approach to securing inquiries were impressive. The size of the inquiry pool at Roosevelt University increased by 34% in a single cycle. That increase in the customer base is the largest I have ever witnessed in a single year. While I would like to attribute all of the growth to improved strategies and tactics, there is no question that the inherent quality of the institutional product played a role.

The decision was made to be much more proactive with telephone communication directed toward inquiries in order to generate applications. A telecounseling center was established for this purpose. Telephone outreach became a top

priority. Communicating with both inquiries and applicants for admission occurred regularly. The University recorded nearly 90,000 telephone calls to prospective students during the course of the cycle! The bulk of these telephone calls were made by representatives in the Call Center, but admission counselors were responsible for literally thousands of them. Other communication strategies were also employed. More search names were purchased and a high tech postcard was designed and mailed with a personalized URL response mechanism. A direct mail campaign was initiated that included letters from alumni, trustees and other import "influencers."

Institutional scholarship and grant programs were completely consolidated and redesigned. Merit financial aid was used to recognize academic talent, but also offered strategically to encourage prospective students to apply for admission. Roosevelt University experienced extraordinary growth in the size of the full-time undergraduate application pool. Admission applications increased a staggering 61% in one year!



Admission counselors became much more focused on communicating with applicants for admission. Systematic email communication and consistent telephone outreach educated prospective students throughout the process. Students were contacted directly and often to encourage them to complete their admission folders, visit the campus and apply for financial aid. As a result, the number of decision-ready admission folders increased dramatically, the number of visits to campus soared and much more work was created for our colleagues in the Financial Aid Office. (see *Lately* p.3)

## LATELY CONTINUED:

Representatives in the Financial Aid Office were not overwhelmed by the increase in workload. They actually packaged more than twice as many students, new and returning, this year as in the last cycle. This feat was accomplished with no additional staff! Sounds unbelievable, huh?

Well, it was only possible because of the efforts of the Assistant Vice President for Financial Aid. Once presented with the task ahead, and understanding the importance of success, he totally revamped the financial aid process:

- Technology was utilized in ways previously not imagined to increase efficiency.
- Forms were eliminated, paperwork was drastically reduced and processing procedures were altered.
- Packaging strategies were changed to meet the needs of a significantly larger enrollment.

The results speak for themselves on the processing side, but intelligent adjustments to the packaging strategy provided better equity in the treatment of all students.

Tighter packaging rules ensured that all forms of financial assistance would be made available to all students, regardless of the time of application. This approach supported recruitment, retention and institutional mission.

None of the success would have been possible without the benefits of extraordinary data management and analysis. New outreach mechanisms with outcome assess-

ments, admission and financial aid reports were created to monitor progress throughout the cycle. The Assistant Vice President for Institutional Research proved to be indispensable. Effective enrollment management is essentially a data-driven operation and the importance of accurate and timely statistics in the facilitation of informed decision-making cannot be underestimated.

The decision by Mary Hendry to consider a little outside assistance, despite her historic success and her openness to re-assessing every element of what was already a successful recruitment and financial aid strategy, ultimately made a big difference at Roosevelt University. In Fall 2008, the University:

- Recorded the largest number of new students in history. The number of new residential students increased by 44% in a single year.
- Enrolled the largest number of new, full-time undergraduate students in history.
- Increased the number of newly enrolled freshman an amazing 70% over the record class the previous year and increased the number of newly enrolled transfer students by 16%!
- Increased enrollments dramatically while maintaining academic quality and actually expanding geographic, socio-economic and ethnic diversity.
- Increased total University credits by 12%.
- Doubled the number of financial aid packages offered to students without increasing staff in the Financial Aid Office.
- Posted the largest, overall undergraduate enrollment in history.

What have you done for me lately? A GREAT DEAL!

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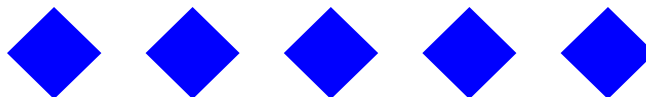
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## RECORD ENROLLMENT GROWTH IN ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

John W. Dysart  
President  
The Dysart Group, Inc.

When I met Dr. Carol Seavor in November of 2003, she had recently launched her Presidency at Jefferson College of Health Sciences in Roanoke, Virginia. The College was very small, with an enrollment of fewer than 650 undergraduates. The physical plant was essentially one building which housed administrative offices, student residences, classrooms and labs. The institution catered almost exclusively to working adults. The private school was a bargain, charging students only \$6,000 per academic year.

Dr. Seavor expressed a desire to make significant changes at the little college. Her plans called for academic program expansion, student services improvements, creation of a new meal plan, growth in the number of residential students and overall growth in the enrolled population.

The first priority was to increase the enrollment. A new recruitment model was introduced and designed to not only attract more qualified students, but to grow the number of traditional-aged undergraduates. The leadership team introduced a variety of changes designed to dramatically increase the number of new students:

- The College utilized the student search process for the first time to identify prospective students who appeared to be academically qualified and suited to the program offerings at Jefferson College of Health Sciences.
- Institutional grant and scholarship programs were significantly expanded to both recognize academic achievement and to meet financial need.
- A communication series was established to educate students and parents about the benefits of attendance at JCHS. The series included face-to-face meetings, direct mail, telephone contact and email messages.
- The institutional web site ([www.jchs.edu](http://www.jchs.edu)) was completely redesigned. While it had historically been used as a source of information for faculty, staff and currently

enrolled students, it was changed to also meet the needs of prospective students and families.

- Admission counselors were re-trained and teamwork was emphasized with everyone in the Admission Office.
- Faculty participated in the creation of the recruitment plan, but also provided additional training to representatives in the admission and financial aid areas to teach them about the specific attributes of each academic program.
- The billing process was improved and front-loaded to facilitate ease of payment for new and returning students.

The new approach produced results. Since the introduction of the changes:

- The number of admission applications has increased nearly 150%.
- New student enrollments increased to all-time record levels and the total enrollment at Jefferson College of Health Sciences climbed by 57%.
- The growth occurred during a period when tuition grew from \$6,000 per year to nearly \$16,000.

Enrollment growth created a number of challenges and opportunities. More students meant strain on the physical plant. Over the last few years, the College's parent institution, Carilion Clinic, responded to this increased enrollment by providing three more buildings, thus expanding its residence capacity and increasing classroom, lab and public space for students.

Significantly more students and the desire to continue such growth led to new majors and concentrations. By 2007, five new degrees, two new programs and the first of three new graduate offerings were in place.

Understanding the importance of retention, Dr. Seavor and her team worked to revamp academic advising and course registration on campus. These processes are now automated and reporting mechanisms have been established to track registration for each student.

Student services have been totally upgraded as the number of traditional-aged students has grown significantly: (see *Record Enrollment p.5*)

## RECORD ENROLLMENT CONTINUED:

- The institution established a new meal plan for both residential and commuter students.
- Residence hall amenities were improved and housing capacity was expanded.
- The number of clubs and organizations exploded while opportunities for special events, lectures and activities quadrupled.
- Opportunities for students to participate in athletic clubs have been introduced for the first time.
- JCHS now has an official mascot.

Jefferson College of Health Sciences has been absolutely transformed under the leadership of Dr. Carol Seavor. Enrollment growth, program expansion, academic improvements, better use of technology across the board and extraordinary changes in student services have served students well.

Congratulations are in order for this visionary President. Dr. Seavor recently announced her retirement effective at the end of the year. Students, faculty and administrators at JCHS will miss her, as will everyone in the Roanoke Valley.

## GROWING AND GREEN IN FERRUM, VIRGINIA

John W. Dysart  
President  
The Dysart Group, Inc.

Ferrum College in Virginia has experienced huge growth under the leadership of Dr. Jennifer Braaten. She implemented a new admission and financial aid plan in 2004 and students really responded. In just the last four years:

- Admission applications have increased by 89%.
- New student enrollments have increased by 82%.
- Total undergraduate enrollment has increased by 45%.

- Ferrum College has expanded its geographic reach by attracting students from eighteen states and five countries.

Enrollment growth has necessitated corresponding expansion of other programs and services on campus. New sports have been added to provide more athletic opportunities. Co-curricular offerings have been increased to meet the needs of students outside of the classroom. The College has dramatically increased the number of students living on campus and has built three new residence halls in the last three years to accommodate the growth.

The College administration has not lost sight of the environment during this period of unprecedented growth. To begin with, trays have been eliminated in the cafeteria. There are a number of environmental benefits from this change:

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- Studies indicate that eliminating trays reduces food waste by as much as 50%.
- Energy consumption can be lessened when trays are no longer used.
- The College will use less water as a result of the change. (see *Growing and Green* p.6)

## GROWING AND GREEN CONTINUED:

The institution is also transitioning to replace plastic with biodegradable goods in the cafeteria. The plan is to have 90% of the paper products biodegradable this year.

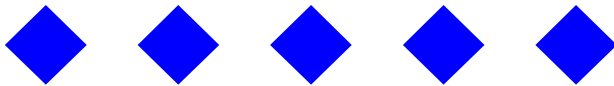
Cleaning products in the cafeteria have been switched. The College reports that 90% of the chemicals now used are environmentally friendly. The institution is even considering a composting program.

New HVAC units have been installed on campus.

The green initiative has also extended to the building of the newest residence facility, Margaret M. Clark Hall.

- The residence hall has ENERGY STAR certifications.
- Motion sensors have been installed to adjust climate control when rooms are vacant.
- Energy efficient light bulbs and plumbing have been installed.
- The College used environmentally friendly paint in the new building, along with installing carpet made from recycled fibers.

Ferrum College is home to the second oldest Environmental Science program in the country. Sensitivity to environmental issues comes naturally!



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## KEEPING IT GREEN IN ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

Leaders in enrollment management divisions can do more to reduce energy consumption and carbon footprints.

- Carefully examine admission travel, including attendance at college fairs and high school visits. With a national emphasis on reducing dependence on oil, eliminating unnecessary travel can save significant dollars and energy. Some institutions have been able to reduce recruitment travel by as much as 80% with no impact on inquiry generation or yield.
- Save the forests by eliminating all forms in the financial aid process not specifically required by regulation. Consider using technology to have a paperless financial aid process.
- Consider using recycled paper to print letters and necessary publications.
- Discontinue printing college and university catalogues and publish them electronically on your web site.
- More and more colleges and universities are finding that fancy viewbooks are no longer the best mechanism for providing information to students and parents. Retiring such publications would help the environment and significantly reduce postage costs.
- Utilize available technology for electronic registration and course selection for all students each term. Electronic registration is earth-friendly and more efficient.
- Consider eliminating paper transcripts in the Registrar's Office.
- Take advantage of new technology at some college fairs and let students inquire electronically, rather than completing a paper reply card.
- Consider eliminating paper admission and financial aid applications.

Obviously, institutions should strive to maximize institutional capacity to accomplish economies of scale. Professionals involved in enrollment management can assist in this area.

## CONGRATULATIONS!

- Congratulations to everyone at **Roosevelt University in Chicago, Illinois** for enrolling the largest number of new students in history, housing the largest number of students in history and increasing new freshmen enrollments an astounding 70% in a single year!
- Congratulations to our friends at **Tusculum College in Greenville, Tennessee** for reducing the institutional discount rate by more than 20 percentage points while simultaneously increasing enrollment!
- Congratulations to **Ferrum College in Ferrum, Virginia** for increasing new student enrollments by more than 82% since 2004, building three new residence halls and enrolling the largest number of new students in nearly one quarter of a century (simultaneous green initiatives have not hurt)!
- Congratulations to **Jefferson College of Health Sciences in Roanoke, Virginia** for seating the largest number of students in history!
- Congratulations to **Iowa Wesleyan College in Mount Pleasant, Iowa** for enrolling the largest number of freshmen in more than twenty-five years!
- Congratulations to **Wesley College in Dover, Delaware** for eleven consecutive years of unprecedented growth!
- Congratulations to **Ohio Dominican University in Columbus, Ohio** for the largest application count in history, the largest number of acceptances in history and the largest total enrollment in history!

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