Recruiting and Working With Graduate Students

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Share your experience

• What have you done?
• What have been your results?
Step 1: Recruitment

• Be proactive!!
• But what does this mean?
  – A few examples follow
• Commit Time to Recruitment
  – You are picking a team that will have HUGE impact on your research success
  – Will your students be tenure makers or tenure breakers?
Recruitment Tables at a Conference

• **Reality** – these are not the best places to recruit students – but they are great for name recognition (your university and your department)
  – Better to spend $$ elsewhere
  – Example.....

• If you still want to do this and cost is an issue for your department, see if another unit in your university will cost share (Grad School, Provost, VP for Research)
Advertise!

• Pay for an advertisement in EOS/GSA Today
  – Research or teaching positions
  – Advertise scholarship funds
  – Cost sharing (again)
  – Maybe you can use startup funds?
Leverage University Resources

• Purchase names of targeted groups from ETS (GRE/TOEFL)
• Make sure that you contact potential applicants who have submitted GRE scores, but not applied
• Make sure you are part of “campaigns”
• Use common lists of high achieving students
  – McNair
  – Council on Undergraduate Research
• Gather university recruitment materials
• Become familiar with benefits/support programs for students at your university
  – Use these as selling points – i.e. do you have lactation rooms, health insurance, mentoring programs, etc.
University Recruitment

- Find out which universities your university recruits at!
  - Identify key universities and offer to come along
  - Offer to use your contacts (domestic or international) and travel to recruit at these places
    - very often your university will financially support this – ASK!
University /Departmental Open Houses

• Be an active participant in on campus university recruitment events

• If you don’t have one, propose (but don’t run as an assistant professor) a departmental open house
  – There are almost certainly groups on campus who will help with this
Campus Visits

• Have prospective students visit
  – Find financial resources to support this (departmental/university, cost share)

• Leverage campus resources
  – Do you have organized tours?
  – Can a dean from your college/grad school meet with the student?
  – Do you have student ambassadors who can meet/eat with the prospective student?
  – Are there resources for housing (examples of some you may not have thought of....)?
The Little Things

• Respond to student enquiries in a timely fashion (would you work for someone who takes 9 days to reply to an email?)

• Make sure that your research is featured on your university web page and in university publications (i.e. research magazine, alumni magazine)

• Take other opportunities (e.g. Professor Podcasts)

• Call/Skype/FaceTime with prospects – your “competition” is almost certainly not doing this
The Little Things

• Have your chair/dean call the applicant
• Have other faculty call the applicant
Step 2: Closing The Deal

- So, you have managed to get the best student ever to apply – this is where the hard part of recruitment starts!
- This is where a campus visit may be VITAL
- Be familiar with what your university offers that others do not..... examples....
- Be responsive
- Have students contact the applicant
- Have chair/dean contact student
- Does the applicant have housing/town resources?
Money

- Sometimes it all comes down to money.....
  - Are there institutional fellowships that you can nominate your applicant for (even at the last moment)?
  - Are there departmental scholarships?
  - If you are offering a GTA position, can you supplement it with any of the above?
  - If you have support from a 3 year grant for the student, will the university “match” this with a 4th year? Ask!
Step 3: Keeping that Excellent Student and Working with Them

- Make sure that class/research expectations are clear
  - Informal contracts?
- Scope of M.S. vs. Ph.D. projects
- Most students are not “Type-A” over achievers like you....
- What are your student’s goals? Take this into consideration!
- Will they stay for the summer?
Keeping that Excellent Student and Working with Them

• Keep an eye out for opportunities for that student – professional (e.g. writing workshops) and financial (e.g. scholarships)

• Make sure that they have research/conference travel money
  – Do you know about all the resources your university offers?

• Weekly meetings (individual/group)

• Make sure your chair/dean knows all the good things that you/they do – sell yourself and your students!
Watch them Graduate!

• Go to commencement!
• Questions/Comments?