

## Recruiting and Working With Graduate Students

Anantha Aiyer and Andrew M. Goodliffe

On the Cutting Edge  
Professional Development for Geoscience Faculty



## 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
  - NNE
- 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

- Maintain a clean and uncluttered web page with up to date research/teaching interests and publications
- 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)



## The Little Things

- Call/Skype/FaceTime with prospects – your “competition” is almost certainly not doing this
- 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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?