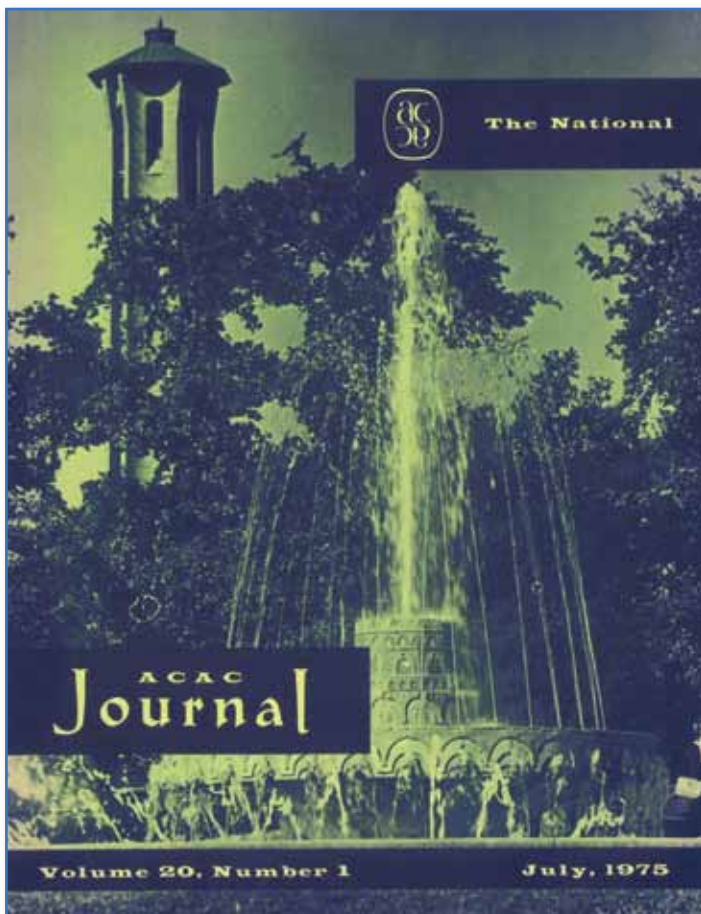


July 1975

Student Recruitment Practices: A Survey Yields Some Surprises

Response: “Recruitment Practices Change, but Issues Remain the Same” by Esther Hugo on page 38



Like all good admissions directors, you constantly ask yourself about your work and its effectiveness. Should you continue high school visits? Should you use Student Search Service, or maybe an unscreened (but perhaps cheaper) “commercial” mailing list? What about “merit” scholarships, as opposed to those based on financial need? What about you—might your president consider replacing you with an “admissions takeover” company? Are your recruitment techniques perceived by others as ethical and professional?



From 1975: RICHARD W. HAINES brought a varied background of scholastic and athletic awards and honors to his position as Director of Admissions for Lafayette College in 1967, where he was previously Assistant Director of Admissions. His articles and stories have appeared in numerous publications.

“Student Recruitment Practices: A Survey Yields Some Surprises” is the result of a study conducted last year by Pennsylvania ACAC’s Admissions Practices and Procedures Committee, which Haines serves as chairman. College recruitment practices have generated much discussion and many articles. Emotions run high whenever the matter is discussed, and some admissions directors find themselves sandwiched between conflicting pressures from inside and outside their institutions. Under these circumstances they need to know what recruitment tactics are generally approved by their professional colleagues, in secondary schools as well as other colleges.

This article provides some interesting and useful answers which can help guide the admissions officer in his day-to-day work, and in his efforts to influence recruitment policy development within his institution.

Your name: F. Stanley Goettum. Your job: Director of Admissions. Your institution: floundering University. Like all good admissions directors, you constantly ask yourself about your work and its effectiveness. Should you continue high school visits? Should you use Student Search Service, or maybe an unscreened (but perhaps cheaper) “commercial” mailing list? What about “merit” scholarships, as opposed to those based on financial need? What about *you*—might your president consider replacing you with an “admissions takeover” company? Are your recruitment techniques perceived by others as ethical and professional? What do your colleagues at other institutions think about some of the things you do? What do secondary school counselors think?

In one state, Pennsylvania, some answers are not necessarily valid for other states, but they may be instructive to admissions officers everywhere. They derive from a Recruitment Practices Survey conducted by the Admissions Practices and Procedures (AP&P) Committee of the Pennsylvania ACAC in the spring of 1974.

The Recruitment Practices Survey was an extensive questionnaire sent to all PACAC member institutions. Its purpose was to elicit reactions of member professionals to various college recruitment techniques. Each institution (secondary school or college/university) was asked to indicate the degree to which its guidance or admissions staff approved of sixty-four different recruitment techniques.

Correctly completed questionnaires were returned by 56.3 percent (222 of 394) member institutions, subdivided as follows:

Public Secondary Schools	80 of 170	47.1%
Private Secondary Schools	39 of 73	53.4%
Public Colleges/Universities	16 of 29	55.2%
Private Colleges/Universities	87 of 122	71.3%

Responses were tabulated in the four categories above, converted to percentage figures according to a five-point approval-disapproval scale: “strongly approve,” “approve,” “neutral,” “disapprove,” and “strongly disapprove.” In addition to the detailed tabulations, a summary for each item reveals the percentage of total respondents who either “strongly approve” or “approve,” as well as the percentage who either “disapprove” or “strongly disapprove.”

The results can tell F. Stanley Goettum how his professional colleagues in Pennsylvania might respond to his questions (and to many other questions as well).

Should F. Stanley continue secondary school visits? Well, if he does, they should be *once* per year, *by* appointment, and by an *admissions staff member*. Visits under these circumstances earned overwhelming approval:

Strongly Approve	66%	91%
Approve	25%	
Neutral	05%	
Disapprove	01%	01%
Strongly Disapprove	00%	
No Response	01%	

Interestingly, though, if F. Stanley visits *without an appointment* the approval rate drops from 91 percent to 1 percent! Yes, *one* percent. If he visits *twice* instead of *once* per year, it seems he will wear out his welcome: only 26 percent will approve. And, perhaps surprisingly, if he cuts back to *once every other year*, his 91 percent approval rate dips to 66 percent. If, by appointment, he sends a faculty member instead of an admissions officer, 64 percent will approve, while 53 percent will favor a volunteer student, 40 percent an athletic coach, 36 percent an alumnus, and 24 percent a paid student.

Perhaps as revealing as the totals themselves is the extraordinary degree of agreement among the four categories of respondents. For example, here’s how they lined up on approval of “high school visits by admissions staff member once per year:

Per Cent of Respondents Who

	Strongly Approve	Approve
Public Secondary Schools	61	24
Private Secondary Schools	61	31
Public Colleges/Universities	56	25
Private Colleges/Universities	70	23
Total	66	25

Responses by the four groups to most of the other sixty-three questions were similarly consistent. Makes you wonder why secondary school counselors and admissions officers seem to argue so much at professional meetings.

So what about F. Stanley's other concerns? Well, he can count on about 83 percent approval of use of CEEB Student Search Service, but only 7 percent approval if he uses "direct mail to students who have not released their names and addresses for this purpose (e.g., through commercial lists)." He may blow his institution's budget on "financial aid not based on financial need," but he'll find that only about 35 percent of his professional colleagues approve (*including* those who themselves use "merit" scholarships), while 96 percent approve of aid based on need.

F. Stanley's president may replace him with an "admissions takeover" firm, but he'd better be prepared for only 3 percent approval among guidance and admissions professionals. In fact, it would be 2 percent if responses from takeover firms had been deleted! Perhaps it would be better for F. Stanley's president to sit down with him and analyze floundering U.'s recruitment program in the light of legitimate student and institutional needs, with references to both the NACAC "Statement of Principles of Good Practice" and the PACAC "Admissions Practices Survey." Of particular interest would be an analysis of the recruitment techniques either approved or disapproved by 80 percent or more of the respondents to the PACAC survey:

"Strongly Approved" or "Approved" by 80 Per Cent or More

Financial aid based upon financial need	96%
High school visits by admissions staff member once per year, by appointment	91%
On-campus programs for prospective students and/or parents	91%
On-campus programs for secondary school counselors	91%
Unpaid radio/TV "Public Service" announcements on behalf of higher education generally	89%
Waiver of normally-required application fee for students with financial need.	85%
Direct mail to students who have released their names and addresses for this purpose (e.g., through CEEB Student Search Service)	83%
Off-campus programs for secondary school counselors	80%
"College Fairs" sponsored by professional organizations (e.g., NACAC, NSSFNS, etc.)	80%

PACAC would be glad to share the complete "Recruitment Practices Survey" results with F. Stanley Goettum, or anyone else who would like a copy. Send your request to Richard W. Haines, Office of Admissions and Student financial Aid, Lafayette College, Easton, PA 18042.

Should F. Stanley continue secondary school visits? Well, if he does, they should be once per year, by appointment, and by an admissions staff member. Visits under these circumstances earned overwhelming approval... Interestingly, though, if F. Stanley visits *without an appointment* the approval rate drops from 91 percent to 1 percent!

"Strongly Disapproved" or "Disapproved" by 80 Per Cent or More

Employment of companies which refer prospective students for a "finder's fee"(specific fee for each student who enrolls)	90%
Telephone contacts to students who have not released their telephone numbers for this purpose	89%
High school visits by admissions staff member two or more times per year, without appointment	87%
High school visits by college students (paid), without appointment	87%
High school visits by admissions staff member once per year, without appointment	85%
High school visits by college students (volunteer), without appointment	83%
Agencies which, for a fee charged to the student-athlete, secure athletic scholarships	83%
Announcement of financial aid award only after student has paid enrollment fee	82%
Requests (addressed to counselors) for lists of top students, athletes, etc..	82%
Formal offers of admission to students who have not applied for admission	82%
Employment of companies which take over total admissions function of a college on an annually negotiated contract	81%
High school visits by faculty, without appointment	81%
High school visits by alumni, without appointment	80%
Direct mail to students who have not released their names and addresses for this purpose (e.g., through commercial lists)	80%

Throwback: 1975

31st NACAC National Conference is held in Atlanta, GA. Joseph Monte (Albert Einstein High School, MD) is NACAC president.

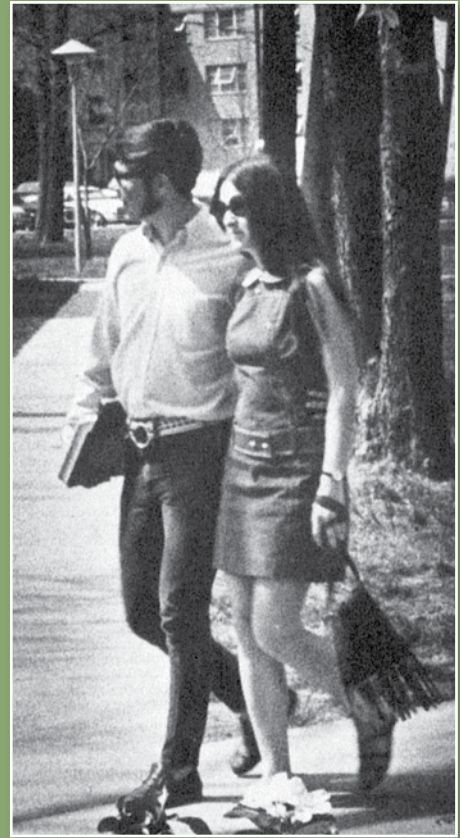
3.1 million students graduate from high school, the most in US history until 2008–09.

NBC airs the first episode of *Saturday Night Live*.

Total number of NACAC staff: 5.

Bill Gates and Paul Allen develop a BASIC program for the Altair 8800.

Congress passes the “Education for All Handicapped Children Act” (Individuals with Disabilities Act).



The University of Evansville (IN) from the cover of *The National ACAC Journal*, Volume 18, Number 4, April, 1974.

Affiliate Achiever

Tonya J. Stokka, *Enrollment Services Specialist*
North Dakota State College of Science, Wahpeton, ND
Dakota ACAC

Who is your role model and why?

I have a few people I consider my role models and mentors. First and foremost, my dad. He was a teacher for 28 years and his never ending love of education, gaining new knowledge and always doing whatever he could to help a student be successful was a huge inspiration to me. He is the reason I chose to be in education, because I saw everyday the positive impact he had on students and wanted to contribute in that same positive way.

Second, Jobey Lichtblau, my former director of admission. Jobey is a someone I can always turn to for advice and guidance. He has taught me and continues to teach me through leading by example about professionalism, leadership and making difference.

Third, Karen Reilly, my current director of enrollment services. Karen has encouraged me to challenge myself on a daily basis, by providing me with many different opportunities to grow professionally and personally. Her positive attitude and the positive impact she has on students continues to inspire me everyday.