

NAGS Webinar

Holistic Admissions

Recruiting and Admitting Diverse Students

February 19, 2021



Meet the Moderator and Panelists



Matthew Bashi-Kadlubowski

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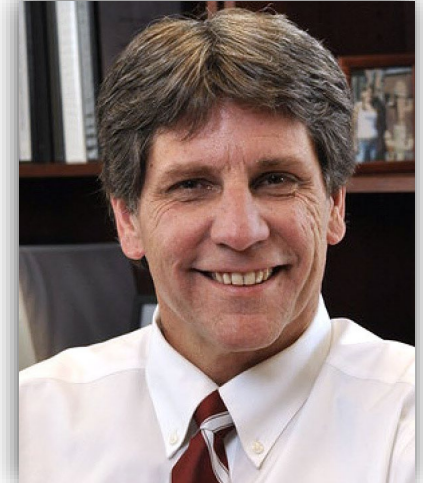
Maureen Grasso

Professor of Textile Sciences and Former Graduate Dean at North Carolina State University and Former Graduate Dean at University of Georgia



Carlos Grijalva

Emeritus Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience and Former Graduate Associate Dean at the University of California, Los Angeles



Steve Matson

Biology Professor and Former Graduate Dean at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Overview

- Recruitment: “A Case Study and What to do When There is No Magic Wand” (**Maureen Grasso**)
- Using Holistic Admissions to Promote Diversity, Inclusion and Student Success (**Steve Matson**)
- Strategies to Promote Success of Every Student (**Carlos Grijalva**)

Recruitment

“A Case Study and What to do When There is No Magic Wand”



Maureen Grasso

ETS Graduate Education Advisor

Professor, Textile Sciences

Former Graduate Dean,

North Carolina State and University of Georgia

Each Program Has *Unique* Recruiting Challenges Our “Newest” Challenges . . .

Financial stress → felt by institutions and students

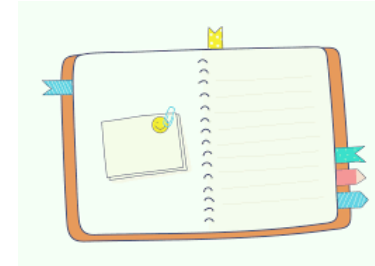
Students are not like we were – they are *digital natives*



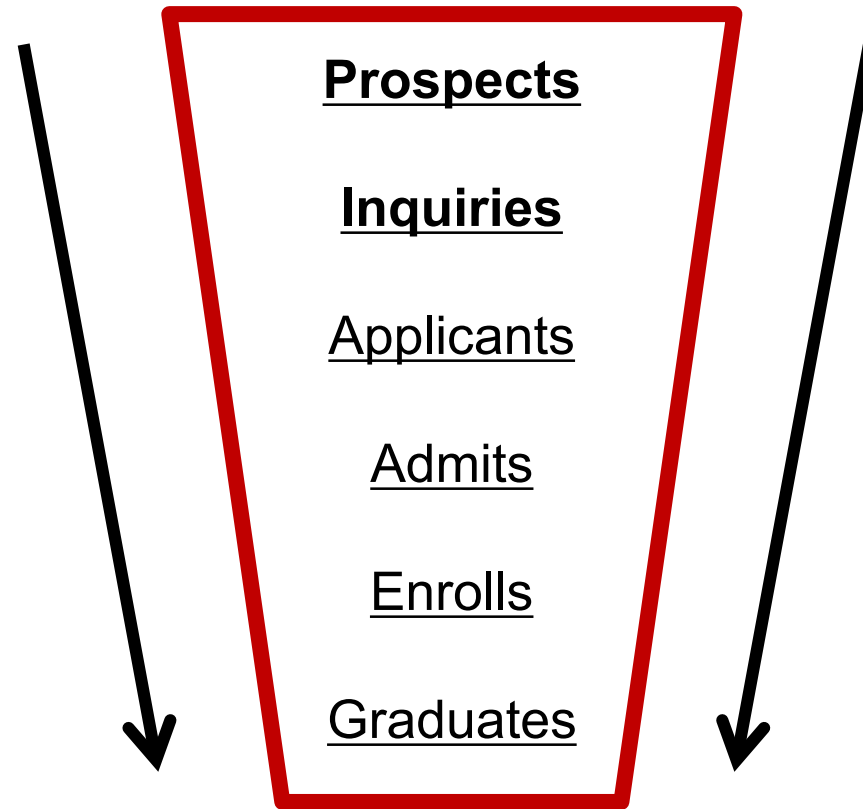
Programs must **actively** recruit the students they desire

“Top 5” Things for Recruitment

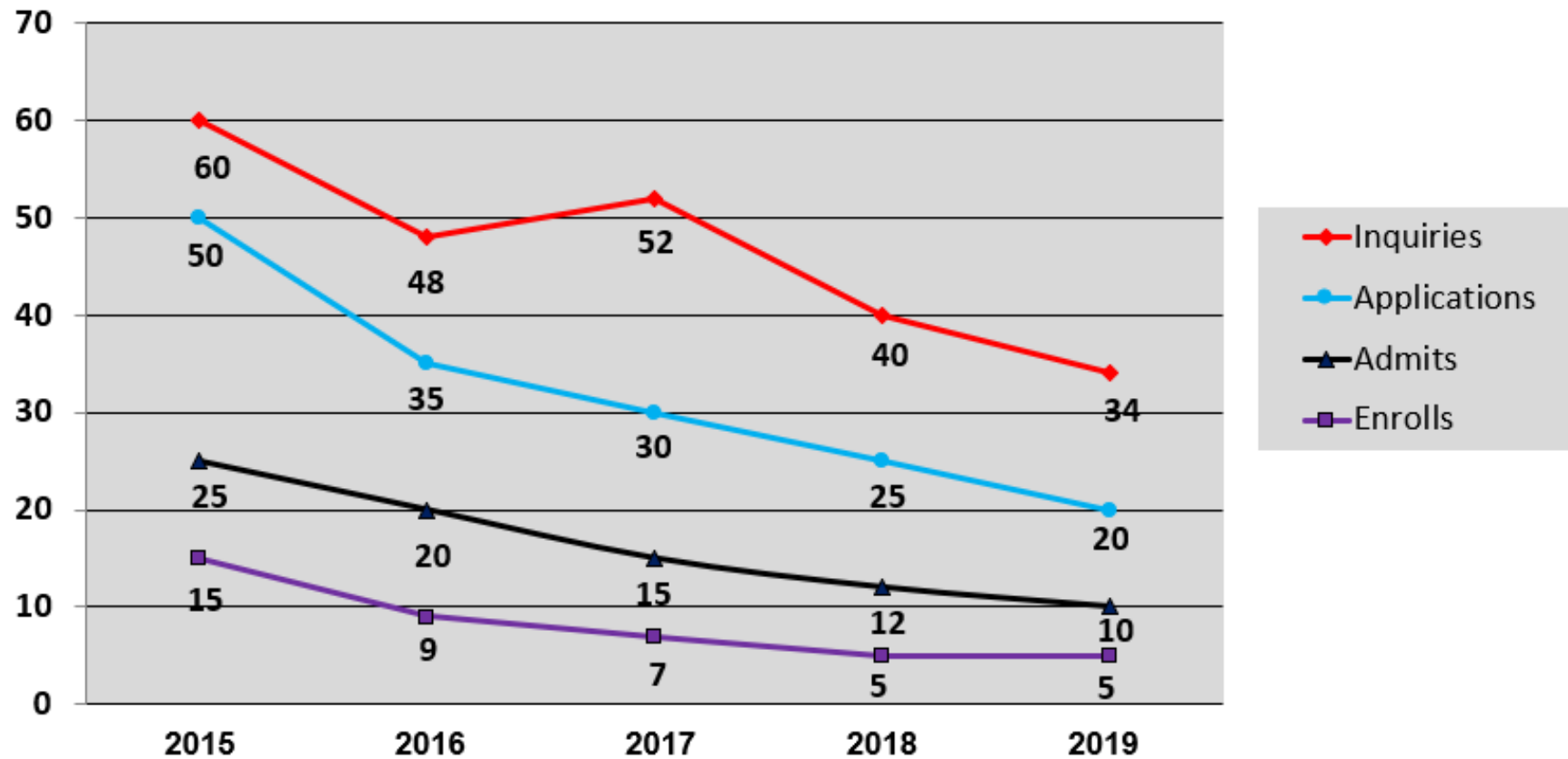
- Establish funding
- Know where to find students/prospects
- Establish a recruitment plan and use data to assess
- Maximize faculty and student strengths
- Communicate and market your Unique Selling Points (USP)



Recruiting Funnel



Getting Started: Know Your Data



Graduate School Recruitment Assistance

- Developed recruiting materials for faculty – “Travel Packs”
- Established Graduate Dean’s Travel Recruitment Fund – to bring students to campus
- Used CRM software to customize communication and timing
- Communicated using different social media platforms
- Worked with faculty to “update” their program websites to be student focused

Graduate School Recruitment Strategies and Initiatives for Underrepresented Students

Leveraged \$\$\$ for Faculty

- ✓ To travel to HBCUs and Hispanic serving institutions
- ✓ To send URM students to their undergraduate institutions to assist in recruiting

Established Feeder School Agreements with HBCUs

Involved Graduate and Professional Student (GAPS) organization in recruitment

Recruitment Strategies (continued)

- ✓ Identified strategies to increase the number of prospective students; Used [GRE[®] Search Service](#)
- ✓ Informed applicants about the [GRE[®] Fee Reduction Program](#)
- ✓ Informed applicants about the availability of [excellent free GRE test prep](#)
- ✓ <https://www.holisticadmissions.org/navigating-through-change/>

Think Like a Prospective Graduate Student

- ✓ Put yourself in their shoes
- ✓ Stay in touch
- ✓ Make them feel special
- ✓ Use your graduate students
 - to talk with potential recruits
 - to go through and evaluate your website

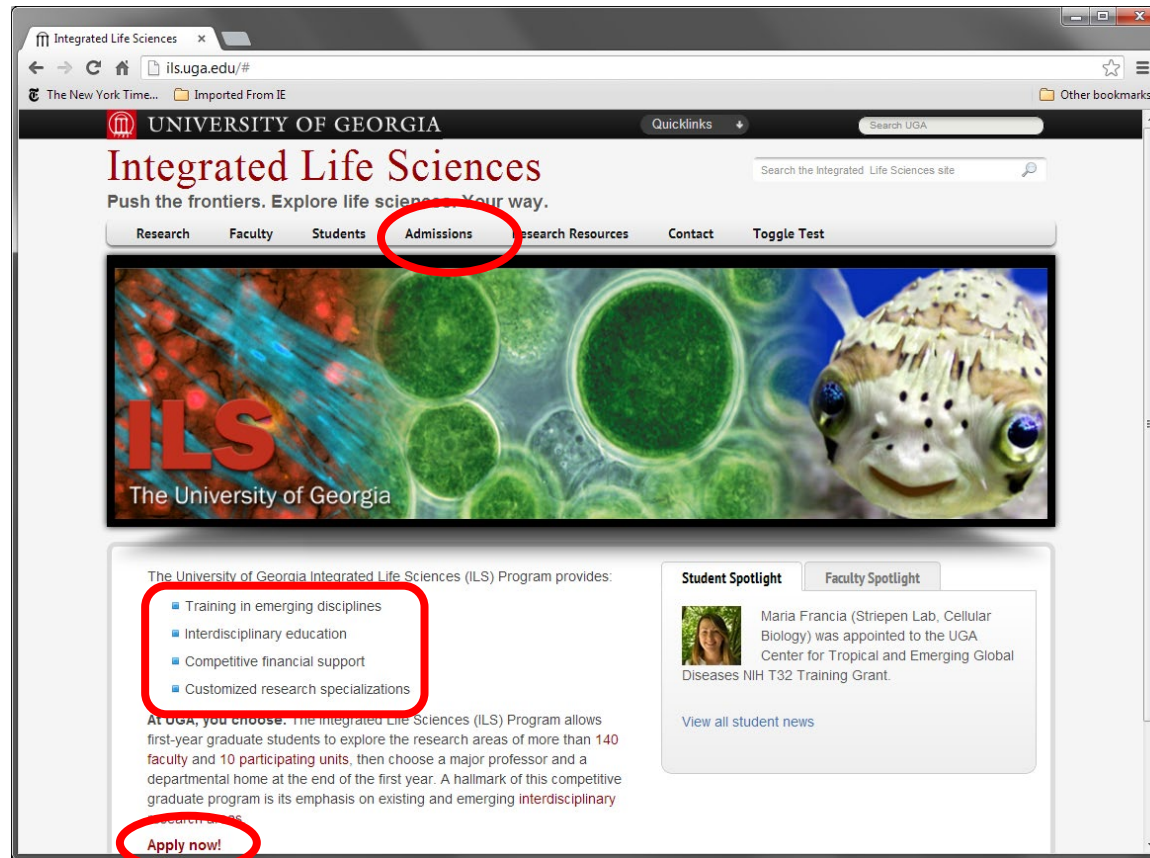


How Do Students Get Information?

- How **easy** is it to find Program X on the web?
- What **information** does Program X provide?
- What is the **process to apply**?



Let's Look at How One Program Provided Valuable Information



- Key selling points about program in four bullets
- Link at top of home page with information about:
 - How to Apply
 - Curriculum
 - Stipends
 - FAQ
- Another link at bottom to apply

Let's Look at How A One Program Provided Valuable Information (continued)

How to Apply

- Applications are due **December 15** for matriculation the following Fall term. Late applications from exceptional applicants may receive consideration.
- A complete application includes a personal statement, official transcripts, GRE scores, and letters of recommendation. The personal statement should detail your research and career interests and include the names of ILS faculty and/or departments that are of specific interest. Submit the statement to the **ILS Graduate Coordinator** and send other applications materials to the UGA Graduate School. **NOTE:** GRE Subject Tests and GRE Personal Potential Index reports are neither required nor considered as part of the application process.
- Important codes: Select **0052 (Integrated Life Sciences)** as the major code in the application process. Select **5813** as the institutional code for ETS reports.
- Applications will be screened by the admissions committee based on GRE scores, undergraduate GPA, letters of reference, research experience and academic potential. Ethnic and gender diversity will also be considered.
- Top domestic candidates will be invited to UGA for interviews in late January. International candidates will be interviewed via phone or Skype. Successful applicants will be notified in February.
- Candidates not recruited by the ILS will be automatically referred to participating departments as potential applicants.
- **Apply electronically** or learn more about admissions requirements of the Graduate School. International applicants should be aware of supplemental requirements prior to applying.

Important information for applicants:

- Deadlines
- Link to single point of contact for program
- Application codes
- Direct link to Graduate School application
- Direct link to information for international students

What You Can Do

Listen to your faculty to identify and set the goals

Educate your faculty on how to recruit

Provide **resources** your office has to assist

Use examples and models as starting points

Use resources available from **ETS – GRE® Search Service**

Make use of CRM – **Communicate**

Make use of **student groups** and organizations

Acknowledge and Reward!!!

UGA: The Goal → Increasing URM Graduate Students

The end result was a **54% increase** in African American students and we did it without a



Using Holistic Admissions to Promote Diversity, Inclusion and Student Success

Steve Matson

Professor of Biology

ETS Graduate Education Advisor

Former Dean of The Graduate School

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill



Practical Experiences from UNC-Chapel Hill



Program Completion is the Goal

- Changing the admissions process
 - Nursing programs waive the *GRE*® requirement
 - Biological and Biomedical Sciences program moves to holistic review
- Retention initiatives
 - Training Initiatives in Biomedical & Biological Sciences (TIBBS)
 - Diversity and Student Success (DSS)

Admissions – the Nursing Programs

Nursing programs – DNP, PhD and MSN

- Requested a waiver of *GRE*® requirement
- Intended goals
 - Increase diversity
- Realized impacts
 - Initial increase in applications
 - Slightly higher UGPA for matriculated students
 - No significant increase in diversity in applicant pool



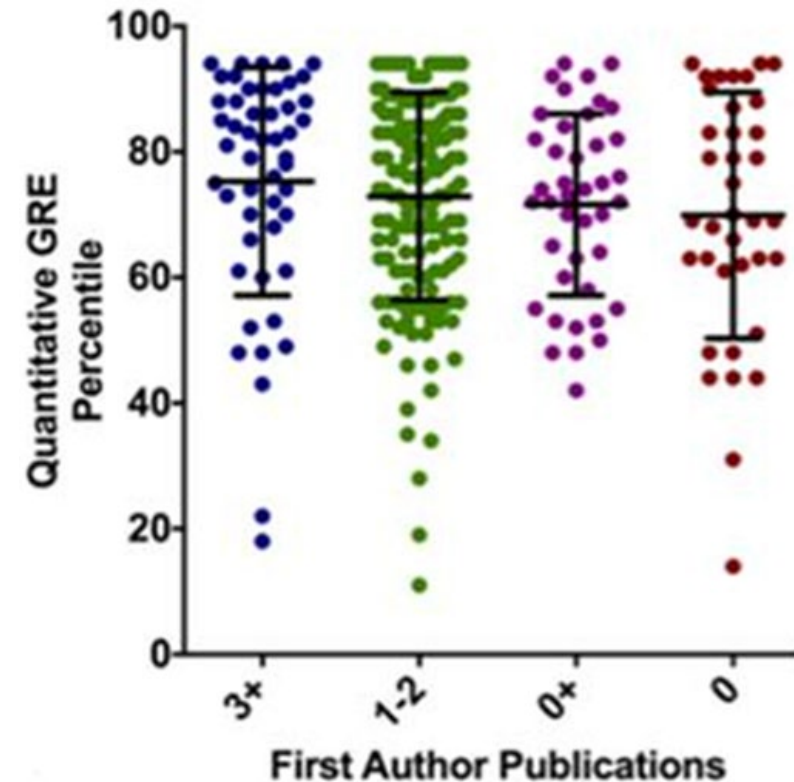
Admissions – Biological and Biomedical Sciences (BBSP)

- Extensive data set used to look for correlation with ‘success’
 - 1,200-1,500 applicants per year
 - Five years of data
- No single component predicts success, completion, or productivity
- Admission process is imperfect – how can it be improved?
 - It is open to bias
- Need to spend as much time discussing how to support our students



A Research Study

- Biological and Biomedical Sciences
 - Measure productivity in terms of papers published
 - 3+ 1st author; 1-2 1st author; 0 1st author with middle author; 0 papers
 - UGPA did not predict productivity
 - *GRE*® scores did not predict productivity
 - Duration of previous research experience did not predict productivity
 - Recommendation ratings were most reliable



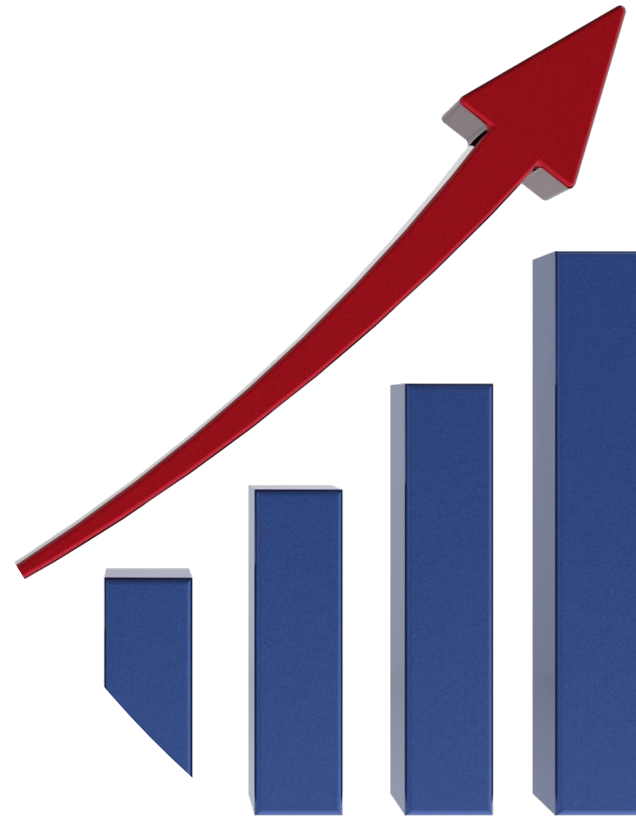


Adopt A Holistic Review Process

- We all want good students and a diverse cohort
- Educate faculty about non-predictive measures of productivity
 - Use these factors in admission decisions appropriately
- Educate all admission committee members about implicit bias
- Remove GPA and *GRE*® scores from student dossier provided to interviewers

Holistic Admissions Approach Impact

- Admission committee training adopted in 2014 (for fall 2015 admission season)
- Admission of URM students at 15% (2011-14)
- Admission immediately rose to 26%
 - Has increased to above 30% with 2019 cycle
- Retention/completion of URM students is identical with majority students



Recommendations for File Review

- Do not assign undue predictive power to UGPA or *GRE*® scores
- Consider relevant experience particularly when coupled with enthusiastic support letters
- Define criteria for admission in advance
- Train committees on implicit bias
- Consider ways to assess non-cognitive qualifications
 - Motivation
 - Perseverance
 - Adaptability
- Read every application
 - Read the entire application
- This can be done at scale



Recommendations for Retention

- Spend as much time and effort training and supporting students
 - BBSP and Training Initiatives in Biomedical and Biological Sciences (TIBBS)
- Effort is supported by SoM, IMSD grant, BEST Award
- Office includes seven full time staff
- Focused on
 - Admissions
 - Professional Development
 - Internships
 - Career advising
- Impact
 - Retention of under-represented students same as majority students (85-92%)



Holistic Admissions: Recruiting and Admitting Diverse Students

Strategies to Promote Success of Every Student

Carlos V. Grijalva, Ph.D.

Professor Emeritus of Psychology and Neuroscience, Former Associate Graduate Dean
University of California, Los Angeles

ETS Graduate Education Advisor

Goal of Graduate Admissions Practice

To Select Highly Qualified, Talented Applicants Who:

- Are a good match for the program in terms of field of study
- Have some basic training and/or skills that are required in the field
- Are highly motivated
- Exhibit high potential
- Are resilient
- Work well with others
- Good communication skills
- Honest and ethical
- *Expand the talent pool in terms of equity, diversity and inclusion*

Why Does Diversity Matter?

5 Reasons Why Diversity Is Important In The 21st Century

Productivity and Creativity: Bringing together people of various backgrounds with different experiences can generate ideas or perspectives that others may not have considered or been aware of.

Becoming a World Citizen: Exposure to people, cultures, traditions and practices that are unlike your own.

Perspective: Other's experiences can shed light on a life different from your own (struggles, priorities, values).

Growing Acceptance, Diminishing Discrimination: Promoting diversity is the first step to not just "tolerance" but true acceptance (People may have more in common than they thought).

Richer Life Experience: Diversity is colorful! Our differences make a strong, beautiful world community.

Achieving Diversity (Department, Institution)

Go Beyond Good Intentions

- Show diverse faces on websites, recruitment materials.
- Add diversity in your mission statement and put it into practice.
- Make diversity goals part of department/institutional plans.
- Show diversity and take a stand.
- Use assessment tools including longitudinal data.



Challenges of Graduate School

Graduate School Is Vastly Different from Undergraduate Studies

- As an undergraduate the goal was to *obtain knowledge*.
- In graduate school your goal is to also **contribute** to the field of knowledge.
- Graduate school is the professional training ground where you learn the skills you need to be successful in your field.

Strategies to Promote Success of Every Student

Initial Principles to Consider for Each Student

- 1. Every Student is Unique Individual*
- 2. Students Enter Program with Varying Degrees of Enthusiasm and Concerns*
- 3. Impact of Communities of Influence*

1. Every Student is Unique Individual

Come to Program with Unique Mental and Physical Attributes and Personal Experiences that Have Shaped Their Individuality

- Different intellectual capabilities
- Different educational experiences and opportunities
- Different problem-solving skills and strategies
- Different acquired skills or talents shaped to varying degree by parents, teachers, coaches, etc.
- Different social skills (partly dependent on disposition/situation)
- Differences in available resources (financial, social support systems, time, etc.)

2. Enter Program with Varying Degree of Enthusiasm and Concerns

- Excited that they got admitted
- Proud of new status as a graduate student
- Imposter Syndrome may set in:
 - ❖ Self-doubt they are good enough
 - ❖ Concerns of challenges to their self-esteem
 - ❖ Concerns that they will fit with department, lab/research or performance group
 - ❖ Concern that they will make new friends
- Find a social support network that will meet emotional, personal and/or civil engagement needs
- Time management skills

2. Enter Program with Varying Degree of Enthusiasm and Concerns (continued)

Non-academic Responsibilities and Concerns

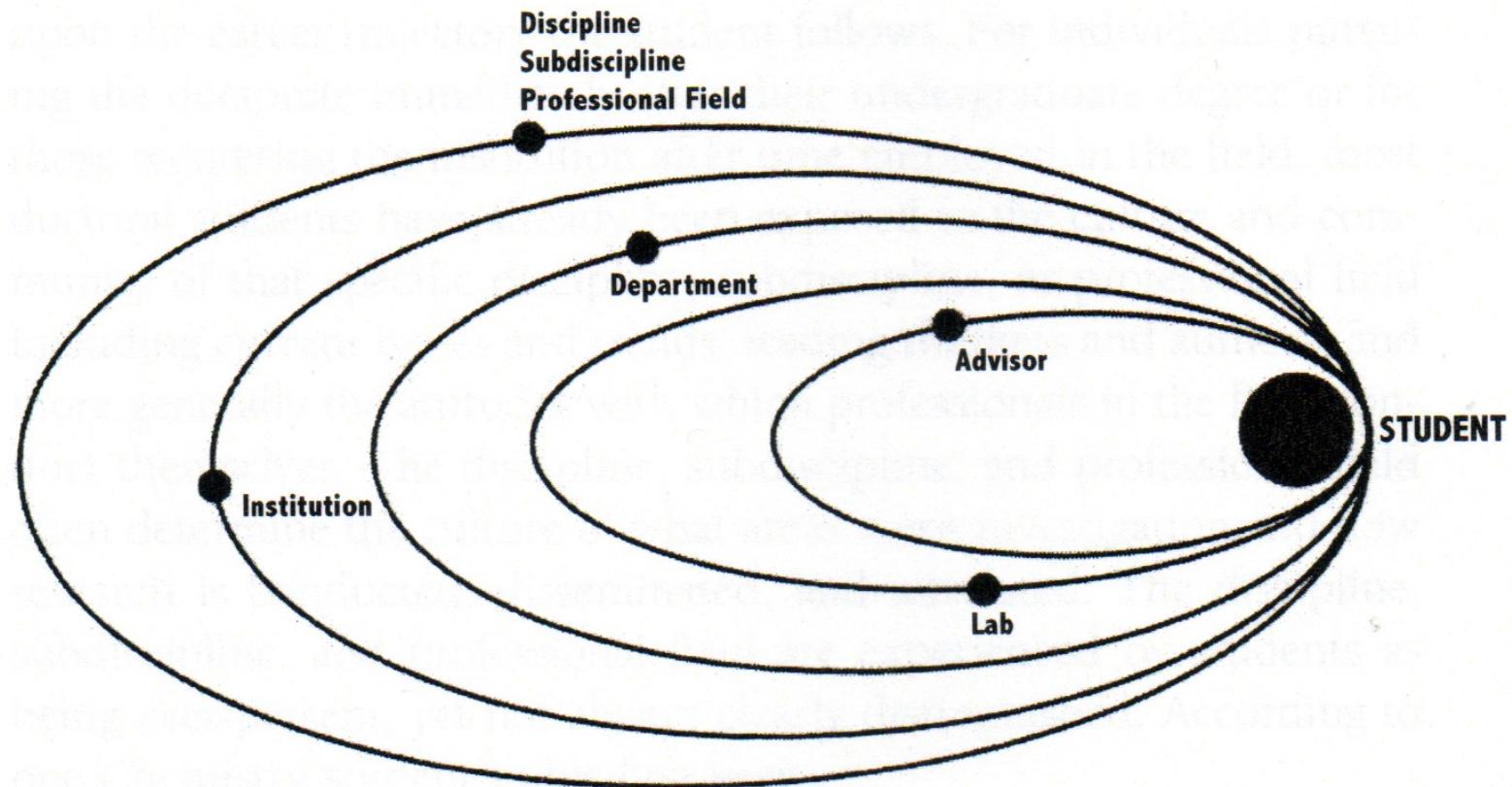
- Family concerns (immediate family members, spouse/partner, children, pets, etc.)
- Health concerns (their own health, health of friends and loved ones)
- Financial concerns (short-term; long-term)
- Housing concerns
- Transportation concerns
- Feelings of belongingness/alienation or isolation
- Issues of bias and prejudice (explicit; implicit)

3. Impact of Communities of Influence

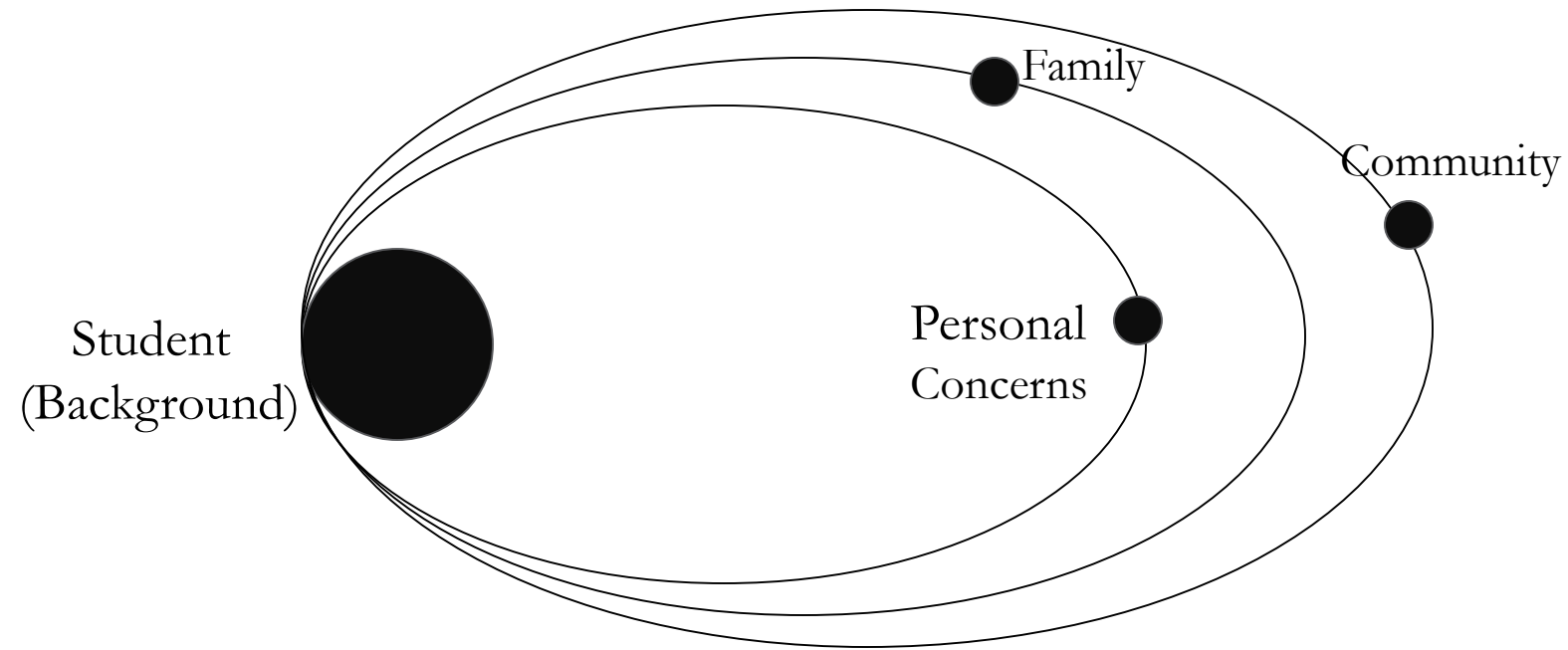
- *Communities of Influence: Academic/Professional*
- *Communities of Influence: Non-Academic*

Communities of Influence: Academic/Professional

Doctoral Student Communities of Influence Model



Communities of Influence: Non-academic



Consider Student Needs at Different Stages During Life-cycle in the Program and Benchmarks

- First year coursework, induction into program, research, department
- Comprehensive exams
- Qualifying exams
- Advancement to candidacy
- Thesis, dissertation writing
- Thesis, dissertation defense
- Job seeking

Provide **frequent feedback on progress in the Program and whether they are **meeting important benchmarks** in a timely manner*

Level the Playing Field to Promote Success

- Offer adequate financial support/multi-year package
- Health insurance and housing security
- Make the student feel genuinely welcome (*Believe-or-not, this is often more important than money*)
- Create a buddy system with advanced graduate students and postdoctoral scholars
- Build a community of scholars (institutional and beyond)

Types of Additional Support

Academic Support

- Tutoring
- Writing Workshops
- Thesis, dissertation engagement

Mental and Physical Health Support

- Workshops – Stress management
- Professional resources
- Health Center
- Women, LGTB resources
- URM resources

Professional Development Support

- Grant writing
- Opportunities to present research/scholarship/creative endeavors
- Professional societies
- Leadership development
- Recognition of accomplishments
- Special competitions of enhance communication skills – three minute thesis; “Graduate Slam”

A Key Ingredient for Success: Mentoring!

What is mentoring?

- A mentoring relationship is a close, individualized relationship that develops over time between a graduate student and faculty member (or others) that includes both caring and guidance.
- Although there is a connection between *mentors* and *advisors*, not all mentors are advisors and not all advisors are mentors.

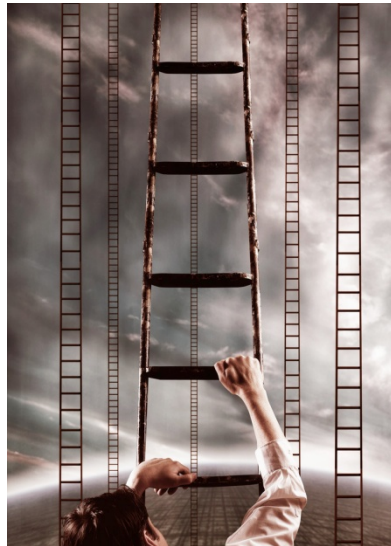
What Makes a Good Mentor?

“Effective mentoring involves not only the transfer of academic skills, attitudes, and behaviors, but a level of interaction, trust, and communication which ... **empowers** a student with the knowledge and confidence to **grow academically and socially** regardless of their environment.” – (Redmond, 1990).

Mentoring

- Structured mentoring program
- Vertical – Faculty, postdoctoral scholars, advanced graduate students
- Horizontal – cohorts, peers
- Defining roles of mentors and mentees
- Refined mutual interests
- Genuine interest in welfare and well-being of the student
- Professionalization of the student
- Empower the student to become independent
- Mentor needs to be available, committed, compassionate, patient
- Positive role model as a person and professional

Support = Success!



To Get More Information

- **GRE® Tests, Services and Resources**
 - Visit www.ets.org/gre/institutions
- **Holistic Admissions Strategies**
 - Visit www.holisticadmissions.org
- **If you have questions:**
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