

The University of Michigan

FALL 1979

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Minority  
Recruitment,  
Enrollment,  
Retention,  
and  
Graduation .

A Report to the Regents

Fundamental to all of these efforts is the goal of identifying potential students, providing them information about the University, motivating them to apply to the University, and giving them an orientation to the University and its academic programs. Many of these recruitment activities also attempt to assist high school students in assessing their own aspirations and academic qualifications in relation to a particular academic program. In some instances while this latter practice may not result in an enrolled student at the University, it may motivate the student to attend another institution. What this Section reveals is that some schools and colleges have developed programs which only address some of the concerns, while others have sought to address them all. Whatever the particular strategies employed in the recruitment, enrollment and retention of minority students, a major element is the ability to evaluate the effectiveness of these programs.

#### Office of Undergraduate Admissions

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions has been delegated the responsibility for assisting in the development and implementation of minority student recruitment programs. In this Section descriptions of these programs are provided as well as some results of these special efforts.

The Minority Prospective Scholars Program was initiated in 1978-79 to recruit outstanding students, with a special focus on those from other states. Candidates for the Minority Prospective Scholars Program are identified through the computerized Student Search Service of the College Board and applications on file in the Admissions Office. Over 2,000 minority students, including

89 Michigan residents, have received congratulatory Prospective Scholar Letters and asked to return a postcard which would bring them further information about the University. Along with the congratulatory letter, the Michigan residents were sent an application for admission and the publication Minorities at Michigan. Similar materials were sent to out-of-state students returning the postcard to request additional information. It is expected that 15 percent of the students will request additional information about the University.

Efforts are being made to reach by telephone, each non-Michigan resident returning a postcard and each Michigan resident to further commend them on their achievement, to encourage them to apply to the University, and to extend a personal offer of assistance. Students in the Detroit area were invited to a special Prospective Scholars Reception in the Rackham Building in Detroit. Twenty-five students and their parents attended the reception which was held on November 1, 1979.

Interview Sessions Sponsored by the National Scholarship Service and Fund for Negro Students (NSSFNS). The University will participate, along with other colleges, in NSSFNS student interview sessions this year in Atlanta, Cleveland, Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, and New York. Sessions are typically attended by over 3,000 high school students. Thus, the sessions are an efficient and effective way to reach large numbers of minority students. The programs in Atlanta and Cleveland have already been attended and more than 100 students at each session made inquiries about the University.

The Annual Detroit Area Counselors Workshop is designed to establish, maintain, and improve communication with key high school and community college officials from the schools which provide most of the University's minority

students. Representatives from 14 of the 21 Detroit high schools and the Wayne County and Highland Park community colleges attended the 1979-80 Counselors Workshop.

Outstate Michigan Recruitment Activities. In addition to efforts in Detroit, the Admissions Office is making special efforts to recruit minority students from population centers such as Flint, Saginaw, Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, Benton Harbor, etc. Workshops are being held for students and parents in these areas to provide information on educational programs and services available at the University and to promote an interest in applying for admission.

SAT Preparation Workshops are sponsored by the Detroit Adjunct Admissions Office and provide students background information on the test such as pre-test preparation, test-taking strategies, and score interpretation. A sample SAT is administered in order to simulate the actual test environment. The Workshops also allow staff to gather information on each participant's academic background, test scores, intended field of study, and potential interest in attending the University. The Workshop was initiated as a pilot program involving only 50 students, but highly favorable responses from students and counselors necessitated an expansion of the program.

Career Day Programs provide high school sophomores and juniors a general orientation to University programs and services and provide career awareness in areas such as behavioral sciences, business administration, applied and fine arts, communications, math and computer sciences, law, natural and physical sciences, engineering, and health sciences. Career Day Programs were conducted in response to invitations from high school counselors in Cass, Chadsey, Finney, Pershing, Renaissance, Osborn, Southwestern and Western high schools.

College Board Minority Scholars Program for Community College Graduates.

Information is received from the College Board on outstanding minority graduates from community colleges in Michigan and nearby states. Students identified through this process receive a letter of congratulations and literature on programs and services available through the University.

Outreach for Health Professions Education Project. Between 1975 and 1978, the University received a grant from the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to encourage high school students from medically underserved areas (inner-city Detroit, the northern lower peninsula, and the Upper Peninsula) to pursue health careers with the long-term goal of having them return to their neighborhoods to practice. High school counselors identified promising students in the sciences and held meetings with the students in their schools about health science careers. Local physicians in the students' communities were asked to maintain contact with the students, and once a year the students were brought to Ann Arbor for a tour of the Medical School.

Since the HEW grant expired, the Admissions Office has been maintaining the program. Currently, 827 students from 26 high schools are participating in the program. During 1978-79, four of the participating schools were in Detroit: Cass Tech, Central, Pershing, and Western.

Of the 258 high school seniors participating in the program in 1979, fifty-three submitted admissions applications, 43 were admitted and 31 paid enrollment deposits. These figures compare with 36 applicants and 31 admissions offers in 1977.

Each One-Reach One-Student Contact Plan. This program offers minority students enrolled at the University an opportunity to provide to the Admissions

Office the name of at least one acquaintance who might be interested in attending the University. Follow-up introductory letters and admissions applications are sent to any prospective students identified by this procedure. A total of 200 names were submitted to the Admissions Office in 1978-79; 20 of the students subsequently applied for admission and 9 were admitted.

Over 3,000 letters requesting the names of prospective students were mailed to minority students at the University this past November. The names of 60 students have been received through early January, and more are expected. The 60 students are now receiving personal follow-up contacts from the Admissions Office.

#### Rackham School of Graduate Studies

While the identification of the available pool of minority applicants is largely the responsibility of individual departments, the Graduate School plays an important role in terms of data collection and the coordination of activities resulting from those data. It should be noted that the activities described often serve a dual purpose: Identification and expansion of the applicant pool, and an opportunity for active recruitment.

Minority Visitation. Rackham sponsored the fourth annual minority visitation program during the winter term of 1979. Funds were allocated by Rackham to fifteen departments which participated in the program for the purpose of covering, or helping to cover, expenses incurred by minority students in visiting the campus. Participating departments were selected on the basis of minority enrollment during the previous term, with special attention given to fields in the biological, physical, and analytical social sciences. Visitors were finally selected by departments in consultation with Rackham.

In contrast with past visitation programs, the departments, instead of Rackham, were responsible for planning activities for students invited to the campus. This new approach seemed to work well, since 74 percent of the visiting students (14 out of 19 students) subsequently enrolled at Michigan, compared to an enrollment rate in the prior year's program of 53 percent.

Name Exchanges. Minority student name exchange programs are an important recruiting mechanism for the Graduate School. The University presently participates in three consortia which exchange information on talented minority undergraduates who may be interested in graduate work. The University expects to receive information on over 1,700 minority students from these consortia (Committee on Institutional Cooperation, Committee on Cooperative Minority Student Recruitment, and the Western Name Exchange). Efforts are currently underway to develop a minority name exchange program among nine institutions in Michigan which could provide approximately 400 names during the current academic year.

This year, for the first time, Rackham is participating in the Minority Student Locator Service sponsored by the Educational Testing Service. It is anticipated that the University will receive from this source approximately 10,000 names of minority students taking the Graduate Record Examination in 1979-80. Through December, 1979, a total of 5,000 minority students identified through the name exchange consortia and the ETS locator service had been contacted by Rackham.

CIC. Five minority students are currently receiving fellowships through the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) which provides assistance to minorities in the social sciences. These two-year fellowships provide full tuition for an academic year, plus a stipend of \$4,250. Two of the

recipients are enrolled in psychology and one is enrolled in each of the following areas: economics, history and political science. The CIC program is funded by the Lilly Endowment, Inc. A total of 25 fellowships were awarded for 1979-80, with the University receiving the second highest number of awards granted.

G\*POP. During the current academic year, 15 students are receiving fellowships from the Graduate and Professional Opportunities Program (G\*POP) under a Federal grant to the University. Four of the fellowships were awarded to new graduate students, and the remainder are renewal awards. The fellowships provide support of \$7,800 a year for minorities and women enrolling in certain health related fields and analytical social sciences. The recipients for the current year are in the following academic areas: applied economics (3), biostatistics (7), computer and communication sciences (1), and medical care organization (4). The total grant to the University through the Graduate and Professional Opportunities Program also included an institutional grant of \$24,205 to assist recruitment efforts, tutoring, and supportive services directed at minorities and women.

The Graduate School has submitted an application to the U. S. Office of Education to request continuation funding in 1980-81 for the current awards, as well as an additional 15 new fellowships for next year. Also included in the application was a request to include engineering in the program in 1980-81.

FIPSE Proposal. The Rackham School of Graduate Studies has participated in the development of a proposal to the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE) on the subject of minority student retention in graduate programs. The proposal was submitted under the auspices of the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) and, if funded, will cover a



study of student retention at The University of Michigan and member institutions of CIC. Specifically, the proposed study will examine enrollment and degree output for six selected departments, including education, two social sciences, two humanities and one natural science. It will involve personal interviews with a sample size of 1,100 graduate administrators and faculty members and telephone interviews with a maximum of 6,000 minority and non-minority students, currently enrolled or dropouts over a ten-year period. It is hoped that the results of the study will influence institutional policies at The University of Michigan and other participating institutions.

### The Opportunity Program

The focus of the University's efforts to assist students from disadvantaged environments is the Opportunity Program. Although not all currently enrolled minority students meet the selection criteria of the Program (SAT scores and high school GPA's below a certain level),<sup>1</sup> the Program has been instrumental in increasing minority enrollment from 1,651 in Fall 1970, to 3,252 in Fall 1979.

One of the services currently offered by the Opportunity Program is academic advising, which is designed to provide students with consistent, clear information about academic requirements for each school and college within the University. In addition, academic counselors monitor the academic progress of each student.

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<sup>1</sup>In 1976 the selection criteria for the Opportunity Program were changed so that only students with high school grade point averages and combined SAT scores below certain levels were included in the Program. This change permitted the University to focus its resources on students with academic promise who are in the greatest need of supportive services.

The primary program for monitoring academic progress is the Mid-Term Estimate which requests faculty members to evaluate the academic progress of Opportunity students enrolled in certain mathematics, science, and foreign language courses. In Fall 1979, faculty were requested to submit 721 mid-term estimates and 457 responses were received (63 percent).<sup>2</sup> If the mid-term estimates indicate that a student is in academic difficulty, the student receives counseling from the Opportunity Program. The Program also makes available a tutorial program which offers one-to-one assistance.

Approximately 1,100 undergraduate students are currently enrolled in the Opportunity Program. Sixty-five percent of the students are in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, 13 percent in Engineering, 5 percent in Nursing, and smaller percentages in other schools and colleges. Although most of the services of the Opportunity Program are directed toward students designated as Opportunity students, it is possible for other students to receive counseling and academic assistance as well. One example of such assistance is the TOP Program which was initiated to improve the rate of retention of the most well-prepared minority freshmen admitted to the University. A preliminary evaluation of the TOP Program indicates that students in the Program show slightly higher retention rates and grade point averages than similar students not in the Program.

The Opportunity Program has established joint relationships with many offices of the University. A close linkage with the Admissions Office has helped to develop outreach activities to prospective students who have academic promise but may need supportive services. For example, the Opportunity

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<sup>2</sup>Faculty response rate was highest in Biology and French and lowest in Physics and Mathematics.

Review Committee assists the Admissions Office in identifying students being admitted to the University who may need supportive services. Assistance has also been provided to the Admissions Office in efforts to recruit students in the metropolitan Detroit, Flint, and Ann Arbor areas. The Admissions Office and the Opportunity Program jointly sponsor the Migrant Program which is designed to assist migrant students who have worked in Michigan for parts of several recent years. The Migrant Program offers students in-state residency (lower tuition) and financial aid to meet college costs.

One of the major objectives of the Opportunity Program has been to strengthen its relationships with other service units as well as with the schools and colleges. The Opportunity Program Coordinating Committee has been the focus of many of these efforts to coordinate and strengthen academic and supportive services in all areas of the University.

Despite the Program's successes, there also have been problems. Students in the Opportunity Program are more likely to be on academic probation than other students. Furthermore, disenrollment rates are higher for students in the Opportunity Program than for other students. There are some positive signs, however, that these problems may be diminishing. For example, there was a dramatic drop of 33 percent in the number of "stop actions" taken on Opportunity students in LSA from 1977 to 1978. While it is difficult to determine the precise reasons for the drop, LSA's Office of Academic Actions identified several possible reasons which are excerpted below:

1. There has definitely been greater input to the recruitment process by LSA representatives and staff members of the Opportunity Program.
2. The efforts of the LSA Office of Academic Counseling, especially in counselor contact with all students on academic probation, are beginning to pay off.