International Graduate Enrollment: Challenges & Opportunities

1. International enrollment trend by school & college: Fall terms 2008-2012 [Info from OIRP]

2. Institutional Goals
OGS and international admissions seek to increase international enrollment as well as geographic diversity. Roughly 30% of total international enrollment is at the graduate level. The university seeks to increase international enrollment to 10% of its total student population. Graduate international students currently represent 11% of total graduate enrollment. Targeted international enrollment is 15%, or an additional 228 enrolled international graduate students.

3. Challenges
   a) Attracting sponsored students;
   b) Top students who are unable to sit for standardized tests (Middle East, China, Southeast Asia, North Africa) or inability to enroll in undergraduate prerequisite courses may be overlooked.
   c) How can we accommodate Low/No TOEFL students whose funding includes ESL preparation.
   d) Beyond GA and RA, limited financial support exists for talented students;
   e) Application deadlines may be too rigid or too late to attract the best.
   f) Not all foreign universities are equal: UG institutions and equivalent grading scale may inform selection committee regarding applicant quality.
   g) Should we expect graduate selection committees to hold non-native English speakers to same standard as native English speakers in standardized test score threshold for admission?

4. Resources
   a) Supplemental applications are available from International admission to provide equivalent GPA, verification of equivalent USA undergraduate degree and accreditation.
   b) OGS workshops for ESL students preparing for graduate application each term.
   c) International admission is available for qualitative input on many foreign undergraduate universities.
   d) OGS and International Admission Graduate Recruiting Workshops are offered for academic departments.
   e) Departments are invited to participate in development of international collaborations
including articulated 2+2+2, 1+2 and dual degree pathway programs.

5. **Admission with Conditions:** risks and rewards
   a) Graduate admission with ESL/pre-requisite restriction results in term enrollment delay. Unknown academic program start puts these students out of synch with the remaining entering class admission term.
   b) Sponsored students whose funding allows ESL but requires graduate admission may not fund “conditional admission” but will fund “Full admission with conditions.”

6. **What we know about international graduate applicants**
   a) They apply to multiple institutions and often select the first school to issue the student visa document. Admission timing is important for enrollment yield especially for sponsored and gifted applicants who are heavily recruited.
   **Suggestion:** **Graduate four part selection process to increase yield and quality**
   - Tier One: Admit immediately
   - Tier Two: Admit qualified pool as department capacity allows
   - Tier Three: Wait list - Notify students of this status
   - Tier Four: Deny right away
   b) They must provide proof of financial savings for a minimum of one year. Many are unable to complete the program when program costs exceed savings.
   **Suggestion:** **Create merit scholarship pool for students ineligible for assistantships.**
   c) Faculty engagement with applicants can make a difference in their enrollment choice.
   **Suggestion:** 1. Create template emails for faculty to send inviting the students to explore their research on the web. 2. Create department specific “personal” emails to go to all graduate prospects. International admission can send on behalf of the department. 3. Post video testimonials of currently enrolled international (and domestic) students’ experience on the website. Links to these can be subject of faculty emails.

7. **How can OGS, OIA and International Admissions support the units?**