



# Instituting an Enrollment Deposit...

## *Lessons Learned*

Dr. Brent A. Gage, Northern Illinois University

Lisa Pinamonti Kress, University of Kansas



# AACRAO

A Century of Excellence in Higher Education  
Admissions • Registration • Enrollment Services

# Why a deposit?

---

- What factors should drive the decision?
  - Enrollment Management issues
  - Data, environmental factors, existing issues?
- Bring the concept to key campus entities
- Weigh benefits versus concerns
  - Effective planning vs. potential deterrent
  - Customer service vs. confusion of student
  - Improving student quality vs. access to institution
- Do you have the resources, staff, and technology to do it well?



AACRAO

A Century of Excellence in Higher Education  
Admissions • Registration • Enrollment Services

# Involvement of the right players

---

- Who should be involved in the process?
  - Academic Affairs
  - Housing
  - Orientation
  - Financial Aid
  - Bursar
  - SIS Programmers
- Who needs to understand the specifics?
- Who communicates with prospective students?
- Will you have support for the policy and its ramifications?
- How will exceptions be handled?
- What processes and communications must be developed



AACRAO

A Century of Excellence in Higher Education  
Admissions • Registration • Enrollment Services

# Developing the process

---

- Coordinate meetings throughout the year
  - Who needs to be involved?
  - What other timelines need to mesh with the deposit
- Develop a timeline for the process
  - Web site language
  - Tone and content of communication
  - Reconciliation



AACRAO

A Century of Excellence in Higher Education  
Admissions • Registration • Enrollment Services

# Identifying Potential Problems

- Identify outdated materials in circulation
- Determine how to match student with payment
- Scholarship recipients/Student Athletes
- Develop the “deferment” process
- Existing fee exceptions
  - Students not living on campus
- Bounced Checks
- Post deadline admits
- The reinstatement process
- Multiple payments
  - Student and Parent
  - Cancel admissions and then wish to enroll



**AACRAO**

A Century of Excellence in Higher Education  
Admissions • Registration • Enrollment Services

# There is a lot of help out there!

- Identify institutions in your peer group
  - What are the challenges and benefits?
- Colleagues to contact during the process
  - Find one or two contacts that can serve as a sounding board for you
- Don't make mistakes that could be avoided
- Allow for the process to evolve
- Involve students, parents and counselors for feedback



AACRAO

A Century of Excellence in Higher Education  
Admissions • Registration • Enrollment Services

# Policy Development

---

- **Do not build your process on exceptions**
  - How will the process work for most students
- Who will pay the deposit?
  - Freshman?
  - Transfers?
  - International Students?
- Which term?
  - Fall only or all terms?
- How much?
- What will the deposit actually cover?
- Does it need to go through the curricular process to be included in the catalog?



AACRAO

A Century of Excellence in Higher Education  
Admissions • Registration • Enrollment Services

# Various Models

---

- A true deposit
  - A payment that is applied to tuition charges
  - The amount?
- A centralized fee model
  - Centralize existing fees paid by new students
    - Housing
    - Orientation
  - One point of contact
  - Greater coordination
  - The amount equals existing fees



AACRAO

A Century of Excellence in Higher Education  
Admissions • Registration • Enrollment Services

# Collection

---

- When can it be paid?
  - On-line options
  - Paper process and required forms
- How will it be paid?
- Is it refundable?
  - If yes, what are the policies for refund
- How will it be tracked and accounted for?
- How will deferment requests be processed?
- What staff will handle the processing?
- What communication will follow?
- How will it be tracked in your SIS?
  - Do all of the essential players have access?



AACRAO

A Century of Excellence in Higher Education  
Admissions • Registration • Enrollment Services

# Motivating Incentives

---

- What functions can be tied to the deposit?
  - Preliminary admission
  - Scholarship acceptance
  - Housing information
  - Orientation invitation
- What communications must be developed?
  - Parent post cards
  - Web-site information
  - E-mail reminders

# Handling Exceptions

---

- Once your primary process is developed...
  - Scholarships students / Student Athletes
  - Deferment Qualification
  - Refund policy
  - Cancellation of admission
    - Post deadline admission or reconsideration
  - Exception process for refund requests
  - Strange amounts???



AACRAO

A Century of Excellence in Higher Education  
Admissions • Registration • Enrollment Services

# Doing the math...

---

- What happens to the melt?
  - What are your fixed expenses?
  - Will the melt be enough?
  - Who gets the remainder?
- Developing accounting processes
  - Don't forget the audit trail!
  - How will fund transfers be tracked
  - Strange quirks...
    - Not living on campus
    - Deposit paid when it was not required
    - Last minute scholarship
    - What if there is not enough to cover expenses



AACRAO

A Century of Excellence in Higher Education  
Admissions • Registration • Enrollment Services

# Getting the word out

---

- External audiences
  - High School Guidance Staff
  - Primary members of the community
  - Peer institutions
- Internal Audiences
  - Take the show on the road!
    - Anyone who will listen
  - Campus publications
  - Academic departments, chairs, advisors, and support staff



AACRAO

A Century of Excellence in Higher Education  
Admissions • Registration • Enrollment Services

# What are the benefits?

---

- Effective Enrollment Management
  - Appropriate course offerings
  - Housing capacity decisions
  - Maximizing Dollars
    - Federal and Institutional Aid
    - Scholarship Dollars
    - Plenty of sections of core courses
  - Knowing exactly where you stand
    - Decisions based on late admission/wait-listed students
    - Positive press/damage control
    - Opportunity for early assessment of yield data



AACRAO

A Century of Excellence in Higher Education  
Admissions • Registration • Enrollment Services

# Student perceptions

---

- Responses at KU and UNL
- Perception of “One University”
- Maximizing limited university resources
- Constantly communicate
- The existing process must change
- Post-deposit communication
  - They are now “your” student
- More willing to participate in assessment



AACRAO

A Century of Excellence in Higher Education  
Admissions • Registration • Enrollment Services

# Does it fit my institution?

---

- What are the challenges you face?
  - Adequate class availability?
    - Empty sections or 1 in 5 freshmen get English 101
  - Not knowing your FTE until 10 day?
    - Sending up your “best guess” to administration
  - Who are your students
    - Commuter, low-income, part-time, “last-minute”
  - Will it make any difference in how decisions are made?
  - Do I have the resources or staff?
  - Is the technology required readily available?
  - How does it fit the culture of the institution?
  - Will a deposit have a negative impact on total enrollment?

# Back to square one...

---

- Why not explore the idea?
  - If a deposit is not the answer...
    - What issues will the discussion reveal?
    - What ideas can be developed?
    - Are there global problems that are not being addressed?
    - How can these conversations continue?
      - Multiple perspectives related to overall management of enrollment.
  - What about a no fee “confirmation” process?



AACRAO

A Century of Excellence in Higher Education  
Admissions • Registration • Enrollment Services

# Questions...

---

Dr. Brent A. Gage

Assistant Vice Provost-  
Enrollment Services

Northern Illinois University

303 Williston Hall

DeKalb, IL 60115

[bage@niu.edu](mailto:bage@niu.edu)

(815)753-0755

Lisa Pinamonti Kress

Director of Admissions and  
Scholarships

University of Kansas

1502 Iowa Street

Lawrence, KS 66045

[lpkress@ku.edu](mailto:lpkress@ku.edu)

(785) 864-5421