Gilman Advisor Spotlight Webinar Series

Going the Extra Mile: Recruiting and Advising Rural Students

The Gilman International Scholarship Program is a program of the U.S. Department of State with funding provided by the U.S. Government and supported in its implementation by the Institute of International Education (IIE).
Introductions

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Western Kentucky University

- Regional state institution with satellite campuses
- Fall 2019 Undergraduate Enrollment: 15,895¹
  - 90.1% from the South
  - 32% First-Generation
  - 11.8% Nontraditional
  - 10.4% Pell Grant Eligible

¹ Source: Western Kentucky University
Going the Extra Mile: Recruiting & Advising Rural Students

- Understanding the Demographic
- Recruiting Rural Students
- Advising Rural Students
- Supporting Rural Students
Going the Extra Mile
Understanding the Demographic
Rural students face a choice:
- Adopt the ideas of the dominant culture
- Deny the new ideas
- Negotiate another form of adjustment

“When the dominant culture presents ideas that conflict with the students’ home culture, an added sense of stress is created in the students’ lives.” (D.M Dees)²
Understanding the Demographic

PERSONAL AND SITUATIONAL DETERMINANTS

- Realization of the importance of family
- Strong sense of community
- “Common sense” is more valuable than intellectual ability
- Mistrust of those outside the community
- Adherence to gender-role stereotypes
- Strong work ethic
- Strong religious beliefs
Understanding the Demographic

UNIQUE PRESSURES

- Many rural students experience unique pressures to
  - Quickly identify an *economically pragmatic* field of study
  - *Maintain connections* to their home communities
  - Establish themselves as competent and competitive students, despite entering college with *limited or dramatically different social and cultural capital*  

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Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship

Going the Extra Mile
Recruiting Rural Students
Recruiting Rural Students

CORBETT’S FRAMES

Emphasize the features and benefits of studying abroad

- Competitive
  - Credit hours, degree planning “hack”

- Pragmatic
  - Practical work experience, required credit hours

- Security
  - Support through process, on-site support

- Entrepreneurial
  - Adaptability, resourcefulness, independence

- Exploratory
  - Personal growth, curiosity, identify formation
Recruiting Rural Students

INSTITUTIONAL MOVES

- Remove financial obstacles
  - Application Fee Waiver Scholarship
  - E.D.G.E. Grant
  - Gilman Supplemental Scholarship

- Offer financial advising
  - Help students see the possibility
  - Show the pathway (campus resources, advocating for themselves)
Recruiting Rural Students

INSTITUTIONAL MOVES

- Offer and highlight accessible programs
  - Identify Gilman-eligible programs that anticipate their needs
    - Affordable programs with transactional value
    - On-site support for navigating a lot of first-time things
    - Program Spotlight: KIIS Tanzania / Imagewest Internship
Going the Extra Mile
Advising Rural Students
Advising Rural Students

EXPLORATION TO SUBMISSION

- Eliminate friction
- Coach academic and career connections in program selection
- Provide financial advising that emphasizes the value of long-term planning
- Critical message: “I will help you get there, and I mean it.”
- Offer flexibility in time and medium
  - Explicitly offer options, acknowledge work and commute
- Use appreciative advising to explore social background
Going the Extra Mile
Supporting Rural Students
Supporting Rural Students

BEYOND SUBMISSION

- Celebrate their hard work and vulnerability
- Reflect the value of the work
- Help them navigate complex processes
- Empower them as ambassadors and encourage their own recruitment
- After awards, console those not selected and celebrate recipients
  - Press release
  - Email program leaders, mentors, etc.
Going the Extra Mile
With Limited Resources
Recruiting and Advising Rural Students

WITH LIMITED RESOURCES

- Invest in your pipelines: Financial Aid, affinity groups, Faculty-Led programs,
- Utilize available campus resources:
  - Peer advisors and/or Writing Center
  - Use planning guides to simplify and demystify the tasks
  - Maximize your time with online tools
    - Loom for quick but thorough, asynchronous feedback
    - Calendly for scheduling
Works Cited

Resource:
“Serving Rural Students” by Andrew Crain (NACE)

1. WKU Fact Book
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