



## The Graduate School

New Mexico State University  
PO Box 30001 MSC 3 G  
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88001-8001

Annual plan 2007-2008

<http://gradschool.nmsu.edu/>

To: Faculty, Students and Staff of New Mexico State University  
From: Linda Lacey, Dean of the Graduate School, NMSU Graduate School  
Re: Recruitment Goals, Objectives and Strategies

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New Mexico State University's strategic plan entitled *Living the Vision: A Performance Plan for Excellence*, is used to guide the activities of the Graduate School. I list the goal and objectives from the performance plan that are specific to the Graduate School. This is followed by strategies employed by the Graduate School to recruit a high quality and diverse student body.

**Goal: To be nationally and internationally recognized for its academic programs.**

Performance Standard: NMSU will be in the top quartile among peer institutions for each measure:

New Mexico State University's objectives are to:

- Attract increasing numbers of well-qualified students at all academic levels
- Enroll a competitive proportion of degree-seeking international and out of state graduate students
- Enroll a competitive proportion of degree-seeking graduate students
- Retain a competitive percentage of students to degree completion at all academic levels.
- Recruit and retain a diversity student body among all colleges within the university (an additional objective of the Graduate School).

### Summary of Activities during academic year

Recruitment and retention activities are major priorities of the Graduate School. We are working with departments and colleges to increase the number and/or quality of enrolled graduate students.

#### I. Strategies to increase the applicant pool

1. *Organized Annual Best Practices Recruitment Workshop*: the purpose of the workshop is to discuss recruitment efforts of the graduate school and engage departments in sharing best practices in recruiting students.
2. *Participated in graduate and career fairs and national conferences*: The Graduate

School participated in over 40 graduate and career fairs within New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, California and Colorado. To attract students across the nation, we purchased exhibit booths at 8 professional and undergraduate conferences with participants of 500 to 2,000.

3. *Purchased mailing lists of about 7,000 undergraduate students:* We used the Western Name Exchange list of students attending western universities and the McNair fellows national mailing list to send information on NMSU graduate programs.
4. *Recruited NMSU undergraduates:* About 40 percent of our graduate students are NMSU alumni. We attended NMSU career and graduate fairs and have spoke in a number of undergraduate classes. We also conducted workshops for undergraduates including a) How to Apply to Graduate School, b) How to Succeed, and c) How to Finance Your Graduate Education.
5. *Electronic recruitment:* About 90 percent of potential graduate students obtain information on graduate programs via the Internet. Last year we employed the services of Gradschools.com, the largest web site on graduate schools. We used their email and web-based services for main campus and our distance learning programs. Based on our online evaluation survey of our recruitment efforts, a sizable number of applicants received information about NMSU through Gradschools.com.
6. *Advertising:* With technical assistance and support from University Communications, the Graduate School has placed ads in local newspapers, student newspapers, conference programs and minority publications to attract students to main campus and distance learning programs.
7. *Conference travel awards for current students:* The Graduate School gave over 70 awards (up to \$250) which enabled graduate students to present their research at professional conferences throughout the country and the world. Potential applicants learned about NMSU through contact with our graduate students at professional meetings.

## **II. Recruiting admitted students**

8. *Transportation awards for admitted students:* We introduced transportation awards to allow departments to bring their top candidates to visit NMSU. About 20 awards (airfare only of \$350 each) are available to recruit admitted students.
9. *60 Tuition Fellowship awards* This new program helped us attract top students to NMSU.

### **Planned activities for academic year**

*We will continue to explore ways to collaborate with departments, colleges including distance learning and undergraduate recruitment staff. We will focus on relationship building with inquiries, applicants and admitted students. With the new Banner service we will work towards “relationship building” by sending out emails to admitted students, applicants and inquiries every few weeks. We will also hold regional information sessions to promote face-to-face interaction with admitted students and potential applicants. Other activities are listed below.*

- a. Main Campus Activities

- i. *Participate in at least 40 Graduate and Career Fairs* at universities where we receive large numbers of undergraduates. States include: New Mexico, Texas, Colorado, Arizona, California and other select states.
  - ii. *Purchase 4 Exhibit booths* at national and regional undergraduate research conferences that attract 500 to 2,000 primarily minority participants.
  - iii. *Offer incentives to department to encourage early admissions' decisions.* This includes all levels of funding from the Graduate School.
  - iv. *Provide departments with data on incomplete applications* so they can contact potential students about completing the application.
  
- b. Distance learning and main campus activities
  - i. *Employ electronic recruitment strategies.* We will continue to use GraduateSchools.com to advertise all graduate programs at NMSU including distance-learning programs.
  - ii. Continue to include *information on distance learning programs* on the Graduate School web site and in all print publications including the Graduate Catalog, View book and brochure.
  - iii. *Continue print newspaper advertisement* in collaboration with University Communications in newspapers of schools we visit.
  - iv. Will collaborate with recruitment efforts at Fort Bliss
  
- c. Collaboration with undergraduate recruitment efforts
  - i. *Promote undergraduate programs* at national and regional conferences. We will distribute undergraduate materials at exhibit booths at conferences that include a large number of community college students.
  - ii. *Expand undergraduate workshops* for NMSU students including workshops offered by our staff and graduate student ambassadors.
  - iii. *Continue to encourage departments* to discuss graduate programs to their undergraduate students at NMSU.
  - iv. *Continue to attend monthly coordination meetings among all recruitment officers.* The purpose of the meetings is to share information on recruitment activities and identify ways to collaborate on activities.
  - v. *Develop a comprehensive recruitment strategy to recruit international students with the Center for International Programs.*
  - vi. *Continue to work with all of the directors of the minority programs* at NMSU to explore additional ways we can collaborate on recruitment of NMSU undergraduates.
  
- d. Market new Funding for Graduate Students through our web site and handouts at recruitment events.
  - i. 60 tuition fellowship awards for entering graduate students
  - ii. McNair graduate assistantships
  - iii. Diversity graduate assistantships
  - iv. Awards for continuing graduate assistants
    - \$4,000 supplemental enhancement awards for graduate assistants for outstanding service to NMSU
    - \$1,000 supplemental awards for Graduate Assistants

- \$1,000 supplemental awards for campus and community leadership (12 to 15)
- v. Health insurance for graduate assistants

To learn more about funding opportunities for students, please visit our web site called *award announcements*:

**<http://gradschool.nmsu.edu/gradschool/announcements.html>**

### **III. Outcome**

The Graduate School has achieved a 50 percent growth in enrollment, based on headcount since fall 2002. In Fall 2002, there were 2,440 graduate students (head count) and the estimated size of the graduate student body for fall 2009 is about 3,600. This includes part-time students and distance learning students.

### **IV. How faculty can help**

There are a number of activities the university community can engage in to build enrollment and the quality of the student body. Below are suggestions:

NMSU Faculty/Staff

- Always ask faculty at other universities if they have undergraduates that might be interested in attending NMSU. Faculty members like to place their undergraduates with people they know.
- Engage or encourage undergraduate to become active participants in research projects. Active learning excites students about becoming scholars.
- Seek ways to collaborate across campus. Take your materials and materials from other units with you on recruitment trips. Help us Identify opportunities for graduate and undergraduate recruitment. We need your help in identifying web sites and professional meetings where we can promote NMSU.
- Develop easy to read web sites that addresses the needs of potential students.
- Develop a telephone communications plan for admitted students. Email, write letters and call as much as possible to answer questions and demonstrate that NMSU is interested in them.
- Include student recruitment in monthly faculty meetings. Develop a sub-committee that develops and implements recruitment strategies.
- We need community residents to let us know about events were we can come and discuss programs of study at NMSU
- Employers have workers who may wish to update their skills. We welcome opportunities to come and speak to employers.