**International Recruitment Committee Recommendations**

**Queens College Internationalization Plan**

**Situation analysis: Where we are now**

On average, there are 600-650 international students annually at Queens College, and they currently comprise approximately 3% of the student body. These are students who are in the United States for the purpose of study and who are on temporary F1 or J2 visas. The vast majority of them are transfer students from community colleges and predominantly from China (26%), Korea (18%), India (4%), followed by Canada, Brazil, and a diverse array of other nations. 65% are enrolled in undergraduate programs while 35% are in graduate. Most popular areas of study include Computer Science, Music and Accounting. International students pay out-of-state tuition, which is very affordable compared to other institutions, at approximately $12-13,000 annually.

There are currently no dedicated recruitment or marketing activities aimed at attracting international students. Students primarily find out about Queens College once they are here in the US, through word of mouth or recommendations from relatives who live in Queens. Some direct overseas recruitment and advertising takes place in QC’s English Language Institute programs (300-500 students are enrolled annually in ELI) which has limited cross-over to enrollment in the school’s degree programs. The majority of the college’s international students are first- or second-generation immigrants, whose native language may not be English.

Located in one of the most ethnically diverse counties in the country, Queens College is in a particularly enviable position given its geography, proximity to New York City, and the international make-up of the surrounding community. The student body represents 170 countries and speak 110 languages, while international students, scholars and artists are an active part of the campus community. The school is truly a global community, and a welcoming learning environment for people of all ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

In terms of product mix, the institution offers a wide array of academic options with over 60 undergraduate and over 100 graduate degree programs. Strengths include Computer Science, Physics, Chemistry, Music, Fine Arts, Languages and Literary Translation, Accounting, and Business (undergraduate - BALA, BBA). At the graduate level, there are limited offerings in Health and Business, the two areas of study which receive the highest enrollment of international graduate students at CUNY.

Queens currently has a “PATH” program, a pre-matriculation program designed to attract and support international students, but efforts are currently on a case-by-case basis and processes are not streamlined. The program provides opportunities to academically qualified students outside the US who meet the college’s admission standards except for language proficiency; students may be seek enrollment in degree programs after studying at the English Language Institute (ELI) and meeting English language requirements.

**Recommendations:**

As a potential destination for study, Queens College has much to offer international students: High quality academic programs; a safe, diverse and collegial learning environment; one of the most affordable tuition rates in the country; and access to the bustling multi-cultural metropolis of New York City.

The expansion of Queens College’s international presence and interactions is one of the cornerstones of the college’s current strategic plan 2015-2020, and consistent with the goals of internationalization. Included in the five year strategic plan goals are to increase international students by 40% (from 600-800), to increase students’ international experiences by 40% (from 150-210), and to build diversity of the student and faculty composition so as to enrich cross-cultural interactions both within the campus and with the surrounding community. The long-term academic, cultural and economic benefits of building the college’s international student body are emphasized in the strategic plan.

International recruitment presents an opportunity to enhance enrollment and the multicultural richness of the institution. With some dedicated recruitment and marketing efforts (where previously there was none), there is an opportunity for the college to increase its draw of international students. Potential also exists with broadening the reach of the college’s highly established English Language Institute programs, and examining the model of how these could be leveraged to increase conversion of international students into full-time degree programs.

Queens College currently has partnerships with 25 universities on 5 continents, and 200-300 faculty travel abroad annually to share their expertise at other institutions. While additional analysis needs to be done to examine the college’s strengths and identifying the markets to match, existing international connections should be leveraged for recruitment abroad.

A major area of investment required would be to build the infrastructure, services and programs needed to support the admission of international students and help them thrive once they are here. The college’s application system and onboarding process is currently not designed to facilitate international students, and this presents a potential challenge, especially to those who are not familiar with the American education system or whose native language may not be English. In general, there is a need to implement a more student-friendly review and communication process for applications at the college, and currently improvements are being made in this area.

Services to support the success and retention of international students once they are on campus are also limited. The college has an on-campus apartment complex that houses 500 students, however, campus life does not provide a 24 / 7 immersive experience for its residents.

Given the strength of QC’s degree offerings as well as capacity to build upon existing support services for international students, it is recommended that recruiting efforts focus primarily on undergraduate prospects.

Strategies for international recruitment include the following:

1. Complete an agreement with Navitas, an international enrollment organization, to tap into their global marketing and recruitment infrastructure. Such an agreement would provide access to prospective students in over 130 countries, while ensuring students coming in are given support and assistance that helps them succeed and thrive at QC.

QC representatives are currently visiting institutions with existing Navitas partnerships to evaluate the feasibility of a QC agreement with the organization, including learning how such relationships integrate across the institution’s marketing, admissions, academic and support teams.

1. Explore industry resources and international recruitment opportunities available through the state department and established industry organizations such as the Institute of International Education (IIE), EducationUSA, NAFSA: Association for International Educators, and the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC). For example, NACAC international affiliates are a means of access to highly qualified students at high schools and preparatory schools in numerous countries abroad.
2. Streamline the system for onboarding international students. While the college has already restructured how global education is directed and organized, there is a need to ensure the appropriate systems are in place to successfully facilitate the admission of international students, across orientation, advising and registration of courses. The traditional processes do not take into account the specific needs of international students. For example, international students cannot enter the US until 30 days before the start of the semester, at which point it may be difficult for them to register for the courses they need.
3. Build the college’s services and support for international students, while exploring ways to build a campus community and culture that is attuned to their specific needs. Develop programs that support integration into campus life and co-curricular activities that facilitate interactions with domestic students and the surrounding community. Explore ways to make the campus a 24/7 living and learning environment for international students that will reside there year-round. Provide support for international students that need to find off-campus housing.
4. Develop a staff position dedicated to international recruitment, and mine new opportunities for outreach.

* Investigate opportunities for recruitment through QC’s institutional partnerships and ways to build institutional exposure through faculty travel. Create an enrollment marketing “kit” for to leverage opportunities for exposure when faculty and staff travel to institutions in other countries
* Engage graduating international students or recent young alumni to participate in enrollment activities for peer-to-peer outreach.
* Explore the potential of participating in international recruitment tours and overseas college fairs.

1. Implement marketing and communications to promote QC as an attractive choice for international students both domestic and abroad. Develop a positioning for international audiences that leverages the strengths of the institution and resonates with the key target audiences identified. Some of the tactics include:

* Create a dedicated international students section on the web site to market to prospects
* Advertise in international student education outlets, such as StudyUSA, IIE website, google ads, etc., and establish profiles on lead generation sites targeting international students i.e. Petersens
* Develop multi-language, culturally relevant marketing tools for key programs (i.e. Aaron Copland School of Music programs / China)

1. Increase mobility of current students by promoting study abroad and emphasizing the value of international and cross-cultural learning within the campus community.
2. Increase funding for administrative infrastructure, marketing support, and faculty travel.
3. Establish a student activity fee per semester for international students and utilize this revenue to implement programming for them that builds a sense of community and connectivity. For example, $75 per student at the current international enrollment rate would yield nearly $50,000 per semester, which could be spent on parties, guest lecturers, films, athletic events, travel, etc. Funds could be allocated back to the departments in proportion to the students enrolled. If the college is successful at building a positive sense of community and culture for international students, this will likely enhance peer-to-peer recommendations and the recruitment pipeline from their countries of origin, which impacts how successfully we can attract more new students in the future.