

Office of Recruitment and Diversity Initiatives, Graduate School

2015-2016 Annual Report

Hobsons® Connect

2016 marks the third year using the Hobsons® *Connect* system and the final year in contract. This year, the new position of Assessment Manager transformed the utilization of the Hobsons system by cleaning up data, creating more reports, and reviewing existing filters and communications.

Presenting at Conference

Last summer, the director of ORDI and the director of GAAPS presented at Hobsons U annual conference on the topic of “Getting Buy In: Maximizing your CRM when the players are always changing.” The session brought over 30 participants and lots of collaborations.

Trainings

ORDI hosted monthly Hobsons Utilization Trainings (HUTs) and invited department users to attend. These trainings included the Director of Admissions and Academic Programs, the Assessment Manager, and the ORDI staff. We worked to pair up with users and go through their individual needs. On average, 5-10 users attended each session.

Department Data Meetings

In Spring 2015, the Assessment Manager and Director of ORDI invited all departments to have a meeting to go over any data or recruitment needs using the Hobsons, GSAAPPS system, and Institutional Research. Over 60 departments and programs signed up for a session and shared their needs. Outcomes from these meetings were the following: data sharing, admissions process review, inclusive/holistic admissions discussions, communication plan improvements, creation of retention strategies, and development of recruitment plans. Overall, the meetings were helpful to both the department and the Graduate School.

Test Score import testing

After three years of requesting a feed from Banner of all test scores (i.e. GRE, TOEFL), the Graduate School still has not received the feed. A test feed was given in early May and the test was successful. The director of GAAPS will continue to work with the Banner Warehouse to implement the feed into Hobsons to be automated (hopefully) by the start of the semester.

YouTube Videos

The ORDI collaborated with academic departments and administrative units to produce additional videos. The total amount of videos produced by the ORDI is 45. New videos this year are the following: Department of Building Construction, Diversity Scholars, holistic admission, Macromolecular Sciences, Accelerated Masters, and Coordinators and Directors 101. These are queued and sent to the appropriate audiences. The videos designed for prospective students have had a good response.

VT Accelerated Masters program had 1422 views in 10 months.

Holistic Admissions (for departments) had 86 views and Grad School 101 (for departments) had 114 views.

The video with the most success is one created a year ago that is triggered to all prospects who have not applied called “Applying online to Virginia Tech Graduate School.” That has had 21,110 views in 1 year.

Usage

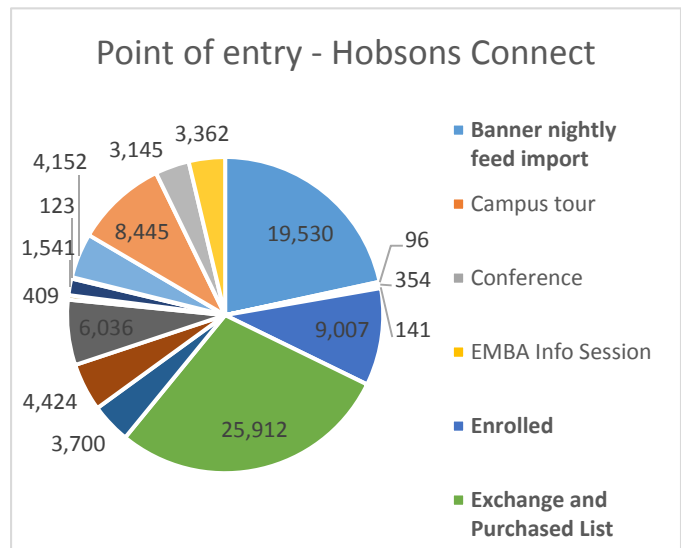
Most of the usage in Hobsons has occurred in the last two years. Imports, feeds, and data downloads are working and communication plans and exports are triggered accordingly. This is a summary of the system usage.

Hobsons System Analysis 2013-2016	
Total student records in system	101,308

Point of entry into system	
Banner nightly feed import	19,530
Campus tour	96
Conference	354
EMBA Info Session	141
Enrolled	9,007
Exchange and Purchased List	25,912
Fairs and Reply cards	3,700
Graduate School Interest Page	4,424
Historical and Generic	6,036
MBA Interest Page	409
MIT Recruitment	1,541
Office Visit	123
Unsubmitted Application	4,152
VT Undergraduate	8,445
Unspecified	3,145
Generic Import	3,362
Number of emails sent by system	
In the last year	84,942

Events scheduled	432
Tours	120
Evening MBA info sessions	243

Total Users	311
Active users	220
Departments and Programs	110



Contract

The five year contract with Hobsons is up this year. After close examination, the ORDI decided to extend the contract on a year-to-year basis. It was also decided that the Graduate School instance of Hobsons Connect would acquire the MBA instance. The two systems merged over the summer and the MBA instance will be turned off in September 2016. The Graduate School also discontinued the use of the Events and Interviews Module (however, the PMBA will continue to use it and pay for it.) The Graduate School purchased YouCanBookMe prescription for one year to replace the Events and Interviews module for daily tour reservations. The MIT program added the Chat feature component and will continue use and payment of it for 2016-2017. After this year, the Graduate School and business programs will reassess the usage and feasibility of Hobsons Connect and possibly explore other vendors.

Coordinator of Recruitment and Retention

The ORDI acquired a new (restricted to two-year) position of Coordinator of Recruitment and Retention. The coordinator started on Tuesday, August 11, 2015. His primary duties were to be the lead on travel, manage the daily tours, create a retention plan, and pilot a mentoring program. These duties helped to alleviate the director to redirect focus to diversity efforts, assessment, and outreach.

Daily Tours

Campus tours are a good service to have, but can become taxing for scheduling other events or meetings. Since there are seven tours a week, someone has to be on call for the tour and for walk-ins. This year there were a variety of guest who participated in the graduate school tour. Some liked the tour provided and others just wanted to see specific buildings or places on campus. The driving tour covers solid portion of campus, corporate research center, downtown Blacksburg and off campus housing. Tours are provided Monday through Friday (no tours on Saturday & Sunday). Each student visiting campus receives a folder with a graduate school recruitment brochure, graduate life center brochure, & list of apartments.

Individual Tour Sign-up
through Graduate School system

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
August						Total
10am	1	2			2	5
2pm	3	2	1			6
September						
10am	2	2		1	2	7
2pm						0
October						
10am	1	2		2	3	8
2pm	1			1		2
November						
10am	1	2		2	1	6

2pm	3			1		4
December						
10am	1		1			2
2pm		1			2	3
January						
10am	1					1
1:30pm				2	1	3
February						
10am	2				2	4
1:30pm	1		1	1	11	14
March						
10am	4				2	6
1:30pm	3	5	2	5	8	23
April						
10am	2				4	6
1:30pm	3	2	3	3	6	17
May						
10am	1				2	3
1:30pm	1		2		4	7
June						
10am	5				3	8
2pm		1	5	5	2	13
July						
10am	1				4	5
2pm			2		1	3
	37	19	17	23	60	156

*This does not include group tours, department-arranged tours, or drop-ins where an estimated 100 students are toured.

Student Ambassador Program

For the 2016-2017 year, ORDI coordinator is encouraging departments to nominate a graduate student to serve as the ambassador for their program/college. The ambassador will provide the campus tour, department tour, and student experience. This is to offer a more personalized experience for visiting students. The following email was sent out.

*Graduate Program Directors/Coordinators,
The Graduate School is trying something new this year in regard to offering campus tours to prospective students.*

*For over 10 years, the Graduate School has offered daily tours to any student who wants to see the GLC and the campus (approximately 150 students/families per year).
We would like to improve the experience for the prospective students by including a department-nominated student host who can be a part of the visit.*

I ask that you nominate 1 or 2 students who would be the best ambassador(s) for your program. This student will get a formal letter from the Graduate School inviting them to be an Ambassador, they will receive a t-shirt, and an end-of-the-year appreciation reception. The purpose of this program is to create a high-touch connection for prospective students with their academic colleagues and with the campus.

Students at extended campuses will also have the opportunity to be ambassadors.

*Please send the name of the student ambassador to Graduate Assistant, **Shekila Melchior**, shekilam@vt.edu, by Monday, August 1, 2016.*

Thanks-

Dannette Gomez Beane

Director, Office of Recruitment and Diversity Initiatives

ORDI will provide five different 30 minute orientations to the students who have been nominated as the representative for their program/college. This will be the first time ORDI has had graduate ambassadors.

Recruitment Travel

Recruitment occurs all year with most trips in the fall. Both ORDI personnel and campus partners travel. These trips have varying results. It is recommend that a system be put in place to assess the quality and quantity from each trip. It is also recommended that cost sharing happen earlier in the process to ensure that budgets are determined and fairs are secured. The focus for ORDI will be toward national conferences that bring high volume and high quality underrepresented scholars together. The state and regional events will be given to department representatives and student recruiters.

Overall, over the ORDI supported recruiting trips yielding over 2000 prospects met.

Those trips include but are not limited to the following:

Recruiting event	Location, date, time	Recruiter(s)
Public Service Expo at American U.	Washington, DC 7/9/15 all day	NCR recruiter
GEM Graduate Fair	Boston, MA 8/6/15 all day	Lindy Cranwell
Forte Foundation Forum	Washington, DC 8/18/15 6:00 pm	Dana Hansson
Radford Univ.	Radford, VA 9/21/15 11am-2pm	Brandon Tigue
Virginia Tech	Blacksburg, VA 9/21/15 4:30-7:00pm	Brandon Tigue
James Madison Univ.	Harrisonburg, VA 9/22/15 4pm-7pm	Brandon Tigue
Morgan State-MBRS-RISE	Baltimore, MD 9/23/15 all day	Ed Monroe
Longwood University	Farmville, VA 9/23/15 11am-2pm	Brandon Tigue
Career Expo at VSU - Bus+STEM	Petersburg, VA 9/23/15 9:30 - 12:30	Dannette Beane
University of Virginia	Charlottesville, VA 9/23/15 4pm-7pm	Brandon Tigue
World MBA Tour	Washington, DC 9/24/15 3:00 pm	Dana Hansson
College of William & Mary	Williamsburg, VA 9/24/15 12pm-3:30pm	Bronwen Watts
Norfolk State Univ.	Norfolk, VA 9/24/15 10:30am-2pm	Brandon Tigue
Old Dominion Univ.	Virginia Beach, VA 9/25/15 10:30 - 2:30	Brandon Tigue
Vanderbilt, NNE	Nashville, TN 9/28 multiple days	Dannette Beane
Big 10+Grad Expo at Purdue W.	Lafayette, IN 10/5/15 during day	Mark Stremmer and Terry Hinders
Rose-Hulman Institute of Tech.	Terre Haute, IN 10/5/15 evening	Mark Stremmer
Howard Univ.	Washington, DC 10/5/15 multiple days	Corrine Julian and Lise Visser
University of Mary Washington	Fredericksburg, VA 10/6/15 11am-1pm	Brandon Tigue
NC State Univ.	Raleigh, NC 10/6/15 6-8 pm	Dannette Beane
VA Commonwealth Univ.	Richmond, VA 10/7/15 10am-1pm	Brandon Tigue
Christopher Newport Univ.	Newport News, VA 10/8/15 12--2 or 11am-2pm	Brandon Tigue
National Soc.of Black Engineers-NSBE--	yearly conference Hartford, CT 10/8/15 multiple days	COE representatives
Florida International Univ.-McNair	Miami, FL 10/16/15	Brandon Tigue
Emory and Henry	Emory, VA 5:30 - 7:00	Public Health Rep
Univ. of No.Carolina	Chapel Hill Chapel Hill, NC 10/20/15	Brandon Tigue
Winston-Salem State Univ.	Winston-Salem, NC 10/22/15 10---3	Brandon Tigue
Dickinson College	Carlisle, PA 10/27/15 11:30 - 1:30	Lise Visser
Franklin and Marshall College	Lancaster, PA 10/28/15 11:30 - 1:30	Lise Visser
Gettysburg College	Gettysburg, PA 10/29/15 11:30 - 1:30	Lise Visser
Society of Women Engineers	Nashville, TN 10/22/15 multiple days	Dr. Watford
SACNAS	Washington, DC 10/29/15 multiple days	Dannette Beane and others
SREB - Institute Compact	Arlington, VA 10/29/15 multiple days	Brandon Tigue
NSBE-Fall Regional conference	MD or TN 11/6 multiple days COE representatives	COE representatives
California Forum for Diversity	UC Santa Barbara 11/7/15 two days	Brandon Tigue
Annual Biomedical Research-ABCRMS	Seattle, WA 11/11/15 multiple days	Dannette Beane, VET Med, MAOP, PREP/IMSD, BIOMED, BIOCHEM, VTC, TBMH, GS
NC A&T Grad+Prof School Day, GAP	Greensboro, NC 11/11/15 10--3	Brandon Tigue
Fort Belvoir Army (Cont.Ed)	Mt. Vernon, VA 11/19/15 10--1	Lise and Corrine registered themselves and will go

Virginia Union Univ.-VUU	Richmond, VA 03/02/16 10---1.	Brandon Tigie
George Mason	Fairfax, VA 03/30/16	Katheryn Zupan said this is only one this yr. C. Julien to attend.
Spring CA Diversity Forum, San Jose Univ.	San Jose, CA 04/23/16	Brandon Tigie

In addition to travel, the ORDI purchases student names. These are names from GRE Services, National Name Exchange, GEM Consortium, McNair Scholars, and national fairs. Those lists equal to over 7000 prospects.

Piloted Mentoring Program – Directional Leadership Experience

An email was sent out to second semester graduate students describing a pilot program called Directional Leadership Experience (DLE). The email is below. The purpose of this program was to provide a touch point for students who do not belong to one of the already established mentoring groups on campus. There are a pocket of students who get left out and DLE was an attempt to catch some of them. It was planned as a complementary program to the efforts already happening across campus.

The Office of Recruitment and Diversity Initiatives (ORDI) in the Graduate School at Virginia Tech is piloting a program in the 2016 spring semester called Directional Leadership Experience (DLE). DLE is being offered to students in their second semester of graduate school at Virginia Tech. The purpose of the program will be to provide sessions on different skills and how they contribute to your success as a student and beyond. This program will allow students from different disciplines to connect, network, communicate and foster a community focused on support. The current topics are leadership, writing, finance, and sponsors/mentors.

The DLE focuses on populations that are underrepresented in graduate programs (first generation, women, race, ethnicity, veterans, etc...). As a recipient of this email, you fall in a population or in multiple populations. The goal is to add another touch point while providing applicable skills and knowledge that can be used after graduation.

Students who are apart of another mentoring experience are not eligible (i.e. New Horizon Graduate Scholars, Multicultural Academic Opportunities Program, VT-IMSD, VT-PREP, or George Washington Carver program.) This pilot is for students not in a current Virginia Tech mentoring program.

This email was sent out to 238 graduate students who identified as first generation and completed by 44 graduate students. Out of the 36, 18 of them said they are interested in participating. Out of the 18, 12 participated. The participants were mostly female (9 female, 3 male), and were racially and ethnically diverse (3 Black/African American, 2 Hispanic/Latino, 3 Asian, 4 White/Caucasian). Participants were in the following programs:

College	Degree program	Type of degree (masters or doctoral)
---------	----------------	--------------------------------------

WAAC	Architecture	Master
Pamplin College of Business	Professional MBA	Masters
Arts and humanities	Rhetoric and Writing	Doctoral
Vet Med	Population Health Sciences	Masters in Public Health
Public Health	Master of Public Health, infectious diseases concentration	Masters
CLAHS	Leadership, Counseling, and Research - Higher Education	Ph.D.
College of Engineering	Grado Department of Industrial & Systems Engineering	Masters
Industrial and system engineering	Master of science	Master
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences	Crop & Soil Environmental Sciences - Forage & Grassland Ecology	Doctoral
College of Engineering	Aerospace and Ocean Engineering	Doctoral
College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences	Human Development	Doctoral
College of Agricultural and Life Sciences	Agricultural, Leadership, and Community Education	Doctoral
Virginia Tech	human factors engineering and ergonomics	Masters
College of Engineering	Grado Department of Industrial & Systems Engineering	Masters
Virginia Tech	Mechanical engineering	Masters

College of Arts and Sciences	MFA in Creative Writing	Masters
Virginia Tech College of Engineering	Industrial and System Engineering	Masters
College of Engineering	Mechanical Engineering	Doctoral

DLE met monthly (on Mondays from 6pm-8pm) and was led by the following instructors.

- **January-Mentors/Sponsors**
 - Brandon Tigue, *coordinator of recruitment & retention, office of recruitment and diversity initiatives*
- **February-Leadership**
 - Dr. James Anderson, *assistant professor, department of agricultural, leadership, and community education*
- **March-Writing** (focused on dissertation, thesis, grant, publication, conference proposals)
 - Ennis McCrery, *title IX investigator and gender-based violence prevention specialist, department of student affairs*
 - Dr. Christian Matheis, *visiting assistant professor of government and international affairs, school of public and international affairs*
 - Rebecca Morrison, *PhD student- graduate assistant for writing center*
 - Jennifer Lawrence, *director senior instructor of english, writing center*
 - Dr. David Brunnsma, *professor sociology, department of sociology*
- **April-Financial**
 - Romie Patel, *Prudent financial advisor*
- **May-Time management**
 - John Massey, *director of professional development, university organizational & professional development*

Feedback from participants included the following quotes:

- I thought for some reason we'd be paired with faculty mentors. Finding and having the time for community are so challenging with a graduate schedule, so I realize this wouldn't be easy. I guess I was hoping for more personal connections somehow?
- More diverse topics can be included which is relevant to students at Tech like managing current financial situation as a student or time management or how to excel in leadership role, etc.
- More sessions on communication skills
- I was only able to attend two sessions after all. I thoroughly enjoyed Dr. James Anderson's presentation on Leadership because it was information that was useful. The presentation was structured, there were activities and the opportunity to work with others in the cohort. As opposed to the March 14 session that seemed completely fly by the seat of your pants. It was a wasted night for me. I realize others may have found it useful but I didn't. I think the topics need to be more overarching and the presenters more structured with an interactive nature about the sessions.

- The food and many of the activities were great. Brandon, you really seem to care about what you do. The writing session seemed to have the folks who were most involved or willing to help.
- It was very informative. The program was well organized well above my expectation that is why I missed some of my graduate classes to attend the sessions.
- It's was a good initiative and helped me with managing my time and effort for graduate school.
- Dr. Anderson's presentation and assessment - found it very useful and helpful for day to day.
- I wish I could say something more helpful. I think the program is a good idea, but it's hard to execute these type of events. I almost didn't come back after this semester because it was such a difficult one, for many reasons. Knowing that there are at least some folks who care, especially outside of my department, is reassuring.
- I think as a pilot program, this went well. I think more work on the topics will enhance the program.
- I will definitely again be the member of this wonderful learning group for spring 2017. Kudos Brandon!

For next year, the program will evolve to include all underrepresented ethnic and racial minorities and be called Community of Scholars. The focus will be active sessions for students to add to their leadership development while in graduate school including sessions on Leadership, Time Management, Influence with Words, and Conflict Resolution. There will be two sessions a semester (fall/spring).

Programming

The ORDI offers events throughout the year that bring together students, faculty, and staff to create a more inclusive environment.

The Underrepresented Minority Luncheon is an annual event that happens during orientation week. This event is open to all students but racial and ethnic minorities are targeted to participate as well as those who identify as LGBTQ. A special invitation is given to Caucus groups to attend and other administrators who support diverse graduate students. Over 180 students RSVPed to this event and over 200 people attended.

The fourth Little Hokies Donate and Swap is an annual event that happens in early November. It is designed to serve students with small children to get supplies, clothing, and toys for their child(ren) and is co-sponsored by the GSA and Women's Center. This year, the event was opened up to staff members on the second day to allow for all items to be taken. Over 100 families attended the event and there were still donations left which were taken to the Blacksburg clothing bank.

Over 30 Social is in its second year and designed to bring together students who identify as over 30 years of age. The Dean hosts this social to include wine and heavy hors d'oeuvres. The event had over 50 people in attendance and allows students to sign up for a listserv managed by the GSSO.

Connect Lunches occur during the cultural celebration months. Each event is designed to bring together graduate students, faculty and staff who identify in the culture being celebrated. The **Hispanic/Latino Graduate student** connect lunch in September had 44 students signed up plus faculty and staff. The **HBCU Connect Lunch**, also in September, had 44 students signed up plus faculty and staff. The **Jewish Cultural** Connect Lunch had 3 students signed up plus faculty and staff. The **MLK Day Graduate School forum** had 30 students sign up plus faculty and staff. This event was more than connecting, it was an opportunity to get updated information about InclusiveVT and InclusiveGraduate School. The **Asian**

Pacific Islander connect luncheon had 20 students sign up plus faculty and staff. The Women's Connect lunch had 30 students sign up plus faculty and staff. The **Native/American Indian** connect Lunch had 6 students sign up plus faculty and staff. The **LGBTQ Connect** Lunch had 15 students sign up plus faculty and staff.

Hispanic/Latino Research Symposium was held for the second year in the Graduate School. This event initiated with a Diversity Scholar and was encouraged to continue by the Hispanic/Latino Caucus. ORDI agreed to host and organize the event with help from the Hispanic/Latino Coordinator in the Intercultural Engagement Center (IEC) and the Caucus. The symposium featured 12 undergraduate and graduate scholars.

InclusiveVT involvement

Tim Wise is an antiracism activist that was invited to campus as part of an effort of InclusiveVT. The students involved in organizing the visit collaborated with ORDI, IEC, and Office of Diversity and Inclusion to bring Tim Wise to campus for a keynote, training, and panel discussion. ORDI was the main point of contact for the panel discussion. Over 200 people attended the panel and 742 people livestreamed.

Dear White America Book Club was hosted by ORDI leading up to the Tim Wise event. The book club was open to any graduate student and was first-come-first-serve. There were 29 students who signed up but ultimately 25 participated. The group was provided lunch and a discussion was held every week for five weeks. Students were encouraged to attend the panel as the final meeting of the book club. The evaluations from the book club indicated that all but one student's understanding of racial issues in the U.S. improved and one person's stayed the same. 100% of the participants indicated that they wanted to participate in a future book club experience around a similar topic.

Presenting at Advancing Diversity

The ORDI director served on a panel of presenters to lead a discussion on *Disrupting Institutional Racism* at the annual Advancing Diversity conference. The discussion was a concurrent session that occurred twice. The two sessions combined had over 300 total participants.

Advising

The Edward A. Bouchet Graduate Honors Society is made up of ABD graduate students who exemplify character, leadership, advocacy, scholarship and service. This past year, Virginia Tech was officially inducted as a chapter. There were 40 applicants to the society and 4 were chosen by a committee. Students chosen were from the following programs ASPECT, Engineering Education, Planning Governance and Globalization. This group was inducted at the Yale Conference in April. ORDI advises the Bouchet Scholars and maintains the listserv for announcements and opportunities.

Diversity Scholars are graduate students who specialize in and advocate for the awareness, knowledge, and skills associated with diversity and inclusion in the Graduate School and greater community. The program is in its 5th year and over 50 scholars have completed their initiatives. This year, the program received 62 applicants and ultimately 18 students were chosen. The students were the following:

Name	Department	Degree
Alexandra Hyler	School of Biomedical Engineering and Sciences	Doctorate
Alexandria Noble	Civil Engineering	Doctorate
Amber Turner	Psychology	Doctorate
Ana-Christina Acosta Gaspar de Alba	English--Creative Writing	Masters
Andrea Rolong	Biomedical Engineering and Mechanics	Doctorate
Ashish Agrawal	Engineering Education	Doctorate
Atiyeh Vahidmanesh	Economics	Doctorate
Corey Miles	Sociology/Africana Studies	Doctorate
Erin Lavender-Stott	Human Development (Family Studies)	Doctorate
Kevin Krost	Department of Leadership, Counseling, and Research	Doctorate
Mariana Sierra-Santana	English--Creative Writing	Masters
Martina Svyantek	Engineering Education	Doctorate
Mary Ryan	ASPECT	Doctorate
Rebecca Elias	Clinical Psychology	Doctorate
Stephanie House-Niamke	Public Administration	Masters
Yen Nong	Interior Design	Masters
Whitney Wright	Educational Leadership	Doctorate
Zeynep Ondin	Learning Design Technology	Doctorate

The initiatives proposed and implemented by these students ranged from studies, to website development, to spoken word performances. Students were advised, funded, and supported by ORDI.

GSA Committee on Graduate Inclusion and Diversity Policies

A group of concerned graduate students requested to form a subcommittee within the Graduate Student Assembly that focused on Inclusion and Diversity Issues. The group is advised by ORDI and

originally agreed to examine university policies to see if they were inclusive. The group emerged to be a listserv where important community events are shared. The group has met three times and is continuing to form its purpose.

SACNAS is the Society for Achieving Chicanos and Native American Scientists. The ORDI in conjunction with the College of Science worked to revitalize the SACNAS student chapter at Virginia Tech. The group involves students, faculty, and staff and meet twice a semester to encourage and support each other presenting at the national SACNAS conference. ORDI sends a representative to the conference every year.

Holistic Admissions

The Graduate School is leading the university on an effort to implement holistic admissions strategies. The ORDI helped to produce a video for departments to view to encourage practices of holistic admission. Holistic admission was also discussed during the department data meetings. The ORDI will continue to help faculty and staff to include holistic approaches in the selection of graduate students.

Memberships

NNE – The National Name Exchange is a consortium of nationally recognized schools who exchange names of top underrepresented undergraduate students. Membership into this Consortium requires the payment of dues, attending an annual meeting, and committing to upload the names of students into the database. Virginia Tech has been a member for three years and is in good standing. The ORDI worked directly with the registrar’s office this year to get the more than 2800 names of students to upload. The list provided by the NNE totaled over 7000 students. Those names are uploaded into the Hobsons system and communication is sent directly to each student based on their interest.

NAGAP – The ORDI maintains membership with the National Association of Graduate Admissions Professionals also known as Graduate Enrollment Managers. This professional association serves to provide best practices for recruiters and admissions staff in graduate schools. The ORDI staff strive to present at the national conference every year.

VALHEN – The Virginia Latino Higher Education Network is a state wide group of professionals who focus on the access of Latino students in higher education as well as policy issues. This year, the ORDI represented Virginia Tech at the annual meeting and served as a liaison at the Hispanic College Institute hosted at Virginia Tech where over 150 high school students and their college mentors are exposed to various professional careers.

SREB – The Southern Regional Education Board

Hispanic/Latino Faculty and Staff Caucus – The director of ORDI serves the Hispanic/Latino Faculty and Staff Caucus to ensure that graduate student interests are included. This group meets year round to mentor students, provide campus leadership, and serve on committees that inform the institution of the needs of the Hispanic/Latino community.

Black Faculty and Staff Caucus – The coordinator of the ORDI serves on the Black Faculty and Staff Caucus as a member and assist in recruitment efforts by collaborating students.

Presentations

Graduate School 101 – The ORDI collaborates with Career Services, undergraduate research, the Corp of Cadets, and other units to offer a Graduate School 101 presentation to undergraduates at Virginia Tech.

Summer REU – The ORDI hosts a social and graduate school information session for all 100+ summer researchers. The group is encouraged to network with the students in other REU programs at this event to encourage community building since many of the REUs have less than 20 students enrolled. These students are offered a fee waiver to apply.

Website

This year, New City Media was hired by the Graduate School to redesign the website. All units had to audit their existing sites and heed the recommendations made by New City to either purge, edit, or create sites based on the new road map. This effort took several months of meetings, trainings, and editing.

Funding

The ORDI continues to manage the Dean Diversity Assistantships, Powell Fellowships, GEM Fellows, and McNair Assistantships. These awards are offered through faculty nomination and selected by a committee. For the last three years, the ORDI has partnered with College Associate Deans, MAOP, Carver Fellowship, and IMSD to maximize the amount of offers. The goal is to secure some type of funding for all of the nominated students. This year, 36 students were nominated for the Dean Diversity Award and 8 offers were made. Eight students were nominated to the Powell Fellowship and 2 offers were made. Two nominations were made to the McNair assistantship and one offer was made. Students who did not receive funding through these offers were considered for other funding either by the department, the college, or another university program.

Climate Survey

This year marks the third year after the original Graduate School Climate Survey was administered and the year to reassess the climate. Partners Division of Student Affairs, Office of Inclusion and Diversity, and National Capital Region joined to revamp the survey tool. Professor Matt Dull and his GA Emily Flores from the Center for Public Administration and Policy in NCR, consulted and offered an audit of the original climate survey tool. They offered suggestions, edits, and omissions. They even agreed to review the final draft of the 2016 survey to ensure quality and purpose.

The result was transforming the survey tool from 99 questions to 71 with dynamic questions and involving all campuses. There were over 1500 respondents (almost double from the 2013 survey). The survey results are being written over the summer and released in October. The findings will inform several units across campus and possibly warrant focus groups. Those details are pending analysis.

Advocacy Link/Services

The Dean of Students, the Intercultural Engagement Center, and the Graduate School have begun to explore a more comprehensive reporting process for students who are in need of advocacy. This group is led by Dr. Sharika Adams in the Dean of Students Office. The goal is to have record and process in place for students ensuring hardship.

Looking forward

The ORDI is firming up the mission and goals of the office. The new branding and approach are the following:

From recruitment to graduation, supporting student excellence through diversity

Mission

Provide campus leadership in collaboration with academic departments and colleges in developing, implementing, and operating events and activities that are designed to recruit and assist underrepresented students' personal development, academic achievement, and graduation.

Vision

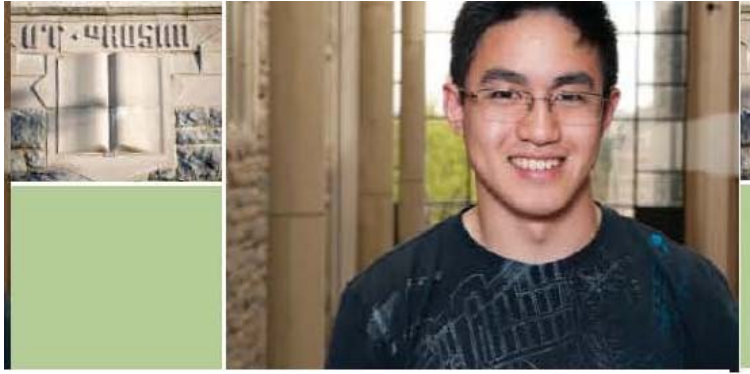
Providing exceptional recruitment, academic support and retention services to American Indian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latin@, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, First generation, Active Duty and Veteran, LGBTQ, Non-traditional, and Differently Abled students.

Goals

1. Increase the outreach, recruitment, and graduation of U.S. historically underrepresented groups (i.e., American Indian, Black/African American, Hispanic, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander).
2. Assist students' adjustment to graduate school by providing guidance and support through programming and mentoring.
3. Maximize collaborations with campus units and student organizations to create environments and programs to support and sustain students' success and continuation at the University.
4. Strategize with academic units in monitoring the progress of students and make appropriate referrals to campus units.
5. Promote and develop educational opportunities and enrichment activities to help facilitate the educational and personal growth of student participants through organized activities and collaborative efforts with other campus units.

Retention: Mentoring Circle

There are four new initiatives in ORDI all focusing on retention. The programs are targeting students who either identify as underrepresented in graduate education or those who have exhibit academic need such as students admitted provisionally or are on academic probation.



Retention Programs

Cypher: Graduate students meet three Fridays a month from 4pm-6pm to write, read, and work. A guest speaker attends once a month to give tips on various topics such as using the library. This is time to hold each other accountable and to support success throughout the graduate school process.

Community of Scholars: This program targets underrepresented students and provides professional development. Two sessions per semester covering topics such as leadership, time management, communication, and conflict resolution will be offered.

Dissertation Boot Camp: Students who are in the final stages of their doctorate program and need a push to complete a piece of their dissertation will be invited to a three-day boot camp where food, support, and motivation will be provided.

Peer-to-peer Support Coaches: Students who are on academic probation or struggling academically can meet with a peer support coach who will provide a success plan and resources. These meetings are M-F and are scheduled by email or drop-in office hours.

Please visit www.graduateschool.vt.edu/retention to learn more or you can email grads@vt.edu.



These new programs will take place for the first time during the 2016-2017 academic year. The ORDI will assess these programs with the help of the assessment manager.

HBCU Summit

The focus for recruitment this year will move toward bringing collaborations to campus, specifically from Historically Black Colleges and Universities. This effort will be collaborative and will create a recruitment and research track and will require faculty involvement. The goal is bring advisors from HBCUs to collaborate on research grants and initiatives with Virginia Tech faculty. Advisors are encouraged to bring their top students who may want to attend Virginia Tech for a summer REU or graduate program.

To date, the following departments have interest in this effort:

ICTAS

Macromolecules and Interfaces Institute

Industrial Systems Engineering

Science Education

Civil and Environmental Engineering

The HBCUs that are working with these departments are the following:

Norfolk State University

North Carolina A&T

Morehouse

Mississippi Valley

Morgan State

Howard

Hampton

Virginia State

This event will take place in the fall and the spring based on the schedules of those involved.