

DePauw Student Government

A White Paper Concerning Student Interaction With the Office of Admission

Introduction:

As a student government, we recognize the efforts made by the administration and the Office of Admission to improve the application experience and to make a prospective student's visit to DePauw both positive and memorable. This white paper explores the many opportunities available for increased interaction between the student body, prospective students, and Admission personnel. We believe these changes would better represent the academic, social, and communal aspects of the DePauw student body to students considering becoming part of our community. In the writing of this white paper, we consulted the new director of Admission, First-Year Senators, and Tour Guides. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of possible changes, nor do we ask that all of the suggestions be implemented. Instead, we hope that the Office of Admission can identify the most practical and beneficial of our suggestions and work with student government to facilitate meaningful interaction between students, admission staff, and prospective students.

Proposal:

1. Through our exploration of the admission process, we observed a lack of communication with first-year students about their experiences in selecting DePauw. Collecting students' opinions could be very valuable in future efforts to examine the process and would highlight the particularly successful aspects of the programs available to prospective students. We recommend using First-Year Senators and Representatives in Student Government as a resource in seeking First-Year feedback about the admission process. Also, a survey could be an effective strategy for collecting information from confirmed first-year students the summer before they arrive on campus.

2. During an average weekend, there are a variety of events on campus that reveal the active and welcoming DePauw community to prospective students. Planning prospective student gatherings for those weekends that most accurately represent the variety of activity at DePauw could give prospective students a more realistic experience. After consulting current students, we discovered that some of their best experiences were through their Programs of Distinction interview weekend. The Programs of Distinction weekends are an excellent example of an organized, event-filled, and successful visit. This focus will give prospective students an accurate and positive view of campus.

3. Another way to ensure that prospective student gatherings occur on weekends that will effectively represent the DePauw community is through the large and diverse collection of student organizations, who painstakingly plan unique and exciting events on campus. Providing a view of this community to prospective students is essential. We encourage the Office of Admission to coordinate with the active clubs on campus. Student Government is an open line of communication between the administration and student organizations. If the Office of Admission informs the student government Executive Board of upcoming admissions weekends, the Board could then communicate to all campus organizations the dates and times of events. Through these events, organizations could showcase their talents and provide prospective students with a glimpse of the diversity of student interests on the DePauw campus. It may be advantageous to have a large venue in which organizations could participate. There are currently “activity fairs” where organizations are given booths and can talk to students. However coordinating performances, information sessions, and panels could help improve participation from student organizations. Also, allocating resources to clubs to provide events for prospective students would allow organizations to generate more interaction.

4. Tiger Ambassador Program Recommendations

The Tiger ambassador program is a fantastic opportunity for prospective students to experience academic and social life at DePauw. In examining the experiences of students during their visit with a tiger ambassador, it became apparent that certain changes to the program could make students’ visits more effective and memorable. These recommendations should help prospective students interact with DePauw’s most informed and active members.

a. Currently, only first-year students can host prospective students. However, after considering how to improve the visiting experience, we believe that allowing upperclassmen to host prospective students could be beneficial. Upperclassmen are more familiar with the variety of opportunities available at DePauw. Their interaction with prospective students could provide visiting students with a more accurate and informed view of campus and academic life.

b. In order to have the most informed members of DePauw working as Tiger Ambassadors, we propose an application and training process for those wishing to host students. This process would ensure that student hosts are positive examples to their prospective students. It would also provide these hosts with an initial understanding of the responsibilities and goals associated with hosting a student. The training could also give them ideas of activities and events to attend with prospective students. Along with training sessions, a packet of information including campus events and clubs could direct the host towards activities for their student.

c. There are a variety of opportunities available to the Office of Admission in improving the quality, dedication, and focus of their hosts. Possibilities include making the program more the like the First-Year mentor process (during which a selected

number of students are trained to promote educational and positive visit experiences). Also, making the program more like a student organization would lead students to unite in guiding prospective students through their visit. This process encourages students to hold each other accountable and would improve the quality of their efforts.

d. Another student recommendation included asking the Tiger Ambassador to write a handwritten letter to send to the prospective student after their visit.

e. The Ambassador program could send a survey asking for feedback from prospective students within the week after their visit. This immediate reaction from the student could offer new information to improve the program.

5. Tour and Information Session

After examining the visiting process it became apparent that most prospective students primary experience on campus is the information session and a tour. The prevalence of their visit highlights the importance of the tour guides, senior interviewers, and Admission counselors. There are a few possible changes that could allow for a more informed and connected facilitation of the tours and information sessions.

a. The Senior interviewers are students deeply connected to campus and well-prepared to present DePauw to students. We found no recommendations to provide and discovered that these interviewers do an excellent job replacing the counselors in the fall.

b. After discussing the relationship between the counselors and current students on campus, it became apparent that there is a disparity between how counselors and students experience DePauw. Counselors must be aware of the current campus climate and issues among the student populace in order to provide an accurate depiction of DePauw to prospective students. We understand that counselors have a very hectic and time-intensive schedule because of their interview obligations. However, we would encourage them to attend a variety of campus events. These connections with campus will allow them to better represent DePauw.

c. For tours to best represent campus an involved and diverse group of students must be tour guides. We would suggest better publicizing the process to encourage student involvement.

Conclusion:

DePauw University provides its students with many unique and exciting options. The admission staff takes great lengths to accurately present what Depauw can offer, but we believe that the suggestions present in this white paper can improve interactions between prospective students and current students, as well as present DePauw as the academically stimulating, socially diverse community that we have both created and become a part of.

Aye __56__

Nay __0__

Abstain __1__

Charles Pierre

Charles Pierre, President

Attest:

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Annie Bowers, Secretary