

Strategic Priority Funding
Application Form
2007-2008

#5

Project Name Graduate Student Recruitment Specialist

Applicant's Name Anne Blackhurst Mailing Address AF 115

Applicant Signature _____

Email Address anne.blackhurst@mnsu.edu Phone Number 5203

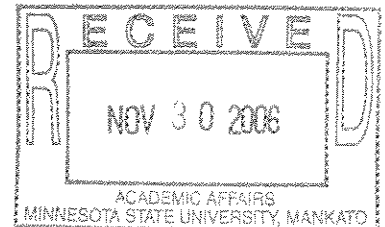
Dept. Chair Signature _____ Date _____

Dean Signature *A. Blackhurst* Date 11/30/06

Vice President Signature *Gifford* Date 11-30-06

Date Submitted to Office of Institutional Planning: November 30, 2006
(Deadline is November 30, 2006)

Priority Number



**Minnesota State University, Mankato
FY08 Strategic Priority Funding Request**

1. Which Strategic Priority and Objective does this funding request support? See link for Strategic Priority definitions. <http://www.mnsu.edu/president/priorities/definitions/>

Innovative Idea: Employ a graduate recruitment specialist to promote graduate education opportunities, to recruit graduate applicants, and to convert admitted applicants into enrolled students.

Strategic Priority: Primarily 4: **Review and Enhance Graduate Education**. This initiative will also assist in fulfilling the published goals of the **Public Relations and Marketing and Enrollment Management Committees**.

Strategic Priority Objective: Objective 1, "Create funding mechanisms which allow the University to grow and improve select graduate programs (on-campus, off-campus, technologically mediated distance, and hybrid.)" This initiative will also support the recommendations of the **Enrollment Management Committee**.

2. Provide a brief description of your project. Please attach a one page project narrative:

The College of Graduate Studies and Research currently engages in some recruitment activity, but much more could be accomplished with appropriate staffing. A graduate recruiter would be responsible for conducting market research, systematically collecting and analyzing data about our applicants and prospects, contacting prospects and applicants, generating leads, holding information sessions, and developing a technology-based graduate recruitment campaign.

3. How will the funding request support the Strategic Priority?

- a. The request will support **University Priority 4: Review and Enhance Graduate Education** by increasing the number of inquiries, applications, and enrolled students. Objective 1 suggests that the University should "create funding mechanisms which allow the University to grow and improve select graduate programs..." Objectives 2 and 3 address the need to expand graduate programs and confront enrollment concerns at the graduate level. A sophisticated graduate student recruitment plan executed by a dedicated graduate recruiter would enhance efforts to promote graduate education in general, as well as efforts to achieve targeted enrollment goals.
- b. The request also supports the recommendations of the **Enrollment Management Committee**, which include increasing graduate enrollment to 15% of total enrollment and increasing the proportion of out-of-state and international students. This initiative will provide the staff to implement targeted marketing strategies that will support the efforts of the College of Graduate Studies and Research and other campus offices in recruiting a diverse graduate student applicant pool. Because much of the anticipated recruitment efforts will be electronically based, this initiative may prove to be particularly effective in recruiting international graduate students.

4. Describe the measurable outcomes:

- a. Increased number of inquiries
- b. Increased number of graduate applications
- c. Increased graduate enrollment

5. Assessment Measures – Define what methods will be used in assessing the effectiveness of the project.

- a. Initially, the recruiter would spend considerable time investigating appropriate software and creating recruiting mechanisms (e.g., email recruitment series, publication mailings, RSS feeds). After recruitment methods have been established, it can be determined which of these efforts results in an increase in graduate inquiries, applications, and enrolled students.
- b. The results of the recruiter's efforts would be carefully tracked and, after Year 1, would be compared to baseline data. Progress reports would not only include number of inquires, applications, and enrolled students, but would also include progress made in creating and implementing a variety of recruitment methods. Because we are essentially creating, and building upon, a graduate student recruitment plan, this initiative will require some start-up time to become fully functional.

Reports Due:

- 6. **Mid Year Report due** January 31, 2008
- 7. **Summary Report due** June 30, 2008

8. Budget Request: From Strategic Initiative Funding

	<u>Request</u>	<u>Match</u>
Salary	<u>\$40,000</u>	_____
Fringe	<u>\$12,000</u>	_____
Grad Assistant	_____	_____
Grad Assistant Stipend Non Salary (Specify)	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
Equipment	_____	<u>\$2,000</u>
Total Budget Requested *	<u>\$52,000</u>	

9. Special consideration (e.g. room, building, office or any impact on other divisions):

There currently is no workstation available within AF 115 (Graduate Studies Office). Other usable space may be available within the College of Graduate Studies and Research.

* Pending funding

Project Description: Graduate Student Recruiter

The College of Graduate Studies and Research currently does not have the services of a professional employee dedicated to graduate recruitment. The College has a limited number of employees and currently engages in limited recruitment activities, but many other recruitment initiatives could be considered.

As the number of high school graduates within the region decreases, graduate student enrollment will become increasingly important to the university's overall enrollment management plan. Previous Enrollment Management Committees have suggested that the campus should strive to increase graduate enrollment from the current level of approximately 12% of total enrollment to 15% of the total campus enrollment. The 2005 Vision for Graduate Education authored by the Graduate Committee suggested an even more ambitious goal of 20%. These goals will be difficult to accomplish without increased attention to recruiting graduate students. A sophisticated graduate student recruitment plan implemented by a dedicated graduate recruiter would enhance efforts to promote graduate education in general, as well as efforts to achieve strategic enrollment goals.

With the advent of doctoral programs, graduate education and the College of Graduate Studies and Research will become an even more significant presence on campus. The University will be expected to provide additional high-quality services to currently enrolled and prospective graduate students. As graduate student enrollment becomes even more critical to the University's enrollment management efforts, it is essential that graduate opportunities offered by Minnesota State University, Mankato are vigorously promoted. A graduate student recruiter will not only promote graduate opportunities and programs, but will also provide exemplary services to prospective graduate students who express an interest, apply, and/or are admitted to the College of Graduate Studies and Research.

Today's prospective students want and expect personalized and superior services. The new graduate recruitment specialist will engage in some traditional recruiting activities, but it is expected that the recruiter would primarily create and utilize more nontraditional, electronically-based recruiting techniques. Among the traditional recruiting methods that could be enhanced are developing printed recruitment publications to be mailed or distributed at recruiting events. Newer techniques involving the use of technology may include the following:

- real time instant messaging,
- sophisticated email recruitment campaigns,
- chats,
- blogs,
- electronic surveys,
- partnerships with online and on-ground newspapers,
- and perhaps eventually RSS feeds, podcasts, etc.

The graduate recruiter will also be poised to take advantage of the unforeseen technological advances that are undoubtedly on the horizon.

The recruiter will also be responsible for generating leads, above and beyond what the College of Graduate Studies and Research currently purchases from the GRE administrators. Other recruitment lists can be purchased from business and industry, professional organizations, and industry and regional publications. In addition, the recruiter will arrange for information sessions, both on and off campus, and will represent Minnesota State Mankato graduate programs at graduate recruitment events.

Progress reports would not only include numbers of inquires, applications, and enrolled students, but would also include progress made in creating and implementing a variety of recruitment methods. Because we are essentially starting from square one with a graduate student recruitment plan, this effort will no doubt require some time to be fully functional.