



# Leveraging Hidden Enrollment Drivers to Grow International Enrollment



# Your Hosts for Today



**Larisa Hussak**  
*Senior Director,  
EAB Research*



**Michelle DiMenna**  
*Senior Analyst,  
EAB Research*

Feel free to introduce yourself in the chat bar  
and share any questions there throughout  
the presentation

# A Global Reach: Perspectives from Around the World

## Major Destination Markets Represented

Canada

United Kingdom

Australia

United States

55 institutions

6 countries



# Six Insights on the Future of Int'l Recruitment



1

## **Global Positioning Will Continue to Shift Post-Covid**

Pandemic-era gains and losses will likely reverberate for years to come

2

## **Virtual, Career-Aligned Recruitment Key for Future**

Restricted travel, economic uncertainty requires new approach to engagement

3

## **Inside-Out Enrollment Strategy Most Successful**

Leveraging existing capabilities, offerings key to establishing pipeline sustainability

4

## **Faculty & Students are an Underleveraged Resource**

Quality, authenticity signaled by campus stakeholders in high demand for prospects

5

## **Rise in Price Sensitivity a Global Phenomenon**

Pandemic will exacerbate price concerns, particularly in growth markets

6

## **Pricing & Aid Strategy a Must for Diversification**

Institutional pricing and aid efforts will drive differentiation in growing source markets

*Today's Focus*



# *An Inside-Out Approach:* Why Leveraging Existing Capabilities is the Next Int'l Enrollment Driver

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1

# Global Volatility Means “Doing More with Less”

## International Enrollment Recovery Will Demand Efficient Strategy



### HE Sector

**4-20%**

HE workforce laid off in US and Australia during pandemic

#### *Long-Term Consequences*

- Top anglophone destinations face dire HE funding environment



Funding, staffing losses prompt stretching of recruiting resources



### Recruitment

**18%**

Of agencies in five Tier 1 Chinese markets are operating as normal

#### *Long-Term Consequences*

- Agent market to become more competitive and central to recruitment



Reliance on agents is not a sure win in upcoming era of competition



### Global Markets

**↓10-25%**

Global economic growth in 2021 compared to pre-pandemic projections

#### *Long-Term Consequences*

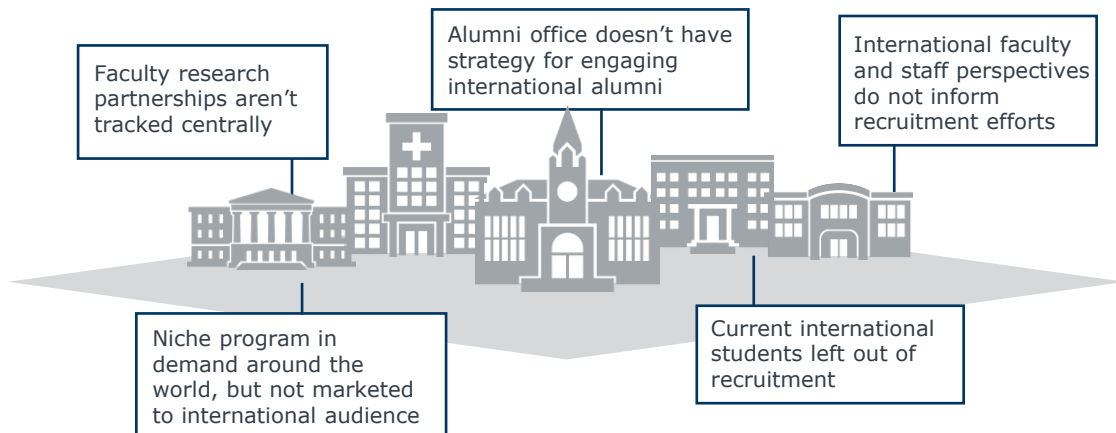
- Key student source market economies lag behind advanced economies



Enrollment growth opportunities concentrated in price-sensitive regions

# Too Often, Enrollments Are Left on the Table

## Existing Resources Underutilized in International Recruitment



“

I wouldn't even say that we've had any 'source markets' over the last 18 months. **Students found us by happenstance.** It wasn't from a conversation, or even a purchase or search pattern, or from travel.

VP for Enrollment

”

# “Outside-In” is the Dominant Recruitment Strategy

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## Start with Student Needs and Interests



- What is the ultimate goal for international students looking to study in my country?
- What types of opportunities are popular with international students?



## Build A Strategy Around Student Preferences

- Advertise the companies that international students have worked for under CPT/OPT
- Offer regular information sessions on top popular programs and opportunities

## Why It Works for International Student Recruitment



**Resources Allocated to Known Wins**



**Market-Responsive**



**Allows for Targeted Messaging**



# The Limits of “Market Intelligence”

‘Outside-In’ Relies on Market Assumptions Over Institutional Strengths



Real-time, **comprehensive data doesn't exist** in international recruitment



Based on assumptions of **narrow range of programs and experiences** that attract int'l students



Marketing efforts **rarely differentiated by target market**

# Advanced Strategy is Built from the Inside-Out



## Start with Existing Capabilities



## Build A Strategy Around Institutional Strengths

- What experiences or opportunities do current international students value?
- What unique or niche programs do we offer?
- What perspectives can other international stakeholders contribute?



- Grow international networks with current international student participation
- Showcase niche programs, or other programs with international appeal
- Design marketing campaigns that place current and former international student experience at the center

## Why It Works for International Student Recruitment



**Increased Output for Existing Resources**



**Engages Stakeholders from Across Campus**



**Promotes Differentiation**

# Hidden Enrollment Drivers Lie in Overlap



- 1 What are the **hidden opportunities** for market alignment if we **disrupt our assumptions** of international students?
- 2 How can we **capitalize on our internal resources** to convey our **unique value proposition**?



# The Inside-Out Approach In Action

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# 2

# Three Missing Links to Advance Inside-Out Efforts

## Most Universities Overestimate Barriers and Underestimate Incentives for Faculty Recruitment Support

- Global Advisory Board
- Int'l Travel Stipend
- Faculty Social Media Takeover
- Faculty-Led Workshops

## Current Students are Underutilized as Informal Network Managers

- Student Focus Groups
- All-in Global Ambassadors
- Coffee with an Ambassador

## Institutional Investment in Career Support Doesn't Align with Growing Market Demand

- International Student-Specific Career Development Support
- Proactive Emerging Program Alignment



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## Poll Question

How engaged are faculty in international recruitment at your institution?

- A. Extremely engaged
- B. Somewhat engaged
- C. Not very engaged
- D. Not at all engaged



# Engaging Faculty is a Delicate Balance

## Faculty Uniquely Speak to Int'l Student Interests

- Trusted by international students and parents
- Provide first-hand glimpse into the academic experience
- Knowledgeable about the institution and campus experience without training



## Recruitment Just Another Ball to Juggle

- Most faculty see recruitment as outside their role or scope
- Limited time and resources to dedicate towards recruitment events
- Protective of existing international relationships
- Not trained in hard-sell recruitment

### Pros Outweigh the Cons for Faculty Involvement

“When faculty are directly involved with recruitment efforts, they provide **more meaningful and better insight** into the student experience.”

*Rachel Salinas, Director of International Admissions  
University of Indiana, Bloomington*





# Appeal Directly to Faculty-Specific Motivations

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## Balance Time and Resource Commitment with Incentives




FACULTY MOTIVATION

*"I'm interested in shaping my institution's global strategy"*



### Global Advisory Committee

- Engages faculty, staff, from across campus, typically those interested in global engagement
- Group meets monthly
- Faculty can pitch new study abroad programs, recruitment practices




FACULTY MOTIVATION

*"I have connections abroad and I want to get involved, but I don't know how"*



### Int'l Travel Stipend

- Offered to faculty with existing int'l travel plans
- Faculty add recruitment visit to their trip
- Admissions office supplies PPT and talking points
- Jumpstarted enrollments in secondary market and saved travel costs



FACULTY MOTIVATION

*"I'm eager to teach new audiences and build my department's brand"*



### Faculty Social Media Takeover

- Popular and niche programs highlighted on social media
- Faculty upload content (e.g., AMAs, lab experiments)
- Content sent via CRM to interested and admitted students

# Ask Faculty to Do What They Do Best: Teach

## “Soft-Sell” Faculty-Run Workshops Hook Prospects on Subject Matter

### Workshops (Sample)

Oct and Nov 2021



- Cybersecurity in 2021
- Journalism Bootcamp: Learning the Basics
- Scholarly Writing Workshop
- UI/UX: Thinking like a UX Designer



**INDIANA UNIVERSITY**  
BLOOMINGTON

### Case-in-Brief

- Workshops run by regional outpost offices for students at local schools
- Faculty recruited based on areas of expertise
- Most content adapted from existing faculty work

**247** Students attended workshops across Spring 21 and Fall 21

**95%** Of workshop attendees indicated they would recommend the workshop to a friend



Faculty workshops give prospects a **taste of the classroom experience** and build university brand of offering **high quality academics**

# Discussion

## Next-Level Ideas to Engage Faculty

*What other successes/challenges have you experienced in engaging faculty in international recruitment?*



### **Faculty Engagement Incentive:**

Include international recruitment efforts in portfolio of faculty service opportunities

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# Help Shape the Narrative



Students are Already Representing Your Institution – How Well is Up to You

“

From my personal experience, I have heard students come because they have **upperclassmen already at IU who rave about the wonders of IU**, and others who found IU themselves and looked at images of IU or the admission process and wanted to come due to that.

Iswerya Ajay, *Student*  
Indiana University

”



One happy student spreads the message among peer and family network back home

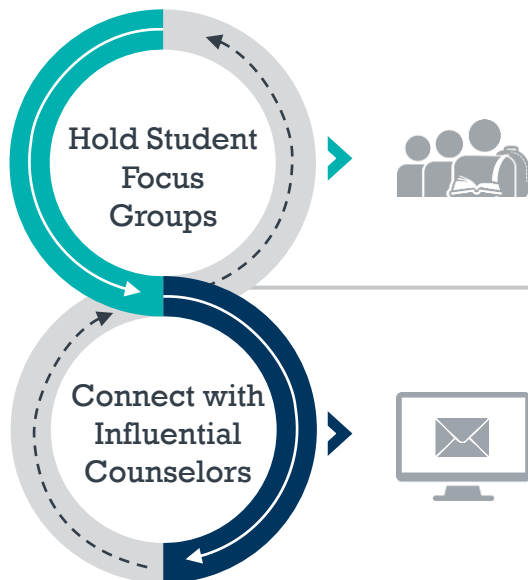


One unhappy student can sour a relationship with an entire region



# Shape Recruitment While Growing Networks

Int'l Student Focus Groups Source Feedback and New Leads



## Student Intel Drives Continual Improvement

- ✓ 15-person groups organized by country of origin
- ✓ Participation motivated by community service credit
- ✓ *Focus Group Win*: Corrected for application fee barrier

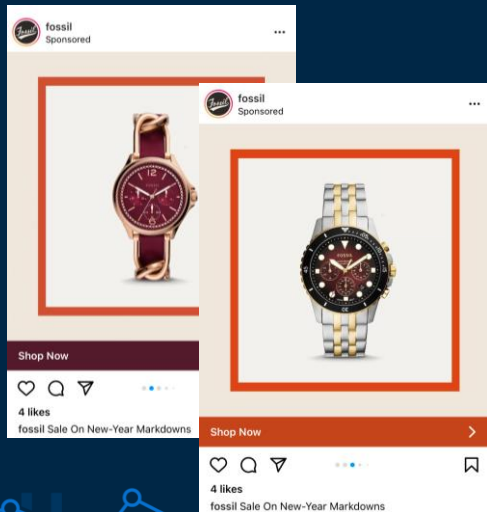
## Recruitment Team Strengthens Networks with Regular Newsletters

- ✓ Newsletters sent to influential contacts sourced during focus groups
- ✓ Content includes campus updates, international student profiles, and stories about international student life
- ✓ Newsletters sent quarterly

# Influencers vs. Advertisements

## Poll: Which Posts Resonate with You?

A.



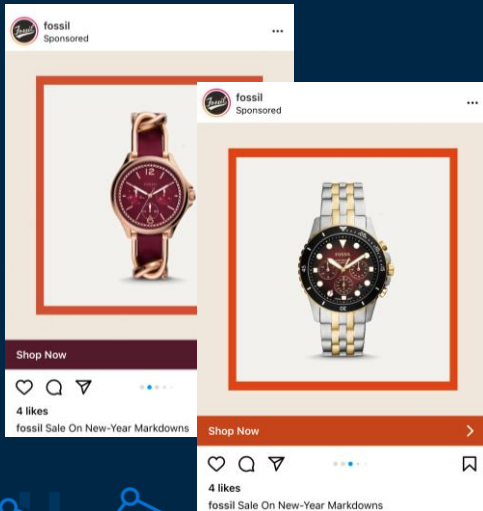
B.



# Influencers vs. Advertisements

## Poll: Which Posts Resonate with *Students*?

A.



B.





# Traditional Advertising Has Its Limits



**Institutional Partnerships**



**Direct Marketing and Recruiting**

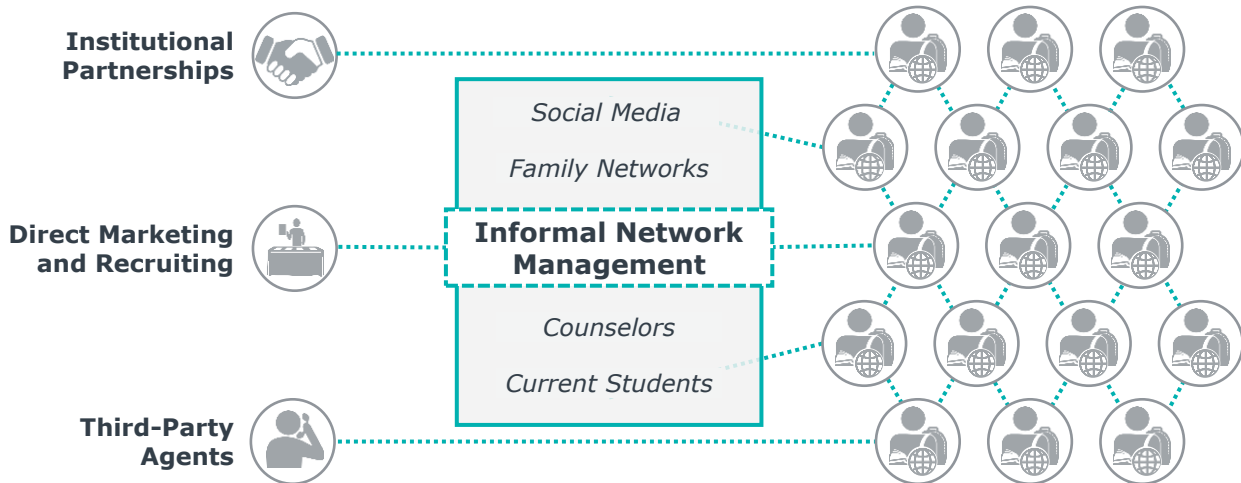


**Third-Party Agents**



# Informal Network Management Expands Reach

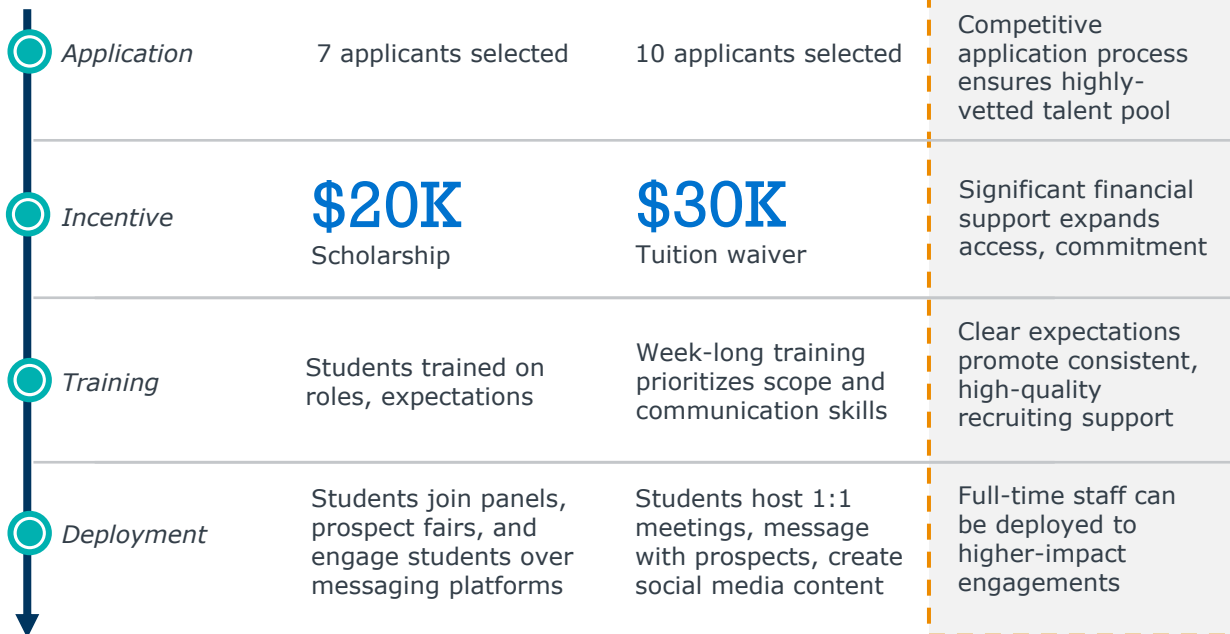
“Influencer” Networks Amplify Impact of Traditional Recruiting Practices



# Investing in Informal Network Management

## All-in Global Ambassadors Add Staff Capacity, Deliver Authenticity

PEPPERDINE  
UNIVERSITY



# Informal Networks, Interactions Key to Success

## Investing in Authentic Student Interactions Has Outsized Returns

“

Paying to have those student ambassadors have those [prospect] interactions is worth it because the money you save on commissions pays for those students. **It's an absolutely huge ROI.**

Camille Rutherford

*Associate Vice Provost, Brock University*

”

1



### Prospects

Offers **authentic glimpse into university life** and helps avoid misinformation

2



### Current Students

Provides **valuable financial support** and builds engagement and investment in university

3



### Institution

Expands recruiting office reach, penetration **at lower cost than hiring full-time admissions staff**

# Energize Engagement with Current Student Voices

Student-Prospect Interactions are a Must-Have Recruitment Driver



**Register for a one-on-one meeting with an International Student Ambassador to learn more about:**

- Student life in Canada & Niagara;
- Brock's online learning platform;
- Getting more involved in the Brock community;
- Working on or off campus; and
- Helpful tips about textbooks, studying, or their favourite courses

**Book a time** ➔



**Current Students Are Uniquely Positioned To Convey Value**



In-demand from international prospects



Implicit trust and authenticity



Personalizes the recruiting experience



## Discussion

# Capitalizing on the Influencer Effect

*What other some other ways you've successfully engaged current international students in recruitment?*



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## Poll Question

What role does career services play in international recruitment at your institution?

- A. Very involved in recruitment efforts
- B. Somewhat involved in recruitment efforts
- C. Not at all involved in recruitment efforts
- D. Unknown/Unsure

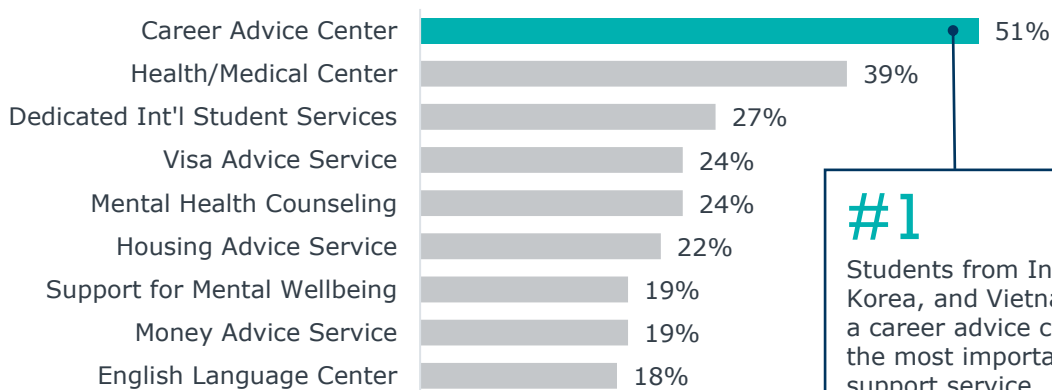




# Int'l Students Prioritize Career Support, Outcomes

## Career Services Top List of Most Important Student Support Services

QS International Student Survey 2021 (UK)



#1

Students from India, South Korea, and Vietnam rated a career advice center as the most important support service

## University Investments Don't Align With Student Priorities

96%

Of incoming international students said **"future career impact"** was a key **deciding factor** for institution choice

9x

Institutions spend **9x more on marketing** to prospects **than they do on career development** and support

## Pace University's International Student-Specific Career Development Curriculum

### INSPIRE Program

#### *Mandatory Modules*

- Rock Your Resume
- CPT Guidelines for Internships
- Winning Strategies for Job Search
- Ace Your Interview

#### *Recommended Modules*

- Cover Letter Writing
- Interview Lab
- LinkedIn Lab
- Virtual Interviewing

Program required for international students

Modules available asynchronously, live, or 1:1

Cultural competencies addressed throughout the curriculum

Resumes fine-tuned before applying to internships

Program available to students once enrolled (including pre-INSPIRE modules)

### Program Optimizes Institutional and Student Needs



Timeline prioritizes int'l student career readiness and staff capacity



All content adapted from existing Career Services materials



Program developed with input from entire Career Services team

# 91%

Of students were employed or continuing education within six months

# INSPIRE Prioritizes Cross-Cultural Learning



## Embedded Cultural Competencies Help Students Adapt to New Norms

### **Cross-Cultural Differences**



Application and hiring norms differ around the world

Self-promotion, professional networking not a universal skill

Unfamiliarity with Application Tracking System software

Limited access to Western professional attire

Varied experience with cover letters

### **INSPIRE Solutions**



Instruction on professional etiquette across the career search process



Just-in-time coaching for live employer networking events



How to write Applicant Tracking System-Compliant Resumes



Career Closet with free professional attire



Cover letter writing sessions that highlight value proposition

# Tailor Support for the International Audience

## Strategies for Supporting Career Development from Across the Globe

### Offer an International Student-Specific Career Counselor

Hire a career counselor to work directly with international students and other international student support staff to deliver high-impact career support



### Build an International Student Internship Program

Develop relationships with local employers to offer paid internships specifically for international students



### Connect Students with a Professional Mentor

Create a professional mentorship program that connects current students with a professional in their field of interest for online mentoring support



### Facilitate International Career Placement Opportunities

Identify skills gaps in foreign countries and build employer partnerships/tuition reimbursement arrangements with overseas employers



# Anticipate Program Demand, Don't React to It



The University of Vermont

## UVM Reads Market to Recruit International Students



1

Vermont launches dairy program with domestic audience in mind



2

International faculty recognize connections to emerging markets in China



3

Vermont forms partnerships in China; faculty recruit based on connections



4

Course sees consistent, high international enrollments



## University Proactively Identifies Emerging Program-Market Alignment



1

University uses EducationUSA data to identify emerging industries



2

University compares fields to programs offered and historical enrollment markets



3

University increases targeted international recruiting investment



4

Program sees consistent, high international interest

# Unclouding the Crystal Ball

## Align Emerging Industries Data with Institutional Offerings

### Regions of Interest



Zimbabwe



Nepal



Colombia

### Emerging Opportunities

Federal push to modernize **agricultural infrastructure** in response to climate change

**14%**

Increase in Zimbabwean students in U.S., 2014-2020

Government prioritizes major investments in **infrastructure development** and energy generation

**0.39%**

Per capita college-age mobility to US (highest in Central/South Asia)

National investment in Orange Economy, focusing on role of **creative/cultural industries** in economic development

**1.9M**

Jobs created in Latin America and Caribbean

### In-Demand Programs

- Agricultural engineering
- Irrigation development
- Agricultural science
- Energy science
- Info. and communication technology
- Tourism and hospitality
- Journalism
- Visual arts
- Information services

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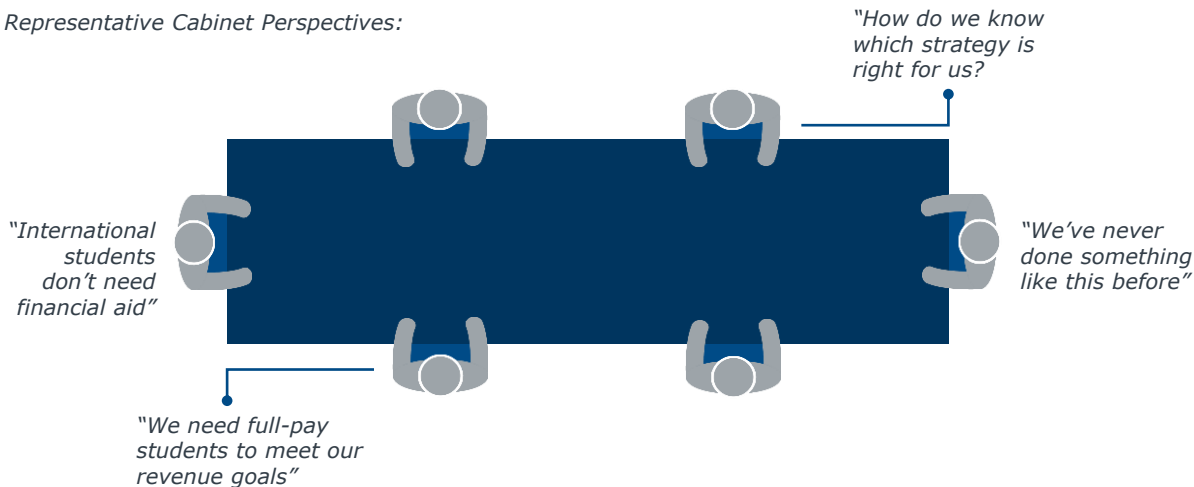
Institutional pricing and aid efforts will drive differentiation in growing source markets



# Coming Soon: International Pricing & Aid Workshop

## Overcome Internal Challenges with Cabinet-Level Expert Support

*Representative Cabinet Perspectives:*



## Workshop Components



Global Trends in  
Price Sensitivity



Institutional  
Case Studies



Strategic  
Considerations



Change  
Management  
Imperatives



Leadership  
Roles



## 1 Continue the Conversation

Speak to an **expert on our team** about specific strategies and research insights



## 2 Bring This Research to Campus

Have an EAB expert present this research to your team

Contact your Strategic Leader for additional resources or requests.