

Graduate Marketing Framework

Overall goal

Increase graduate enrollment and net tuition revenue through a scalable, portfolio-based marketing and recruitment engine.

Green = Prioritized for the next 12-18 months

1) Drive paid marketing engine with a revised Portfolio strategy

Objective: Drive near-term growth while building a repeatable portfolio model.

Key initiatives:

- Improve the formal portfolio prioritization and annual review cycle for “paid-ready” programs and adapt existing program portfolio dashboard.
- Define priority geographies and target populations
- Build channel plans by audience (search, paid social, programmatic, retargeting, lead-gen)
- Stand up weekly optimization (CPL → app rate → admit rate → deposit rate → enroll rate)
- Build a test roadmap (new segments, geographies, creative/value props)

Primary owners: Enrollment Management + University Marketing + Colleges

Core KPIs: leads/inquiries, cost per lead, application rate, admit rate, deposit rate, yield, net tuition per enrollment, ROI by program/channel

2) Increase Graduate brand awareness and outcomes-based positioning

Objective: Clarify “why DePaul grad” and make outcomes the centerpiece of messaging.

Key initiatives:

- Define and activate a graduate brand identity *in connection with Academic Distinction
- Prioritize the subset of programs that drive web traffic and demand
- Build the economic value proposition of the graduate degree (career advancement, earnings, mobility)

- Expand outcomes marketing (career results, industry connections, alumni stories, employer proof points)

Primary owners: University Marketing + Colleges + Career/Industry partners

Core KPIs: program page engagement, lead-to-app conversion lift from message testing, outcomes content coverage for priority programs

3) Enhance operating model and organizational capacity

Objective: Improve consistency across colleges and tighten handoffs across the funnel.

Key initiatives:

- Align best practices and standardize playbooks across colleges
- Stand up a cross-functional graduate growth team with clear decision rights
- Audit current practices to identify gaps and scale what's working
- Strengthen the connection between program leadership (grad directors) and recruitment teams

Primary owners: Enrollment Management + Colleges/Academic Affairs + Marketing Ops + Analytics

Core KPIs: speed-to-lead, follow-up SLA compliance, application cycle time, melt reduction, playbook adoption across colleges

4) Increase efficiency of funnel systems, analytics, and improvement in conversion

Objective: Build a measurable funnel (awareness → inquiry → application → enrollment) and remove friction.

Key initiatives:

- Train academic units and staff on funnel mechanics, roles, and conversion levers
- Expand yield analysis by program, segment, and source channel; identify leakage points
- Reduce application friction (requirements clarity, transcript workflow, waivers, decision timelines)
- Expand video/content capability with shared templates and distribution support

Primary owners: Enrollment Operations + Marketing Operations + Analytics + Admissions
Core KPIs: attribution quality, conversion by stage, application completion rate, cycle time to decision, event-to-app yield

5) Optimize graduate financial aid

Objective: Use aid strategically to improve competitiveness and yield.

Key initiatives:

- Review and optimize scholarship/grant allocation processes and awarding principles
- Establish program-level aid strategies (convert admits, reduce melt, compete in key markets)
- Define technology needs (automation, attribution, scholarship optimization, comm flows)
- Explore and pilot 3+2 aid/tuition model for a small set of programs (with clear targets)

Primary owners: Financial Aid + Enrollment Management + Finance + Colleges

Core KPIs: yield per aid dollar, net tuition per enrollment, discount rate by program, competitive win rate, melt by aid segment