STRATEGIC ALLIANCES IN MARKETING EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The remainder of the 1990's pose a challenge for business schools, and specifically marketing departments, in terms of attracting both the number and quality of undergraduate students necessary to produce competitive graduates. Indeed, the percentage of college freshmen indicating business as their planned major dropped from a high of nearly 27% in 1986 to 14% in 1993 (Green 1993). After several decades of slow but steady increases in the quality of students (measured by SAT scores and high school GPA’s) entering business school programs, the 1990's has witnessed a reversal of this trend.

Marketing the Major

It is time to apply what is known about marketing to recruiting more and stronger marketing majors. These applications include an emphasis on gaining early access to the student applicant pool, impacting applicant and student awareness and interest in marketing as a career, reducing barriers to matriculation and graduation from the major, and building predictable links to the job market and professional career ladder for students in various stages of selecting marketing as a career.

Strategic Educational Alliances

Building strategic alliances both across campus and with partners outside the university, including other educational providers and industry, is seen as a key tactic in accomplishing the above. Strategic partners in this regard might include the science and engineering disciplines, as well as the arts and humanities ("Learning..." 1994). Initiatives could be developed with the objective of creating minors and joint majors.

Strategic alliances with other campus units such as student advisement, student recruitment, and placement could also contribute to raising the awareness of and interest in marketing as a major and career. Marketing departments need to take a proactive approach in developing materials for use by such campus units and in establishing strong relationships with professionals engaged in these campus outreach and service units.

Strategic alliances beyond the campus are also called for. These might include jointly developed transfer and advising programs with community colleges and high schools, as well as partnerships with area businesses associations and corporations. The basic message that "marketing is where the actions is" needs to be spread throughout all these potential communication channels.

REFERENCES
