



CASE STUDY

A personalized, modernized approach to recruitment

Garden City Community College improves outreach, increases applications, and streamlines manual processes

Garden City Community College (GCCC) is a public two-year institution located in Garden City, Kansas. The college serves approximately 1,900 students, about 60 percent of whom attend full time. GCCC is focused on providing a high-quality, affordable education to area residents, and is noted for its highly ranked nursing, technical, food-sciences, and athletics programs.

To optimize its recruitment processes and better highlight its unique offerings, GCCC recently moved to modernize its recruitment processes and technology. The college went live on Ellucian CRM Recruit in early 2021, and can now automate cumbersome manual tasks, tailor their prospect communications, and spend more time on high-value projects and personal outreach.



Enrollment

1,900

Challenge

Modernize recruitment processes to improve targeting, tailor communications, improve user experiences, and speed application and enrollment processing.

Solution

Ellucian CRM Recruit

Results

Increased applications immediately after implementation

Automated time-intensive manual processes

Personalized communications

Refocused staff toward strategic projects and 1:1 interactions

Saving time and increasing applications with automation

“Before CRM Recruit,” says Samantha Garcia, an admissions representative, “it was really hard. We were doing every single application and every process manually, so 60–70% of our time was just processing applications.”

By automating application processing and email responses, staff now have much more time for one-on-one prospect communications and other high-value work.

“Now we’re able to actually focus on recruiting—calling students, following up,” says Sydnee Sassaman, GCCC’s director of admissions. “Sometimes you need to be in contact with a student five to seven times to get them to your institution. Now that’s being done automatically with email in addition to our phone calls.”

“Now, with the student dashboard and their communication history,” says Sassman, “we can get a full picture of what emails they received, if they were called, if they closed their opportunity.”

“The communication with students is so much smoother,” Garcia says.

Demystifying the admissions process for prospects

As another key goal of their modernization process, GCCC sought to clarify the entire admissions process—not just the application phase—for all their prospective students. The college wanted to ensure that prospects could easily see and manage outstanding tasks and get full visibility into their application status.

“Before CRM Recruit,” Sassaman says, “our students would really have no idea where they were in the admissions process. ‘Have they received my transcript? What do I have left to do? What about supplemental items?’ Now they have a place to go to see what they need to do instead of it being up to them to call us and ask.”

“Now,” says Sassaman, “they’re getting automated emails, they know where they’re at, they’re getting reminders if they have supplemental items—and it’s just been so much smoother.”



“With CRM Recruit, we’re setting up individualized emails with specifics about our programs and what they can do to enroll in those programs.”

SYDNEE SASSAMAN

Director of Admissions, Garden City Community College

Immediate ID credentialing and registration

For students who accept and enroll, the college's new system is making a big difference in onboarding as well. Before GCCC implemented its new technology and process, newly accepted students wouldn't get their IDs or the ability to register for several weeks. Now, it's immediate.

Not only that, but automated follow-up emails keep them on track and up to date all the way through registration, continuing the momentum and increasing the odds of matriculation.

"Once they've turned in all their supplemental items," says Sassaman, "they get their ID right away so they can see their decisions on their dashboard and download their acceptance letters."

Tailored communications for more effective recruiting

Automated emails, alerts, and credentialing haven't just made things easier for prospects—they've improved transparency and lessened the burden for the admissions and enrollments team, too. "It's opened up a lot of time in our office, so now we have time for a lot more student contact instead of processing data," Sassaman says.

The college's new system has also enabled GCCC faculty to be more targeted with their outreach. Every

two weeks, the admissions staff sends academic departments curated lists of students using CRM Recruit's Advanced Find feature. Staff then partner with faculty members to send faculty-signed emails with tailored program information.

"When we send departments a list of students who have applied, we also share where they are in the funnel, as well as how the conversation should go for the stage they're at," Sassaman says. "Then they can make contact and send directed messages, like 'You've started your application, but you need to finish it.' Or 'Thank you for submitting your application; you're ready to go for enrollment once we open in April.' Or 'Do you have any questions? Do you want to come on a campus tour?'"

"Having that data and making it available to our faculty really helps guide those conversations."

Adding that individualized, human touch is helping GCCC achieve one of its top priorities. "Students might already know that we have these programs," Garcia says, "but now with CRM Recruit, we're setting up individualized emails with specifics about [the] programs and what they can do to enroll in them. It's really going to help us push more of that directly to the students."