

The Welcomer

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News and Information from the
Collegiate Information and
Visitor Services Association

NCAA Task Force on Recruiting Affects Campus Visit Programs

by Denise Wellman

In the not-too-distant past, national headlines were smeared with alleged excesses in the recruitment of prospective student-athletes. As a result, in February 2004 NCAA President Myles Brand called for the appointment of an NCAA Task Force on Recruiting to review NCAA rules and practices related to “official campus visits” and asked the group to propose appropriate changes before the 2004-2005 recruiting season got underway. The Call to Action by the NCAA was precipitated by “allegations of specific objectionable behavior and activities related to the use of alcohol and sex in recruiting...” (NCAA Task Force Final Report, July 13, 2004). In July 2004, the NCAA officially recommended that recruiting visits by prospective student athletes (PSAs) model the experience(s) offered to any prospective student and should operate within an environment of mutual respect and ethical behavior. Furthermore, these visit opportunities should offer a balanced experience that allows “the student-athlete and his/her family to make a decision about where to pursue his or her athletic and academic future” (NCAA Task Force Final Report, July 13, 2004). CiVSA members who administer campus visit programs for prospective students either have or undoubtedly will soon be called upon to develop an institutional response to the NCAA Task Force recommendations.

Campus visit programs are designed to offer an opportunity for broad exploration by any number of constituents including prospective students and their families and friends. Many also involve an opportunity for mutual exploration by an institution interested in offering a scholarship and/or valuable programs and services to a prospective student. This mindset is routine for CiVSA members who administer campus visit programs on a daily basis to hundreds of thousands of visitors. The policies and procedures of a well-run campus visit program will be *critical* to the development of a professional response to the NCAA Task Force. Fortunately, CiVSA members can also rely on the [CAS Professional Standards](#) in the development of a reasoned response because these standards provide an overarching framework for excellence in program delivery and ethical behavior.

As the [University of South Carolina Visitor Center](#) was beginning the 2004 fall

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From a Customer Service Standpoint,

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?



(see answer on page 10)

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term, we already had thousands of prospective students scheduled for campus visits (we assist more than 2 million visitors a year) and were heavily involved in our annual Ambassador recruitment program which was met with an unprecedented level of interest. To quote one of our dear colleagues, life was indeed “rich and full” (Fran Lane, year unknown). Then our athletic department arrived with a copy of the NCAA Task Force recommendations and asked us to immediately begin to offer campus tours for prospective student athletes (about 200 per game) at all home football games (we had 6 last year in 2004; we will have 7 in 2005). Specifically, in late August our Athletic Department requested 50 Ambassadors to work at every home football game during the 2004 season, starting the very next weekend. While the Gamecocks have never had a national championship, tailgating and football games are an essential part of the collegiate experience and rock this city for weeks on end. Suffice it to say that USC students don’t readily give up their Saturday football experience, even for Lou Holtz. Additionally, with our regular Saturday tours operating in full swing (around the games and football traffic, mind you) and Ambassador responsibilities already scheduled at the tailgating events hosted by President & Mrs. Sorensen, providing the needed staff for this new responsibility was going to be a formidable challenge.

Previously, the USC Visitor Center had been asked to give tours to prospective student-athletes (PSAs) participating in the Olympic (non-revenue) sports. Such tours were handled as “group tours” and involved an experience similar to an individual tour, but could be customized to meet the needs of the group. Coaches and parents frequently participated in these tours but it was not unusual for the PSAs to tour alone. Additionally, each fall Ambassadors led an abbreviated tour for the new freshman football players to assist them in navigating the campus in search of their fall classes. Beyond that, the USC Visitor Center was in no way involved in the recruiting efforts of athletes. The USC Athletic Department and a group of 30 women hostesses, called the Carolina Classics, handled all unofficial and official recruitment activities. Just as we started this fall semester, we were faced with the challenge of immediately developing a new recruitment program for PSAs, learning how to give tours of

the football stadium and other athletic facilities not currently included on a regular campus tour, pondering how to engage PSAs in meaningful discussions about their athletic, college, and career choices, and most important of all, we were faced with the significant challenge of recruiting the manpower needed to provide such tours. We initially recommended that these prospective students be merged into the regular campus tours already offered every weekend; however, it was immediately clear that the needed response was going to involve an entirely separate experience. Therefore, we expanded our Ambassador recruitment efforts, immediately began a professional development and training program to prepare our Ambassadors for such tours, and developed a risk management plan to insure the safety of all students involved.

To assist in the development of our institutional response to the Task Force recommendations, the USC Visitor Center conducted an assessment of how other institutions were responding to this Call to Action. A total of 19 institutions responded to the survey (my guess is that many were overwhelmed with figuring out how to respond) and therefore it is difficult to draw many meaningful conclusions. However, it is clear that:

- 1) The NCAA’s action was not anticipated and therefore many institutions were creating and implementing a response on the fly during the Fall 2004 football season;
- 2) While many offices involved in the administration of campus visit programs were unaware of this action when our survey was being distributed, a few were involved at the time in initial discussions with their athletic department to determine a response; and
- 3) While only a small number of institutions responded to the survey, it is clear that there is no consistent response among institutions involved. Some institutions simply continued to involve all PSAs (including football) in their regular campus tours and thus experienced no change. Others simply did what their athletic departments demanded. Some institutions stated that their athletic department would

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**Register
Now!**

CiVSA National Conference June 4-7, 2005



Mark
your
Calendar

June 2005						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

The Conference includes:

- Who Moved My Cheese? Training
- Professional development workshops
- Chances to network
- Souvenir exchange
- Trips to Salt Lake City, Park City, and Sundance
- Plus a whole lot more!

Bring a guest or three! Guest meals and transportation on excursions costs just **\$150** per person.

Stay at the **Provo Marriott** - \$79/night



**Call Troy or
Chelsy with any
questions at
800-238-6717**

**Register online!
Pay your conference fee and
membership dues online.**

We are excited to be hosting the 2005 National CiVSA Conference here at Brigham Young University. We hope you will find your time here informative and enjoyable.

We have some great events planned for the conference. We are excited to have Kevin Giddins from *Who Moved my Cheese?* as our keynote speaker. We will also be privileged to hear from Provo City Mayor Lewis K. Billings.

Plan on arriving early and/or staying late to fully enjoy all that visiting Utah has to offer. Come hear "America's choir," the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, as they perform their renowned Sunday morning broadcast *Music and the Spoken Word*. See where the stars hang out as we visit Park City and Sundance. To wrap up the conference, try visiting Zion National Park or the Grand Canyon. As well, Las Vegas is only a beautiful 5-hour drive from Provo.

Again, we look forward to seeing you in June for an exciting conference. Please feel free to contact Chelsy or myself with any questions or concerns you may have at **1-800-238-6717** or contact us by email at taselk@byu.edu or Chelsy_Mcfadyen@byu.edu

SEE YOU IN JUNE!

CiVSA Best Practices

University of Notre Dame Jammin' at the Eck

Last year, we began looking for a way to enhance the football weekend experience for our visitors. The challenge was that we have around 20,000 visitors to the [Eck Center](#) on a typical home football weekend. Many were not aware of the Visitors Center or thought it was only a place to use the restrooms, watch our visitors' video, or join a tour. We wanted to create a vibrant and exciting environment in which visitors, whether or not they actually had tickets to the game, could participate in a fun and festive experience. We decided to showcase the musical talents of some of our students and created "Jammin' at the Eck." We tested the program on a small scale last year and it was so successful that we went full scale this past football season – the feedback from visitors has been great. As a matter of fact, we noticed repeat guests who made a special point to join us for every game. Some people stay only a few minutes and some people stay for an entire afternoon.

Each home football Friday and again on home game Saturday mornings, we have various musicians who donate their talents for the enjoyment of our visitors. We've had campus student blues and jazz bands, individual student musicians, alumni musicians, Irish musicians and dancers as well as members of the University Marching Band, Glee Club, Handbell Choir and a cappella singers. There has literally been something for fans and visitors of all ages! We are fortunate



to have a patio attached to our Visitors Center, so on beautiful fall days the musicians performed outside, and in inclement weather, the carnival atmosphere was moved inside. We published the event in the campus "Gridiron Graffiti" brochure that the University prints for every game and distributes throughout the campus and on the Internet. It wasn't hard to find musicians who wanted to perform. We started with some of our musically-talented tour guides. They had so much fun performing that they told their friends, who told their friends, and before we knew it, we had people lining up wanting to join the fun. We did work with the Bookstore (which is next door to us) to help us promote the event and we also contacted Student Activities to get the names of campus bands. We also worked with the Music Department (band department, glee club director, etc.) to get their musicians over here. And of course we had to alert Security, but they are already used to the masses of people who congregate here on football weekends so it really didn't cause any extra hassles for them.

We wanted to welcome the visitors from the opposing schools as well, so we dedicated one of our display cases to each challenging football team. We displayed mascots, information, and ephemera from each opponent's team. That seemed to be a great way to welcome everyone to our beautiful campus. This is a new Notre Dame tradition, but one that we hope will continue from now on. It's our way of joining with our visitors in "shaking down the thunder" as we shout "Go Irish!"

*Jaime Cripe
University of Notre Dame*



Welcome New Members!

Erin Burfield
University of South Carolina

Steven Domachowski
Bowling Green State University

Rae Ann DiBaggio
Case Western Reserve University

Dennis Dunham
Oklahoma City University

Lindsey Engbrecht
University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Kimberly Jacobs
Bowling Green State University

Leslie McKenzie
Oklahoma City University

Tami Moore
Washington State University

Michael Yoon
Princeton University

Membership Memo

I am pleased to welcome new members and excited at the number of colleagues looking into CiVSA. Thanks to all of you for your help in spreading the word!

We are busy making sure our member list is accurate. I, with the help of some very generous volunteers, will be contacting you in the next few weeks to ask you to verify your membership information. We will also be contacting those members who have not renewed their membership for 2005. If this is one of those things that has just not been removed from your list of things to do, you can renew online at <http://www.civsa.org/application/> We have not removed you from any CiVSA services yet, but will soon. If you are unsure whether or not you've renewed, you can contact me at (414) 229-6235 or e-mail info@civsa.org. You can pay your membership dues by credit card or check. If you're paying by check, be sure to print a copy of the form to send with your Purchase Order/check to the address listed and hit submit so your information comes to me electronically.

Several of you have requested the Federal ID number for use when processing your payment. In case anyone else needs this, here it is...**13-384-4646**.

I look forward to seeing you at the conference at [Brigham Young University](#) in June. Troy and his staff have lots of great outings, speakers, and experiences planned for us. Tami has sent out a request for presenters; please don't be bashful about jumping in with ideas for sessions you'd like to see offered and/or sessions you would like to present.

Anyone who is interested in being a session note taker at the conference, let me know. This is an easy way to get involved.

Don't forget to use the listserv! It's easy – just send an e-mail message to civsa@civsa.org.

*Kate Steinbach
Membership Chair
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee*

If you missed CiVSA's 11th Annual Conference, or if you just weren't able to attend every session of interest to you, fear not. A team of conference attendees compiled their session notes, which we've shared with you in this and previous issues of The Welcomer. (CiVSA members are nothing if not generous!)

Customer Service Goes to Hollywood

Presented by Betty Spengler and Robin Oldfather, *Anne Arundel Community College*

This fast-paced, humorous, multi-media extravaganza of a presentation had plenty of props: star-shaped sunglasses, feather boas, and lots of candy! Robin and Betty cleverly used clips from movies to illustrate key customer service concepts to us. During each clip, there was something specific we were supposed to pay attention to that we then discussed as a group after the scene. Here's a rundown of the movies used and the customer service principle that each exemplified:

Desk Set (1957) – **Courtesy**

From this movie, we watched a scene where Spencer Tracy visits a large corporation's headquarters and tries to find the person he's looking to talk to. During the clip, half the group wrote down elements of good customer service that we saw and the other half noted elements of poor customer service. At the end, we compared lists – and the team looking for negative elements had noticed more things (including using office phones for personal business, not greeting people when they walk into the office, and sending a customer away to someone else instead of dealing directly with the customer's issue).

Orange County (2002) – **Accuracy**

In this clip, a high school guidance counselor mistakenly sends Stanford University the wrong transcripts attached to the application of an over-achieving student. This, of course, has devastating results for the student when he does not get accepted and demonstrated to us the importance of paying attention while

on the job. In order to further press this point, we then broke up into several small groups. Each person in the group got an index card with one sentence written on it. One person in the group (designated as the customer) had a question on their card that they were supposed to get answered by the rest of the people in the group. So when the customer asked the question written on their card (to each member of the group in turn), the rest of the group could only respond with the sentence written on their card, no matter if it answered or completely ignored the question being asked. By asking people in the correct order and carefully keeping track of the information given, it was possible for the customer to receive an answer to their query, but it was a long and frustrating process that could have been made much easier

with a little more accuracy in the customer service.

The Wedding Planner (2001) – **Being Prepared**

We watched a scene in which Jennifer Lopez, portraying a wedding planner, dealt with numerous small crises right before a wedding ceremony. As we watched, we were instructed to jot down words that represented every customer service element that we noticed. After the clip, each team had two minutes to compare and compile a master list of concepts. Then, all the teams in the room compared their lists, eliminating any duplicate

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Christine DeSalvo and Jen McGowan (with Derek Spriggs in the background) show off their fancy new sunglasses.

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concepts. The team with the most things left on their list won a prize, and we all learned how valuable being prepared is when you arrive for work.

Go (1999) – Choose your Attitude (or, Leave the Bad Stuff at Home)

In this clip, we watched a bored, irritable, impatient, and somewhat rude grocery store clerk as she interacted with customers. She was obviously focusing on things other than the people in front of her, and the customers could tell by her attitude toward them. As we watched the clip, we made a list of strategies that the clerk could have used to defuse the explosive situation that built up: things such as smiling, being respectful, making eye contact, and listening to what her customers were saying.

Pretty Woman (1990) – Respect

We watched two scenes from this movie: the one where Julia Roberts first goes into an expensive clothing store on Rodeo Drive (dressed much less formally than the store’s usual clientele) and the store clerks refuse to help her; then we watched the second scene in that same store when she returns loaded down with bags from a competing store, making the comment that those clerks could have had a huge commission if only they’d looked past her appearance. After this clip, we discussed how things such as attitude, judgment, and making assumptions stand in the way of good customer service and how respect for the customer and paying attention to preconceptions can overcome those barriers.

My Cousin Vinny (1992) – Good Communication



Robin and Betty pose in their costumes.

In this humorous scene, we watched Joe Pesci try to make himself be understood in a courtroom – his heavy Brooklyn

accent makes the word youth sound like “yout” and the judge and opposing lawyer had no idea what he was actually saying. Everyone involved becomes frustrated as they try to communicate and understand each other. After the scene, we discussed ways to clarify when language and accent become a barrier to understanding, as the goal for all customer service professionals is clear communication.

Jerry Maguire (1996) – Sincerity

We watched two scenes from this movie, one in which sports agent Tom Cruise only tells his client what the client wants to hear, and another in which his information and emotions are genuine. The moral of the clip? Don’t fake it. As Betty and Robin reminded us: good customer service is about establishing rapport, even if the relationship is only as long as one phone call.

You’ve Got Mail (1998) – Job Knowledge

From this movie, we watched a scene in which Meg Ryan, as the owner of a small bookstore, walks through her store and seems to do 5 things at once as she interacts with her customers: answering questions, reading to a little girl, providing a handkerchief. We made a list of examples from all the customer service elements that appeared in this scene: Teamwork, Courtesy, Eye Contact, Diplomacy, Knowledge, Professionalism, Listening, Anticipating Customer Needs, and Believing in your Mission. Combining all these elements together shows pride in your job performance and will impress your clients.

Father of the Bride (1991) – Thoroughness

As we watched this clip of a wedding reception, our goal was to identify all the missed customer service opportunities. We saw the father of the bride (Steve Martin) not get dinner and not get to dance with his daughter, because Franck the wedding coordinator seemed unorganized, unprepared, and unhelpful. When the police showed up at the reception (because of complaints about the cars parked on the street) Franck left Steve Martin alone to handle the situation, instead of interacting with them himself. And instead of offering helpful suggestions like they could have, the police merely issued a directive to move the cars and

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then left. From this clip, we took away the idea that *missed chances critically change outcomes*, so we should always keep our customer in mind.

My Big Fat Greek Wedding (2002) – **Being Present**

In this funny scene from early in the movie, our heroine is working as a waitress in her family's restaurant. An attractive man (whom she later ends up marrying) comes into the restaurant and his arrival distracts her from her waitressing duties. She can't remember what she's supposed to be doing, she doesn't remember what her customers have ordered, she gives people incorrect food and beverages, and everyone gets untimely service because all of her attention is focused on one customer. As we discussed after the clip, one of the more important elements to customer service is making sure that you are present mentally, not just physically.

When Harry Met Sally (1989) – **Leave it Behind**

The final clip takes place in a restaurant – Harry and Sally are out to lunch and Sally places a very complicated order. She specifies every aspect of her meal: she wants a salad with the dressing on the side; she wants her pie heated; she wants the ice cream on the side and not on top of the pie; she wants strawberry ice cream and not vanilla; if they don't have strawberry ice cream then she wants whipped cream, but only if it's real whipped cream (not out of a can); if they don't have strawberry ice cream or real whipped cream then she just wants the pie – heated. While listening to this order, the waitress becomes increasingly disbelieving. Finally, she just mutters "uh huh" and walks away. Betty and Robin asked us to brainstorm some possible scenarios for the next three tables that that waitress serves – how will this complicated, crazy order affect the waitress's mood? Most of our scenarios involved the waitress taking out her frustration with Sally on her next customers. But that's not good customer service – we all need to learn to leave the frustration behind and interact happily with our next patrons.

*notes provided by Jennifer McGowan
University of Michigan*

never allow them to assist with the highly specialized nature of athletic recruiting and therefore were not surprised that they hadn't been involved. Others were thankful that they had not been contacted or involved in any way. A few institutions merged their "athletic host group" in with the students that give the regular campus tours (some with unsuccessful results); others required that they go through the rigorous application and selection process that all students interested in hosting prospective students participate in.

The USC Visitor Center Ambassador program required that all Carolina Classics go through the regular Ambassador recruitment and selection program (we accepted 2 of 9 who applied) and we overall doubled in size (to 59 Ambassadors) so that we could meet this new responsibility. When all was said and done, we provided tours for almost 500 PSAs and their families/friends during 3 of the 6 home football games and recently completed a full compliment of official visits in December and January. This entire effort was completed without any financial support from our Athletic Department (Ambassadors are unpaid, unless they give a tour on the weekend) and future support is still unclear. We continue to have discussions with our Athletic Department as we are already planning for fall 2005. The USC Visitor Center was fortunate to have gained additional resources and a new full-time state position from within the Division of Student Affairs to provide continuous oversight and management of our involvement in athletic recruiting. This individual is also responsible for managing our entire training, risk management, and professional development programs. While it remains unclear exactly what role the Ambassadors will play in the unofficial football recruiting efforts in 2005, we know we will be heavily involved. The Ambassadors' role in the 2004 official visit weekends proved to be extremely rewarding and offered the opportunity for them to work with our football coaching staff, including Coach Steve Spurrier, to meet their recruitment goals. It was in this environment that they were able to fully utilize their skills and pride as USC Gamecocks, both in the classroom and in our football stadium on a Gamecock Saturday.

*Denise Wellman
University of South Carolina*

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE? - The Correct Version! (from page 2)



A visitor will think nothing of it if you give them something from your hand to his/her hand, but if you put it on the counter for him/her to pick up, it will be impersonal in their mind and will detract from any other nice thing you do.

From Nick Kovalakides



The Welcomer is a quarterly publication of the Collegiate Information and Visitor Services Association. Please send comments, suggestions, or photos to:

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mcjen@umich.edu

Have you visited the CIVSA website recently?

There's a wealth of information available, including a member directory, past issues of the Welcomer, archives of messages sent to the CIVSA listserv, and information about the upcoming conference in Utah (it's never too early to start planning!).

www.civsa.org

If you don't remember the CIVSA member login and password, contact Jen McGowan or send a message to info@civsa.org