UWT UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT RECRUITING INSIGHTS

PROJECT BACKGROUND
The University of Washington Tacoma (UWT) has been growing exponentially since they were founded in 1990. However, in the fall of 2019, UWT experienced their first decrease in enrollment and an increasing number of students leaving the university. UWT needs to quickly and strategically adapt to draw students to their university and retain existing ones.

PURPOSE
The purpose of this project is to understand the current UWT audience and make recommendations on how to improve student recruiting and retention at UWT and increasing market appeal; helping shape the future of the UWT experience.

CURRENT STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

We developed a PowerBI dashboard to visualize descriptive and diagnostic analytics. The dashboard focuses on new undergraduate student demographics including age, gender, and majors of choice for 2018-2020 fall enrollments. This gave us insights into the current strength and opportunities for target demographics. The age representation falls primarily in the 21-34 bucket and a larger female representation. The top schools of choice are Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences, School of Engineering and Technology, and Milgard School of Business. The dashboard allows users to see both areas of strength and opportunity.

FUTURE UNDERGRADUATE GROWTH

We developed a chatbot through chatbot.com for the UWT IR home page to help answer questions that faculty or executives may have on UWT IR data. This cognitive analytical tool will be robust, answer various common questions and has the ability to quickly adapt with training. Users can ask questions on the chatbot to help guide them to the data they seek. This helps automate UWT IR processes and allows them to track the types of questions they may be getting.

TOOLS AND APPS USED

We utilized PowerBI and Azure Machine Learning for predictive and prescriptive analytics, we analyzed key features and future undergraduate growth. We found that based on historical data, UWT can expect to see stagnant or slight growth over the next two years for new undergraduate students. Our dashboards in PowerBI indicate that UWT should continue to focus on schools in Tacoma and community colleges to continue to drive growth.

THE TEAM

Breanna Harris  
Project Manager

Kohle Ferenchak  
Business Strategist

Laura Truong  
Technical Engineer

Prathi Prasad  
System Analyst

Ray Lee  
Financial Analyst

ANALYTICAL DRIVEN RECOMMENDATIONS

- Emphasis and expansion on Inter. Arts and Sciences, School of Engineering, and Milgard School of Business.
- Continue recruiting from schools in Tacoma and focus on Community colleges
- Utilize Chatbot features to understand what questions are being asked or what visualizations can be added to UWT IR site.

UTILIZATION IMPACTS

- Future Undergraduate Growth:
  - Predictions can be used for determining faculty count for upcoming years.
  - Focus targeted marketing strategies based on key locations and demographics.
- Current Student Demographics:
  - Determine budgets and investments for schools within UWT based on demand.
- Enabling Data Driven Chats:
  - Enabling faculty to make data driven solutions by adding support via chatbot so people can access data.