

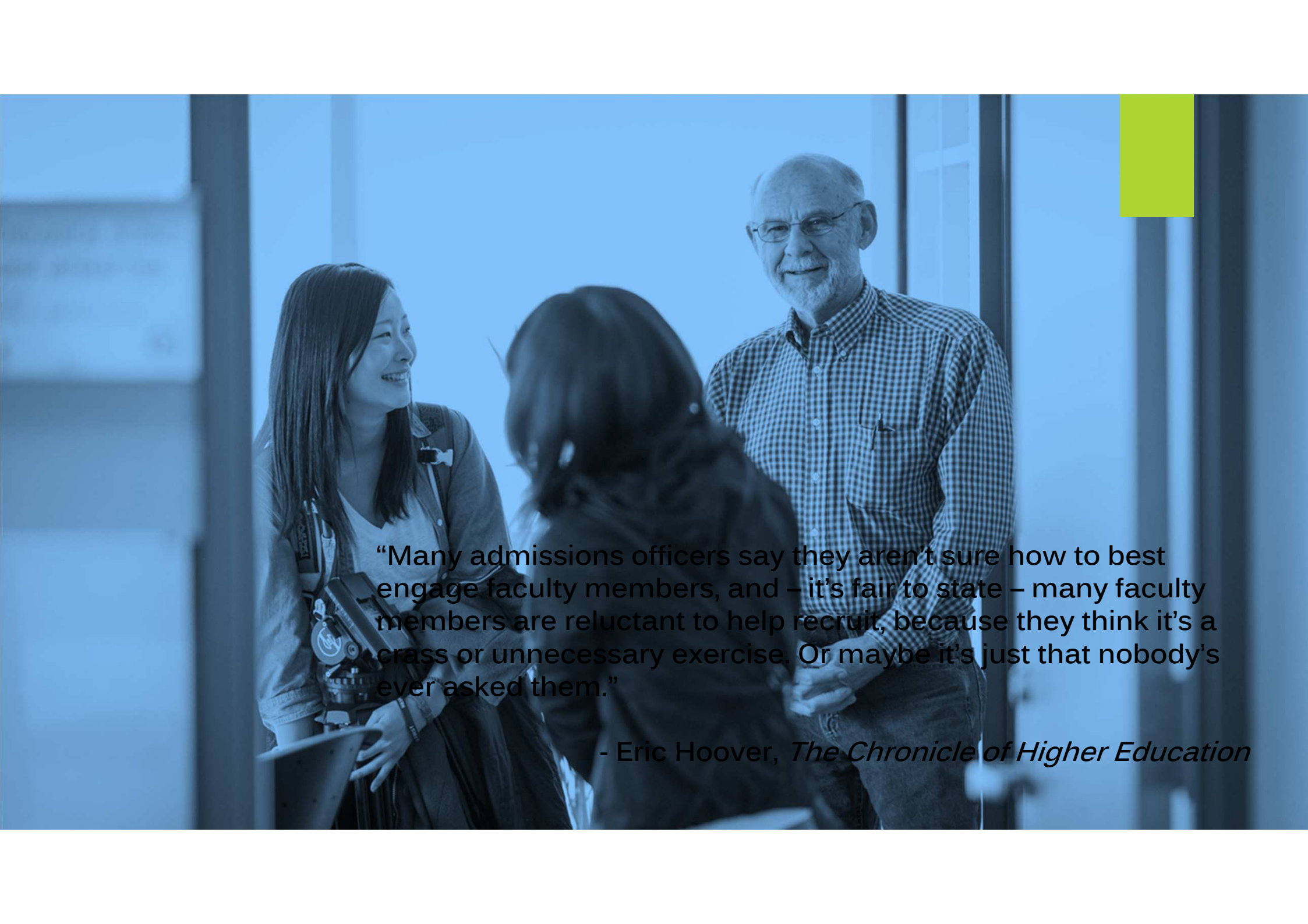


It Takes a Village:

Engaging Faculty in the Admission and Recruitment Process

2015 MACAC ANNUAL CONFERENCE

ANGELA ERICKSON, ASSISTANT DEAN OF ADMISSION, GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS COLLEGE



“Many admissions officers say they aren’t sure how to best engage faculty members, and – it’s fair to state – many faculty members are reluctant to help recruit, because they think it’s a crass or unnecessary exercise. Or maybe it’s just that nobody’s ever asked them.”

- Eric Hoover, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*

An Overview

- ▶ Why should we involve faculty in the recruitment process?
- ▶ What are the stumbling blocks to engaging faculty?
- ▶ How might we best utilize them?

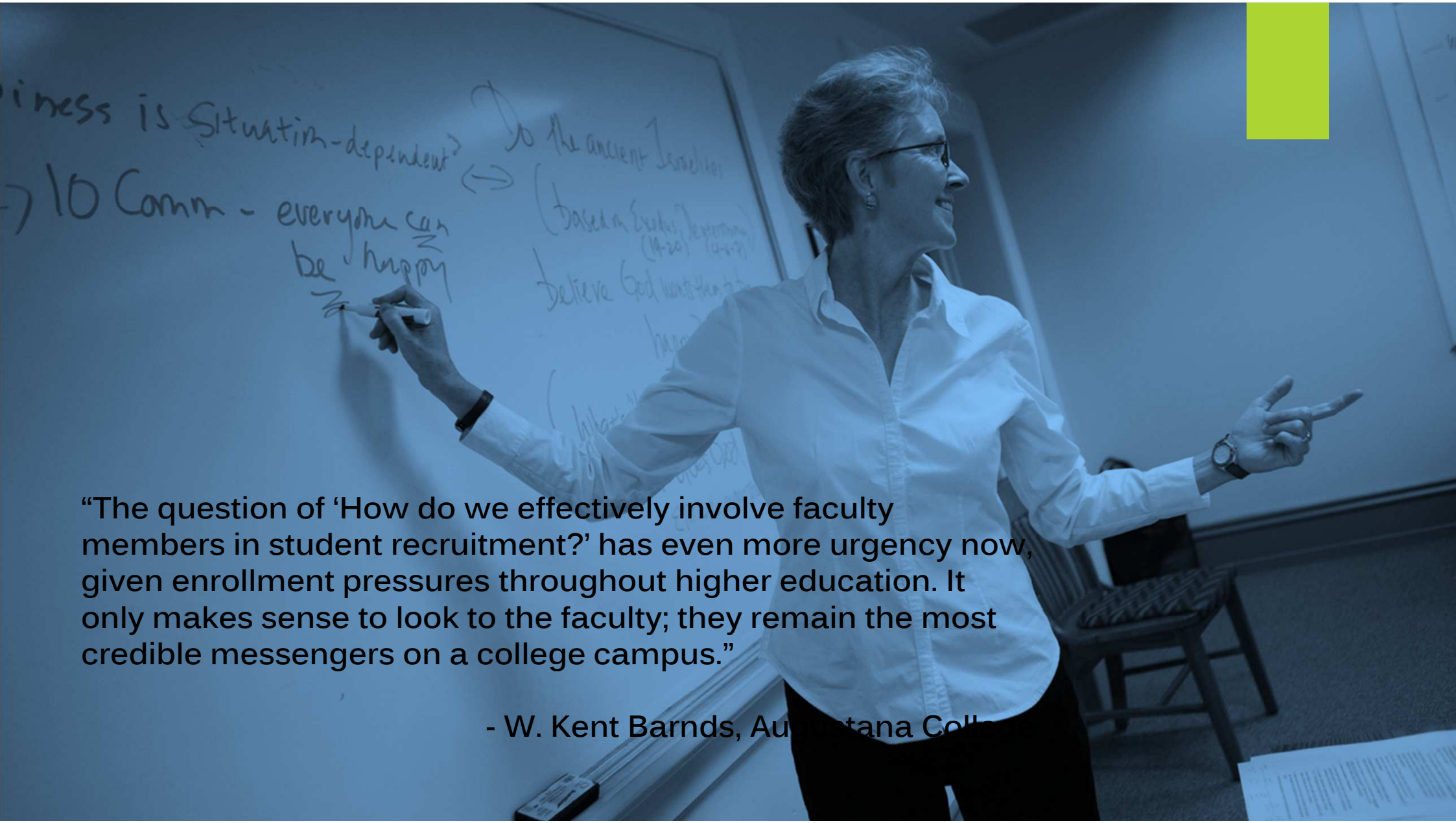


How would you rate your campus?

On a scale of 1-10, one as abysmal and ten as phenomenal, how would you assess faculty engagement in admissions and recruitment at your institution?

What serves as the basis for your rating?

Overall, how do you feel about the relationship between faculty and admissions staff on your campus and why?



“The question of ‘How do we effectively involve faculty members in student recruitment?’ has even more urgency now, given enrollment pressures throughout higher education. It only makes sense to look to the faculty; they remain the most credible messengers on a college campus.”

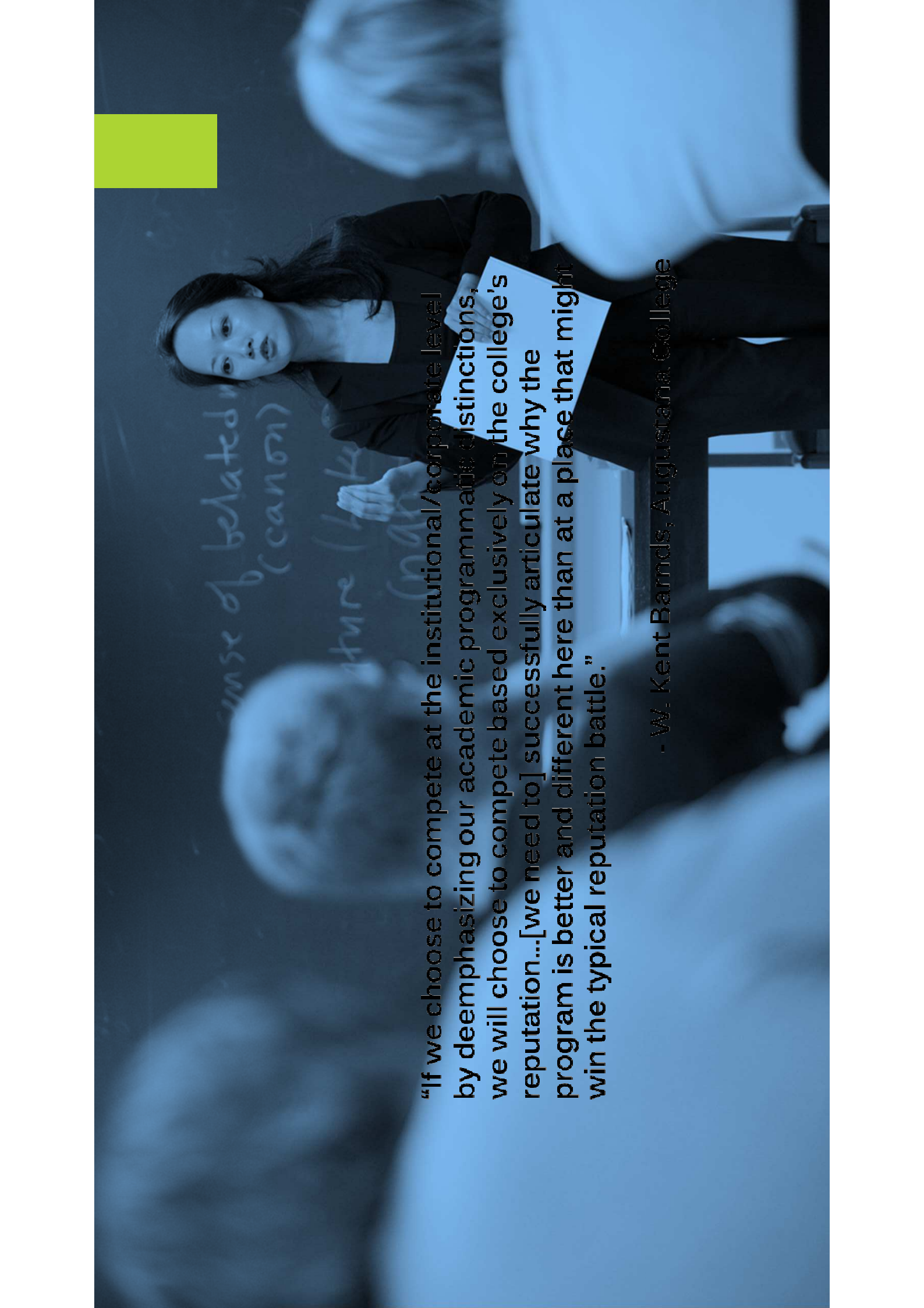
- W. Kent Barnds, Augustana College

So, why faculty? External constituents think...

- ▶ Central component to overall quality of institution and experience of prospective student
 - ▶ “The quality of faculty as teachers and mentors is the second most important attribute in choosing a college for both students and parents.” (TeensTALK, 2006)
 - ▶ “Meaningful relationships are typically not forged through a single encounter...there must be a sustained period of interaction between a faculty member and a potential student for a relationship to be born.” (SEMWorks)
- ▶ When committed to the mission of the institution, faculty members serve as its greatest ambassadors and are able to authoritatively communicate its benefits

And within the campus community?

- ▶ Admissions office as “an extension of the faculty”
- ▶ Faculty not always aware of enrollment trends and pressures on admissions offices
- ▶ Shared responsibility for the successes (and failures) in terms of enrollment goals

A woman with dark hair, wearing a black blazer, is standing in a lecture hall and speaking. She is holding a white card with text on it. In the background, a chalkboard has some handwritten text in white chalk. The scene is dimly lit, with a blueish tint. A bright yellow square is visible in the top right corner of the image.

“If we choose to compete at the institutional/composite level by deemphasizing our academic programmatic distinctions, we will choose to compete based exclusively on the college's reputation...[we need to] successfully articulate why the program is better and different here than at a place that might win the typical reputation battle.”

- W. Kent Barnnds, Augustana College

Inside the Faculty Psyche

- ▶ Hierarchy of priorities
 - ▶ Promotion and tenure considerations
 - ▶ Teaching/class load
 - ▶ Research
 - ▶ Office hours
 - ▶ Departmental/institutional political climate
- ▶ Personality traits
 - ▶ Differences between “researchers” and “teachers”
 - ▶ Experiences that lead to “difficult” personalities
- ▶ What’s in it for them?

What motivates the faculty to help?

- ▶ Concerns about enrollment numbers, more departmental than institutional
- ▶ Desire to enroll quality students, departmental focus
- ▶ Service to the college, department
- ▶ Wanting to work with students
- ▶ Enjoyment of participation in these types of activities
- ▶ Professional responsibility to make program known to external constituencies

What hinders them from participating?

- ▶ Conflict between serving department and serving the institution
- ▶ Overloaded departments or programs
- ▶ Heavy course loads
- ▶ Timing of and time commitment for events
- ▶ No perception of reward/return on investment
 - ▶ Free meals, gift certificates, etc. hold minimal value overall
 - ▶ Not categorized at all institutions as service for purposes of tenure or promotion
 - ▶ Many feel they should be compensated with release time or money
 - ▶ Certificate/letter of recognition is meaningful and can be kept in professional file

Building a “Coalition of the Willing”

- ▶ Are some faculty more likely than others to participate? YES!
 - ▶ Viewing recruitment as a regular part of the faculty job
 - ▶ Personality traits and values that contribute to collegiality and collaboration
 - ▶ Work assignment (merely having time available)
- ▶ Not really effected by tenure, rank, years of service
 - ▶ Approaching pre-tenure faculty has its pros and cons
 - ▶ Strategically work around the laggards and “difficult personalities”

A Snowball Effect?

- ▶ Find areas which exhibit:
 - ▶ Institutional passion
 - ▶ Need for higher enrollment
 - ▶ Collegial attitude toward admissions practices
 - ▶ Successful visits and interactions with potential students
- ▶ Lends itself to a symbiotic relationship
 - ▶ A natural ebb-and-flow between breadth and depth



“Just like the star athlete likes to hear from the head coach, the academically talented students enjoy talking with faculty.”

- Brad Pochard, Furman University

What can they do?

▶ ON-CAMPUS

- ▶ Assist with admissions events
- ▶ Conduct meetings with prospective students
- ▶ Allow students to sit in on classes
- ▶ Serve on admissions committees
- ▶ Serve on focus groups
- ▶ Send letters, emails, or make calls to admitted students
- ▶ Outreach activities for high school students

Bridging the Gap – Outside the “Ivory Tower”

▶ OFF-CAMPUS

- ▶ Serve as “brand ambassadors”
- ▶ Learn and utilize an “elevator speech”
- ▶ Visits to high schools and community colleges
- ▶ Community outreach, workshops and clinics

▶ TECHNOLOGY-ASSISTED AND PASSIVE TASKS

- ▶ Blogs
- ▶ Web chats, instant messaging and/or social media
- ▶ Craft documents and promotional materials for distribution
- ▶ Provide syllabi or class materials for admissions to hand out
- ▶ Create a list of “Key Influencers” in their areas to make sure the right people are hearing about things happening on campus
- ▶ Provide alumni success stories or anecdotes about recent graduates




Other suggestions?

What tactics have your offices tried?

To what extent have they been (un)successful?

Why?



“Professors hold a key role in recruiting students, especially at private colleges and small public institutions. It is part of our jobs to set aside a small amount of time to meet potential students and showcase the academic programs that we have worked so hard to build. We need to make sure we treat potential students the same way we would want colleagues at other institutions to treat our own children.”

- Professor Stephen M. Winzenburg, Grand View College

So, where to find new recruits for recruitment?

- ▶ Ask your colleagues
- ▶ Ask other faculty with a reputation of collegiality and passion for the institution
- ▶ Ratemyprofessors.com
- ▶ Lists of new faculty from HR/new faculty orientation
- ▶ Faculty intern program
- ▶ Make presentations at faculty senate, college-wide meetings
- ▶ Faculty involved in pre-college programs
- ▶ Faculty with teenage children
- ▶ Faculty willing to 'train' or 'advise' admissions staff

How best to motivate?

- ▶ Gear recruiting efforts toward departmental enrollment
- ▶ Provide faculty with ongoing information about enrollment challenges and goals
- ▶ Offer training and instill confidence
- ▶ Write expectations into job descriptions as “internal service to the institution”
- ▶ Recognize faculty who assist and implement meaningful rewards
- ▶ Provide titles to faculty engaged in efforts
- ▶ Give faculty control over the process, including allocation of funding

How best to engage?

- ▶ Well-organized plans from the admissions office
- ▶ Consider 'fit' when evaluating faculty members
 - ▶ Not all faculty will want to be involved in all things – ask them!
- ▶ Go for the best teachers, not necessarily the ones that look best based on academic credentials
- ▶ Appeal to the egos – but be careful!
- ▶ Know the teaching schedules and campus events attended by your best recruiters and plan around them
- ▶ Meet with faculty in their space – put forth an effort
- ▶ Encourage them to “do what they do best”

Long-Term Relationship Building

- ▶ Admissions staff should be encouraged to develop empathetic engagement mentality
- ▶ Culture of shared responsibility and celebration of achievements, not 'thunder-stealing' or minimizing of other constituent's valuable work and contributions
- ▶ Immediate feedback and "return on investment" for faculty are very important
- ▶ Prepare visiting students/families with questions to ensure a good experience for faculty
- ▶ Watch for burn out – do your best to "spread the love around"
- ▶ Regularly solicit their opinions and use their advice whenever you can
- ▶ Know your audience – keep your finger on the pulse of the institution, work to understand the dynamics, priorities and campus culture



“Faculty members think differently than you do...if you want them to help you recruit, you’ve got to recruit them, engage them, and communicate with them regularly.”

- W. Todd Robertson, IUPUI

Credits and References

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Questions?

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING – ENJOY THE REMAINDER OF THE EVENT!