

## Kent State Grad Admissions System Improves Communication and Efficiency

Incomplete Applications Decline by 21 Percent; Faculty and Administrators are Thrilled!



### Inside

#### Kent State University, Graduate Admissions

Kent, Ohio

#### Products:

*ApplyWeb*® Integrated Admissions System

#### Why ApplyWeb?

“ApplyWeb gives us one complete, integrated application processing and CRM system that enables us to track and communicate with each applicant throughout the entire admissions process. Also, being able to easily make changes, such as adding new programs to our system, is crucial for us. Other systems don’t offer that kind of flexibility.” – Lana Whitehead, Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies and Director of Graduate Admissions

#### The Savings:

Hundreds of hours of administrative time, and tons of paper. According to Lana Whitehead, “the new system eliminated almost all the manual data processing, printing, scanning and copying we had been doing. Our ‘busy season’ processing timeline for email-submitted documents went from a three-to-four-week backlog to a one- or two-day turn around. Since applicants can now upload documents directly through their applicant portals, our email system can be used for true customer support.”



#### Graduate Studies

about in-progress applications or help applicants along the way). Many students who found the application process confusing, too slow, or too difficult to navigate simply abandoned their applications.

According to Ms. Whitehead, “the old admissions process consumed hundreds of hours of administrative time, in addition to reams and reams of paper. Our applicants would email all their documents, which we would then print out, write on, scan, and then move into each student’s electronic file.” After that process, faculty were notified via email that a completed file was ready for review. The vast majority of programs would then print all the documents all over again in order to make their decisions. The process typically took several weeks and sometimes months. The administration wanted to find a suite of admissions products that would provide more tools and flexibility to help manage all of Kent State’s graduate programs, improve communication with applicants, and provide a better overall experience for applicants, faculty reviewers, and administrators.

#### The Solution

The ApplyWeb integrated system immediately streamlined Kent State’s entire admissions process, eliminating printing, scanning and filing, while adding all the customizing features the school needed to manage their complex graduate curriculum. According to Whitehead, moving to an all-in-one application processing and CRM system was a big improvement. “Because we have all the pieces of the system,

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#### The Challenge

Kent State had been using an email-based admissions system that was wasteful and inefficient. The process was confusing and frustrating for applicants (who had to wait weeks after each document submission to see updates to their applications) as well as faculty (who couldn’t access information

when we're adding a new program into the application, it's easy to add it into Admin and ensure the right application requirements are associated with the program. We can do the whole thing in five minutes." And administrators can track applicants' progress and have direct, immediate communication with them. Now, the Admissions office can generate detailed reports in minutes. Faculty can view in-progress applications and reach out to promising students to encourage completion. And applicants can see their real-time status anytime they want, instead of waiting weeks for an email update that may already be outdated. The improved application experience was immediately obvious: Kent State Admissions saw a 14 percent reduction in incomplete applications within the first full semester of adopting the ApplyWeb system, and a 21 percent reduction by the following term.

"Another huge benefit to our new system is improved usability and convenience for our faculty," says Whitehead. All faculty review committee members now have access to a single, scrollable PDF of applicant documents wherever and whenever they want. Although, the best part is that we've been able to empower our faculty, giving them ways to identify and reach out to promising applicants. We can also remind faculty and deans when they have applications waiting for review. This helps move decisions along and gets offers out more quickly, so we can truly impact enrollment."

### The Benefits

- More completed applications – Kent State Admissions has seen a 21 percent decrease in incomplete applications, thanks to its new system.
- Superior data integration – "Not only are we feeding information into the SIS when the application comes in, we continue updating their information throughout the

entire application process."

- Improved communication – "We can create an email template in minutes, as well as customized messaging. And faculty can easily identify and communicate directly with promising applicants."
- Flexibility – "We love how we can turn on and off the application start and end dates in Admin, based on individual programs, and especially the ability to update the application requirements for new programs."
- Time, paper and cost savings – "Not only have we stopped having weekly paper deliveries, this system is also eliminating costly errors and saving us hundreds of hours in administrative processing time."
- Happier students – No more angry emails from frustrated students! "Applicants find the process much easier to navigate and can check their status anytime."
- Faculty convenience – "The Admissions office is seeing tons of decisions coming in over the weekends, now that faculty can make decisions without having to come to campus."
- Superior customer service – "Our huge win in all of this has been how little time it took us to get our application up and running. With nine colleges and over 400 unique program offerings, we were operational in under five months! Some of the toughest-to-please people on our campus have said that CollegeNET has by far been the most accommodating, the most reliable, most accessible vendor that we've ever worked with." – Lana Whitehead

### Want to Know More?

To discuss the many ways CollegeNET's products can save you time and money, and improve efficiency, contact [sales@collegenet.com](mailto:sales@collegenet.com).

