

Recruiting, Selecting and Supervising Graduate Students



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Student Recruitment

- Spread the word: advertise your science widely – create a buzz
- Websites critical (search optimization; attractive and easy to navigate; international)
 - Campus visits – Open Days: Promote the program
 - Personal contact by phone or e-mail
- The top applicants will have multiple offers – need to have exciting project and competitive financing
 - Focus on developing a reputation as a good mentor

Student Selection

- The best student on paper is not necessarily the best student for you – interviews and letters can be key
- Beware the ‘institutionalized’ student – try to understand motivation
- Know what you are looking for (numerate, skilled in lab, expertise)
- Letters of recommendation very important BUT be beware of hyperbole and learn to read between the lines (damning with faint praise)
- Look for evidence of a student's ability/willingness to do what it takes to meet/exceed a set goal (GRE results; undergraduate project; internships)

Student Supervision

- Students are a big responsibility – you are incredibly important for their future careers
 - Students have a big responsibility to you – they are important for your career
 - Start each new grad student with a 'training project' – proving ground
 - Engender independence but keep your eye on the ball
 - Have a clear route to an endgame – where is this leading?
 - Don't pander to students – bring them along but don't do the work for them
 - Treat students as colleagues and not slaves