

College Board Search in Action

ROSE-HULMAN RECRUITS LARGEST FIRST-YEAR CLASS IN HISTORY



Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology recruited its largest first-year class in history, growing their national profile, exceeding tuition enrollment goals, and significantly diverting their dependence on international student enrollment. And they couldn't have done it without College Board Search. In fact, nearly half of their first-year class came in through Search.

The Back Story

Rose-Hulman is a STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) institution, focused on the undergraduate experience. The institution has been nationally recognized for its quality of education and outcomes. Although Rose-Hulman is consistently ranked among the best engineering schools in the country, this suburban school in Indiana has tough competition throughout the Midwest, including larger, public flagship universities. Targeted enrollment and recruitment techniques are critical for the institution's success.

In 2019, about 15% of Rose-Hulman's students were international students. They helped drive the school's net tuition revenue, but events out of an institution's control, such as the covid-19 pandemic, political factors, and increasing competition abroad, can impact international student enrollment, often in unpredictable ways.

Because of these factors, Rose-Hulman saw a significant drop in international student enrollment in 2021, from 85 students to 30 students. Despite these challenges, the institution welcomed its largest first-year class in history. Nearly half

of their first-year class came through College Board Search, which helped Rose-Hulman fine-tune their recruitment strategies and connect directly with students who were the best fit for the institution.

The Technique

The college has a vibrant STEM culture. Students engage in projects that range from designing and programming self-driving model cars and building robots, to testing water quality and running computer programs. Those who thrive at Rose-Hulman have a deep passion for STEM and are looking to learn with other like-minded peers. They enjoy the makerspaces and faculty relationships. They have the technical skills as well as the soft skills to succeed.

“We would not have been able to reshape our first-year class if we had not used these tools like [College Board Search] and used them more purposely.”

—THOMAS BEAR, VICE PRESIDENT, ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

The goal of the Rose-Hulman enrollment staff is to recruit a freshman class that will thrive on their campus. A College Board Search tool called [Segment Analysis Service](#) has made it easier to achieve their goal. Segment Analysis Service™ tells institutions more about students based on where they live and where they go to high school. Many factors can describe an institution's ideal students, such as GPA, career aspirations, high school activities, and diversity. The tool narrows down the information to educational neighborhood clusters and high school clusters, allowing for a more targeted search.

By working with College Board staff, Rose-Hulman found that it isn't only neighborhoods but also high schools that drive enrollment. In the Chicago suburbs, students who attend large public high schools with Advanced Placement® courses, diversity, and mobility are more likely to enroll at Rose-Hulman. These types of students also reside in cities beyond Chicago. Rose-Hulman used these criteria to license names from Search. They targeted their messaging to these students, maximizing their reach by finding out what's most important to students when deciding which college to attend.

When Rose-Hulman began targeting their search and their messaging, they exceeded enrollment goals. With College Board Search, Rose-Hulman:

- Identified the type of students who thrive at Rose-Hulman and the messages that resonate with those students and targeted their search.
- Discovered new metrics that were indicators of enrollment success (e.g., taking AP® courses in STEM subjects).
- Spoke to students during recruitment who were already admissible, saving both time and resources.
- Honed their holistic admissions strategy, looking for both technical and soft skills that allow students to succeed at Rose-Hulman.

The Outcomes

With the help of College Board Search tools, Rose-Hulman:



Recruited its **largest first-year class in history, despite a decline in international student enrollment.** Rose-Hulman attributes nearly half of the enrolled students in its record-breaking class to using College Board Search.



Exceeded enrollment goals and recruited a highly engaged first-year class that's more diverse and more connected to the institution.



Protected the institution from future changes in international student enrollment due to strong domestic growth.



Grew its national profile overall and maintained its position as a leading engineering college.

Success at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology proves College Board Search allows enrollment managers to meet recruitment goals and maximize the institution's ROI.

What's Next?

Rose-Hulman will continue to use College Board Search and its tool, Segment Analysis Service, to expand their reach while getting smarter about who their prospective students are and how to speak to them. Rose-Hulman plans to launch a new pre-college program to invite young women in high school to a STEM program on campus, and they'll use College Board Search to identify prospective candidates. Rose-Hulman also hopes to fill some under-enrolled programs using the knowledge they gain from College Board Search.

“Our campus is very united because everyone speaks the same language: STEM. We work hard to appeal to a student who is a good cultural fit and can thrive here. That is a student who understands that hard work will lead to tremendous outcomes.”

—THOMAS BEAR, VICE PRESIDENT, ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology is a private institution in Terre Haute, Ind., specializing in science, engineering, and mathematics with an undergraduate enrollment of 1,972 (as of fall 2020).