A. Role of Program Director in Recruitment:

1. Maintain an attractive and informative web site which includes information on faculty research areas, and student outcomes

2. Make sure the faculty list on your program web site provides an accurate representation to prospective students (i.e. possibly differentiate between faculty who can appropriately serve as the primary advisor to either Masters or Doctoral students, and faculty who primarily teach in courses)

3. If undergraduate research experience is an important criterion in the evaluation of applicants’ credentials, include that information on your web site

4. List any designated application deadlines on your web site

5. Include a FAQ section on your program web site

6. Include average scores expected (or required) for GPA, GRE, MAT, and TOEFL / IELTS for internationals

7. If appropriate, include in your web site information a listing of desirable undergraduate majors for prospective students

8. Be aware that in some foreign countries cheating on standardized tests, and falsification of official documents are common occurrences

9. Engage all program faculty in the recruitment effort

10. Develop and maintain personal relationships with colleagues in foreign countries from which your program recruits students

11. Use former students to recruit from within their home countries

12. Become familiar with visa requirements; develop working relationships with individuals in the International Student Services Office (ISSS at UAB)

13. Ask program faculty who are traveling “home” to another country to interview prospective students while there; this is preferable to phone interviews

14. Become familiar with the best foreign schools; e.g. schools from which your program has accepted successful trainees previously
15. You and your faculty colleagues should distribute recruitment materials, brochures, etc. when attending professional meetings or (as is appropriate) when invited to present research seminars at other institutions.

16. Over time, evaluate what works with regard to recruitment of students into your program and eliminate what doesn’t.

17. Target feeder schools.

18. Be familiar with and take advantage of all features of Apply Yourself including the automated response system.

19. Consider all aspects of students’ applications; review the whole application; specifying strict cutoffs for GRE or TOEFL scores, or GPAs is not advised.

20. Review applications as soon as possible and send the Certificate of Application Review for each applicant, whether he/she is being accepted or rejected, to the Graduate School as soon as possible.

21. In compliance with the Council of Graduate Schools recommendation (to which most schools in the country subscribe) programs cannot force students to reply to offers of admission before April 15.

**B. ApplyYourself (AY) training will be available on an individual basis**

1. Contact Susan Banks in the Graduate School office to obtain a complete orientation regarding the benefits of the AY system. You and your administrative assistant (if one is being provided by your program) should become thoroughly familiar with the features of AY.

2. Only online applications are accepted by UAB graduate programs.

3. ID and Password access to your program’s applicant information in the ApplyYourself system can be made available to all program faculty if desired.

4. Establishing an application review process and criteria for acceptances and rejections is strictly the prerogative of each program.

5. It is advisable to establish an admissions committee for each program; this provides assistance with application review, and sets the stage for collective decision making.

6. Provide clear information on application deadlines, both on your program web site, and within the AY application.

**C. Managing Enrolling and Enrolled Students**

1. Judiciously use emails or telephone calls to follow up with students to whom your program has made offers of acceptance to reaffirm your interest in them until they have informed you whether they will, or will not, accept your program’s offer of admission.
2. Develop communication procedures for incoming students which span the time between acceptance of your offers of admission and when students arrive.

3. Make sure that all international students who have indicated that they will be enrolling are aware of the deadline for arrival and the required international student orientation (usually a few weeks before the start of their first semester).

4. Develop a comprehensive policy and procedure student handbook for your program; it should state clearly all program requirements and expectations for student performance. Program requirements may exceed the minimal requirements established by the Graduate School if appropriate within the discipline.

5. Become familiar with policies and guidelines relating to graduate student appointments including appointment letters, tuition scholarship letters, and requests for additional assignments. Details and letter templates can be found on the Graduate School website on the Program Directors page under the link “Administrating Fellowships and Assistantships.”

6. Hold a new student orientation soon after your new students arrive, go over program requirements in detail, and make sure the students either have, or know where to get, copies of both the Graduate School Student Handbook, and your program-specific student handbook. Introduce the department faculty and staff personnel during this event.

7. Decide what’s important and emphasize that up front and ease into the rest later. It is not necessary to cover everything during the initial orientation period; just try to be sure to cover the essentials.

8. Establish and maintain drop-in hours for students in your program who have questions or wish to discuss programmatic concerns.

9. Devise a mechanism for the new students to verify that they have attended the orientation by having them sign a document to that effect.

10. Ask the students to provide emergency contact information.

11. Plan a social gathering during the students’ first week in the program and additional social events periodically thereafter.

12. Follow up with all new students one month into their first semester to determine whether they are integrating satisfactorily into the program and design intervention and/or remedial steps on a case by case basis as necessary.

13. The progress of all students in your program should be reviewed at least annually, or more often if desired. This can be accomplished by meeting with the students individually yourself, or perhaps by having other members of the program Executive Committee assist with these reviews (See Details in Appendix I).

14. Be aware of and accommodate educational and/or cultural differences.

15. Consider assigning both a preliminary faculty advisor and a peer mentor.
16. At an appropriate time during or after the new students’ first year (this differs by discipline) have a program specific procedure for the student to seek and secure a primary advisor for his/her thesis or dissertation research.

17. Develop a policy/procedure for the timeline and process by which students and their primary advisor solicit and secure the participation of other faculty members to serve on the student’s thesis dissertation committee.

18. Graduate School policy is that students’ study committees should meet to review each student’s progress at least annually, and more often if desired. Each program should have a policy that supports and enforces this requirement.

19. Develop a mechanism for documenting the date, time and content of thesis dissertation committee meetings. Brief statements regarding the committee consensus on student progress, and recommendations for goals to be met prior to the next committee meeting should be included. These records should be provided to the program director to be made available to the program Executive Committee as is necessary. Copies of the committee meeting records should be kept by the student’s primary advisor, and can be provided to the student as well.

19. Develop a policy/procedure for student mentor and / or faculty advisor changes.

D. Graduate School Resources

1. The Graduate Student Handbook can be downloaded as a PDF from the “Students” drop down menu on the Graduate School Home page.

2. Academic Conduct, Grievances, and Appeals; see pages 15-20 of the Graduate Student Handbook.

3. All appeals and grievances from students are adjudicated first at the program or department level; if not resolved there the next level is the within the school in which the department/program is located (schools have their own grievance/appeals procedures); if not resolved there, then following guidelines outlined in the Graduate Student Handbook, appeals can be submitted to the Graduate School Dean for adjudication by the Graduate School Appeals Board (GSAB). The GSAB does not adjudicate appeals of grades or failed comprehensive examinations.

4. The Graduate School Advisory Committee (ADCOM) is comprised on one graduate program director from each school, appointed by the school dean, to serve on ADCOM. ADCOM is the representative faculty committee which serves as the advisory body for the Graduate School.

5. ADCOM sets policies and procedures, reviews new program and certificate proposals. Each committee member is responsible for mediating two way communication between ADCOM and the other graduate program directors in his/her school.

6. The Graduate School provides a comprehensive Professional Development Program that helps students develop professional skills. Complete information is available at: http://www.uab.edu/graduate/programs/professional-development-program
E. Contact Information and Contact Persons in the Graduate School Office:
   
   http://www.uab.edu/graduate/contact

F. Examples of Well Designed Graduate Program Web Sites:
   
   http://www.uab.edu/gbs/cmdb/
   
   http://www.uab.edu/english/
   
   http://www.uab.edu/engineering/departments-research/bme
   
   http://www.uab.edu/gbs/pathobiology/policies

G. Example of a Well Designed Program Student Handbook
   

H. Graduate School Online Orientation:
   
   http://www.uab.edu/graduate/area-3/online-orientation
APPENDIX I

Policy on Graduate Student Progress Reviews
Approved by ADCOM, March 2011

1. The progress of each student enrolled in a graduate degree granting program toward meeting his/her degree requirements must be reviewed on at least an annual basis.

2. The review format and timing of reviews are the prerogative of the program. Progress Reviews may be performed by either the student’s thesis or dissertation committee, by the Program Director, or by the program Executive Committee.

3. A written documentation (usually one page or less) of review group consensus regarding progress made and/or goals met since the previous review, as well as timelines for meeting specific goals during the next review period must be prepared and submitted to the program director who is responsible for maintaining a “progress record” for each student in the program.

4. In the event that progress is considered to be unsatisfactory, or a student is nearing the 5 year (Masters) or 7 year (Doctoral) limit for completing his/her degree requirements, the student’s thesis or dissertation committee, or the program Executive Committee should implement a “Completion Plan.”

COMPLETION PLAN TEMPLATE:

A “Completion Plan” should include specific goals and specific deadlines for meeting those goals, as well as prescribed consequences if the goals are not met within the proposed deadline time points. The plan should include a stipulation that the student will meet with his/her committee to review progress at each of the proposed deadline times. It is recommended that the time intervals between proposed committee meetings be no longer than three months. The plan should be incorporated into a written document, signed by the student, by his/her advisor, and by the program director. If it will be necessary to request an extension beyond the 5 or 7 year limit for completion of degree requirements, the plan must be submitted (along with the extension request) to the Graduate School Dean for review and approval.