# Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis

# *NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION*

# *PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT*

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## Executive Summary

### Purpose

The primary purposes of this program evaluation were to 1) determine if the New Student Orientation process is meeting the needs of incoming students, 2) reassess the goals of orientation, and 3) understand the impacts of orientation on student participants' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. Generally, this evaluation was designed to help provide an informed perspective on the major strengths and deficiencies of the New Student Orientation process so that data-driven program improvements are possible. Please note that this evaluation focused exclusively on the New Student Orientation one-day program for incoming students.

### Method

Quantitative and qualitative approaches were employed in an effort to gain a comprehensive understanding of the implementation and outcomes of the current orientation process. A series of 14 focus groups were conducted in spring and fall 2002 with all major orientation stakeholders included. Additionally, a questionnaire was administered to first-year students in Learning Community (LC) courses (first-year seminars attended by most incoming freshman) during the fall 2002 semester to assess their perceptions of New Student Orientation. The questionnaires were mailed to instructors and they were asked to distribute them in classes.

Focus group participants included 14 faculty members, 8 advisors, 7 department representatives (Parking Services, Undergraduate Admissions, International Programs, General Studies, University Library, Enrollment Services, and Financial aid), 12 Student Life and Diversity staff members, and 5 O-Team members (a team of student orientation leaders). A total of 609 first-year Learning Community students completed and returned questionnaires.

### Highlights of Focus Group Results

- When asked about the overall effectiveness of orientation, participants indicated that the O-Team and program directors have improved the program over the years and do a commendable job given the time constraints and the amount of information they are expected to present. The majority of the participants reported that students feel overwhelmed because of the quantity of information presented, orientation should be more tailored to the needs of adult and transfer students, strategies should be implemented to enhance student enjoyment of the process, and that advising sessions need to be longer to meet new students' advising needs and to establish better connections with incoming students.

- Participants were asked to reassess the current orientation goals and identity what they thought should be included in orientation to meet students' diverse needs. Results suggest that as an outcome of orientation incoming students should: have the basic tools they need for the first day of classes (schedule, technology, one-card, contact information, parking information, and book information); understand the purposes of higher education and what is recommended to attain academic success; begin to feel a sense of excitement, pride, and connection to IUPUI; understand physical

surroundings and campus resources; and understand costs associated with attending school (financial aid, scholarships, book costs).

- Participants indicated that the following are unmet needs and deficits among first-year students: time-management skills, lack of financial aid knowledge, limited feelings of pride and connection with IUPUI, and a lack of familiarity with opportunities for involvement in student life and campus activities.

- Participants reported that the orientation process needed to be more interactive, engaging, and contain more social or "fun" components. Many participants noted that including more Student Life and Diversity components and/or having a 2-day orientation program would be effective approaches for integrating more social aspects into the program.

- The "Partnership for Academic Excellence" document outlines University College (UC) services and asks students to commit to a partnership with UC to effectively attain academic excellence. As part of the partnership, the document recommends the following: 1) get to know professors, 2) stay in contact with an academic advisor, 3) attend classes, 4) complete assignments on time, 5) allow sufficient time for out of class learning, and 6) enjoy the intellectual challenges of attending IUPUI. Almost all participants noted that the act of signing the contract during orientation may not be the best method of communicating the information to new students or enhancing their understanding of their role in the partnership.

- Participants suggested implementing different methods for delivering information before, during, and after orientation to promote students' recollections and use of the information presented. Many participants suggested developing an IUPUI New Student Orientation CD-ROM and/or developing a more comprehensive New Student Orientation website.

- Participants noted that New Student Orientation should be viewed as part of a process and that there should be intentional linkages between First-Year Seminar courses and New Student Orientation.

Further detailed results are available in the section entitled "Focus Group Results."

**Highlights of New Student Orientation Survey Results**
- The majority of the respondents reported that they were better prepared to send and receive e-mail with their IUPUI account (69% either agreed or strongly agreed), and slightly over one-half indicated that they were better prepared to use IUPUI OnCourse Technology (56% either agreed or strongly agreed) as a result of orientation.

- Slightly over one-half of the respondents reported that they knew their way around campus better (52% either agreed or strongly agreed) and were better prepared to start classes (51% either agreed or strongly agreed) as a result of orientation.

- Slightly over one-half of the respondents indicated that they made a more successful transition to IUPUI as a result of orientation (55% either agreed or strongly agreed) as a result of orientation.

- Almost 40% of respondents indicated that they did not establish a meaningful relationship with an advisor as a result of orientation as a result of orientation (34% were neutral).

- Many respondents reported that they did not use the Writing Center, the Math Assistance Center, or The Learning Center as a result of orientation (65%, 59%, and 67% respectively responded "not at all").

- The majority of respondents reported that they did not make sustained connections with other students or with faculty or staff as a result of the orientation process (64% and 66% respectively) and only about one-third of the respondents reported that they felt more connected to IUPUI as a result of orientation.

- Respondents indicated that the most helpful aspects of orientation were the tour of the physical surroundings, the technology session (particularly OnCourse, e-mail, and INSITE), obtaining a schedule through the advising meeting, learning what is expected to ensure academic success, learning course specific information and major requirements, obtaining the one-card, and receiving parking information.

- With the exception of adding a financial aid component and more interactive/social aspects to the orientation process, the majority of respondents suggested improving existing components: the tour, the technology session, the advising meeting, more information about campus resources (Math Assistance Center, Writing Center, Learning Center), and more in-depth information about ways to get involved in campus activities.

- When asked about suggestions for improvement, students recommended the following: a more efficient orientation process (e.g., shorter, less wait-time, more organized), develop a more extensive campus tour, allot more time for the advising session, allow more opportunities for students to interact and develop connections, implement strategies to make the day more enjoyable, and plan to have more in-depth technology sessions (e.g., more information on OnCourse).

- Student respondents belonging to underrepresented groups (reported they were "African American," "Asian American," "Native American," "Multiracial" or an "International Student") were significantly more satisfied with orientation than respondents in the all other group (reported that they were "White American") (based on an independent samples t-test, $p<.05$). Transfer students were just as satisfied as non-transfer students and non-traditional students (students 25 and older) were just as satisfied as traditional students (there were no significant group differences based on independent sample t-tests).

Further detailed results are available in the section entitled "New Student Orientation Questionnaire Results."

**Recommendations**

One of the goals of this evaluation was to reassess the goals of New Student Orientation. Results of this research suggest that orientation leaders should refine goals and develop more specific goals to ensure that incoming students' fundamental needs are met. Additionally, based directly on the data gathered from focus group participants and a sample of student participants, developing orientation content to accomplish the goals listed below may serve to facilitate a more efficient orientation process.

Ensure that incoming students:

1. Have the basic tools needed for the first day of classes (one-card, course schedule, parking information, financial aid, and bookstore information).

2. Know physical surroundings well.

3. Know how to use IUPUI technology (e-mail, OnCourse, and INSITE).

4. Have contact information and feel that they have made some important connections with staff, advisors, faculty, and other students (begin to feel a sense of community).

5. Understand what to expect as they transition to a new university environment and what commitments are recommended to achieve academic success (regular class attendance, course demands, time devoted to studying, balancing outside commitments).

6. Have a basic understanding of course requirements.

7. Feel a sense of excitement and pride in IUPUI.

8. Enjoy the orientation process.

9. Can identify key campus resources/services and know where to go to get help with coursework and personal issues.

- We recommend that New Student Orientation planners use this report to develop data-driven action plans to improve the orientation process. The following questions could serve as a starting point to guide action planning:

1. Are the above goals the most appropriate ones for New Student Orientation at IUPUI?

2. Would it be beneficial for orientation planners to take a strategic planning approach and engage in a self-reflective process in which they identify an agreed upon vision, mission, and the specific goals of orientation?

3. What implementation procedures could be introduced to create a more efficient orientation (e.g., less wait-time, reduced feelings of information overload, and a more organized experience)?

4. What strategies could be employed to make orientation a more interactive, engaging process so that students make more meaningful connections with other students, faculty, advisors, SLD staff, and O-Team members?

5. Should advising sessions be longer?

6. What strategies could be implemented to foster a greater sense of pride in IUPUI?

7. What new processes and formats could be introduced to help sustain students' interest and ensure that they are focused on the material being presented?

8. Should more information regarding financial aid, costs of attending, and scholarships be presented during orientation?

9. Should more programs tailored to the needs of older students, transfer students, and international students be implemented?

10. What structures and policies could be implemented to ensure more intentional integrations between the New Student Orientation and First-Year Seminars so that orientation is viewed as a more seamless process?

**Further Study**
- Orientation to IUPUI should be viewed as a process. There are still substantial numbers of incoming students not participating in First-Year Seminars. It may be necessary to conduct further investigations regarding the experiences of students who **do not** participate in First-Year Seminar Courses and/or New Student Orientation.

- Although comprehensive periodic reviews and program evaluations can be extremely helpful, internal systems need to be developed so that orientation leaders are able to obtain on-going feedback regarding the impacts of orientation, effective processes, and incoming students' needs. Ideally evaluation results could be used to make on-going improvements rather than serving as a component of an episodic review procedure. To begin the process of using data to make on-going improvements, the "Orientation Exit Survey" could be reviewed and modified in light of the current findings. Revising this instrument could be an effective strategy to ensure that orientation leaders receive on-going feedback about students' perceptions of the orientation experience.

- Following the development and implementation of action plans based on the current results, data should be collected again to assess the effectiveness of the interventions designed to improve orientation.

- These current results could effectively serve as a part of the "self-study" component of the New Student Orientation Program Review process.

**Research Limitations**

It is important to mention that the focus group results were based on the perceptions of a relatively small group of IUPUI faculty, staff, advisors, and students. Additionally, the questionnaire results were based on participants' post-program perceptions. Because a pretest - posttest methodology was not implemented, it is difficult to ascertain the extent of learning gains and behavior changes as a result of participating in the orientation process. However, it is quite plausible that new students would not have been exposed to some to the information presented in orientation and thus, we can be relatively certain that the self-reported learning gains were primarily a result of participation in the orientation process. These results are based on a sample of orientation participants enrolled in a fall semester First-Year Seminar course. Further investigation may be necessary to examine the experiences of New Student Orientation participants in comparison with non-participants.

**Research Strengths**

Despite these limitations, this study possesses a number of strengths. One of the strengths of this research was the use of qualitative and quantitative methodologies to assess the complex orientation process and its outcomes. Additionally, multiple measures were employed to capture the perceptions of a diverse group of orientation stakeholders (students, faculty, SLD staff, and advisors). Moreover, an instrument was designed to measure students' self-reported changes in behaviors, learning gains, and perceptions of orientation three months after the start of the fall semester. At this point in time, students could report how orientation helped or did not help them in making their transitions to IUPUI.

**INTRODUCTION**

New Student Orientation is an integral component of University College's mission to provide a common gateway to the academic programs available to entering students. In accordance with this mission, New Student Orientation strives to coordinate existing university resources to help incoming students make more successful transitions to Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI). During New Student Orientation, faculty, staff, and students share in the responsibility for introducing new students to IUPUI's supportive and challenging learning environment. Many IUPUI incoming students possess characteristics that place them at a greater risk for academic failure and attrition: not completing a rigorous high school college-preparatory curriculum, being first generation college students, attending classes part-time, living off campus, and significant off-campus work commitments. These students are often juggling work and family responsibilities along with school, and are commuting students separated from the overall campus community. Thus, it is difficult for them to make the necessary connections and take advantage of the support systems offered by the university. New Student Orientation is designed to provide incoming students with the resources and information they need to successfully meet university demands and acclimate to a new environment.

IUPUI's orientation program has grown tremendously over the years. In 1981 the orientation program served 826 new students during a three-hour program with four sessions over two days. The New Student Orientation (a full day program) now serves approximately 5000 students yearly and has been expanded to include a "Family Connections Program." The rapid growth of orientation necessitated the implementation of new strategies and systems over the last four years including: a functional testing and reservation system, a strong emphasis on faculty involvement, an enhanced technology session, and an expansion of staff (e.g., reservation specialists, student orientation leaders) to help administer the program. A group of student mentors form the "O-Team." The student O-Team members strive to provide a welcoming and supportive environment during the orientation process.

The literature about orientation suggests that the programs should be viewed as processes or intentional sets of programs designed to assist incoming students with their transition to the institution. Additionally, content should be designed to meet the diverse needs of incoming students including underrepresented minority students, student athletes, international students, commuting students, and adult students (e.g., Jacobs, 1993; Smith and Bracklin, 1993). According to Fox, Zakely, Morris, and Jundt (1993), effective orientation programs assist students to become academically and socially integrated into a new and unfamiliar university environment. These authors contend that a well-designed orientation program together with a quality-advising program may collectively serve as catalysts for improved retention of students from the freshman to the sophomore year. To underscore the assertion that orientation programs can serve to promote student retention, Mullendore (1996) advocates the implementation of retention-based orientation

programs. This approach aims to identify those factors that substantially impact first-year student attrition and incorporates specific strategies to address these factors during orientation.

In an effort to enhance the quality of orientation programs across a variety of higher education institutions, in 1986 the Council for Advancement of Standards (CAS) developed standards for 16 functional programs including orientation programs that were widely distributed. Authors of the CAS standards recommend that orientation leaders "operationalize" the CAS standards and engage in self studies and systematic and regular evaluations to ensure that the education goals and needs of students are being met (Mullendore and Abraham, 1993). Please see Appendix A to view the recommended goals of orientation programs as outlined in the CAS standards.

Using the CAS standards as a guide and taking the context of IUPUI into consideration, orientation leaders developed a set of goal statements. Listed below are the stated general goals of IUPUI's New Student Orientation program.

### Goals for the Students Attending Orientation at IUPUI:

- To understand the Partnership to Academic Excellence contract
- To develop a positive contact with a university faculty, academic advisor, staff member and peer student
- To register for the courses required in pursuing the academic area of their interest
- To be introduced to the opportunities and responsibilities of academic life and leadership at IUPUI
- To have the questions, concerns, and expectations addressed, answered, and resolved during the program

Orientation leaders have implemented a variety of processes during the one-day period to achieve the above stated goals. The exact content and temporal sequence of topics presented during New Student Orientation is shown in Appendix B. It is notable that a wealth of content is presented during an 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. time period including the following: congratulations and welcome to IUPUI, information about the quality of IUPUI, explanation of academic schools, UC services and academic support programs (e.g., Critical Inquiry, Structured Learning Assistance, etc.), how to get involved in student activities, description of mandatory and optional fees, school presentations, parking information, computer information, tour of campus, academic advising and registration session, presentation on the Partnership For Academic Excellence and obtaining the One Card.

**Current Evaluation Research**

The primary purposes of this program evaluation were to: 1) determine if the current New Student Orientation program is meeting the needs of incoming students, 2) reassess the goals of orientation, and 3) understand the impacts of orientation on student participants' knowledge levels, attitudes, and behaviors. This evaluation was designed to help provide an informed perspective about the major strengths and deficiencies of the New Student Orientation process. Ideally, evaluation results can be used to make data-driven decisions regarding the improvement of program goals and implementation strategies. This research

employed multiple measures to gain insight into the complex orientation process and its outcomes. The implementation of New Student Orientation requires the involvement of multiple departments and units across campus and thus, methodology was employed to ensure that multiple perspectives were taken into account during data collection. Although IUPUI provides a parental component to the orientation and separate orientations are conducted for international and honor students, this evaluation focused exclusively on New Student Orientation, a one-day program for entering students.

**METHODOLOGY**

Quantitative and qualitative techniques were employed in order to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of New Student Orientation on student participants. In the spring of 2002 a committee of faculty from University College was charged with the task of conducting an evaluation of the New Student Orientation Program at IUPUI. In order to make the review as comprehensive as possible, the committee decided to seek input from a variety of sources including administrators, faculty and staff across campus as well as students who had participated in the program in its current format. Because many members of the IUPUI community have contact with incoming students, efforts were made to collect information from several perspectives. Focus groups and self-administered questionnaires were used to systematically collect the perceptions and opinions of multiple stakeholders (students, faculty, advisors, administrators, Student Life and Diversity (SLD) Staff, and O-Team members).

**Focus Groups**

In the spring and fall of 2002, a series of fourteen focus groups were conducted with IUPUI faculty, advisors, administrators, Student Life and Diversity staff, and O-Team members. Focus group participants were recruited via a web-based form sent to all academic departments. Faculty, staff and administrators from every department on campus were contacted via e-mail and directed to a website designed to enable respondents to give written feedback about their experiences with entering students, their opinions about what an orientation program should include, and any other thoughts they wished to share with the researchers about orientation. Respondents were also asked to indicate their willingness to participate in focus groups in order to have a better opportunity to express their views. Fifty-five members of the campus community responded to this web-based form. The anonymous comments were shared with orientation planners. Almost 40% of those who responded subsequently participated in a focus group. Additionally, a list of faculty, staff, and advisors specifically involved in Learning Communities (first-year seminars attended by most incoming freshman) and other services and programs directly related to addressing the needs of incoming students was compiled.  Persons on this list along with those who indicated participation interest on the web-based form were subsequently contacted and invited to participate in a focus group.

The focus group format consisted of a structured interview. All questions were asked in the same order for each group. Please see Appendix C to view a copy of the actual "New Student Orientation Focus Group Protocol." Participants were asked about their perceptions and opinions regarding: 1) how well oriented new students are to the campus community, 2) what the key outcomes of orientation should be, 3) the unmet needs of incoming students, 4) the format and processes of orientation necessary to effectively accomplish key goals 5) academic and socialization processes during orientation, 6) the use of ritual and ceremony during orientation, 7) the use of technology before, during, and after orientation, and 8) the linkages between New Student Orientation and Learning Community courses. The focus groups lasted approximately

2 hours and in responding to the structured interview questions participants were asked to specifically articulate their experiences with first-year students, share what they have heard first year students saying about orientation, and describe what they have personally observed. The New Student Orientation stated general goals and content as shown in Appendix A and B were employed as prompts as participants responded to questions.

A total of 46 members of the IUPUI community participated in the focus groups. Focus group participants included 14 faculty members, 8 advisors, 7 department representatives (Parking Services, Undergraduate Admissions, International Programs, General Studies, University Library, Enrollment Services, and Financial Aid), 12 Student Life and Diversity staff members, and 5 O-Team members.

**Student Self-Administered Questionnaires**

Students in fall 2002 Learning Community sections were asked to complete a self-administered questionnaire on a voluntary basis at one point in time. LC instructors received the questionnaires via campus mail and were asked to distribute them during class time. The questionnaires were administered during the months of October and November. It was reasoned that at this point in time (3 to 4 months after the beginning of the fall semester) first-year students would be able to report how well the orientation process assisted them in making a successful transition to IUPUI.

The questionnaire was designed to assess New Student Orientation participants' perceptions of the orientation process. LC instructors were told to inform students that the questionnaires would assess their opinion about New Student Orientation exclusively and not their opinion about LCs (a separate questionnaire is employed to assess students' perceptions of LCs). Additionally, students not participating in the New Student Orientation were instructed to indicate that they did not participate and turn in the form. In this way, how many Learning Community students fell into this non-participant category could be monitored. No such questionnaires were returned.

The New Student Orientation Questionnaire was designed to determine the extent to which the expressed orientation goals had been met and to gain an understanding of some of the ideas and issues expressed during the focus groups. Students were asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with statements regarding information and knowledge gained, and connections made as a result of orientation. The following are some item examples: "I knew my way around campus better," "I was better prepared to start classes," I was better prepared to send and receive e-mail from my IUPUI account,"  "I was better prepared to use IUPUI OnCourse technology," "I have a more meaningful relationship with an academic advisor," and "I feel more connected to IUPUI." Students were also queried about the extent of their use of or participation in the following campus resources and activities as a result of attending orientation: Writing Center, Math Assistance Center (MAC), Learning Center, Career Center, Campus Sponsored Activities and Events, and Student Organizations. First year students were asked as well to respond to the following questions: "How many students did you meet at orientation whom you still talk to regularly?," "How many

IUPUI faculty, staff, or administrators did you meet at orientation whom you contacted afterwards?," and "To what extent were you satisfied that New Student Orientation provided you with the information and resources you needed as a new IUPUI student?" Students were asked to respond to three open-ended questions: 1) "What did you learn or obtain from orientation that was <u>most helpful</u> to you as a new IUPUI student?," 2) "Thinking back on your first semester at IUPUI, please describe anything <u>not</u> included in orientation that would have been very helpful in making the transition to IUPUI?," and 3) "What specific suggestions do you have for improving orientation?."

**Data Analysis**

Data were analyzed using quantitative and qualitative techniques in order to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the current New Student Orientation Program. During the focus groups an academic coordinator took comprehensive notes. The transcripts were content analyzed and categories were discovered through a method of classifying based on semantic content and coding. Any substantive aspects of data that appeared to be clustered around a similar construct were included together to form categories. The same process was used to analyze the qualitative data from the student questionnaires. Quantitative data from the student questionnaires were reported in percentages choosing each response.

**RESULTS**

**FOCUS GROUPS**

This section documents results of the New Student Orientation focus groups. Findings are presented in the following order: 1) overall perceptions of orientation effectiveness, 2) clarification and identification of major goals, 3) incoming students' unmet needs, 4) recommendations regarding the format and implementation of orientation, 5) ways to facilitate academic and social socialization, 6) appropriate use of ritual and ceremony during orientation, 7) use of technology before, during, and after orientation, and 8) the relationship between Learning Communities and New Student Orientation. Please note that the findings are displayed in the same order that questions were asked during the focus groups and a summary is presented for each consecutive question. Data from fourteen focus groups consisting of faculty, advisors, administrators, Student Life and Diversity staff, and O-Team members were content analyzed, examined for trends and patterns, and coded as categories emerged.

**1. Perceptions of Overall Effectiveness of New Student Orientation.**

Focus group participants were asked a general question regarding the effectiveness of orientation. It is noteworthy that many participants reported that **orientation should be viewed as a process** and not just a one-day event. One participant asserted that "orientation should be thought of as a process not a day…need to look at all the components involved." Another remarked that orientation helps to set the stage for new students' transitions to IUPUI and he "views this day as their first day of their LC-getting registered and mechanics are important- key thing of everything is to have a welcoming environment." Along these lines, a faculty member remarked: "only have a short period of time – so need to showcase activities that help build a sense of community of campus." Another asserted: "I think that it's a lot of information to put into one day. Need to have a follow up."

General Effectiveness/Positive Comments

Many participants acknowledged that orientation has improved over the years and that it is difficult to meet all students' needs given the time and resource constraints. It is notable that many participants had positive comments about the effectiveness of orientation:

- Overall, orientation has been very positive. A lot of fine things coming out of there. Students are having good interactions.
- Compliments to the staff. Orientation has really been wonderful. They take a lot of criticism and complaints from around campus, but they really do a good job. Very accommodating and willing to work with the students.
- In general…thinks that orientation is working well. Students when arrive at advising are familiar with things that they learned that one day at orientation. Are familiar with registering, learning communities, with honors program and all of those things that when they come in for advising that they understand.
- Seems much more cohesive now. Have really done a good job in helping the students get the information that they need. Think have done a better job of setting the expectations of what is going to happen at the orientation. Hear feedback that the technology training is good…have done a good job integrating the skill levels of students into

the presentation.  They are getting the advising that they need.  Getting concrete things.  They are getting what they need.

<u>Quantity of Information Presented</u>

Virtually all participants reported that orientation seemed to be covering a lot of important content, but that **students are overwhelmed with the amount of information presented.** The following are some comments:

- They are told a lot in one day that information probably goes in and out… Really bombarded with all of the information.
- Average/glazed over look…get hit with so much information in the morning, by end of day overwhelmed
- I find that students say that they are overwhelmed, that there is just so much.

Student Life and Diversity participants also commented that students are overwhelmed with the quantity of information that is presented and may not be getting other important information because of time constraints. One SLD staff member indicated that her "biggest concern heard from students is that they are hit with so much information that it is hard to remember it. Another remarked that students "feel like all they get are the basics…don't get information about other areas like AES, athletics…get overwhelmed with some things – but don't feel like they have enough about other areas, I get asked about parking a lot."

O-Team members reported that orientation provides students with an overwhelming quantity of information:

- We throw a lot of information at them right away.  They don't usually have questions until afterwards because it is so much information.  Then it seems like they can't get their questions answered until school starts.  They are really tired and they start to get cranky at the end.
- Some of them might even end up a little more confused than when they first came to campus.  Some of the people in her learning community have told her that they felt like that had gotten the information that they needed. Overwhelmed at the time.

<u>Not Tailored to the Needs of Transfer Students and Older Students</u>

The majority of the participants voiced concerns about the ability of orientation to meet the needs of all incoming students and indicated that orientation is **not tailored to the needs of older students and transfer students.**

- Based on perspective of adult students…not done very well. Really only thing good for them is getting their e-mail and student ID's.
- Agrees that do good job for traditional students…also feels that adults are not getting their needs met
- A lot of transfer students who are not given a lot of this information in the shortened orientation
- Feels the same way about international students/does good job for 18-year-old Indiana student, skits and rah rah stuff does not fit. Does a good job for young-out of high school.

SLD participants also indicated that orientation should to be more effectively tailored to students' diverse needs:

- For traditional students I think orientation is effective since they are looking for a traditional experience. If they have heard their friends talk about their experience then it is like comparing apples to apples. For adult students, I don't know if we are on target each groups have different needs and it is not tailored.

- First generation students with no university experience slip through the cracks. They have no one at home to compare their experience to.
- I think transfer students have a hard time, they are a unique type of students since they may have been oriented at their other school. Tailoring to all different needs.

<u>Student Enjoyment with Orientation Experience</u>

Many participants had general comments regarding the level of enjoyment experienced by students. Most of the remarks seemed to suggest that students do not enjoy the experience, find it "boring," and experienced a lot of wait-time. Faculty and advisors reported the following:

- Whirlwind sort of day, long, tiring, feel herded
- Students feel that it is long, some of them don't see the need for the day, they just want to see the advisors and get registered. They are most concerned about getting registered. They call it boring.
- Heard a lot of complaints from students-Did not have a good experience Scale of 1-5 = 2… Forced "Rah, Rah, Rah" at beginning of day. Role playing by 'mentors' – not well received by students.
- Went through orientation as a parent and the biggest comment that she gets from her LC class is that it's too long.
- Have heard from students that they thought they had too much down time.

SLD participants echoed similar concerns as one participant reported that a student "told me it was boring and a waste of time." Another participant also commented about a direct report from a student: "We got lucky, bad weather cut our orientation in half. There was a lot of waiting to get IDs, a lot of downtime, waiting for your turn."

<u>Quality of Time Spent with Advisors and Registration Process.</u>

Many participants voiced concerns about the quality of time spent with advisors and the registration process. Generally, participants reported that the short (15 minute) advising session is not sufficient. Please note that this will be addressed more thoroughly in the section on student needs and deficits.

**2. <u>Critical Goals of New Student Orientation</u>**

Participants were asked to report what they thought students should obtain or experience through the New Student Orientation process. Participants were asked to prioritize, clarify, and articulate what they thought the <u>key outcomes</u> of New Student Orientation should be based on their experiences with first-year students, what they have heard first year students saying, and their observations. As mentioned above, the document displaying the current goals of New Student Orientation and the CAS Standards was shown to participants during the focus group process. Shown here are the predominant themes that surfaced when analyzing the results.

<u>Basic Needs for First Day of Classes: Technology, One-Card, Schedule, Parking, Books</u>

Almost all participants noted that there is a limit to what can be accomplished in a one-day process and that New Student Orientation should realistically consider what students "need to know now" and what they "need for the first-day of classes:"

- Students need to register for classes, get their e-mail account, and the One-Card
- Need to leave with their e-mail log in, but also with their password and other information to be able to get into OnCourse.
- Need to be familiar with the bookstore, where it is, but also need to know that it is important to have their books before classes start. Alternatives to the IUPUI bookstore.
- Need to get registered with schedule, get one card, have email. Leave them with the thought in their head that they are now a full-fledged IUPUI student. Let them know that they now have an identity as a student. Right of passage. Want them to think about it differently.
- Need tool things – student id, e-mail, access, and survivors list – parking pass would be nice too.
- A lot of anxiety with parking of first year student…have known students to drop out due to parking…need some kind of explanation (to prepare them for the parking situation).
- Since we are saying that they are already overwhelmed, and especially if they are not as computer literate as others, do they need all of this other information? Yes, OnCourse, Insite, e-mail, but limit their technology that day to what it is that they need to function their first days of classes.

A SLD participant remarked "scheduling and registration is critical." An O-Team participant summarized what students need to leave orientation with: "…should be set for their first day of school. Even if they don't get it all done that day, they have the tools that they need to get it, their technology account, student id, campus tours are needed for some, but not for all, need something with the bookstores."

<u>Students Need to Understand Higher Education/IUPUI Expectations</u>

Participants frequently stated that incoming students need to have an understanding of what the expectations of higher education are following their orientation experience. Notable expectations mentioned were time-management issues, class attendance, relationships with faculty, amount of time to devote to studying outside of class, classroom conduct, and academic integrity. Generally, participants commented that students should realize that the demands of IUPUI are "different than high school." The following are some participants' comments:

- Students are just right out of high school, help the students understand the institutions expectations. Most don't understand what a University means. Most of them it's their first time on a campus. Maybe get the students engaged in a conversation about how their classes were in high school, and how they are different from college. Needs to be a transition and a bridge. Tell them that it is different, but there still are some similarities.
- …expectations such as 3 hours outside of class work, ask for help, independence, innovation, establish relationship with instructors.
- Need to know how this is going to be different from high school especially if a lot are first generation students
- Need to have time to study, etc. Families need to understand that they will have less time to be involved in taking care of family things.
- Students don't know why they are here. They don't know they have to go to class, or that they have to study…important goal to express that these things are required.
- Classroom conduct is something that should he expressed at orientation.
- Goal should be to explain the mission of IUPUI and higher education - such a difference from high school.

One O-Team participant eloquently articulated: "They should develop a certain perception about what the university is. They should know the culture of the university and how to interact with different people in the University. In high school they are told everything that they need to know, but in college you have to ask to get the information."

Excitement, Fun, and Pride in IUPUI

The vast majority of participants asserted that students should leave orientation feeling a sense of "pride" in IUPUI, some "excitement", and should have a "fun and enjoyable" experience. Along these lines, students should leave orientation knowing about some exciting facts about IUPUI and an understanding that there are many campus activities offered (e.g., student organizations, programs, celebrations, etc.):

- First goal should be the beginning of a "love affair" with the institution…most of our students do not start that by academics. Social piece, fun and pride in an institution are important to the student…so much here to be proud of ("Crest" example).
- Community spirit…pride aspect is very important
- Have a sense of pride – IUPUI trying to shed old reputation /proud to be going to IUPUI / here to help them get a good education.
- You want them to connect to the university – should be a little cheerleading, Jaguar pride
- SLD programs and campus activities…need to leave orientation with a sense that they can be connected to a group or organization on campus besides their classes.
- Awareness of non-classroom activities – just need exposure to some exciting programs
- Goal that is not on the this that we need to do is, people should leave the day feeling really good about choosing to come to IUPUI. They should feel good about their decision.
- Orientation should send a message that learning is supposed to be enjoyable…create an IUPUI identity.

The O-Team members collectively remarked that students should leave with a sense of "fun" and that they try to "make it a fun day."

Students Should Feel a Sense of Connection with IUPUI and Leave with Contacts

Many participants indicated that incoming students should feel a sense of "connection to IUPUI" as a result of attending orientation and should leave orientation with some key contacts:

- Make people feel connected to institution – what it means to study at IUPUI
- Idea of having contact names – idea that we care – want them to succeed
- Goal should be for students to leave with phone numbers that they can call for questions/contact information
- Very important to establish a "connection" on campus
- Students in high school come here and fail – because no connection made on campus – students need to be involved into the institution.

An O-Team member reported that students should have "some kind of contact information that the student leaders can give to the students. Maybe we should have some kind of a system (e-mail, phone) so that they feel like that can contact someone to be able to ask a question or gather information." Another O-

Team member asserted that students "seem to enjoy that they get to meet so many people. There has been many times that she has been in situations that they need help, recognize her from orientation and ask her for help."

<u>Quality Academic Advising and Registration Process</u>

A common goal expressed in the focus groups was that via the orientation process incoming students should be familiar with registration processes and establish a relationship with an academic advisor:

- Develop a positive contact with the university faculty, advisor and staff. Too many students that she has spoken to have no clue about who their advisors may be. That should be the first person that they talk to about getting their schedules, and that they understand their program. If students are not seeing their advisors first than they don't have a clue. Advisor is most important.
- Advising is a key issue – especially about students working so much, then can't be full time.
- Would want to know what the academic opportunities are, actually be able to register for classes.
- Students should be able to register themselves. Currently, thinks that the mentors were doing it for them. They need to be able to do this themselves.

<u>Understanding of Physical Surroundings</u>

Participants indicated that new students should have a good understanding of the physical layout of the campus and thus, receiving an effective tour is an important goal: "tour is a good thing," "students should develop familiarity with physical surroundings."

<u>Financial Aid and Costs</u>

Many focus group participants reported that students should obtain some information about costs associated with attending IUPUI, financial aid, and scholarships during New Student Orientation:

- Critical for students and families of the students, need to understand financial aid. This is being done, but should be pointed out as a critical need.
- One goal should be about finances/financial aid counselors available.
- Need to be able to identify costs in time and money
- Tell them that there are different types of grants, scholarships, and aid that can be applied for.
- Have a lot of questions from students and refer them to financial aid because does not want to steer the students in the wrong direction.
- Financial aid is very important, especially for minority students (students of color).

<u>Good Understanding of Key Campus Resources and Services</u>

Some participants also noted that students should know what academic resources and services are available to help serve diverse needs. Participants mentioned that students should know where to get services related to health care, psychological issues, disabilities, and financial concerns:

- Students get depressed…it's o.k. to seek help. STD's, pregnancy, death/depression, racial issues – thinks students just disappear in that situation now. Is CAPS mentioned at all? Increasing numbers of students who are needing this type of help

- Where can they go something happens…-medical services-health center
- Need to know about the disability issues (AES)
- Key services – where and what (bursar, registrar, etc.).

## 3. Incoming Students' Unmet Needs

Participants were asked to report their experiences, observations and what they hear first-year students saying regarding key unmet needs. In accordance with this query, participants were asked to focus on what could be done in New Student Orientation to address students' critical unmet needs. Predominantly participants reported student have deficits in the following areas: **time-management skills, financial aid knowledge, feelings of connection and pride in IUPUI, and familiarity with campus activities.** The following are some comments that relate to these areas:

- Think they need a clear understanding in their own minds of the number of hours that they are working and the number of credit hours they are in school. They need to be realistic of the number of hours that it takes to study.
- Students have told her that they would like to have better financial aid information. Especially the adult students, the financial aid component has always been set to talk with the parents of students, don't reach the adult learners.
- Pride – love of university –see that as a deficit
- Community is attachment to people – "people to people" contacts. Getting a lot of information but don't feel like they are getting an "attachment or belonging"
- Always had a problem with how the campus values student organizations and clubs. Are not always involved their freshman year because they are not aware of the things that are going on on-campus. Since you only have a certain number of O-Team members, maybe get a club president or club member to help answer questions, etc…
- Knowing about some of the extra-curricular opportunities that are available at IUPUI – does not think that it gets discussed now…helping them see that being involved can be a part of the educational process

Some participants also reiterated issues that had been discussed in response to former questions such as the fact that incoming students need to begin the process of forming a quality relationship with an academic advisor during orientation. **However, the short time allotted for advisor meetings (15 minutes) is not sufficient.** One advisor eloquently stated**: "**I feel that a lot of the students leave thinking that they are more a number and a process. Should make it more engaging; make students feel like they are important". She as an advisor feels rushed, so she knows that they feel rushed. Need to make them feel like they (the advisors) really care, they do. Advisors and others are concerned about their success." A faculty member noted: "15 minutes for advising session is insane."

Participants also noted that the **current orientation program does not meet the needs of adult students, transfer students, and international students.** Additionally, a number of participants noted that the **sheer quantity of information presented results in knowledge deficits** among incoming students: "students still have lots of questions that should have been answered in orientation—how to get e-mail – should be handled in orientation – what is there to do on campus – where things are located. Did not know what partnership piece was." Another participant remarked: "Each student should leave with some sense of excitement, there is too much, too quickly…"

Some participants mentioned that students need **a centralized place or "welcome center" where students can go to get basic information at the time they need it.** One participant indicated: "Information desk in UC is probably a very important thing to have for students…someplace for them to be able to go for help in registration"

## 4. Suggested Orientation Format and Processes

Participants were asked how they would organize orientation to achieve some of the key goals and how New Student Orientation could effectively meet the needs of incoming students. Many participants' comments related to the following orientation processes necessary to achieve critical goals:  allowing for more interactions among students (peers, and continuing students such as O-Team members), faculty, deans, advisors, staff, and administrators, opportunities to learn about campus activities and student organizations, more extensive campus tour, ample opportunities to ask questions, more time for advising and registration, and including mixed formats (some lecture presentations, opportunities for small group interactions, and fair/tables set-up).

More Opportunities for Interactions.

Participants indicated that students would feel more connected to IUPUI if there were more opportunities for interactions at orientation:

- Maybe small groups.  In a lecture hall or larger setting, do not have the contact with the student.  Could be all the same major, or school, or ethnicity.  Gives the students a chance to start connecting and getting to know each other.
- Students sit and receive a lot of information…minority students connect better in smaller groups and having interaction.
- …small groups.  In a lecture hall or larger setting, do not have the contact with the student.  Could be all the same major, or school, or ethnicity.  Gives the students a chance to start connecting and getting to know each other.
- Try hard to do small groups – but with the volume of students cannot always do…they will be more likely to remember more if interactive.
- Put them in small groups and work through the manual (each group has a small item that they have to find then share with the group) – give them more active problem solving skills.
- Talk to each other – get to know mentor/group leader.
- Kids in block - all come at same time – meet in small groups/tour the campus.
- Need to make it exciting and make a contact.
- Come together with common dialogue and food.

Many participants noted that the **presence of the O-Team helps make the process more interactive and is effective.** One participant asserted: "staff does a wonderful job (O-Team) work very hard and they always have a presence there." Another said: " …people leading orientation – truly want this to be an eventful thing for students."

Noteworthy is the fact that many participants noted that there **was a lot of "down-time" and "wait-time" during orientation.**  One participant noted that: "heard a lot of down time – should make schedule

tight to help keep them engaged.  Keep flowing." Further, many noted that there **may be opportunities during lunch time to intentionally create opportunities for students to interact with one another.** One participant asserted: "lunch time is highly underutilized.  They go and sit with their families and do not interact with other people." Another commented that during lunch "orientation leaders could encourage them to get together into larger groups to meet new people."

An O-Team participant noted "interactions with other students is a focus that could help make the process more fun.  Leaders do encourage the groups to talk with each other.  Start the day off with a lot of being talked to instead of interaction."

Fun, Social Components, and SLD.

Participants often indicated that during orientation students should have fun, be exposed to some exciting facts about IUPUI, and understand that there are many campus activities offered (e.g., student organizations, programs, celebrations, etc.):

- Have some kind of event, maybe at the track and field stadium, so that students have a chance to socialize.  Or perhaps a progressive appetizer event, get food at each stop, but then also get an in depth tour.
- Something social of an evening or even the same day.  Some type of social activity.
- Some kind of organization fair.  Something that they can get up and move around and look at their own pace.  Scholarship fair.  Something that they can take their own initiative to go and look at.
- Have some kind of a fair, student organizations.  Students can sign up to participate even before schools starts.  Should be at every orientation.
- SLD could come up with a program.
- Needs to tell them that they are going to have fun…a lot of models out there that exist…bowling, bar-be-que, multi-media things presented by students, etc…activities
- Incorporated everything from campus into the orientation (athletics, pep band, etc)…makes them more exciting about attending school.
- Less lecture – more activity.

More Extensive Tour.

Many participants mentioned that the tour should to be more extensive and interactive so that students have a good understanding of IUPUI's physical surroundings when they begin classes:

- Tour should follow their schedule so they can find their classes.
- Need to know where their classrooms are-walk their schedule with someone.
- Probably try to need to implement more in the tour.  Actually go inside the building and have someone from there tell them what it is about.  They've heard the information about what these things do, but we don't show them where it is.  Certain parts of the tour needs to be more extensive and the students need to be taken there.  (O-Team member)

Partnership for Academic Excellence Contract

Almost every participant voiced concerns about the "Academic Partnership For Excellence" contract. Please note that participants were prompted with a document that displayed and explained the "Academic Partnership for Excellence" contract. Some faculty members were not familiar with the contract and reported that they had never seen it before. Most participants noted that it contained important information,

but that signing such a contract may not be an effective method for communicating the information and promoting the behaviors outlined:

- What does it mean that they sign this form-Academic Partnership?
- Aware that they have a ton of paperwork that they sign--not really sure that they are aware of what it is.
- This document is geared for University College–not followed up on.
- Not sure that anyone ever refers back to this form.
- What kind of message does it send about the University that we make students sign this contract….JAG 101-information is important.
- Not sure that the get a lot from the partnership piece.
- Partnership in Excellence piece, good to tell the students about that information, but does not think it should be presented in a contract form.
- Contract is University College – not for everyone –Direct admits need something from individual school-University College is very confusing to students

<u>Sequence of Events</u>

Participants indicated that the beginning of orientation should be "engaging" and make students feel "excited." Others cautioned that the orientation day should not end with the tour because many students may be "tired" by that time. The following are some comments related to the sequence of events in the orientation process:

- We should pump ourselves up at the beginning, tell them why they made a good decision to come to IUPUI.
- First impression should be fun and exciting – music playing, great experience, and end on same note
- Beginning would have to have a video – welcome to IUPUI – here's what we have to offer – highlight programs.
- Have school song playing when they walk in, have pennants hanging up, creating "so glad you are here" atmosphere.

Some focus group participants noted that orientation should be a two-day process to allow students to develop important connections and to allow time to adequately integrate the academic and social components of the university experience:

- Not enough getting to know you…start out with small groups… maybe a breakfast. Should be multiple days.
- Should be 2 half days/not too long of days…Give them time to meet people and digest the material overnight and come back with questions.
- Need a 2 day program
- Can have one day of academics and then one day of fun – has to be mixed
- Likes idea of academic "fair" done—day or two before classes start. Activities that get students to meet each other.

Many comments related to giving students information ahead of time and **providing information/materials when students leave orientation to reduce students' feelings of being "overwhelmed"** during the one-day event:

- The fact that they get all of this information in an hour – needs some kind of a change…need to send out more mailing
- Need handout with this information and says that you can look up – easily find the information that they'll need to look up after.

- What is in the mailing that is sent ahead of time?  Give them the information that they can look up before they come to orientation.
- Give them information about courses that count towards their degree – have them look at it before they come…the curriculum.
- Real message at this point is that college isn't just classes, but them give them a whole packet of information that they can go back and look at.
- Hand out a sheet for students to mark down the activities that are coming up on, i.e.  activities fair, career fair.
- In a previous institution, used a check list like format.  Developed a brochure, what you do before orientation, what you do first week of classes, etc…

## 5. Promoting Academic and Social Socialization During Orientation

Many participants reported that an effective way to help promote academic integration and social integration (introduce students to the academic and social university environment) is to provide opportunities for interactions in small groups, introduce the student to organizations of interest to them, and introduce the student to IUPUI community members:

- 300 people in LE 101 does not open a sense of socialization…not possible in such large groups.
- Get some students together—some kind of process to get them talking
- Have leaders [O-Team} have a list of things that should cover during those times…classroom conduct/importance of getting involved
- Need faculty, alumni, SLD professionals involved in orientation.
- If involve the small group option, start to get students sharing with other students about their experiences
- Have student organizations available at orientation
- Show IUPUI pride…show pictures of people on campus.

It is worth mentioning that participants commented that the presence of the O-Team (student-to-student contact) helps foster social interaction. A participant noted: "One thing that we already do, is provide student orientation leaders.  Orientation does a good job in selecting them and training them.  The student leaders really connect with the students and help show them the atmosphere."

O-Team participants articulated the following ways to effectively facilitate socialization:

- Utilize the small groups, breaks it down and takes some of the anxiety away.  Try to break things down to an incoming student perspective.
- Through the partnership you learn what the university expects form you, during the school presentation they learn what is expected of them, during the technology session they learn that they shouldn't send hate mail, learn not to plagiarize.  The expectations are taught throughout everything they go to that day.
- We give them plenty of opportunity to asks questions.

## 6. Ritual and Ceremony

There was a great range of responses to the question about rituals and ceremonies. Some participants believed that a formal ceremony was appropriate and could help foster pride in IUPUI. One participant remarked that it would be "cool to have faculty in caps/gowns and a final ceremony – you've graduated from orientation, welcoming ceremony like graduation-get a certificate." Another participant remarked that

orientation should involve "some kind of ceremony or celebration to acknowledge that you have completed orientation and are now an IUPUI student."

However, the majority of the participants indicated that it would be more effective to give the students something specifically displaying an IUPUI/Jaguars logo to remember the day (e.g., t-shirt, pin, car decal, key, bumper sticker, group picture). One participant remarked: "think something lighthearted, but not a real ceremony." Further, many participants mentioned that the presence of Jinx and the IUPUI school song would be appropriate for the ceremony process:

- Get spirit shirt at end of orientation as a hand out.
- Key to the campus…unlocking to their education/future/campus
- Sing fight song – have it sung at orientation
- Have Jinx greet them

The O-Team participants had mixed feelings about the appropriateness of ritual or ceremony during orientation as one participant noted that "ritual is kind of messy, since we have two schools going here" and another concluded "would just like to see other ideas that have been thrown out there and then evaluate."

### 7. <u>Use of Technology to Deliver Information Before, During, and After Orientation</u>

Participants expressed positive feelings about the use of technology in the orientation process to deliver information.  They indicated that technology could be used during orientation to "enliven" the presentations, and before and after orientation to deliver important information to effectively reduce students' feelings of being "overwhelmed." A variety of formats were mentioned such as CDs, a New Student Orientation Website, Power Point Presentations, and even the Marquee. Additionally, some participants mentioned that technology could be employed to provide the students with a "virtual tour."  The following comments were made:

- Fun, jazzy presentation if you can make sure that they work (Jag 101 already has)
- Do some in video or include technology or a skit presentation – attention span of traditional students – make more interesting.
- Help offset the lecture format…should be used. Chancellor Bepko – welcome video to IUPUI.
- Give students a CD or something like that or that they can go home and look at it at their pace.
- Give the information face-to-face—then put on CD that they can take home with them when they are not so overloaded.
- Could be given information websites, etc. – on schools – e-mails for contact – also good way to get questions ahead of time – give them a contact to get with before orientation.
- Marketing orientation better, have web site with web tour.
- Could be used to give a virtual tour

An O-Team member cautioned: "don't think good to give them a CD Rom ahead of time because they say ok, here is the orientation, and I don't need to go." However, all members were in favor of the following O-Team member's perspective: "actually saw a CD…from another university that is sent before orientation, could really get students pumped up about the school.  Personally, thought the CD was cool and awesome.

Gave you general information about the campus. Didn't tell me everything that I was going to get at orientation, but with the information that is on the CD can prepare for orientation."

## 8. Integration of New Student Orientation and Learning Communities

Almost all participants noted that New Student Orientation should be viewed as part of an overall process rather than just a one-day event:

- Need to make them aware that this is part of the process. Orientation is only the beginning. There are a lot of other things that orient you to the campus and college. It continues in your LC's. Needs to be stated as a goal. Gateway courses are also an opportunity to help the students adjust to college life.
- Develop a positive contact with a university faculty member. Register for courses. Be introduced to college expectations, etc. can give them information that day, but they really aren't going to get anything too in depth.
- Orientation is treated like a one shot wonder-we have learning communities to transition them through the rest of the semester.
- A lot of the things that is covered in orientation can be covered in LC.
- Given all of this information at orientation. Will not remember all of it. Need to be covered in LCs.
- Get away from one shot approach-continue it.

Additionally, participants reported that many areas needed to be expanded or focused on in Learning Communities such as technology (e.g., e-mail, OnCourse, INSITE), expectations of higher education, campus resources, student conduct, and academic integrity:

- Writing center/MAC – campus resources need to be talked about again
- Behavior should be reinforced in LC (classroom conduct)
- Going back through technology pieces should be expanded in LC
- AES needs to be mentioned in orientation to the large group (not to single anyone out)…then brought into the LC
- If there are areas in orientation that can't be covered – have them come to LC (AES, CAPS etc.)
- Take study abroad out and move to LC – civility, code of conduct.
- Code of Ethics – can be mentioned in Orientation – but in depth at LC

Some participants asserted that caution should be exercised when omitting material from orientation and subsequently assuming that it will be covered in Learning Communities because not all students enroll in Learning Communities. A participant noted "I agree that some of the current information can be taken out and done in Learning Communities if you are aware they are going to be going into an LC. If they are not, then students should be offered this information at other times during the summer before the semester starts." Another participant commented: " LC's are also overloaded. It's hard to fit everything in already, not to mention adding more."

### NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Nine hundred and fifty-six questionnaires were sent out and 609 were completed and returned (response rate = 64%). The vast majority of participants were freshmen (97 %), 13 (2%) respondents reported that they were "Sophomores," 2 students reported a "Junior" status and 1 student indicated a "Non-Degree" status. Five hundred and forty-eight (91%) respondents were non-transfer students and 53 (9%) respondents were transfer students. Eight students did not respond to this item. Slightly over half of the respondents reported that they were "18 and under" (52%), 35% reported that they were 19 - 21 years of age, 5% reported that they were 22 - 24 years of age, and 8% reported that they were 25 or more years of age. Nine students failed to respond to this item. Five-hundred and thirty two respondents (89%) reported that they were enrolled full-time and 67 (11%) respondents reported they were enrolled part-time. Ten students did not respond to this item. Four-hundred and seventy-eight (80%) respondents reported they were "White American," 57 (10%) respondents reported they were "African-American," 16 (3%) respondents indicated that they belonged to the "Other" category in terms of ethnicity, 13 (2%) respondents reported they were "Asian-American," 12 (2%) respondents reported they were "Multiracial," 11 (2%) respondents reported they were "Latino/Hispanic," 6 (1%) respondents reported "International Student" status, and 1 respondent reported "Native American" as his/her ethnicity. Fifteen students did not reply to this item. The vast majority of the respondents (86%) indicated that they commuted to campus or "live in a house or apartment within driving distance of campus," 9% of the respondents reported they live in campus housing, and only 5% reported that they live in a "house or apartment within walking distance of campus." Nine students failed to respond to this item.

Displayed in Table 1 are the results of the questionnaire administered to student orientation participants enrolled in First-Year Seminar classes. Again, this instrument was administered 3 months after the start of fall semester. Slightly over one-half of the respondents reported that they knew their way around campus better (52% either agreed or strongly agreed) and were better prepared to start classes (51% either agreed or strongly agreed) as a result of orientation. The majority of the respondents reported that they were better prepared to send and receive e-mail with their IUPUI account (69% either agreed or strongly agreed), and slightly over one-half indicated that they were better prepared to use IUPUI OnCourse Technology (56% either agreed or strongly agreed) as a result of orientation. Only about one-third of the respondents reported that they felt more connected to IUPUI or had more pride in IUPUI as a result of orientation. Slightly over one-half of the respondents indicated that they made a more successful transition to IUPUI as a result of orientation (55% either agreed or strongly agreed) as a result of orientation. It is notable that almost 40% of respondents indicated that they did not establish a meaningful relationship with an advisor as a result of orientation as a result of orientation (34% were neutral).

**Table 1. Perceptions of New Student Orientation**

| As a result of attending orientation… | Percent Distribution | | | | | Percent Agree or Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree | 0%  20%  40%  60%  80%  100% |
| I know my way around campus better. | 8% | 18% | 22% | 41% | 11% | |
| I was better prepared to start classes. | 3% | 15% | 32% | 44% | 7% | |
| I was better prepared to send and receive e-mail from my IUPUI e-mail account. | 3% | 10% | 17% | 52% | 17% | |
| I was better prepared to use IUPUI OnCourse Technology. | 5% | 16% | 23% | 42% | 14% | |
| I have a more meaningful relationship with an academic advisor. | 14% | 25% | 34% | 21% | 6% | |
| I feel more connected to IUPUI. | 5% | 15% | 44% | 30% | 5% | |
| I have more pride in IUPUI. | 6% | 13% | 50% | 28% | 4% | |
| I was better able to meet the demands and expectations of college. | 4% | 15% | 40% | 36% | 5% | |
| I made a more successful transition to IUPUI. | 3% | 9% | 32% | 47% | 8% | |

| As a result of attending orientation... | Number of Respondents | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Valid N | Missing | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| I know my way around campus better. | 608 | 1 | 51 | 111 | 131 | 248 | 67 |
| I was better prepared to start classes. | 607 | 2 | 18 | 89 | 193 | 265 | 42 |
| Better prepared to send/receive e-mail from my IUPUI e-mail account. | 607 | 2 | 19 | 63 | 105 | 318 | 102 |
| I was better prepared to use IUPUI OnCourse Technology. | 607 | 2 | 32 | 97 | 139 | 257 | 82 |
| I have a more meaningful relationship with an academic advisor. | 604 | 5 | 83 | 149 | 208 | 125 | 39 |
| I feel more connected to IUPUI. | 606 | 3 | 33 | 93 | 269 | 183 | 28 |
| I have more pride in IUPUI. | 607 | 2 | 35 | 76 | 306 | 167 | 23 |
| I was better able to meet the demands and expectations of college. | 606 | 3 | 26 | 88 | 243 | 218 | 31 |
| I made a more successful transition to IUPUI. | 606 | 3 | 19 | 56 | 195 | 285 | 51 |

Table 2 displays respondents' self-reported use and participation in campus academic support services and student activities as a result of orientation. Relatively few respondents reported substantial amounts of use of the Writing Center, Math Assistance Center, Learning Center, or Career Center as a result of orientation. Only about one-quarter of incoming students reported at least some use the Writing Center and the Math Assistance Center (19% and 24% respectively when combining "Some" and "A Great Deal"). Slightly more respondents reported substantive participation in campus-sponsored activities and events (31% when combining "Some" and "A Great Deal").

**Table 2.  Reported Use of Campus Resources and Participation In Campus Activities**

| As a result of attending orientation, how often did you use or participate in the following… | Number of Respondents | | | | | | Percent Distribution | | | |
| | Valid N | Missing | Not At All | Only A Little | Some | A Great Deal | Not At All | Only A Little | Some | A Great Deal |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Writing Center | 604 | 5 | 393 | 96 | 92 | 23 | 65% | 16% | 15% | 4% |
| Math Assistance Center | 605 | 4 | 357 | 104 | 95 | 49 | 59% | 17% | 16% | 8% |
| Learning Center | 597 | 12 | 399 | 83 | 100 | 15 | 67% | 14% | 17% | 3% |
| Career Center | 597 | 12 | 343 | 120 | 107 | 27 | 57% | 20% | 18% | 5% |
| Campus-sponsored activities & events | 600 | 9 | 291 | 127 | 141 | 41 | 49% | 21% | 24% | 7% |
| Student Organizations | 604 | 5 | 329 | 113 | 124 | 38 | 54% | 19% | 21% | 6% |

Table 3 displays student respondents' self-reported connections established during orientation. A substantial proportion of respondents (64%) reported that they did not meet any students during orientation whom they still talk to regularly. Furthermore, a large proportion of respondents (66%) reported that they did not meet any faculty, staff, or administrators during orientation whom they contacted after orientation.

**Table 3. Sustained Connections and Contacts**

| How many students did you meet at orientation whom you still talk to regularly? | N | Valid % |
|---|---|---|
| None | 384 | 64% |
| One | 90 | 15% |
| Two | 51 | 8% |
| Three | 24 | 4% |
| More Than Three | 53 | 9% |
| Valid N | 602 | 100% |
| Missing | 7 | |

| How many IUPUI faculty, staff, or administrators did you meet at orientation whom you contacted afterwards? | N | Valid % |
|---|---|---|
| None | 381 | 66% |
| One | 118 | 20% |
| Two | 60 | 10% |
| Three | 7 | 1% |
| More Than Three | 13 | 2% |
| Valid N | 579 | 100% |
| Missing | 30 | |

Table 4 displays student respondents' reported satisfaction levels. About one-third reported that they were "Satisfied" and only 5 % reported they were "Very Satisfied" that orientation provided them with the

information and resources they needed as a new IUPUI students. A notable proportion reported that they were "neutral" (43%).

**Table 4.  Perceptions of Overall Satisfaction with Orientation**

| To what extent were you satisfied that New Student Orientation provided you with the information and resources you needed as a new IUPUI student? | N | Valid % |
|---|---|---|
| Very Dissatisfied | 21 | 4% |
| Dissatisfied | 77 | 13% |
| Neutral | 255 | 43% |
| Satisfied | 215 | 36% |
| Very Satisfied | 30 | 5% |
| Valid N | 598 | 100% |
| Missing | 11 | |

Shown in Tables 5-7 are the results of a series of analyses conducted to examine differences in satisfaction levels among various groups of student orientation participants. More specifically, these analyses were performed to determine if orientation is having a differential impact on the perceptions of underrepresented students, transfer students, or students 25 or older compared to students not in the underrepresented group, non-transfers, and students under the age of 25. Student respondents belonging to underrepresented groups (reported they were "African American," "Asian American," "Native American," "Multiracial" or an "International Student") were significantly more satisfied that orientation provided them with the resources and information they needed as new IUPUI students than respondents in the all other group (reported that they were "White American") (based on an independent samples t-test, p<.05). Please note that the effect size for this analysis was "small" meaning that despite statistical significance there is not a "large" amount of difference between satisfaction levels among underrepresented students and all others. Transfer students were just as satisfied as non-transfer students and non-traditional students (students 25 and older) were just as satisfied as traditional students (there were no significant group differences based on independent sample t-tests).

**Table 5. New Student Orientation Satisfaction Among Underrepresented Students and All Others (N=568)**

| | N | Mean Satisfaction[c] | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Underrepresented[a] | 99 | 3.42 | |
| All Others[b] | 469 | 3.23 | |
| Overall | 568 | 3.26 | |
| Total Missing | 41 | | |

[a] Underrepresented group includes students who reported the following ethnic categories: African American, Asian American, Native American, Multiracial, and International Student.

[b] All Others refers to those students who reported that they were "White American"

[c] Responses on a 5 point scale where 1=Very Dissatisfied, 2=Dissatisfied, 3=Neutral, 4=Satisfied, 5=Very Satisfied

Note 1. Responses to the question: To what extent were you satisfied that New Student Orientation provided you with the information and resources you needed as a new IUPUI student?

Note 2: Student respondents in underrepresented groups were significantly more satisfied than respondents in the "all other" group based on an independent samples t-test, p<.05).

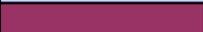**Table 6. New Student Orientation Satisfaction Among Transfer and Non-Transfer Students (N=591)**

|  | N | Mean Satisfaction[a] |
|---|---|---|
| *Transfer* | 52 | 3.33 |
| *Non-Transfer* | 539 | 3.25 |
| Overall | 591 | 3.26 |
| Total Missing | 18 | |

[a]Responses on a 5 point scale where 1=Very Dissatisfied, 2=Dissatisfied, 3=Neutral, 4=Satisfied, 5=Very Satisfied

Note 1. Responses to the question: To what extent were you satisfied that New Student Orientation provided you with the information and resources you needed as a new IUPUI student?

Note 2: Differences in satisfaction levels between transfer and non-transfer students are **not** significant (based on an independent samples t-test, p<.05). The small number of transfer students may have limited statistical power necessary to detect significant differences.

**Table 7. New Student Orientation Satisfaction Among Non-Traditional and Traditional Students (N=590)**

|  | N | Mean Satisfaction[c] |
|---|---|---|
| *Non-Traditional[a]* | 49 | 3.31 |
| *Traditional[b]* | 541 | 3.25 |
| Overall | 590 | 3.26 |
| Total Missing | 19 | |

[a] Non-traditional students are defined as those students who reported that they were 25 or older.

[b] Traditional refers to students who reported that they were "18 and under," "19 - 21," and "22 - 24"

[c]Responses on a 5 point scale where 1=Very Dissatisfied, 2=Dissatisfied, 3=Neutral, 4=Satisfied, 5=Very Satisfied

Note 1. Responses to the question: To what extent were you satisfied that New Student Orientation provided you with the information and resources you needed as a new IUPUI student?

Note 2: Differences in satisfaction levels between non-traditional and traditional students are **not** significant (based on an independent samples t-test, p<.05). The small number of non-traditional students may have limited statistical power necessary to detect significant differences.

**NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE OPEN-ENDED ITEM RESULTS**

Students were asked to respond to 3 open-ended items on the questionnaire. This section describes the results. Tables 8-10 display the major categories that emerged following content analyses of students' responses.

Shown in Table 8 are the major categories that emerged and actual student responses when queried about to the most helpful aspects of New Student Orientation. Orientation participants thought that the campus tour, the technology session, obtaining a schedule and meeting with the advisor, and learning about what is expected to achieve academic success at IUPUI were the most helpful aspects of orientation.

### Table 8. Most Helpful Aspect of Orientation (N = 470).

| What did you learn or obtain from orientation that was __most helpful__ to you as a new IUPUI student? | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Most Helpful Aspect** | **N** | **%** | **Examples of Actual Student Responses** |
| Knowing Physical Surroundings (Campus Tour) | 139 | 30% | • " Knowing where different buildings were on campus."<br>• "I thought it was helpful because it showed me where everything was. I wasn't lost at all when school started."<br>• "The tour was one of the most helpful things for me because I had never been on the campus before."<br>• "I am able to get around the University without getting lost." |
| Technology Session (OnCourse, e-mail, and INSITE). | 132 | 28% | • "The most helpful part of the orientation was when we learned to use OnCourse. Many instructors expected me to know this."<br>• "OnCourse – they showed us how to use all aspects of it."<br>• "I was taught about the different technologies that were available to the students."<br>• "Setting up our accounts and how to get to OnCourse and e-mail." |
| Registration Getting a Schedule/Advising Session | 48 | 10% | • "I learned of the efficient registration system."<br>• "Being able to register for classes was the most helpful, because then I did not have to worry about doing it later."<br>• "I hadn't enrolled in any classes yet, so the 15 min. advising appointment scheduled those."<br>• "The most helpful thing at new student orientation was meeting my academic advisor. She really helped me to decide on what classes to take and how important it is to do well." |
| Learning about Higher Education Expectations | 46 | 10% | • "I learned more about what I needed to do to be more prepared for college and I learned my way around campus better."<br>• "Knowing what IUPUI expected of me and what I needed to do to do well here."<br>• "I learned to come to class and do all my work on time. Be sure to study and keep your grades up."<br>• "They told us how we can get help and how we need to get involved around campus. They also informed us about how much we need to study for each credit hour we take and the information was really close and helpful."<br>• "I learned to attend class regularly." |
| Course Specific Information and Major Requirements | 31 | 7% | • "The different schools school of liberal arts, and the handouts for the requirements."<br>• "The most helpful information was the requirements for my major."<br>• "I learned where things were at. I learned about my major and requirements. How long it would take to graduate."<br>• "The requirements of the Kelley School of Business." |
| Campus Resources | 31 | 7% | • "The assistant help we could get in writing and math."<br>• "Math Center Assistance – helpful after returning to school after 20 years."<br>• "I learned all about University College and I also learned about student support service, and I like that program a lot."<br>• "Just what resources were available to assist me in my subjects in school." |
| One-Card | 18 | 4% | • "The most helpful thing that I got out of the new IUPUI student was the one card and how to use it."<br>• "IUPUI one card."<br>• "The one card, even though I don't know how to use it, will be the most helpful thing to me." |
| Parking Services and Information | 13 | 3% | • "The parking information I believe helped me the most."<br>• "I learned that I should get here early to find parking."<br>• "Parking. The students who led my tour helped out a lot of |

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| | | | parking.  It's full fast and other stuff." |
|---|---|---|---|
| Connections and Contact Information | 12 | 3% | • "Where or who to contact for information."<br>• "Meeting new people that had the same schedule as me.  I liked it because I wasn't a stranger in a big class."<br>• "How to get in touch with my professors." |

Note 1. Percentages rounded to the nearest whole. Some students' responses represented more than one category so percentages total greater than 100%.

Note 2. The remaining responses were so varied that no major categories emerged. Some responses included the following: appreciation of the free software, compliments regarding the lunch, and appreciation of the "free stuff."

Table 9 displays the major categories that emerged and actual student responses when asked to describe anything not included during orientation that would have been helpful in making the transition to IUPUI. The most frequently occurring responses to this question included implementing the following: an expanded tour, longer advising sessions, a more in-depth technology session, and more opportunities to interact with others and establish connections. A notable number of respondents mentioned that it would have been helpful to include more information about academic support services, campus activities, and financial aid.

## Table 9. Would Have Been Helpful to Include In Orientation (N = 314)

| Thinking back on your first semester at IUPUI, please describe anything not included in Orientation that would have been very helpful in making the transition to IUPUI? | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Not Included** | **N** | **%** | **Examples of Actual Student Responses** |
| Improved or Expanded Tour/ Knowing Physical Surroundings Better | 102 | 32% | • "I think a more extended tour of the campus would have helped a lot."<br>• "A more thorough tour would have been helpful."<br>• "Better familiarizing us with the campus and surroundings."<br>• "A more extensive tour of the library and some buildings would have been nice and helpful." |
| Longer, More In-Depth Registration/Advising Sessions | 36 | 11% | • "Better time w/ advisor.  More of it and more personalized.  I know there's not much time but I felt it could be more personalized."<br>• "Well I could have used a little more advice in picking my courses."<br>• "More efficient advisors that can make your schedule to better accommodate the student."<br>• "Too much information was thrown at me to remember.  I was over loaded.  Academic advisors should take more time with new freshmen." |
| More In-Depth Technology Sessions | 35 | 11% | • "Need more time w/ OnCourse and explaining e-mail."<br>• "Be more efficient with the technology on campus (i.e. how to use webmail, OnCourse and how to research using the library)."<br>• "Learning how to use OnCourse, my webmail, and the library reference computers."<br>• "The computer technology part of orientation was so rushed.  The lady kept leaving everyone behind and I walked out of there very frustrated." |
| More Opportunities for Interactions and Making Connections | 32 | 10% | • "Giving us more of a chance to talk with other students while there."<br>• "I think you should get the students more involved with each other."<br>• "Smaller groups.  I feel that I would have gotten to know many more people."<br>• "Have a better question/answer session.  Make it easier to get in  contact with other people at IUPUI." |
| More Information about Academic Resources | 30 | 10% | • "Academic Support Centers: MAC, Writing Center, and Learning Center."<br>• "It would have been helpful to get info. on the writing centers and math centers on paper so if I went back through info. I may run upon it."<br>• "More information on the centers (MAC, Writing Center, etc.)" |

| | | | • "Maybe a section that talked about things to do and places to get help." |
|---|---|---|---|
| More Information about Getting Involved In Student Life and Campus Activities | 18 | 6% | • "…some information on clubs, organizations, and sporting events."<br>• "We know about the student organizations, but we didn't really learn how to get involved in them."<br>• "Go over more about student activities."<br>• "More information about campus activities and services." |
| More Information about Costs of Education: Financial Aid, Scholarships, and Funding. | 14 | 4% | • "Financial aid and scholarship counseling."<br>• "Financial aid/student loan information."<br>• "Telling about the different scholarships." |

Note 1. Percentages rounded to the nearest whole. Some students' responses represented more than one category.
Note 2. The remaining responses were so varied that no major categories emerged. Some responses included the following: more information about parking, better food, more "free stuff," and not requiring students to carry heavy yellow bags during the tour.


       Table 10 shows the major categories that emerged and actual student responses when asked to provide specific suggestions for improving orientation. The most frequently occurring response to this question related to creating a more efficient orientation process (less wait-time, more organized, reduce quantity of information presented). A notable proportion of respondents also suggested including an expanded tour, providing more opportunities for interactions, planning for a longer advising meeting, and creating a more enjoyable process. Some respondents also suggested including a more in-depth technology session. Additionally, some respondents used this survey question opportunity to share positive comments about their experiences such as: "No need for improvement. It was Great!"

## Table 10. Recommended Improvements (N = 284)

| What specific suggestions do you have for improving orientation? | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Should be Improved?** | **N** | **%** | **Examples of Actual Student Responses** |
| More Efficient Process: Length, Less Wait-Time, Too Much Information. | 74 | 26% | • "I would seriously recommend cutting the time it takes. I personally lost interest due to the time. They need to show areas that pertain to me as a student."<br>• "Make it more organized and timely. We were rushed around quickly and uninformed."<br>• "Make it shorter. It was way too long and I was tired by the end."<br>• "Do not make it so long. I sat around forever waiting for an academic advisor. They need more advisors to quicken the project."<br>• "Shorten it. It was a lot of information to digest." |
| Extended Tour | 42 | 15% | • "Spend more time on showing students around. Many new students still look lost the first day of school."<br>• "Make sure enough time is allowed for a campus tour! I had no idea where I was going. If something runs over don't cut out the campus tour!"<br>• "More in depth descriptions of buildings not just show us it!" |
| Connections/Interactions, Small Groups | 38 | 13% | • "Give the students more opportunity to get to know each other."<br>• "Making people talk to each other."<br>• "Need to make things more social, work on building friendships and contacts, have some student run organization come and speak about what the organization does and try to get people involved." |

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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Longer Advising Session/Registration Process | 31 | 11% | • "Not so much crammed into a short time. Better info. on placement testing. More time with advisor."<br>• "A more personal understanding between advisors and student. To meet with advisor for more time."<br>• "We have to have more time w/ advisors because I got stuck in classes I didn't want because I didn't have time to ask questions." |
| More Fun, Enjoyable Process. | 22 | 8% | • "Make more fun."<br>• "Keep it interesting so we don't lose interest."<br>• "Not so boring and a waste of time just sitting and waiting."<br>• "Have more activities planned; find people who really want to do the tours; have more activities planned like concerts, dances, etc" |
| More In-Depth Technology Sessions | 14 | 5% | • "More time getting familiar with OnCourse/Insite etc."<br>• "… slower when teaching about OnCourse and e-mail because first time mine didn't work and I was clueless what to do."<br>• "Explain more about OnCourse, including how to send and receive e-mail and let students know how they can check their grades on line." |
| General Positive | 13 | 5% | • "No suggestions. Great job!"<br>• "No need for improvement. It was great."<br>• "It was pretty good overall. The O-Team made it fun." |

Note 1. Percentages rounded to the nearest whole. Some students' responses represented more than one category.
Note 2. The remaining responses were so varied that no major categories emerged. Some respondents articulated negative statements regarding the use of games and skits to communicate information and that these activities were "elementary" and not appropriate for adults.

## CONCLUSION

This program evaluation was conducted to reevaluate the goals of the New Student Orientation in its current format, to understand how orientation is meeting the needs of incoming students, and to increase understanding of the impacts of orientation on student participants' knowledge levels, attitudes, and behaviors. Due to the fact that implementing orientation involves many academic units and offices across campus, data collection efforts were aimed at obtaining information from multiple perspectives (e.g., faculty, administrators, advisors, SLD staff, and O-Team members). Additionally, quantitative and qualitative approaches were employed to enhance understanding of the processes and outcomes of orientation.

Results from a series of focus groups conducted with 46 members of the IUPUI community suggest orientation has improved substantially over the past 4 years and that orientation leaders do a tremendous job considering the number of students served per year. Furthermore, planning orientation presents unique challenges as leaders must coordinate activities across multiple campus programs and academic units while serving a very large number of students in relatively short time periods. The presence of the student lead O-Team was noted as a positive aspect of the orientation experience. In terms of planning for improvements, results suggest that orientation planners consider the following areas: meeting the unique needs of transfer students, International students, and students above the age of 25; creating a more efficient process; developing a limited set of more specific goals; developing a more interactive process; ensuring that students make meaningful connections and begin to feel a sense of community; promoting a sense of IUPUI pride among new students; providing students with information on the financial aid and costs of attending; ensuring

that students are equipped with the "expectations" necessary to achieve academic success; and using technology to effectively deliver information before, during, and after orientation.

A total of 609 student orientation participants enrolled in fall semester First-Year Seminar courses completed a questionnaire designed to assess knowledge levels, attitudes, and behaviors related to orientation participation. The survey was administered 3 months after the start of fall semester so that new students could report on how participation in orientation impacted their transition to IUPUI.  In many ways, the questionnaire results served to further "validate" some of the focus group findings. Results suggested that as a result of the orientation process, students are familiar with IUPUI technology and have the ability to send and receive e-mail. A notable proportion of students reported that the most helpful aspects of orientation were the campus tour, the technology session, registering for classes through the advising meeting, and gaining insight into what is expected at the university level and what commitments are needed to achieve academic success. Learning about the university and its expectations may help to facilitate academic and social integration among incoming students.

Questionnaire results suggest that orientation planners focus on the following areas when implementing improvements:  expanding the campus tour; providing more in-depth technology sessions; planning a more efficient process; providing more extensive, meaningful advising sessions; creating more opportunities for interactions and for establishing connections: and ensuring that students leave with the resources, and information needed to meet the demands of college. Although one of the stated goals of New Student Orientation is to ensure that new students "develop a positive contact with a university faculty, academic advisor, staff member and peer student," this research suggests that more intentional efforts should be employed to help new students make more sustained contacts and connections with the campus community during orientation. Due to the fact that orientation serves so many new students, it seems vital that it serves as an effective mechanism for helping students become connected to IUPUI's diverse community of learners.

Ideally this report will serve to stimulate dialogue among orientation planners and stakeholders so that data-driven plans can be implemented to improve the orientation experience. Thus, we hope that this report functions as a dynamic communication piece that stimulates self-reflection and change.

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# APPENDIX A

## Goals for the Students and Family Members Attending Orientation at IUPUI:

- To understand the Partnership to Academic Excellence contract
- To develop a positive contact with a university faculty, academic advisor, staff member and peer student
- To register for the courses required in pursuing the academic area of their interest
- To be introduced to the opportunities and responsibilities of academic life and leadership at IUPUI
- To have family members familiarized with the university contacts and services
- To have the questions, concerns, and expectations addressed, answered, and resolved during the program

## CAS Standards and Guidelines for Student Orientation Programs:

- Assist students in understanding the purpose of higher education
- Assist students in understanding the mission of the specific institution
- Assist students in determining their purpose in attending the institution and developing positive relationships with faculty, staff, peers, and other individuals in the community
- Help students understand the institution's expectations of them
- Provide information about and opportunities for self-assessment
- Identify costs in attending the institution, both in terms of dollars and personal commitment
- Improve the retention rate of new students
- Provide an atmosphere and sufficient information to enable students to make reasoned and well-informed choices
- Provide information concerning academic policies, procedures, requirements, and programs
- Promote an awareness of non-classroom opportunities
- Provide referrals to qualified counselors and advisors
- Explain the processes for class scheduling and registration and provide trained supportive assistance to accomplish these tasks
- Develop familiarity with the physical surroundings
- Provide information and exposure to available institutional services
- Help students identify and evaluate housing and commuting options
- Create an atmosphere that minimizes anxiety, promotes positive attitudes, and stimulates an excitement for learning
- Provide appropriate information on personal safety and security
- Provide opportunities for new students to discuss expectations and perceptions of the campus with continuing students

# APPENDIX B

## Overview of New Student Orientation Content

**Partnership For Academic Excellence Presentation**
      Congratulations/Welcome to IUPUI
      About IUPUI
      IU or Purdue Information
      Quality of IUPUI
      Your place at IUPUI (explain academic schools)
      University College
            Academic Advising
            Services
      Learning Blocks
      Learning Communities
      Critical Inquiry
      Structured Learning Assistance
      Academic Advising
      Partnership for Excellence Contract
            Work with Faculty
            Actively seek out and take advantage of opportunities
            Make time for out of class experiences
            Take advantage of academic advising
      Get involved at IUPUI
      Choosing a Field of Study
      Learn about other opportunities
            Student Org.
            Study Abroad
            Coop. Educ.
            Meeting different people

**JAG 101 Presentation**
      What is a
      Lecture, Lab and Recitation
      Credit Hour
      Course Load (Full and Part Time)
      Day of the Week abbrev.
      What does it take to graduate
      Example of a student's schedule
            Course Name
            Course Number
            Section Number
            Credit Hour
            Time
            Days of the week
            Location
            Difference between 100,200,300, 400, 500 level courses

Mandatory and Optional Fees
Parking on Campus

On or Off Campus Classes

**Computer information**
        INSITE
        Registration
        Grade Check
        OnCourse

One Card Services

Campus Safety

Career Center
Writing Center
Learning Center

University College Manual Overview

**School Presentation  (Varies between academic school)**

Test Score Review
Curriculum
Academic Advising issues
Services within school
Educational Opportunities

**Technology Class**
        Setting up Network ID and Password
        Kb
        IT homepage review of services
        OnCourse
        INSITE
        Web Mail
        STEPS classes
        Mail Forwarding
        Tech etiquette

**Tour of the academic perimeter of campus**

**Academic Advising and Registration**

**Get the One Card Id.**

# APPENDIX C

## Orientation Review Focus Group Protocol

Thank you for coming to this meeting today. I appreciate that you have taken time out of your busy schedule to participate in this focus group. My name is Michele Hansen. I work in the department of IMIR and my role is to provide assessment/program evaluation support for UC and SLD. Stephanie is here to take notes so that what you say is accurately recorded, but I want to assure you that what you say will not be attributed directly to you.

As you know, the New Student Orientation program is a critical component of University College's mission to help new students make successful transitions to college. An The Orientation Review Committee, chaired by Ann Lowenkron (professor in nursing), has been formed to help ensure that the New Student Orientation (one day program held in Spring and Fall for students and families) is effectively meeting the needs of IUPUI's diverse community.

This focus group has been designed to gather information about your opinions, experiences, expectations, and what you hear our students saying about their orientation. I will be asking a series of questions regarding the processes (program components of orientation, content) and the intended outcomes or goals of orientation (what students should be able to do when complete orientation). Because you are here today, most likely through your work you have had a wealth of experiences with first-year students and thus, it is important for this focus group process that we obtain input from each of you.

This focus group will last approximately 2 hours. I will be preparing a report to be shared with the Orientation Review Committee and the UC Curriculum Committee, but I want to assure you that I will not attribute anything you say directly to you. Please understand that you may leave the group/interview at any time and this is strictly voluntary.  Do you have any questions at this point?

Prior to beginning, introductions---describe your work here at IUPUI and experience with New Student Orientation.

[prompt goal and process questions by referring to the 1 page listing of current goals/those discussed in the literature and the 1 page format/schedule of events in the current orientation]

1.  How well oriented do you think new students are to the campus community?
    **Probes:** Based on your experiences with the product of orientation, how or how not effectively orientated?

2.  (**Goal Prompt**). What do you think incoming students should get out of orientation? In other words, what should students be able to do, demonstrate when orientation is completed? (while taking into account time, staff, and resource constraints)? **Probes:** What are the key outcomes of orientation, what are the most important critical knowledge, skills, and abilities that students should have when they leave orientation; what are the priorities in terms of goals?

3.  Based on your experiences, observations and what you hear first-year students saying, what do you think are some needs and deficits in knowledge and abilities among first-year students?

4.  (**Content Prompt**) How would you organize orientation (processes) to achieve the goals and key outcomes you have articulated?  **Probe**: What do you think should occur (e.g., events, presentations), and in what sequence?

5.  Orientation programs are an attempt at early student socialization into the norms, values, and behavioral expectations of IUPUI. How do you think orientation can effectively promote this process of *socialization?*

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6. What types of ritual and ceremony do you think would be important in orientation?
   **Probes:** What is the best way to use ritual and ceremony in orientation? Do you think orientation would benefit from more ritual or ceremony? If so, how? Some colleges have a convocation at the beginning of the semester, buck-eye given at Ohio…

7. What is the best way to use technology in orientation?
   **Probes:** What is the best way to use technology to deliver information before, during, and after orientation? How would you improve the contribution of technology to orientation? For example, should students receive a CD-ROM prior to orientation describing IUPUI and explaining expectations, requirements…

8. Orientation is just the first step in helping students transition to college, what aspects of orientation do you think could effectively be extended or expanded upon in the Learning Communities, or First-Year Experience Courses (one-credit course U 110 taught to help students make successful transitions).