



University College



A Comprehensive Assessment Plan for a Large Entering Student Unit: Planning, Implementing, and Using Assessment Results

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Overview

- University College Structure and Context
- Assessment Methods
- Examples of Reports and Findings
- Effective Strategies for Using Assessment Results
- Discussion of Challenges



University Colleges provide a structure to address the need for a comprehensive approach to entering students.



This is achieved by:

- Providing efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability
- Facilitating collaborations on and off campus
- Improving opportunities for grants



- Re-organization into UC structures has facilitated college entry and has increased student success at many institutions



IUPUI – University College

- Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI)
 - Downtown Indianapolis
 - Public comprehensive four year institution
 - Over 200 academic programs
 - Doctoral/Research Intensive
 - Enrollment - 30,300
 - Undergraduate – 21,423
 - Graduate – 8,877



IUPUI – First-Year Students

■ Student Profile

- Approximately 2500 first-time, full-time students
- 75% commute to campus
- 24% admitted conditionally
- Only 7% part-time students
- 58% female
- 97% In-State Students
- Only 2% under 25 years of age
- 57% first generation
- Around 42% work more than 20 hours a week
- Approximately 75% have jobs
- Approximately 76% received some sort of financial aid
- UC serves about 8000 students



IUPUI – University College

- UC Programs
 - Honors
 - Advising and Career Counseling
 - Pre-College Programs
 - New Student Orientation
 - Learning Center
 - Student Support Services
 - Learning Communities
 - First-Year Seminars
 - Critical Inquiry
 - Summer Bridge Program



IUPUI – University College, Cont.

MISSION

University College is the academic unit at IUPUI that provides a common gateway to the academic programs available to entering students. University College coordinates existing university resources and develops new initiatives to promote academic excellence and enhance student persistence. It provides a setting where faculty, staff, and students share in the responsibility for making IUPUI a supportive and challenging environment for learning.

PRINCIPLES

University College will achieve its mission through the

- Promotion of student learning
- Focus on individual student success
- Establishment of its own traditions and recognition of accomplishments
- Provision of a quality first year experience
- Development of strong connections with the degree-granting units
- Commitment to faculty and staff development
- Creation of a community that values diversity
- Implementation of collaborative governance built on individual responsibility
- Commitment to intentional reflection and assessment



Essential Features of Successful UC Model

- Collaborations with P-12
- Campus collaborations among all units serving students at entry
- Joint staff, advising and faculty appointments
- Curricular approaches
- Strong academic support services
- Assessment



Assessment



- **Evaluation** – “the collection of methods, skills, and sensitivities necessary to determine whether a program is needed and likely to be used, whether it is intense enough to meet an unmet need, whether the service is offered as planned, whether the program is provided at a reasonable cost without undesirable side effects.” Emil Posavac



- **Assessment** – “Assessment is the systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development.”

Trudy Banta



ASSESSMENT . . .

**“a rich conversation
about student learning
informed by data.”**

-- Ted Marchese --

AAHE



Historical Perspective on Assessing First-Year Programs at IUPUI

■ In the Beginning:

- New academic unit housing first-year programs. There was a lot of visibility and need to demonstrate program effectiveness as well as value added to the university.
- Focus on summative evaluation, program development, needs assessment.
- Engaged in active learning about what works in the first-year of college - participated in site visits, consulted with experts, and learned from other institutions regarding how to effectively implement first-year success programs.
- Qualitative studies were conducted to improve understanding of learning outcomes and students' perceptions of programs.



Historical Perspective on Assessing First-Year Programs at IUPUI

■ Current Approaches:

- Using assessment to prove and improve programs: summative and formative evaluation.
- Employing multiple measures of student learning and academic success - moving beyond retention.
- Using program evaluation methodology: understanding needs, processes, and learning outcomes.
- Understanding the dialogue between qualitative and quantitative research.
- Seeking involvement of key stakeholders in assessment planning, implementation, and deployment.
- Ensuring information used for program improvement.
- Meta-Assessment



Focus on Accountability

- Four-Year Graduation Rates
- Degree Completion
- Course Completion
- “Value-Added” Interventions
- Cost-Effectiveness
- Student Learning Outcomes



Critical Questions About Programs

- What are programs providing and for whom?
- Are they meeting the needs of students?
- How can the program be improved?
- Is the program, course, or service improving student learning?
- Where is learning satisfactory?
- Which approaches produce the most learning for which students?



- Do program impacts vary across different groups of intended beneficiaries (males, females, undergraduates, first-generation students, Latino students) and over time?
- Are there any unintended effects of the program, either positive or negative?
- Is the program worth the resources it costs?
- Can the changes in outcomes be explained by the program, or are they the result of some other factors occurring simultaneously?



Measuring Student Learning

- Grades
- Exams, tests, papers, course assignments
- Standardized tests
- Self-report questionnaires
- Narratives
- Portfolios
- Interviews
- Focus groups



Direct Measures of Learning

Assignments, exams, projects, papers

Indirect Measures

Questionnaires, inventories, interviews

- Did the course cover these objectives?
- How much did your knowledge, skills, and abilities increase?
- Did the teaching method(s) help you learn?
- Did the assignments help you learn?



Essential Assessment Planning Steps

- Develop Definitions, Goals, and Plans
- Identify Purpose of Assessment
- Articulate Goals and Understand the Program Theory
- Identify and Involve Stakeholders
- Identify Valid Key Indicators
- Determine Data Collection Procedures
- Determine Research Design and Assessment Methods
- Analyze Data and Produce Reports
- Ensure Use of Results
 - Adopted from Posavac and Carey, 2002; Palomba and Banta, 1999



UC Strategic Planning/Assessment Template

General Outcome Goal or Objective	Expected improvements or changes	Implementation strategies (what is being done to achieve the outcome goal or objective)	Measures (what measures, would provide evidence of whether the changes have occurred)	Methodology (How is information being collected, analyzed, and disseminated)	Findings (what are the results?)	Improvements (what has been or is being done to adjust processes based on findings?)
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Take Inventory of Existing Assessment Information

- Grades in courses
- Course exams
- Student surveys
- Faculty surveys



Underlying Theories Guiding Many First-Year Programs

❖ Academic integration:

- The development of a strong affiliation with the college academic environment both in the classroom and outside of class. Includes interactions with faculty, academic staff, and peers but of an academic nature (e.g., peer tutoring, study groups) (Nora, 1993)

❖ Social integration:

- The development of a strong affiliation with the college social environment both in the classroom and outside of class. Includes interactions with faculty, academic staff, and peers but of a social nature (e.g., peer group interactions, informal contact with faculty, involvement in organizations) ((Nora, 1993).



Underlying Theories Guiding Many First-Year Programs

❖ Academic Self-Efficacy

- Students' evaluation of their competence to successfully execute academic tasks necessary to reach desired outcomes (Zajacova, Lynch, Espenshade. 2005; Bandura, 1993).

❖ Social Learning Theory

- "Human behavior can be learned observationally through modeling: from observing others one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action." (Bandura, 1977, p. 22).



Assessment Approaches

- Seek involvement of key stakeholders in planning, implementation, and deployment.
- Select outcome measures that are valid, reliable, aligned with course goals and learning outcomes.
- Understand what processes lead to particular outcomes: the why and the what.



Assessing Approaches

- Employ qualitative and quantitative methods.
- Employ multiple measures from different sources.
- Employ summative and formative approaches.
- Take steps to ensure results are linked to planning and decisions.



Quantitative and Qualitative Methods

- Multiple Methods and Measures are Employed to Assess Program Component and Outcomes
- Complementary Techniques
- Work Best in Dialogue



Qualitative Assessment

- Brings Awareness Of Program Implementation Differences
- Provides In-Depth Understanding of Student Responses and Interactions
- Represents Part of a Long Term Strategy of Formative Evaluation



Qualitative Assessments Conducted:

- First-Year Seminars,
- Learning Communities,
- Critical Inquiry,
- Summer Bridge
- Orientation

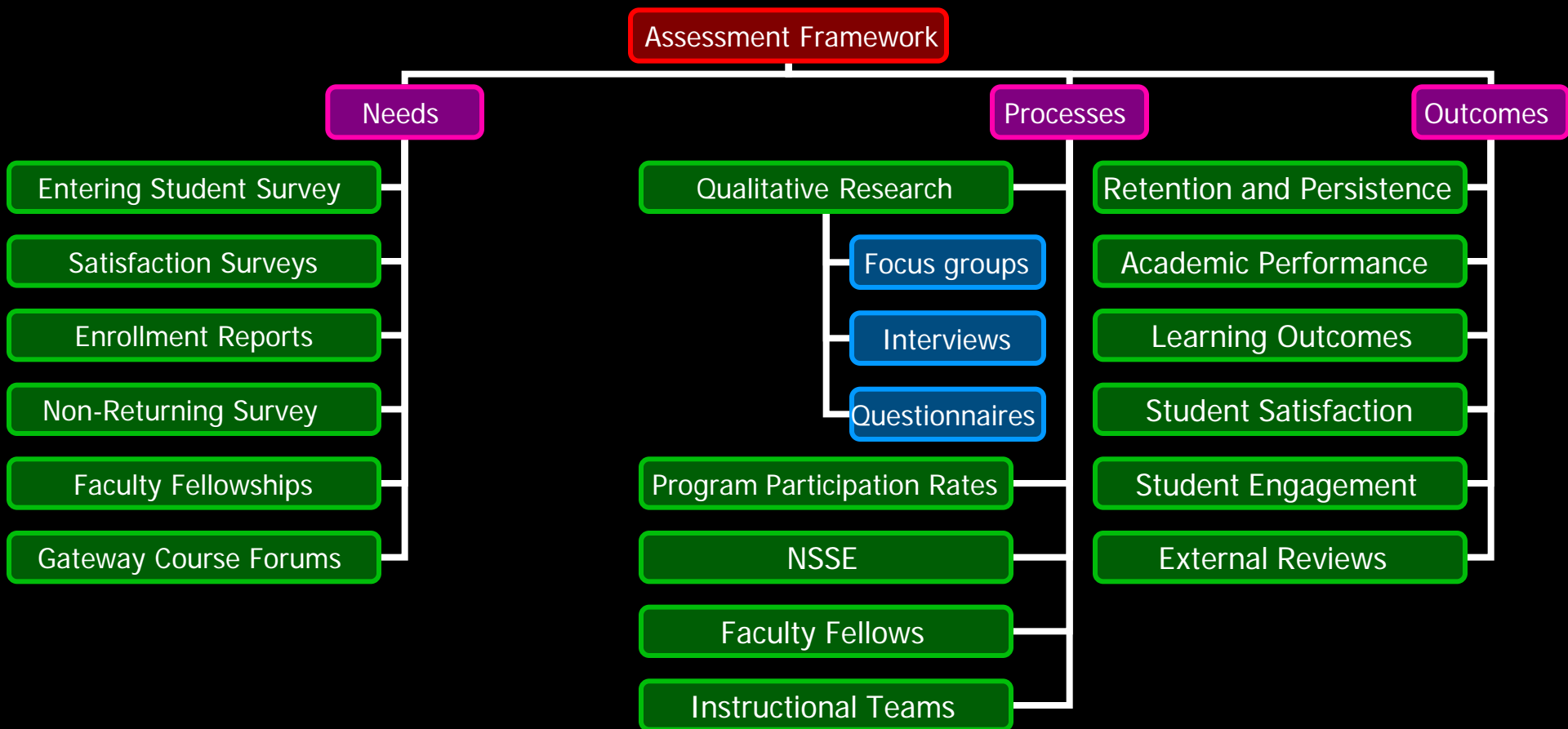


Quantitative Assessment

- Conduct analyses to determine program impact on academic performance, retention rates, and DFW rates.
- Describe retention rates and GPAs in defined populations over semesters and years
- Examine participants compared to non-participants with regard to Fall GPA and retention while controlling for background differences
- Examine predicted vs. actual retention, course grades, and DFW rates
- Administer student surveys to assess student needs, satisfaction, engagement, program impacts, reasons for leaving, etc.

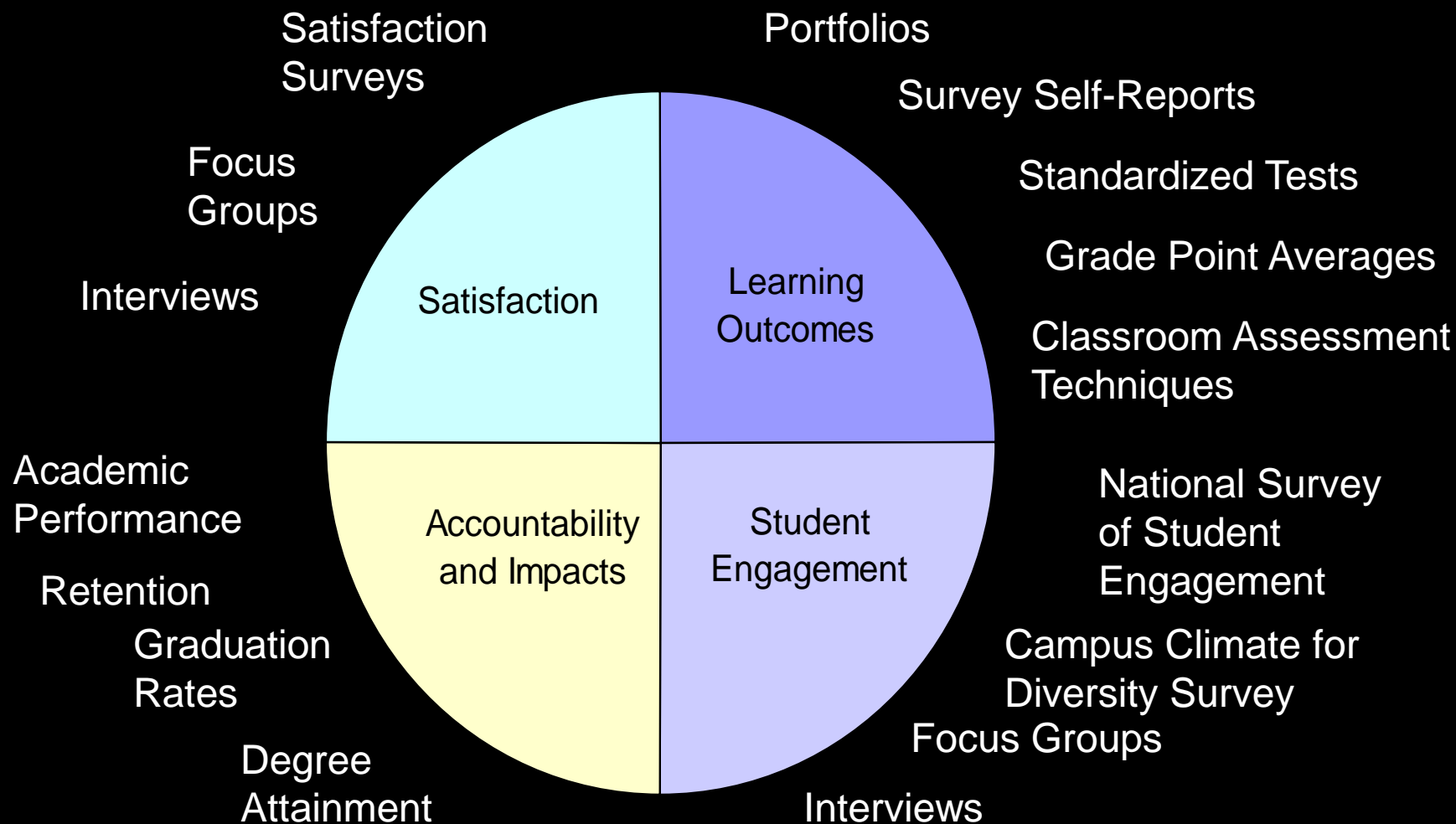


UC Three-Phase Assessment Framework





UC Outcome Assessment Framework: Employment of Quantitative and Qualitative Methods





Highlights and Examples of UC Assessment and Improvement

- First-Year Seminars
- Learning Communities
- Summer Bridge Program
- Critical Inquiry
- Advising
- Orientation
- Learning Center



FYS Focus Group Results: Students' Report of Changes in Behavior

- **About half of the 221 students reported changes in one or both of two clusters of attitudes and behavior:**
- **Becoming a better student**
 - Taking course demands more seriously
 - Developing better study habits
 - Organizing time better
- **Becoming more outgoing**
 - Trying to get to know students and instructors in other courses
 - Expressing self more, having more self-confidence



First-Year Seminar Evaluation Form

- Designed to assess learning objectives outlined in template
- Provides instructional teams with valuable feedback concerning students' perceptions of course benefits
- Reports display findings by instructional team and in the aggregate



Questionnaire Results: Students' Reported Notable Improvements and Course Benefits in the Following Areas...

- Becoming familiar with campus and academic support resources.
- Deciding on a major or future career.
- Making connections with other students, peer mentors, faculty, and advisors.
- Adjusting to college.



Most Valued Aspects of Learning Communities

- Making connections and forming a sense of community
- Learning more about IUPUI campus and academic support resources
- Exploring majors and career opportunities
- Learning about library resources



Least Valued Aspects of Learning Communities

- Assignments that do not contribute to learning process: “busy work.”
- Unorganized activities in and outside of class.
- Class activities that are not linked with discipline courses.
- Class activities that are not related to major or career goals.



Complexity of Retention

- Pre-College Factors and Preparation
- Background Characteristics
- Students' Intentions
- Students' Expectations
- Students' Needs
- Students' Financial Issues
- Institutional Factors
- External Environmental Factors



Fall 2007 Impact of Participation in a First-Year Seminar on One-Year Retention

First-Year Seminar	N	Retention Rate
Participants	2248	70%
Non-Participants	308	65%
Overall	2546	



Hierarchical Logistic Regression: 2007 First-Year Seminar and Retention

<i>Step</i>	<i>Variables</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>Wald</i>	<i>Prob.</i>	<i>df</i>
1	Course load	0.16	26.18	.000	4, 2558
	SAT score	0.00	3.02	.082	
	High School GPA	0.76	39.27	.000	
	Female	-0.05	0.27	.603	
2	Seminar	0.34	5.40	.020	1, 2557

Nagelkerke $R^2 = .078$



Other Indicators of Academic Success: 2007 First-Year Seminars

- 39% of the non-participants earned a grade point average below a 2.0 compared to 23% of participants.
- The DWF rate for non-participants (29%) was notably higher compared to participants (23%).
- The IUPUI fall-to-spring retention rate for non-participants was 83% compared to 87% for participants.



Impact of Participation in a 2005 First-Year Seminar: One-Year Retention

Type of Admit	First Year Seminar	N	Retention Rate	Adjusted Rate
Regular Admits	Participants	1035	70%	70%
	Non-Participants	227	62%	63%
	Overall	1262	69%	
Conditional Admits	Participants	496	57%	57%
	Non-Participants	98	39%	41%
	Overall	594	54%	



National Survey of Student Engagement

Significant differences of FYS students in comparison to others:

Students participating in FYS

- made more class presentations.
- worked with students outside of class more often.
- participated in more community-based projects.
- Included diverse perspectives in class discussions or writing assignments.

FYS students also reported

- Better quality of academic advising.
- experiencing a more supportive campus environment.
- engaging in more active and collaborative learning.



TLC First Semester G.P.A.

		2004	
		<u>N</u>	<u>Adjusted GPA*</u>
TLC Participants		255	2.65
<i>Non-Participants</i>		1217	2.56

Comparison group – students who participated in a freshman seminar or learning community.

		2005	
		<u>N</u>	<u>Adjusted GPA*</u>
TLC Participants		280	2.65
<i>Non-Participants</i>		1026	2.43

*G.P.A. adjusted to control for significant covariates including: course load, age, gender, ethnicity, SAT scores, high school percentile ranks, units of high school math, and summer bridge participation.

		2006	
		<u>N</u>	<u>Adjusted GPA*</u>
TLC Participants		312	2.75
<i>Non-Participants</i>		1324	2.53

		2007	
		<u>N</u>	<u>Adjusted GPA*</u>
TLC Participants		535	2.78
<i>Non-Participants</i>		1499	2.55

Bolded items are significant p<.01



TLC Retention

Fall 2004 One Year Retention

	<u># of Students</u>	<u>Retention Rate*</u>
TLC Participants	287	69%
Non-TLC Participants	1351	68%

Fall 2005 One Year Retention

	<u># of Students</u>	<u>Retention Rate*</u>
TLC Participants	338	70%
Non-TLC Participants	1211	65%

Fall 2006 One Year Retention

	<u># of Students</u>	<u>Retention Rate*</u>
TLC Participants	377	70%
Non-TLC Participants	1779	67%

Bolded items are significant $p < .05$, even while controlling for differences in demographics, enrollment, and academic preparation.



2007 Bridge-Themed Learning Community Combination has Positive Effects

	N	Avg. Fall GPA	Avg. Predicted GPA	Difference	% below a 2.0 GPA	DFW Rate
Bridge-TLC	200	2.96	2.86	0.11	11%	13.13%
TLC	354	2.71	2.69	0.03	16%	18.16%



Essential Elements Of Summer Bridge

- Offered as a two-week program for incoming freshmen held in August before fall classes begin
- Open to students in specific majors
- Based on student interest in pursuing a particular major or in exploring various major options
- Provides a collegiate-level curriculum
- Creates communities of entering students
- Offered free to participants
- Required for all First Generation Scholarship award winners beginning fall 2006



Characteristics of 2005 Cohort

- 175 Students Participated
- 70% Women
- 9% African American
- 53% First-Generation College Student
- 18% First-Generation Scholars
- 22% Admitted Conditionally
- 1016 Average SAT Score
- 69% Average High School Percentile Rank
- 39% Campus Housing
- 18-19 Primary Ages. Average=18.17



Characteristics of Fall 2006

Two-Week Cohort

- 209 Students Participated
- 71% Women
- 8% African American
- 89% First-Generation College Student
- 70% First-Generation Scholars
- 7% Admitted Conditionally
- 1000 Average SAT Score
- 75% Average High School Percentile Rank
- 27% Campus Housing
- 18-19 Primary Ages. Average=18.75



Characteristics of Fall 2007

Two-Week Cohort

- 361 Students Participated
- 72% Women
- 7% African American
- 91% First-Generation College Student
- 78% First-Generation Scholars
- 10% Admitted Conditionally
- 982 Average SAT Score
- 3.31 Average High School GPA
- 34% Campus Housing
- 18-19 Primary Ages. Average=18.77



Impact of Bridge Participation 2005

Type of Admit	Summer Bridge	N	Fall GPA	Adjusted Fall GPA
Regular	Participants	120	2.94	2.87
	Non-Participants	858	2.65	2.68
	Overall	978	2.69	
Conditional	Participants	33	2.61	2.59
	Non-Participants	461	2.06	2.06
	Overall	494	2.09	



Impact of Summer Bridge Participation 2005

Type of Admit		N	Average Retention
Regular	Participants	127	74%
	Non-Participants	936	70%
	Overall	1263 (70%)	
Conditional	Participants	32	77%
	Non-Participants	480	56%
	Overall	612 (57%)	



Two-Week Summer Bridge Participants Compared to Non-Bridge Participants: Conditional Admits

	N	Avg. Fall GPA	% below a 2.0 GPA	DFW Rate	Fall to Fall Retention Rate
2005 Bridge	37	2.53	27%	19.10%	78%
No-Bridge	648	2.08	41%	38.22%	53%
2006 Bridge	15	1.58	53%	47.50%	40%
No Bridge	713	2.08	41%	37.99%	53%
2007 Bridge	36	2.11	29%	31.46%	69%
No Bridge	649	2.15	37%	32.78%	58%



Two-Week Summer Bridge Participants Compared to Non-Bridge Participants: First-Generation Scholars

	N	Avg. Fall GPA	% below a 2.0 GPA	DFW Rate	Fall to Fall Retention Rate
2005 NO Bridge	114	2.77	19%	18.58%	73%
2006 Two-Week Bridge	147	2.78	14%	14.62%	72%
No Bridge	50	2.66	20%	23.18%	70%
2007 Two-Week Bridge	281	2.96	11%	12.14%	77%
No Bridge	12	2.59	17%	32.87%	75%



Hierarchical Multiple Regression: 2007 Two Week Summer Bridge and GPA

<i>Step</i>	<i>Variables</i>	<i>Std. Beta</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Prob.</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>R² Change</i>
1	Course load	.13	5.90	.0001	4, 1976	.204
	SAT score	.07	2.76	.0001		
	High School GPA	.34	14.33	.0001		
	Female	.07	3.50	.0001		
2	Summer Bridge	.06	3.08	.002	1, 1975	.004
	F-value = 103.78					
	Adj R ² = .21					



Top Rated Benefits of Summer Bridge

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Social Integration/Sense of Community	916	4.41	.55
Campus Resources	896	4.40	.44
College Adjustment	894	4.22	.53
Interactions with Instructional Team	899	4.17	.60
College Expectations	886	4.17	.56
Class Activities	923	4.16	.68
Study Skills	911	4.04	.64
Critical Thinking	908	4.01	.65
Academic Skills	909	3.92	.64



Factors that Significantly Predict Overall Satisfaction with Summer Bridge

- Course Activities
- College Adjustment
- Campus Resources
- Interactions with Instructional Team Members

adjusted $\underline{R}^2 = .215$, $\underline{F}(9, 756) = 23.97$, $\underline{p} < .0001$).



Summer Bridge (Two-Week) Student Questionnaire Results



98% of students surveyed said they would recommend the Summer Bridge program to other first-year students.

2006 = 99%

2005 = 96%,

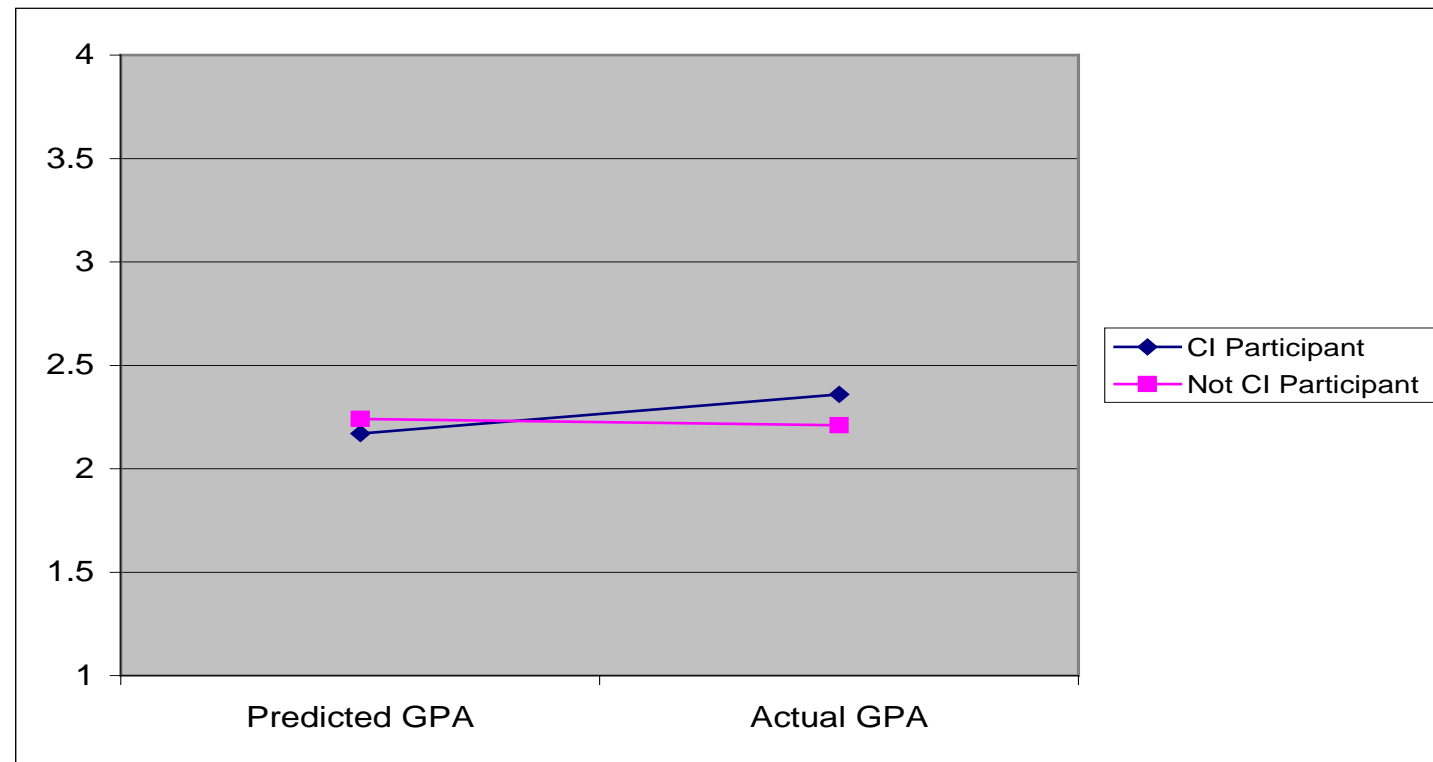
2004 = 98%



Critical Inquiry Courses

Figure 1. Fall 2001 Expected versus Actual Fall GPAs (excluding CI grade) for Conditional Beginning Freshman

	N	Predicted GPA	Actual GPA
CI Participant	115	2.17	2.36
Not CI Participant	907	2.24	2.21





What Students Learned/Gained From Advising: Pre-Post Results (N=294)

■ Academic Goal Setting

- I have a good understanding of my academic goals.
- I have learned to accept responsibility for achieving my academic goals.

■ Career Decision Making

- I am able to identify links between my chosen major and possible careers.
- I have a good understanding of how to decide on a major or future career.

■ Academic Hope/Goal Persistence

- At the present time, I am energetically pursuing my academic goals.
- There are lots of ways around any school-related problems that I may face.

■ Engagement

- I have a good understanding of ways to become engaged at IUPUI (co-curricular and campus life activities).
- I feel a sense of belonging at IUPUI.



Significant Predictors of Fall Grade Point Average (N=358)

- Academic Success Strategies (e.g., "I can maintain a balance between school and my personal life.")
- Confidence in Degree Completion (e.g., "I feel confident that I will complete my degree in a timely manner.")
- Academic Hope (e.g., "At the present time, I am energetically pursuing my academic goals.")



Personal Development Plans (PDPs)

- Personal Development Planning is a process which will enable first year students at IUPUI to understand, implement, and mark progress towards a degree and a career goal by creating and following a personalized plan that is open to revision and reevaluation every semester in collaboration with an academic advisor.



Three Components of a Personal Development Plan (PDP)

- **Semester in Review:** Reflect on individual strengths, long term goals, challenges faced during the first semester, and IUPUI resources utilized.
- **Principles of Undergraduate Learning:** Identify how IUPUI's learning outcomes (PUL's) are connected to personalized academic and experiential goals.
- **Peak Performance Plan:** Outline specific action steps, courses, and extracurricular activities targeted for the undergraduate experience.



PDP Assessment Plan

- Track the percentage of students who successfully complete a PDP (report on demographics, academic background, etc.)
- Conduct focus groups of faculty members
- Conduct focus groups of students who worked on a PDP
- Survey students who participated in the Fall 2007 pilot of the PDP to determine perceived efficacy, relevance, ease of use, intention to maintain and update the PDP, and so on.
- Conduct an in-depth evaluation of the PDP by collecting a random sample of PDPs from each participating first-year seminar and conducting content analysis/evaluation, based on a rubric.
- Investigate impact on student retention, GPA, certification to school, and changes of major.
- Ensure that the Fall 2008 pilot includes a control group of seminars that do not use the PDP, so that outcomes of PDP and non-PDP sections can be compared



Recommended Strategies

1. Incorporate proven local initiatives.
2. Have clear learning outcomes.
3. Place faculty at the center of design and delivery.
4. Address the specific concerns of YOUR students and THEIR families.



Recommended Strategies

5. Create collaborative decision-making processes.
6. Use careful and planned assessment.
7. Grow slowly.
8. Consider participation in multiple programs.



Using Assessment Results



Improving Service Units: Fostering On-Going Internal Learning

- On-Going Communication of UC Mission, Program Goals, and Assessment Findings
- Faculty Fellowships
- Gateway Group
- Involvement in Foundations Of Excellence in The First College Year National Project
- Program Reviews



Institutional Objectives for Program Review

- ***Provide planning information***
- ***Direct internal resource allocation***
- ***Provide monitoring to ensure quality***
- ***Offered as an internal review process***



Elements of Program Review

- ***Self Study***
- ***Review by Respected Peers***
- ***Recommendations***
- ***Follow-up***



Program Review

Examines:

Resources

Processes

Outcomes



Examples of Service Unit Outcomes

- ***Students Retained and Graduated***
- ***Students Achieve Learning Objectives***
- ***Students Successfully Transition into Degree Granting Schools***
- ***Students Adjust to College***
- ***Students Academically Prepared***
- ***External Recognition***

Following the Review

- ***Unit reviews the recommendations***
- ***Unit prepares written response***
- ***Unit presents response in administrative hearing***
- ***Responsible administrators agree upon responsive action(s)***
- ***Responsive actions are implemented***
- ***Re-review ensures action***



Recommendations from Literature Review

“If the review does not result in a program change, innovation or improvement, then it has not been used”

Barak & Breier, 1990

Service Unit Program Reviews: Fostering Empowerment and use of Results

- Unit director empowerment through active and on-going participation (the self-study).
- Reviewer feedback promotes collaboration, dialogue, and collective analysis.
- Active learning and discovery fostered by critical reflection process.
- Data-driven action plans developed following review.



New Student Orientation

- Dynamic one-day program that has evolved over the years.
- Designed to provide incoming students with the resources and information they need to successfully meet university demands and to acclimate to a new environment.
- Faculty involvement in program design and delivery.
- Student-lead orientation team.
- Serves over 5000 students per year.
- Programs for transfer students and parents.



Application One: Program Review of New Student Orientation

- Focus: Assessment of new students' needs, program processes, and student learning outcomes related to orientation.
- Stakeholders: perspectives from all major stakeholders (faculty, advisors, student affairs, and students)
- Self-Study: Focus groups with all major stakeholders and questionnaires administered to students three months after start of fall semester.



Program Review as Lever for Change in New Student Orientation

- Strategies developed to make orientation process more efficient
- More clearly defined goals and learning objectives established.
- Expanded tour and technology sessions added
- Increased opportunities for interactions and making connections included
- More in-depth advising model implemented.
- Support for unit director's professional development opportunities recommended.



Learning Center

- The Center strives to improve academic success among students through academic support programs such as Structured Learning Assistance and the Resource Desk.
- Programs are based on a belief that highly successful academic students can play an integral role in the academic development of their peers.
- Collaborative learning, role modeling, peer interaction, and peer support are all components.
- Training mentors and providing continuous mentor support are considered critical to the Center's success.



Application Two: Learning Center Review

- Focus: Assessment of center administrative processes; resources; relationships with other units and faculty; and student learning outcomes related to mentoring programs.
- Self-Study: Documentation of center resources and program process; web-based surveys from multiple stakeholders (faculty, peer mentors, and students receiving mentoring).



Program Review as Lever for Change in Learning Center

- New perspectives on the benefits of peer mentoring campus-wide.
- More institutional support for program expansion.
- Ability to secure resources to implement proposed improvements.
- Modification of the Supplemental Instruction mentoring program.
- Improved mentor training.
- Redesigned instruments to more effectively measure student learning outcomes.



Unit Director's Perspective

- “The program review process gave me a unique perspective to actually give some intentional effort to the quality of the Learning Center programs. I know as a practitioner, it seems like we barely have time to keep our programs running, but it was a wonderful opportunity the university gave me to focus on my program more holistically and determine what courses of action to take in order for our unit to thrive in the future by allowing experts in the field to come to campus and actually view our operations first hand.”



Benefits Of Program Reviews for Service Units

- Establishes atmosphere of openness and trust regarding assessment data.
- Creates positive affect regarding usefulness of assessment.
- Leverages university “opposing” forces.
- Brings external legitimacy to the service unit.



Assessment Challenges

- Defining and measuring learning.
- Using assessment results to improve teaching and learning.
- Identifying what program components have the most positive educational outcomes and for what groups of students.
- Communicating results in a timely manner so they are used when decisions are made.
- Ensuring accountability in planning, conducting, using results.
- Communicating and publicly reporting the bad news.



Assessment Challenges (continued)

- Some of units or programs embrace assessment plans while others do not.
- Some areas lend themselves to assessment better than others.
- Assessing programs that are experiencing or will experience significant growth or change is difficult.
- Determining the right time to begin a review can be challenging.



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UCOL Organization
Programs

Research & Assessment

- First-Year Seminars U110
- Learning Communities
- Critical Inquiry U112
- Summer Academy Bridge
- Mentoring
- Reviews
- National Projects
- Faculty Fellowships
- Retention
- Entering Student Survey
- Institutional Research-IMIR
- Policies
- Procedures
- Publications



Faculty & Staff: Research & Assessment

University College includes numerous support programs, grant initiatives, and academic courses. In order to facilitate on-going communication with the campus community and outside constituencies concerning the effectiveness of all programs in contributing to student success, University College developed a comprehensive assessment plan, which includes qualitative and quantitative methodologies for evaluating particular program components/operations. The three-phase approach model incorporated by University College includes an assessment of needs, processes, and outcomes.

Virtually all of University College's programs, including orientation, advising, student mentoring, learning communities, academic support for gateway courses, summer bridge, and honors are completed in cooperation with other undergraduate schools and units. Assessment results are used to continuously improve programs and to ensure unit mission alignment.



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