

Summer Bridge Program 2011 Qualitative Report

Daniel Trujillo, M.S.
Michele J. Hansen, Ph.D.

University College – Research, Planning, & Evaluation
Indiana University Purdue University, Indianapolis (IUPUI)

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<https://research.uc.iupui.edu/>

Introduction

The IUPUI Summer Bridge is a program for incoming freshmen held in August before fall classes begin. “Students are divided into groups of approximately 25 based on their interest in pursuing a particular major or in exploring various major options. Bridge participants establish networks for success with faculty, advisors, student mentors, and librarians; make friends with other students; learn to handle college-level expectations for reading and writing; receive individualized support for math; begin connecting with a school and major; become acquainted with the campus; and gain experience in using instructional technology” (bridge.uc.iupui.edu). The goal of this evaluation report is to identify student participants’ opinions and perceptions of the program through examining open-ended questionnaire response feedback.

Sample

During the summer of 2011 a total of 455 First-Time, Full-time IUPUI students participated in the Summer Bridge program. Students were asked to voluntarily participate in a questionnaire at the conclusion of the program. The questionnaire consisted of questions that were both quantitative and qualitative in design. Three open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire in an effort to gather students’ perceptions of the program. The number of student responses varied depending on the question asked:

Questions:

- 1.) Please describe what you found most valuable about the Summer Bridge program. (n = 407)
- 2.) Please describe what you found least valuable about the Summer Bridge program. (n = 377)
- 3.) What specific suggestions do you have for improving the Summer Bridge program? (n = 347)

Method

End-of-Course Questionnaire data was first uploaded into ATLAS-TI; a software program that assists in the management and analysis of qualitative data. A *coding* process was then employed as the primary means of examination. Through an *open coding* process student responses were arranged into specific topical theme categories. The topical theme categories allowed for individual student perceptions of the 2011 Summer Bridge program to be considered collectively. Theme categories were considered to be “emerged or notable” if 5% or more of students responded in a similar manner. While this method of analysis essentially quantifies student comments, it does allow for the students’ key perceptions and feelings about the program to be identified. Many of the comments are concise statements and may not fully reflect the entirety of students’ opinions.

In a number of instances a singular student comment addressed more than one thematic category. The concept of *Co-Occurrence* best explains this phenomenon. For example, a singular student response could address the topical theme categories of “Meeting New People and Forming Friendships” and Group “Activities and Discussions”, simultaneously. In these instances student comments were considered in multiple analyses, areas of discussion, and accompanied tables. It is important that the entirety of a student’s response is considered. Listed below is the total number of individual student responses and the average number of codes assigned to those comments.

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| Total Individual Student Comments: | <u>1131</u> |
| Total Codes Assigned: | <u>1575</u> |

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Average Number of Codes Assigned to Individual Student Comment: | <u>1.392</u> |
|---|--------------|

Report created by: Daniel J. Trujillo, M.S. and
Michele J. Hansen, PhD, Executive Director - UC Office of Research, Planning & Evaluation

Results

Through the examination of open-ended response feedback a wide variety of students' perceptions of the 2011 Summer Bridge program were obtained. These perceptions included students' opinions about the most and least valuable aspects of the program, as well as suggestions of improvement. First, a highlights section outlining notable student opinions is provided. This is followed by a comparison highlights section that contrasts notable students' responses with those from previous years. Finally, students' specific responses to each open-ended question, including examples of actual student comments, are presented. (Tables 1-3). It is our hope that this report will aid Summer Bridge instructional teams and administrators in gaining a further understanding of the program by identifying both areas of achievement and those that may benefit from improvement. For previous program reports please feel free to visit (<https://research.uc.iupui.edu/>).

2011 Program Highlights

Specific Thematic Codes are in Quotations (“---”)

Most Valued Aspects of the 2011 Summer Bridge Program:

- “Meeting New People and Forming Friendships” was the most common response (33%) given by student questionnaire respondents when they were prompted to describe the most valuable aspect of the 2011 Summer Bridge program.
- 24% of student respondents indicated “Campus Navigation (Tours & Scavenger Hunt) as a most valuable component of the Summer Bridge program. 17% of students denoted “Gaining a Greater Understanding of IUPUI” as a most valuable program aspect.
- Students also considered several other areas of Summer Bridge to be the most valuable program aspects: “College Transition Assistance” (15%), “Instructional Team Interaction & Support” (14%), and “Gaining an Understanding of Campus Resources” (9%), among others.

Least Valued Aspects of the 2011 Summer Bridge Program:

- “N/A, None, Nothing” was the most common response (27%) provided by students when they were asked to indicate the least valuable component of the 2011 Summer Bridge program.
- 12% of student respondents considered “Mathematics Components” to be a least valuable aspect of the Summer Bridge program. 11% of students indicated “Group Activities & Discussions” as a least valuable program component.
- Students also considered other aspects of the Summer Bridge program to be least valuable such as for example, “Library Components” (10%) and “Reading & Writing Activities (9%).

Suggestions for Improving the Summer Bridge Program:

- 22% of students provided a response of “N/A, None, Nothing” when asked to provide suggestions for improving the Summer Bridge program.
- 12% of students suggested that the program could benefit from “More or Improved Group Activities & Discussions”. 12% of respondents suggested that there be “Less Time Commitments & Restraints”.
- 9% of respondents provided the suggestion to have “More Peer Interaction Opportunities (Across Groups)” while 6% of students provided the suggestion to “Improve Mathematics Components” .

**Five (5) Year Comparison Highlights:
2007 – 2011 Summer Bridge Program**
Specific Thematic Codes are in Quotations (“---”)

Most Valued Aspect of the Summer Bridge Program (2007 – 2011)

- “Meeting New People and Forming Friendships” was the most common response provided across Summer Bridge cohorts when students were asked for their opinions of most valuable program aspects. It ranked as the #1 most frequent response given by the 2011 cohort (33%), 2010 cohort (42%), 2009 cohort (39%), 2008 cohort (41%), and 2007 cohort (41%).
- Student participants across all cohorts indicated “Campus Navigation (Tours)” as a most valuable program aspect. It ranked as the #2 most common response provided by the 2011 cohort (24%), 2010 cohort (38%), 2009 cohort (32%), 2008 cohort (29%), and 2007 cohort (34%).
- “College Transition Assistance” was the #4 most valuable program aspect identified by the 2011 cohort (15%). While it was the #3 program aspect in 2010 (14%), it was also the #4 most common response given by students in the 2009 cohort (18%) and 2008 cohort (16%).

Least Valued Aspects of the Summer Bridge Program (2007 – 2011)

- Students often responded “N/A, None, Nothing” when asked to describe least valuable aspects of the Summer Bridge program. It ranked as the #1 most common response for the 2011 cohort (27%), 2010 cohort (29%), 2009 cohort (19%), 2008 cohort (25%), and 2007 cohort (18%).
- 2011 student respondents (12%) indicated “Mathematics Components” was the #2 least valuable program aspect. This was also the #2 response given by the 2010 cohort (22%) and 2009 cohort (14%) although with a higher rate of frequency.
- “Time Commitments and Restraints” has often been cited by students as a least valuable Summer Bridge program aspect. In 2010 and 2009, 10% of students identified this component in their responses. However, in 2011 only 5% of students denoted this aspect, the #8 item in frequency.

Suggestions for Improving the Summer Bridge Program (2007-2011)

- “N/A, None, Nothing” was the #1 most common suggestion indicated for Summer Bridge program improvement given by the 2011 (22%), 2010 (28%), 2008 (28%), and 2007 (20%) cohorts. It was also the #2 most common suggestions for improvement provided by the 2009 cohort (21%).
- “More or Improved Group Activities and Discussion” was the #2 most common suggestion for Summer Bridge improvement provided by the 2011 (12%) and 2010 (11%) cohorts. It was the #3 most frequent suggestion given by the 2009 cohort (10%) and 2007 cohort (12%).
- “Less Time Commitments and Restraints” was the #3 most frequent suggestion for improvement given by the 2011 (12%) and 2010 (10%) cohorts. It was the #1 most common suggestion for improvement in 2009 (27%) and the #2 most frequent suggestion given the 2008 (15%) and 2007 (14%) cohorts.

Table 1: Most Valuable Aspects of the 2011 Summer Bridge Program (n = 407)

Please describe what you found most valuable about the Summer Bridge program:

| Most Valued Aspect | N | % | Examples of Actual Student Comments |
|---|------------|------------|---|
| Meeting New People & Forming Friendships | <u>136</u> | <u>33%</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Meeting new people”. • “Making new friends”. • “The relationships”. • “That I was able to meet really good friends”. • “Having the opportunity to make new friends”. • “The relationships you develop with the other participants”. • “I have a study group and already a small group of friends”. • “Meeting other students who will be in some of my classes”. • “All my new friends and connections that I now know”. • “I found being able to meet new people and make friends was most valuable”. • “I got to meet a lot of new people that have a lot of the same kinds of interests”. |
| Campus Navigation (Tours & Scavenger Hunt) | <u>96</u> | <u>24%</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Tours”. • “The scavenger hunt”. • “Finding your way around campus”. • “Learning where your classes are”. • “Getting to know the campus layout”. • “The tours were very helpful and informative”. • “Learning about the campus, where rooms are, organizations”. • “I found that walking from place to place on campus was the most valuable because I now know my way around”. • “What I found most valuable would be that I know how to get around the campus without getting lost”. |
| Gaining a Greater Understanding of IUPUI | <u>70</u> | <u>17%</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Learning about the school itself”. • “Know how things work around the campus”. • “Learning about campus”. • “I learned more information about IUPUI and the campus”. • “Getting comfortable with the campus”. • “Getting to know the school and meeting new people”. • “The feeling of being comfortable and confident on and about campus”. • “I learned all about the school, the different people I can talk to, and I feel more comfortable coming into college next week”. • “I feel that it was very informative and helpful learning new things about campus”. |
| College Transition Assistance | <u>60</u> | <u>15%</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Slowly adjusting into college situations”. • “The ability to get used to college before everybody else”. • “Learning about the college itself. Making the transition to college”. • “Transition from high school to college learning/life”. • “The learning of how different college life is than high school”. • “Lives up to its name, bridge between high school and college”. • “After being out of school for a year, it eased me back into the life of a scholar”. • “Helped get me into the college mindset and show me college level skills”. |

Continued

Table 1: (Continued)

| Most Valued Aspect | N | % | Examples of Actual Student Comments |
|--|-----------|------------|---|
| Instructional Team Interaction & Support <i>Faculty (32)</i> <i>Peer Mentors (13)</i> | <u>55</u> | <u>14%</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The info from advisors, mentors, and students”. • “Most valuable thing was meeting the staff!”. • “Helpful instructors and mentors that are willing to help”. • “The helpful staff and the learning community formed”. • “I found the interaction with advisors, mentors, and staff to be the most valuable”. • “Talking with the professors”. • “Getting to meet your teachers beforehand”. • “Getting to know students and faculty members before school started”. • “Being able to connect with professors and let them get to know you more”. • “Student mentors!”. • “The mentors were willing to help”. • “Student mentor relations”. • “I liked having a student advisor and a student mentor. Definitely relatable”. |
| Gaining an Understanding of Campus Resources | <u>37</u> | <u>9%</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Explaining of resources”. • “Learning about campus resources”. • “Learning about the MAC and other resources”. • “The information about all the resources”. • “I think learning about all the resources available to students”. • “Being informed of the various available to me - mentors, help centers. Etc”. • “What I found was that I now know where to get help when needed”. • “I found all of the resources very helpful. Now I know where and who to go to help when needed”. |
| Learning College / Instructor “Expectations” | <u>24</u> | <u>6%</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Learning what to expect”. • “The expectations of college and what I need to do”. • “Knowing where I am and what is expected of me”. • “Expectations of how college was going to be liked were changed”. • “Learning what to expect in college and how to be an organized student”. • “Learning college etiquette, exploring diversity, study skills”. • “It prepared me for class expectations and requirements”. • “Getting to know campus and expectations before all of the other freshman get here. It gives me a heads up on all of them so I can help them”. |
| Real Classroom Experience (Practice Lecture) | <u>19</u> | <u>5%</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Lecture preview”. • “The big scary lecture”. • “Sitting through a college lecture”. • “Being exposed to real professors and classrooms”. • “Learning about what to expect in lectures”. • “Learning what to expect in classes and where stuff was”. • “Sitting through the Bio lecture because I got first-hand experience what to expect when classes start”. |

Notes: Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole. The remaining responses were so varied that no major themes emerged. (N) indicates the number of student responses included in analysis; percentages (%) are based on the number of question respondents. Sub-Categories are denoted by *italics* and consist of participant responses that address a specific component of the larger thematic category.

Table 2: Least Valued Aspects of the 2011 Summer Bridge Program (n = 377)

Please describe what you found least valuable about the Summer Bridge program.

| Least Valued Aspect | N | % | Examples of Actual Student Comments |
|--|------------|------------|---|
| N/A, None, Nothing | <u>102</u> | <u>27%</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “n/a”. • “None”. • “Nothing”. • “Nothing was not valuable”. • “I really don’t think anything is not valuable”. • “Nothing, everything seemed to help in some way”. • “Nothing was least valuable. Everything had a purpose to what we did”. |
| Mathematics Components | <u>47</u> | <u>12%</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Math class”. • “Math sessions”. • “Math lab”. • “Math! I dislike math”. • “Math I felt like I was learning things from 8th grade”. • “I felt the math because it was more of just review”. • “Math and the way it was taught, felt like busy work”. • “The math levels need to be worked out. I was in level 1 preparing for 001 when I may not even have to take a math class. I was way below my level.” • “The activities in the MAC lab were boring and not interactive. I hate ‘busy work’ and filling out worksheets. I would prefer more interactive learning with math.” |
| Group Activities & Discussions <i>Icebreakers (15)</i> <i>Museum (11)</i> | <u>41</u> | <u>11%</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I felt like some of the activities were pointless”. • “Some of the class discussions”. • “Playing all the games and being babied between classes”. • “The least valuable were some of the games we played in the morning”. • “Games, I felt team building exercises made actual team building hard”. • “Ice breakers”. • “The icebreakers that we did every morning”. • “The icebreakers in the second week”. • “Ice breaker games got boring sometimes. We need new games/activities”. • “Trip to museum”. • “IRA museum”. • “Eiteljorg museum - felt rushed”. |
| Library Components | <u>36</u> | <u>10%</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The library tour”. • “Library disaster”. • “The library sessions”. • “The library course, I did not learn enough”. • “The library because I didn’t learn how to research”. • “Still confused about library resources”. • “I found that I disliked the library sessions most. They were hard to follow”. • “The library. I didn’t get what I needed out of it. I think that students should take a complete tour of the whole building”. |

Continued

Table 2: (Continued)

| Least Valued Aspect | N | % | Examples of Actual Student Comments |
|--|----|----|---|
| <p>Reading & Writing Activities</p> <p><i>Journals Assignments (11)</i></p> | 35 | 9% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “English class”. • “Reading class”. • “Going to writing class”. • “College reading only 1 session”. • “The writing portion was the least valuable”. • “Writing, I didn’t really learn anything new, I felt like it was a waste of time” • “I found that the literature discussion was unneeded. We covered all of that information in writing”. • “Journals”. • “The journals every night”. • “The journal assignments”. • “The journals were a little to repetitive.” |
| <p>General Positive Comment</p> | 26 | 7% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I loved it”. • “I liked it all”. • “All for me was great”. • “Everything was valuable”. • “I think everything we did helped in one way or another”. • “I found all the information really valuable”. • “I thought all of it was helpful at least a little bit”. • “I thought every aspect of the Summer Bridge was valuable”. • “I found absolutely 100% of the things we did to be extremely valuable”. |
| <p>Not Meaningful, Helpful, or Productive</p> | 20 | 5% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Overly obvious advice”. • “Not serious enough”. • “Going over things we already know”. • “I knew everything from SSA. This wasted a lot of time”. • “I feel that some of the classes we had didn’t really do anything for me”. • “The assignments were kind of unhelpful to me. They had nothing to do with psychology generally”. • “Having to learn about what not to do in college when most of it is common sense”. • “Some of the math and writing already familiar w/ most of the teacher’s points, work was too simple”. |
| <p>Time Commitments & Restraints</p> | 20 | 5% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Long and tiring”. • “The length of each class”. • “The long hours of bridge!”. • “The two weeks”. • “It was way too long. It seemed like high school but longer”. • “The 9-4 schedule no actual breaks made it feel like high school”. • “We got finished with a lot of things early. Instead of waiting around or taking breaks I would rather get out at 3:00”. • “Day was way too long had way too much homework no time to meet new people always doing homework not fun!!”. |

Notes: Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole. The remaining responses were so varied that no major themes emerged. (N) indicates the number of student responses included in analysis; percentages (%) are based on the number of question respondents. Sub-Categories are denoted by *italics* and consist of participant responses that address a specific component of the larger thematic category.

Table 3: Suggestions for Improving the Summer Bridge Program (n = 347)

What specific suggestions do you have for improving the Summer Bridge program?

| Suggestion for Improvement | N | % | Examples of Actual Student Comments |
|---|-----------|------------|--|
| N/A, None, Nothing | <u>75</u> | <u>22%</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “n/a”. • “None”. • “Nothing”. • “No suggestions”. • “Nothing specific”. • “Leave it as it is”. • “Everything was necessary. There isn’t much I would change”. |
| More or Improved Group Activities & Discussions <i>Field Trips (6)</i> | <u>41</u> | <u>12%</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “More group activities”. • “More fun hands-on activities”. • “Different activities, more free food”. • “Have set team building activities planned”. • “Have more fun activities to do with other groups”. • “Do more fun activities but still cover the basics of IUPUI”. • “Make sure everyone talks by going in a circle to get everyone involved”. • “More in-depth conversations and more information on each person’s specific major”. • “More fun activities, 9-4 is a long day, we need a little more time for fun”. • “More fun places instead of the museum”. • “Go to the zoo. Thank you very much”. • “Go to more places. Maybe a building a day and explore it”. • “Going to somewhere fun, like the zoo or Indiana State Museum”. • “Have a day when you just go out in the city so you see what is available off campus”. |
| Less Time Commitments & Restraints <i>Shorter Days (15)</i> <i>More “Breaks” (8)</i> <i>Shorter Program (4)</i> | <u>40</u> | <u>12%</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Change the time”. • “Make it a shorter time”. • “Way too long, short classes”. • “Making the times shorter through the week”. • “I would make it not so long or not as many days because I work and had to take a lot of time off”. • “Shorter days!”. • “Make the hours shorter the day is too long”. • “Shortening the hours 9-4 is way too long”. • “Leaving earlier, so not so exhausted”. • “Bigger breaks so you meet more people”. • “More time for lunch to explore”. • “More time to get to know other groups. More breaks”. • “Give more freedom in between classes - teaches time management”. • “Shorten bridge”. • “I think the length should be shortened to a week”. • “Try to not make the days so long. If you do then maybe only go for a week instead of two”. |

Continued

Table 3: (Continued)

| Suggestion for Improvement | N | % | Examples of Actual Student Comments |
|---|-----------|------------|--|
| General Positive Comment | <u>38</u> | <u>11%</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “It was a great experience!”. • “Keep up the enthusiasm”. • “You guys are awesome”. • “Everything was wonderful”. • “I think that it is great and absolutely useful to anyone and everyone”. • “Having more people do it. It really helps out students be successful”. • “I think that the program was great!”. • “I think the summer Bridge is excellent and does not need improved”. • “I absolutely LOVED this bridge program! I would make no changes”. • “I don’t know, I think its fine. It’s a really good experience and I would do it again if I could”. |
| More Peer Interaction Opportunities (Across Bridge Groups) | <u>30</u> | <u>9%</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “More student interaction”. • “Give students more personal time to interact”. • “More interaction w/other groups”. • “More than anything just allowing people to interact”. • “Have all groups meet and free food”. • “More group to group interaction”. • “Meet other groups such as nursing instead of just meeting other engineering groups”. • “Have multiple groups interact instead of being with only the same people for 2 weeks”. • “There could be more activities to where all the participants can get together and get to know one another”. |
| Improve Mathematics Components | <u>20</u> | <u>6%</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Improve the math sessions; we did almost the same thing every time”. • “Less math sessions that are meaningless”. • “Make Math not mandatory”. • “Improve math by making it productive”. • “And the math portion should be reevaluated”. • “Letting kids move up in math if their level is too easy”. • “Interactive hands-on math teaching instead of doing worksheets”. • “Make the math section a little more challenging”. • “The Mac Center doesn’t teach you anything just give you work to keep you busy”. |

Notes: Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole.

The remaining responses were so varied that no major themes emerged.

(N) indicates the number of student responses included in analysis; percentages (%) are based on the number of question respondents.

Sub-Categories are denoted by *italics* and consist of participant responses that address a specific component of the larger thematic category.