Hanging in the towel: Student considerations for leaving IUB

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Agenda

• Brief overview of NSSE
• Overview of Persistence
  • Astin’s Theory of Student Involvement
• Details about IUB’s NSSE data
• Overview of students’ first-year experiences
  • Challenges
  • Seeking help
  • Considerations for leaving IUB
• Programmatic recommendations
College Student Persistence

- Defined as the **continual pursuance** of a student in a degree program leading toward the completion of the program
- It begins once the student is **admitted** to the institution (King)
- Freshman year is the **most significant** intervention in student persistence (Lewis, 1999)
Astin’s Theory of Student Involvement

• Five factors of student involvement (Astin, 1984)
  1. Academic involvement
  2. Involvement with faculty
  3. Involvement with peers
  4. Involvement with work
  5. Other forms of involvement

• Stresses that involvement requires an investment in time in academics, building relationships, and active participating (Astin, 1984)

• Need to develop strong collaboration between student and academic affairs (NASPA, 2003)
NSSE

• National Survey of Student Engagement
  • An annual survey of first-year and senior students measuring their participation in educationally effective experiences
  • Topics cover content such as aspects of academic challenge, learning with peers, experiences with faculty, campus environment, and high-impact practices

• Participation
  • More than 1,500 colleges and universities have participated in NSSE since 2000
  • IUB has participated in NSSE 2004-2012, 2015
IUB NSSE Data Details

- 2015 administration of NSSE
- 2,481 first-years
  - 32% response rate
- 1,744 seniors
  - 22% response rate
- Slightly over-representative of female respondents but results are weighted by sex
- Well represented by racial-ethnic identification
FYE Data

• First-Year Experiences Topical Module
• 2,131 first-years responded to these items
• Questions ask about
  • Challenges faced
  • Help-seeking behavior
  • If and why students considered leaving IUB
• Comparison group: seven institutions with a similar Carnegie Classification (Research Universities—Very High, High research)
Respondents

- 32% Business
- 13% Biological Sciences, Agriculture, & Natural Sciences
- 10% Health Professions
- 9% Social Sciences
- 3% started college elsewhere
- Educational aspirations:
  - 29% Bachelor’s degree
  - 44% Master’s degree
  - 25% Doctoral or professional degree
- 88% Dorm or campus housing
- 47% Man
- 51% Woman
- 1% Another gender identity
- 25% first-generation
- 96% 19 or younger
- 9% international
- 13% Asian
- 4% Black/African American
- 4% Hispanic/Latino
- 69% White
- 6% Multiracial
- 88% heterosexual
- 5% LGB
What do you think are students biggest challenges?

• Learning course material
  • Managing time
• Getting help with school work
  • Interacting with faculty
During the current school year, how difficult have the following been for you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Difficulty</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managing your time</td>
<td>3.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning course material</td>
<td>3.3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3.0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2.9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Challenges

During the current school year, how difficult have the following been for you?

<table>
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<th>RU/V/H</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
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</table>

- **Very difficult**
- **Not at all difficult**

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Where do you think students get help with their coursework?

- Friend(s) or other students(s)
  - Family member(s)
  - Faculty member(s)
  - Academic advisor(s)
- Learning support service(s)
- Other persons or offices
During the current school year, About how many times did you see *any* assistance with coursework?
During the current school year,
About how many times did you see *any* assistance with coursework?
Which of the following was your primary source of help?

- Friend(s) or other student(s): 55%
- Faculty member(s): 24%
- Learning support services: 10%
- Not applicable: 5%
- Family member(s): 3%
- Academic advisor(s): 2%
- Other persons or offices: 1%
Which of the following was your primary source of help?

- Friend(s) or other student(s): 55% IUB, 54% RU/V/H
- Faculty member(s): 24% IUB, 21% RU/V/H
- Learning support services: 10% IUB, 11% RU/V/H
- Not applicable: 5% IUB, 5% RU/V/H
- Family member(s): 3% IUB, 4% RU/V/H
- Academic advisor(s): 2% IUB, 3% RU/V/H
- Other persons or offices: 1% IUB, 1% RU/V/H
What percentage of students seriously consider leaving IUB, and why?

- To improve career prospects
- Due to unsatisfactory academic progress or performance
  - Financial reasons
- To obtain a better quality education
  - Personal reasons
  - Other reasons
During the current school year, have you seriously considered leaving this institution?

- Yes
  - IUB: 26%
  - RU/V/H: 28%

50%
25%
0%

Yes
Reasons for Considering Leaving

Why did you consider leaving?

- To improve my career prospects: IUB 24%, RU/V/H 27%
- Due to unsatisfactory academic performance: IUB 23%, RU/V/H 30%
- Financial reasons: IUB 30%, RU/V/H 33%
- To obtain a better quality education: IUB 21%, RU/V/H 32%
- Personal reasons: IUB 43%, RU/V/H 34%
- Another reason: IUB 24%, RU/V/H 24%
Write-In Overview

- 132 write-in comments
- Top four
  1. Fit, climate, environment, location, etc.
  2. Program admission, major, etc.
  3. Social, social expectations, friends, etc.
  4. Mental health, happiness, homesickness, etc.
- Others: athletics, diversity, administration issues, weather, significant other, financial reasons, health
1. Student-Environment Fit

- 27% of the respondents said that fit was the reason they considered leaving IU-Bloomington
  
  “To go to a university that matches my personality and has students with similar values to me”

  “Could do better if I was at a school with more 1-1 interaction”

  ”Boring, Weather, Difference of people”
2. Program Admission, Major, Etc.

• 21% of the respondents said that major and their requirements was the reason that they considered leaving IU-Bloomington

   “If I don't get admission to the Kelley School of Business, I will leave.”

   “Different nursing program if I don't get admitted into IUB’s”

   “Dental hygiene major not offered here”
3. Social Life

- 16% of the respondents said that social life was the reason that they considered leaving IU-Bloomington

  “I didn’t get into sorority recruitment”

  “Overwhelmed with social aspects”

  “Lack of social life first semester”
4. Mental health

• 10% of the respondents indicated that their mental health was the reason they considered leaving IU-Bloomington

  “Feeling lonely, friends, social life”

  “Depression”

  “Stress, wanting to put off college and start at a new school in the fall. Decided to tough it out and so glad I did!”
Discussion

Given your particular position or office, what about these responses is positive or affirming? What is most troubling or concerning?

What can your office do to help with some of these issues?

What else could NSSE tell you that might be helpful?
Increasing Persistence
Programmatic Recommendations

• Create and **market** opportunities for faculty engagement (research, mentoring, etc.)
  • Faculty will be provided a letter of service for their tenure portfolio

• **Expand** the honors program to include more diverse and inclusive courses

• Create opportunities for parents and families of **all socio-economic statuses** to support their child
Increasing Persistence

Programmatic Recommendations

• Provide quantitative and qualitative data of students in the top programs (Kelley, Jacob, Nursing)
  • Better understanding of the requirements of the program
  • Use a panel of students to add a personal aspect about the programs
• Provide opportunities/assignments for students to actively research other majors
Increasing Persistence
Programmatic Recommendations

• Create a program that **educates** high school students on the types of colleges and universities
  • Help them choose a college that fits their needs

• Create a social **squad**
  • Students are grouped into squads who attend social events and discuss their experiences

• My experience at the....
  • Create **YouTube** videos of students **sharing** their experiences working with different offices like the writing center, counseling center, etc
Increasing Persistence
Programmatic Recommendations

• I wish my professor knew...
  • Create a writing assignment in which students free write anything they need assistance with. Following the assignment, match them to a respective person in a department or program to assist them.

• Dear IU,
  • Students will have the opportunity to provide advice to their peers who are in need of assistance
Final thoughts and questions?

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• King, C. Factors related to the persistence of first year college students at four-year colleges and universities: A paradigm shift. Retrieved March 21, 2016, from: https://www.wju.edu/faculty/cardinalperspectives/king04_05.pdf

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