Program Review for Summer Bridge, First-Year Seminars, and Themed Learning Communities

ASSESSMENT AND EFFECTIVENESS

Assessment Methods

University College (UC) at IUPUI has a comprehensive range of programs, services, and policies designed to enhance student learning, academic achievement, and persistence. The focus on continuously improving student academic achievement and persistence has made a strong commitment to assessment and evaluation an integral aspect of the UC mission. Assessing programs designed to enhance student educational outcomes during the first-year of college such as Summer Bridge, First-Year Seminars, and Themed Learning Communities requires careful conceptualization of the processes and dynamic relationships involved before choosing outcome measures and evaluation designs. As such, the assessment strategy includes a three-phase approach to assessment including needs, process, and outcome assessment. In addition, we employ mix-method approaches that involve a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods as well as indirect and direct measures of student learning. Please see Figure 1. We also strive to assess multiple outcomes such as student engagement, learning gains, retention, and academic performance. In order to ensure a comprehensive understanding of program impacts, we use multiple sources and collect information from multiple levels (e.g., faculty, student, and institutional levels of effectiveness).

Our assessment and research on academic achievement, persistence, and learning often focuses on first-year students and the programs they participate in. Innovations such as intrusive and developmental advising, first-year seminars, Themed Learning Communities, Student Peer Mentoring, and Summer Bridge have been centered in UC. UC leadership often facilitates campus-wide attention when discerning what works in enhancing undergraduate academic success and retention (e.g., Dean Kathy Johnson chairs the Council on Retention and Graduation). Additionally, the characteristics and expectations of entering students (needs) evolve continually, and University Colleges can be focal points for institutional attention to these needs.

IUPUI Context: First-Year Student Characteristics and Academic Success Outcomes

Over the past decade UC has collected an array of information about the characteristics of first-year students including an Entering Student Survey (ESS) and institutional data (please view **Appendix A** and **Appendix B** to see detailed information about IUPUI First Year Students and the entire population of University College Students). The ESS is administered during New Student Orientation sessions and helps us to assess a broader array of motivational, cognitive, and behavioral factors that are predictive of student learning and success (e.g., Sense of Belonging, Academic Hope, Academic Self-Efficacy, Behaviors in High School or Previous College, etc.). Shown in Table 1 are the factors that have been identified as *Thriving Factors*. University College serves over 6000 students per year and approximately 60% of incoming students are not directly admitted into a school at entry. Thus, University College plays a pivotal role in helping students make successful transitions to their academic major programs.

Figure 1: University College Assessment Framework

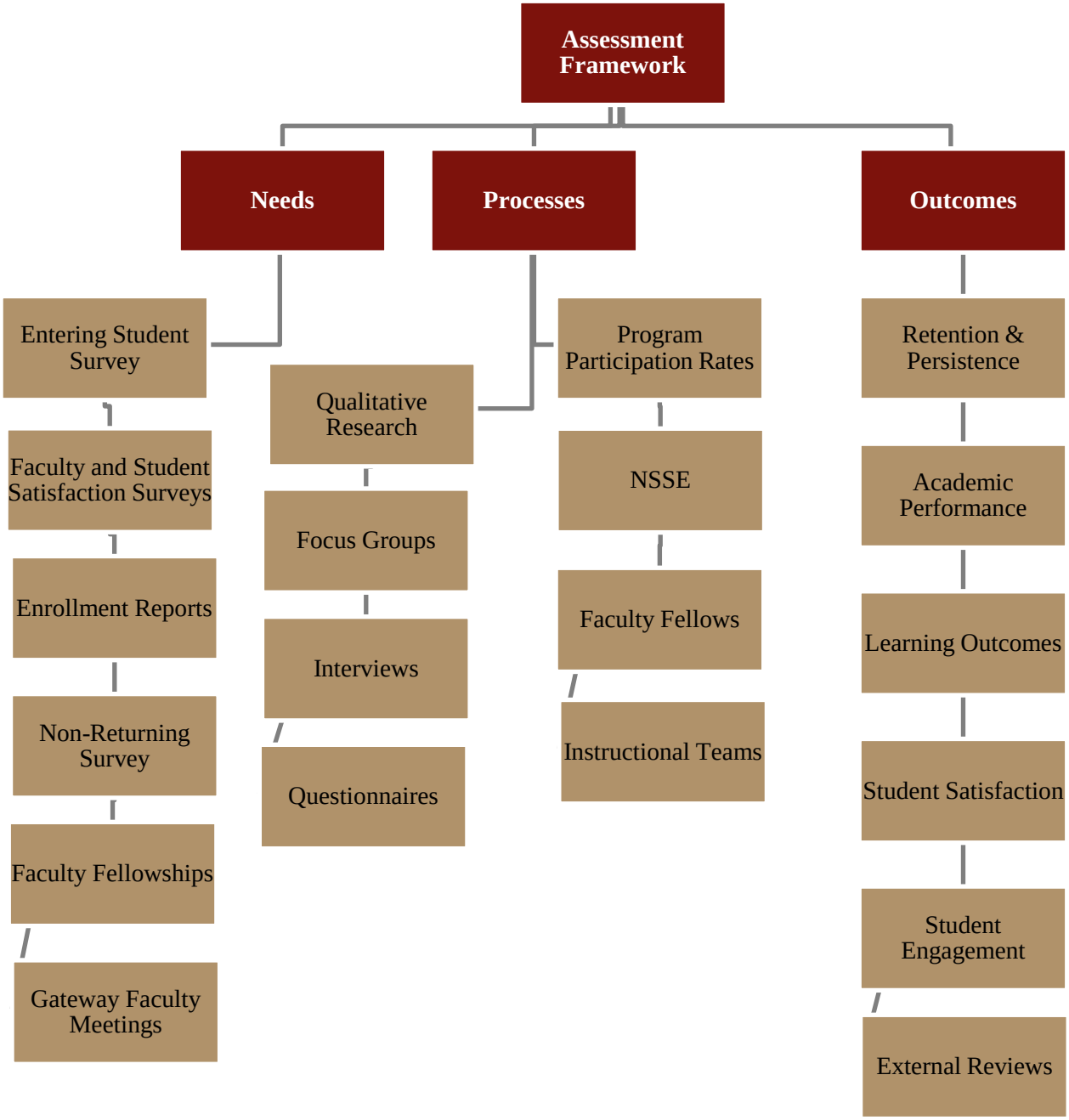


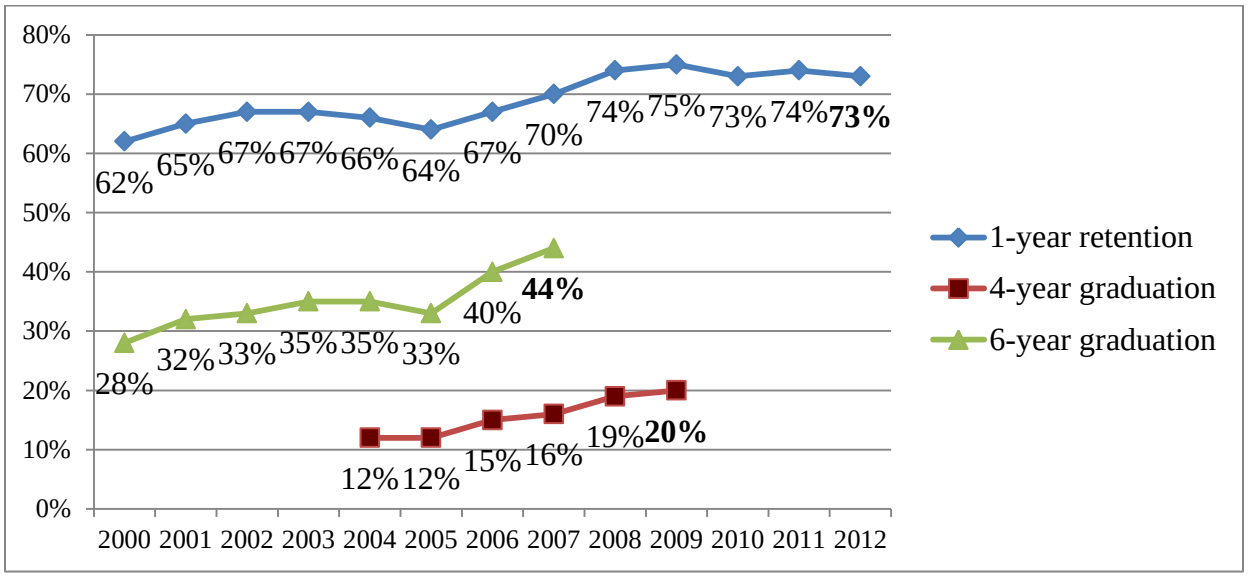
Table 1. Success or Thriving Factors for IUPUI Students – Associated with High Levels of Academic Achievement and Persistence

- Gender (Female)
- Having low levels of unmet financial need and not having low family income (Pell Grant as a proxy).
- Low levels of unmet financial need or from high levels of Socioeconomic Status – (SES)
- High levels of academic preparation (High school GPA is a strong predictor)
- High rigor and intensity of High School Curriculum
- Not being a First-Generation college student
- Living on-campus
- High levels of institutional commitment (not intending to transfer at entry)
- Not expecting to spend significant amounts of time engaged in Non-Academic Activities (Work for pay off-campus, spending time caring for dependents, volunteering, socializing)
- Reporting that she/he was careful in completing high school assignments and completing assignments on time.
- Reporting high levels of sense of belonging to IUPUI and other students early in transition.
- Participating in early interventions or academic support programs.
- Applying and enrolling early (proxy for motivation).
- Placing into credit bearing math.
- Participating in early interventions such as Summer Bridge, First-Year Seminars, or Themed Learning Communities.

IUPUI Persistence and Graduation Rates

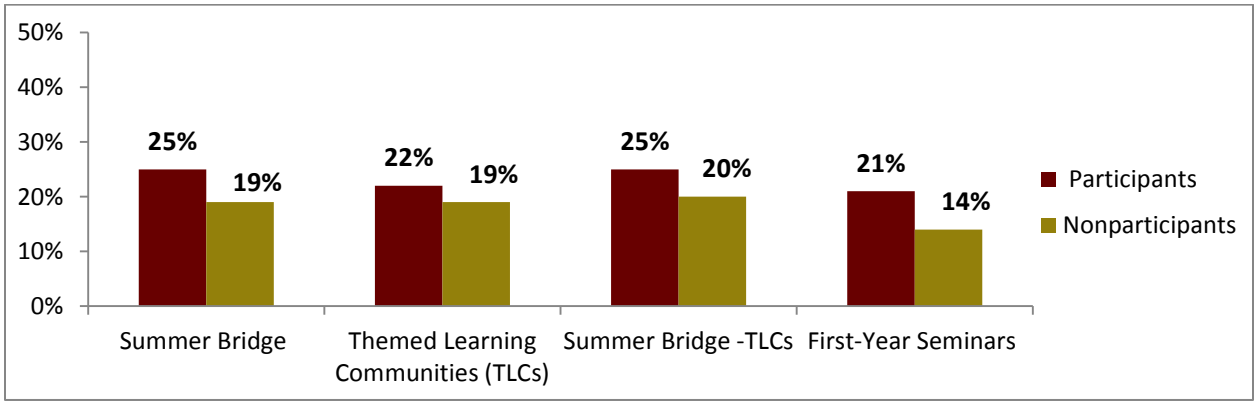
There have been fairly steady increases in the one-year retention rates over the past 10 years (Shown in Figure 2). It is noteworthy that the one-year (fall -to- fall) for the fall 2012 first-time, full-time IUPUI (Indianapolis only) cohort was 73% compared to 62% in 2000. Shown in Figure 2 are also the Four- and Six-Year Graduation rates by cohort year. Again, the graduation rates have shown fairly steady increases over the last 10 years. However, our graduation rates are below those of our peer institutions (see Table 2). It is important to note that our one-year retention rates are in line with our peer institutions most likely due to the focus on providing quality first-year experience programs such as Summer Bridge (SB), First-Year Seminars (FYS), Themed Learning Communities (TLCs), and Summer Bridge-Themed Learning Communities (SB-TLCs). Shown in Figure 3 are the 4-year graduation rates for students participating in first-year academic programs.

Figure 2. Indianapolis Only First-Time, Full-Time Cohort Retention and Graduation Rate (Bachelor's, Associate, and Certificate)



Note: Graduation figures include Bachelor and Associate degrees and Certificates awarded in 150% of time. Retained includes students awarded a degree or certificate or students who have re-enrolled. The rates exclude Columbus beginners. Fall 2012, 2009, and 2007 cohort retention and graduation figures are preliminary at this point in time, and may not match official numbers once they are available (bolded values)

Figure 3. Indianapolis Only 2009 First-Time, Full-Time Cohort 4-Year Graduation Rates for UC Program Participants compared to Nonparticipants



Note 1: Graduation figures include Bachelor and Associate degrees and Certificates awarded in 150% of time. The rates exclude Columbus beginners. The 2009 cohort 4-year graduation figures are preliminary at this point in time, and may not match official numbers once they are available.

Note 2: Summer Bridge participants N=389 and nonparticipants N= 2127, TLC participants N=721 and nonparticipants N=1795, Summer Bridge-TLC participants N=228 and nonparticipants=2288, First-Year Seminar participants N=2232 and nonparticipants N=284.

Table 2. IUPUI and Peer Institution Retention and Graduation Rates

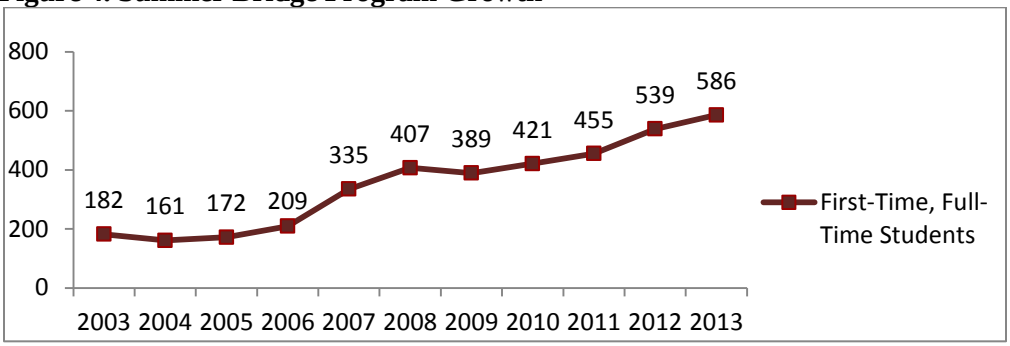
Peer Institutions	One-Year Retention	Four-Year Graduation	Six-Year Graduation
Univ. of Pittsburgh	92%	61%	79%
Temple University	89%	37%	68%
Univ. of Cincinnati	84%	22%	59%
Univ. of Illinois Chicago	82%	27%	55%
Virginia Commonwealth	85%	27%	53%
Univ. of Missouri-St. Louis	74%	25%	51%
Georgia State University	84%	18%	47%
Univ. of Houston	82%	15%	46%
Univ. of Toledo	65%	24%	46%
Univ. of Alabama-Birmingham	80%	23%	45%
Univ. of Missouri-Kansas City	75%	17%	41%
CUNY	83%	6%	40%
Univ. of Mass-Boston	75%	14%	40%
Univ. of Wisconsin-Milwaukee	73%	14%	40%
Portland State University	70%	14%	38%
Univ. of Memphis	78%	12%	38%
Univ. of New Orleans	64%	17%	38%
IUPUI	**74%**	**11%**	**33%**
Cleveland State University	64%	9%	30%
Wayne State University	77%	10%	26%

SUMMER BRIDGE PROGRAM

Characteristics of Students Participating in Summer Bridge

The Summer Bridge program has experienced steady growth over the past decade (2003-2013). As displayed in Figure 4, a total of 586 first-time, full-time IUPUI students participated in Summer Bridge in 2013 compared to 455 in 2011. This figure only displays students who were in the First-Time, Full-Time Beginning cohort for consistency with other years. Some students may have been served that entered as part-time students in the fall or who were not part of the official cohort.

Figure 4. Summer Bridge Program Growth



A total of 586 fall 2013 first-time, full-time (Indianapolis only) students participated in the Summer Bridge Program. A total of 56 (10%) Summer Bridge students were African American and a total of 49 (8%) were Hispanic/Latino(a). There were a number of important differences between the students participating in Summer Bridge and the nonparticipants. Fall 2013 first-time, full-time students participating in the Summer Bridge Program were more likely to be female (62.8%). The proportion of African American students participating in the Summer Bridge Program was similar to the nonparticipating cohort (10% and 9%, respectively). The proportion of Hispanic/Latino(a) students participating in the Summer Bridge Program was also similar as the nonparticipating cohort (8%). The proportion of international students participating in Summer Bridge 2013 was greater than the proportion of international students in the overall IUPUI population of nonparticipants (7% and 3%, respectively).

A total of 539 fall 2012 first-time, full-time (Indianapolis only) students participated in the Summer Bridge Program. A total of 64 Summer Bridge students were African American and a total of 38 were Hispanic/Latino(a). There were a number of important differences between the students participating in Summer Bridge and the nonparticipants. Fall 2012 first-time, full-time students participating in the Summer Bridge Program were more likely to be female. The proportion of African American students participating in the Summer Bridge Program was greater compared to the nonparticipating cohort (12% and 9%, respectively). The proportion of Hispanic/Latino(a) students participating in the Summer Bridge Program was the same as the nonparticipating cohort (7%). The proportion of international students participating in Summer Bridge 2012 was greater than the proportion of international students in the overall IUPUI population of nonparticipants (13% and 3%, respectively). See Table 3 to view changes in the Summer Bridge population over time.

The higher proportion of African American students participating in Summer Bridge compared to the overall cohort as well as the high levels of academic performance among African American scholarship recipients seems to suggest that scholarships have some positive implications in terms of: 1) attracting underrepresented students to the program and 2) serving as an incentive for attaining high levels of academic performance.

Table 3. 2010-2012 Summer Bridge Program Overview: Academic Background Characteristics and Student Demographics

Academic Background Characteristics	10	11	12	3Yr Change (%)	10	11	12	3Yr Change (%)	10	11	12	3Yr Change (%)	10	11	12	3Yr Change (%)
	N				Avg. H.S. GPA				Avg. SAT Score				% Received Pell Grant			
All Cohort Bridge Participants	421	455	539	21.9%	3.32	3.3	3.38	1.8%	1017	990	1034	1.6%	47%	55%	40%	-18.3%
All Cohort Non-Bridge Participants	1974	2096	2272	13.1%	3.30	3.29	3.33	0.9%	1017	1022	1026	0.9%	41%	42%	42%	2.4%
All Cohort Students	2395	2551	2811	14.8%	3.30	3.29	3.34	1.2%	1017	1016	1027	1.0%	42%	44%	42%	-0.2%

Note: Includes only First-time, Full-time students. Percentages rounded to the nearest whole.

Student Demographics	10	11	12	3Yr Change (%)	10	11	12	3Yr Change (%)	10	11	12	3Yr Change (%)
	% Female				% African American				%Latino(a)			
All Cohort Bridge Participants	63%	68%	61%	-2.5%	21%	17%	12%	-78.3%	6%	11%	7%	14.3%
All Cohort Non-Bridge Participants	58%	57%	54%	-8.2%	10%	10%	9%	-12.6%	4%	5%	7%	42.9%
All Cohort Students	59%	59%	55%	-7.5%	12%	12%	10%	-21.0%	4%	6%	7%	42.9%

Note: Includes only First-time, Full-time students. Percentages rounded to the nearest whole.

Students' Experiences, Perceptions of Benefits, and Self-Reported Learning Outcomes

Students are highly satisfied with their Summer Bridge experiences. As shown below in Table 4 below, students reported that they were satisfied that the program provided them with the resources and information to help them succeed in college. Additionally, the vast majority of students (99%) consistently report that they would recommend Summer Bridge to other first-year students.

Table 4. Summer Bridge Overall Program Satisfaction

	Means				
Overall, how satisfied were you that the Summer Bridge program provided you with the resources and information to help you succeed in college?	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
	4.52	4.68	4.55	4.56	4.65
	Percent Yes				
Would you recommend the Summer Bridge Program to other first-year students?	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
	99%	98%	99%	99%	99%

Note: responses provided on a Likert-type scale: 1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree. Percentages (%) rounded to the nearest whole.

Results based on quantitative and qualitative investigations suggest that the Summer Bridge program helps students feel academically and socially integrated. Students report that they are effectively introduced to collegiate-level expectations for writing, mathematics, and critical thinking; given opportunities to establish connections with faculty and other students; allowed to become more acquainted with the campus; and learn effective study strategies. Results shown in Figures 5 and 6 indicate that 99% of the students reported that the program helped them meet new people, 94% reported that they established close friendships, 94% reported that the program helped them locate appropriate campus resources, and 89% reported that the program helped them to develop an appreciation for social and cultural diversity. **Appendix C** contains results of a 2012 qualitative investigation. Students responded that meeting new people and forming friendships, learning to navigate campus and participating in tours, and receiving college transition assistance were aspects of the program that they valued the most.

Figure 5. 2013 Summer Bridge Questionnaire Results: Benefits and Self-Reported Learning Outcomes

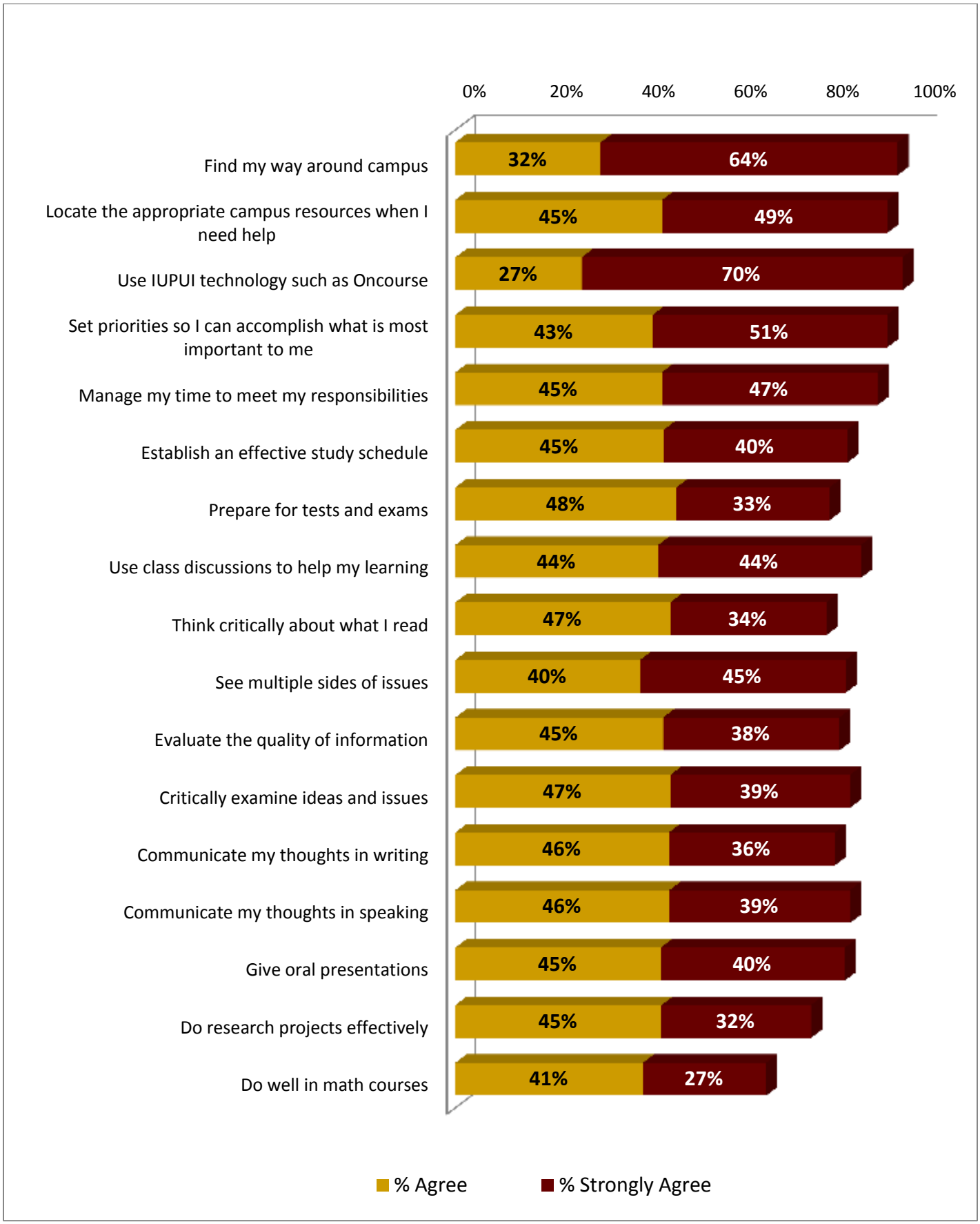
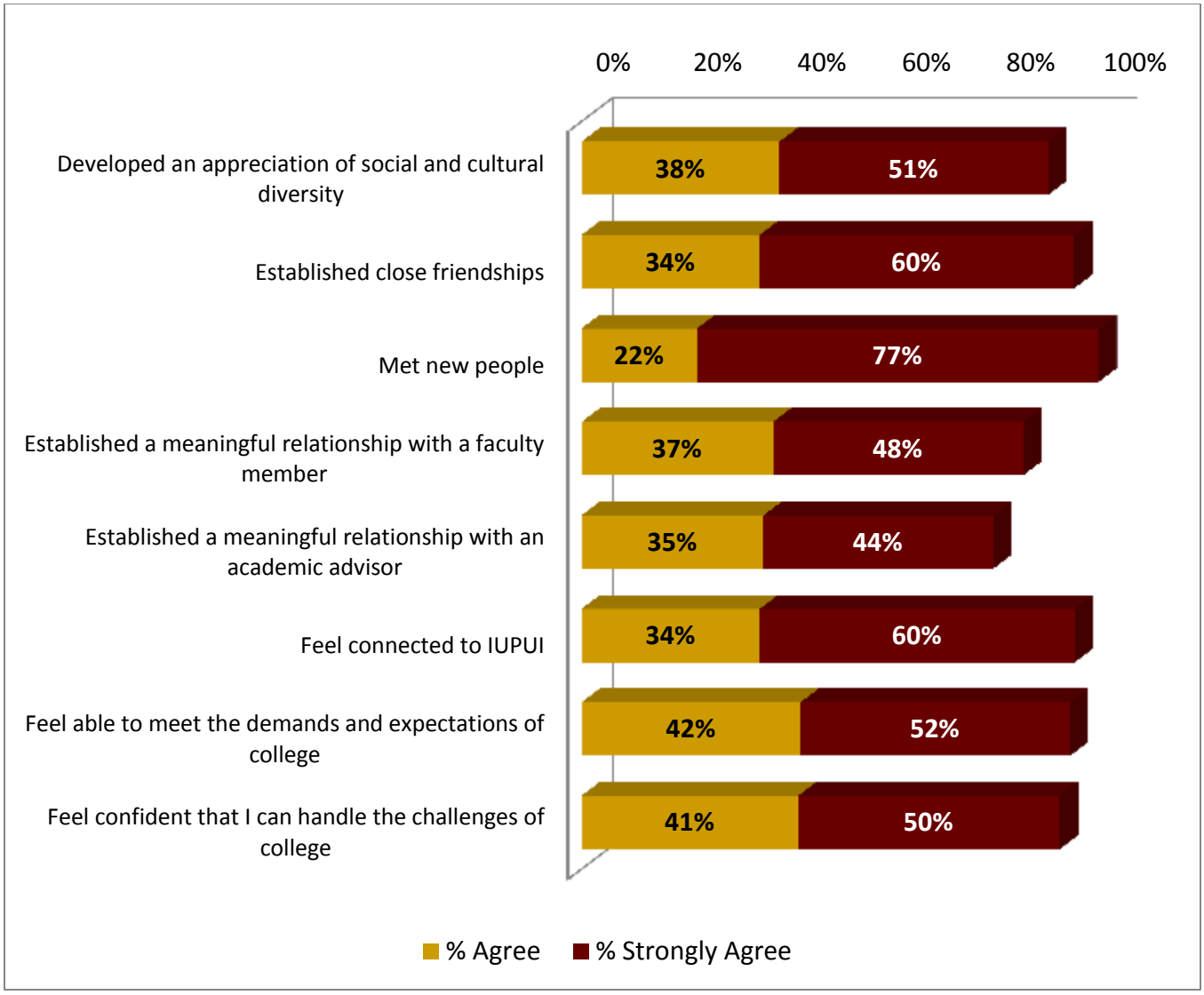


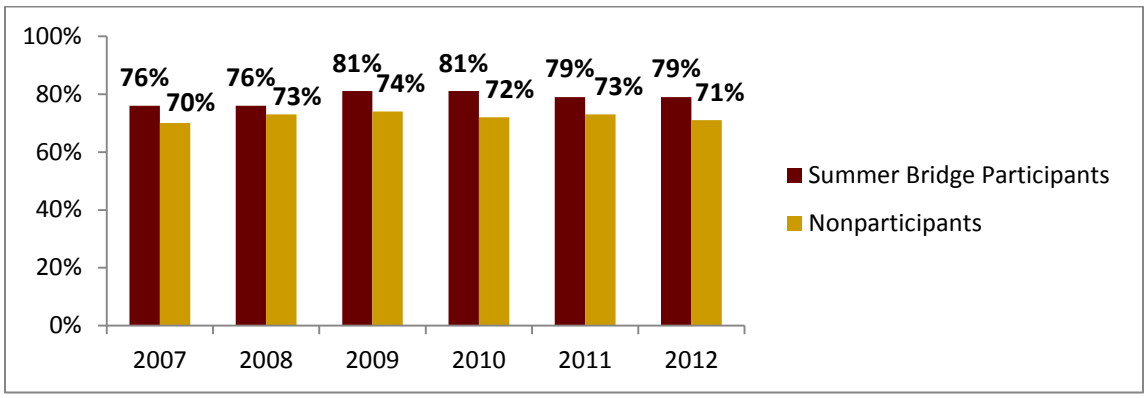
Figure 6. 2013 Summer Bridge Questionnaire Results: Benefits and Developing Relationships with Faculty, Advisors and Other Students



Effects of Summer Bridge Program on Retention and Academic Performance

Students participating in the Summer Bridge program consistently have significantly higher one-year retention rates even when taking even when taking academic preparation and demographics into account (HS GPAs, SAT Scores, Gender, Income Level, and Admit Date-used as a proxy for motivation). Figure 7 displays the Summer Bridge retention rates 2007-2012. Logistic regression models are employed to determine if the SB program has significant effects on one-year retention. Student enrollment characteristics, demographics, and academic preparation variables are entered into the first step in the model. Students participating in the 2012 Summer Bridge program earned higher one-year retention rates (79% compared to 71% for nonparticipants)

Figure 7. Summer Bridge Students Have Higher One-Year Retention Rates Compared to Nonparticipants



Note: One-Year retention rates are significantly higher for Summer Bridge participants compared to nonparticipants even when taking academic preparation and demographics into account (HS GPAs, SAT Scores, Gender, Income Level, and Admit Date).

Overall, the 2012 Summer Bridge participants had higher levels of academic performance (fall GPA 2.95) compared to nonparticipants (fall GPA 2.81). Students participating in SB also had lower DFW rates (15%) compared to nonparticipants (18%) and higher fall-spring retention rates (92%) compared to nonparticipants (88%). 2012 Summer Bridge participants had marginally significantly higher first-year cumulative GPAs (adjusted 2.76) compared to nonparticipants (adjusted 2.68), even when adjusting for high school GPA, and admission date ($p = .098$ based on ANCOVA results). Results from the most recent SB cohort (2013) also suggest that participants earned significantly higher fall GPAs even when taking into account HS GPAs and SAT scores (ANCOVA results shown in Table 5).

2012 African American students who participated in SB had higher Fall-to-Fall retention rates (72%) compared to nonparticipants (65%). African-American students who participated in the Summer Bridge program (2012) also were less likely to earn fall GPAs below 2.0. Shown in Tables 6, 7 and 8 are the retention rates and academic success levels of all groups of students participating in the Summer Bridge program. Results suggest that the Summer Bridge program has a differential positive impact on African American, Latino, and students testing into remedial math.

There were 70 international students who participated in SB in 2012. International SB participants had higher average a one-year retention rate (93%) compared to the International students (N=40) who did not participate in bridge (86%).

Fall-to-fall retention rates among Hispanic/Latino(a) students participating in bridge (84%) was notably higher than for Hispanic/Latino(a) students not participating in bridge (65%). Hispanic/Latino(a) bridge students also had notably higher levels of academic success (14% of participants earned Fall GPAs below 2.0. compared to 23% for nonparticipants). See Table 8 for results.

Table 5. Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) Predicting First-Semester GPA Summer Bridge 2013

	N	Average Fall	Adjusted Fall GPA
Summer Bridge	541	2.94	**2.86**
Non-Summer Bridge	2500	2.80	**2.82**
Overall	3041	2.83	

Note: Missing cases were excluded from the analysis.
Note 2: ANCOVA results suggest students participating in Summer Bridge had significant higher fall semester GPAs compared to students not participating even after HS GPA and SAT scores were entered as a covariates (p=.0001).

Table 6. Summer Bridge 2012 Student Groups/Underrepresented Minority Academic Success Outcomes

	SUMMER BRIDGE PARTICIPANTS			**NON-PARTICIPANTS**		
	First-Year GPA	**% First-Year GPA Below 2.0**	**Fall-Fall Retention Rate**	**First-Year GPA**	**% First-Year GPA Below 2.0**	**Fall-Fall Retention Rate**
African American	2.38	**26%**	**72%**	2.32	**30%**	**65%**
Asian American	2.97	20%	87%	2.94	13%	89%
Latino/a	**2.59**	**21%**	**84%**	**2.38**	**29%**	**65%**
International	3.05	9%	**93%**	3.03	12%	**86%**
Female	**2.87**	**15%**	**79%**	**2.76**	**18%**	**71%**
First-Generation	**2.69**	22%	**75%**	**2.52**	26%	**67%**
Pell Grant	**2.55**	**26%**	**75%**	**1.95**	**42%**	**67%**
25 or Older						
Conditional Admit	**1.89**	42%	58%	**2.12**	40%	60%
Part-Time Students	**2.43**	**38%**	**75%**	**2.54**	**28%**	**57%**
Remedial Math	**2.67**	21%	**75%**	**2.53**	24%	**68%**

Note 1:Missing cases were excluded.
Note 2: Includes only 2012 first-time, full-time beginners (with the exception of the part-time row).
Note 3: Bolded items are practically or statistically significantly different based on ANOVA results or chi-square test results (p <. 05).
Note 4: The 25 or Older group had numbers too low to report outcome.

Table 7. 2012 Summer Bridge Results Cohort and African American Student Academic Success Outcomes (First-time Full-Time Students Only)

Academic Performance	N	% Fall GPA above 3.0	% Fall GPA below 2.0	Avg. Fall GPA	Avg. One Year GPA	DFW Rate	Fall-Spring Retention Rate	One-Year Retention Rate
Afr. Amer. Bridge Scholarship Recipients	23	22%	30%	2.35	2.14	24%	100%	74%
Afr. Amer. Bridge Non-Scholarship Recipients	41	34%	17%	2.53	2.42	23%	88%	71%
Afr. Amer. Bridge Participants Total	64	30%	22%	2.47	2.32	24%	92%	72%
Afr. Amer. Cohort Students - Non-Bridge	207	41%	27%	2.49	2.33	24%	85%	65%
All Cohort Bridge Participants	539	58%	14%	2.95	2.81	15%	92%	79%
All Cohort Non-Bridge Participants	2272	53%	17%	2.81	2.67	18%	88%	71%
All Cohort Students	2811	54%	17%	2.84	2.70	17%	89%	73%

Note: Includes only First-time, Full-time students. Percentages rounded to the nearest whole. Retention is based on enrollment during the following year (fall semester at census) at any IU campus or having received a degree or certificate before census. Avg. One Year GPA was calculated after the Fall 2013 official census and includes students' Fall 2012, Spring & Summer 2013, corrected, grades.

Table 8. 2012 Summer Bridge Results Cohort & Hispanic / Latino(a) Students Academic Success Outcomes (First-time Full-Time Students Only)

Academic Performance	N	% Fall GPA above 3.0	% Fall GPA below 2.0	Avg. Fall GPA	Avg. One Year GPA	DFW Rate	Fall-Spring Retention Rate	One-Year Retention Rate
Latino(a) Bridge Scholarship Recipients	8	50%	13%	2.80	2.75	13%	100%	100%
Latino(a) Bridge Non-Scholarship Recipients	30	50%	13%	2.80	2.56	20%	90%	80%
Latino(a) Bridge Participants - Total	38	50%	14%	2.80	2.60	17%	92%	84%
Latino(a) Cohort Students - Non-Bridge	164	43%	23%	2.57	2.38	22%	81%	65%
All Cohort Bridge Participants	539	58%	14%	2.95	2.81	15%	92%	79%
All Cohort Non-Bridge Participants	2272	53%	17%	2.81	2.67	18%	88%	71%
All Cohort Students	2811	54%	17%	2.84	2.70	17%	89%	73%

Note: Includes only First-time, Full-time students. Percentages rounded to the nearest whole. Retention is based on enrollment during the following year (fall semester at census) at any IU campus or having received a degree or certificate before census. Avg. One Year GPA was calculated after the Fall 2013 official census and includes students' Fall 2012, Spring & Summer 2013, corrected, grades.

Instructional Team Members' Experiences with the Summer Bridge Program

In 2013 an investigation was conducted to understand instructional team members' perceptions of the Summer Bridge program. A full report can be viewed in **Appendix D**. 2013 Summer Bridge instructional team members were asked to voluntarily respond to an anonymous questionnaire administered at the end of the program. Participants were encouraged to 1) indicate their level of satisfaction with their instructional team experience and the support provided to them throughout the Summer Bridge process, as well as the effectiveness of technology instruction sessions; and 2) provide open-ended response feedback regarding what they found most valuable about the course, the challenges they encountered during Bridge, and suggestions for program improvement.

Overall, instructional team members were satisfied with their Summer Bridge experiences. Questionnaire participants responded positively that the program provided adequate support related to training and preparation (4.20 on 5.00 scale: 4=*Agree* / 5=*Strongly Agree*), conveying timely information (4.20), ongoing support during the program (4.44), and providing necessary resources (4.52). They also indicated that they had positive instructional team experiences to the extent that teams worked well together (4.57 on 5.00 scale: 4=*Agree* / 5=*Strongly Agree*), provided opportunities for all members to contribute (4.58), and communicated effectively (4.53). Those participating in the technology instruction sessions found them somewhat effective (3.96 on 5.00 scale: 3=*Neutral* / 4=*Somewhat Effective*).

Instructional team members also described their Summer Bridge experiences positively. When asked what they found most valuable about the program, the majority of respondents focused on program sessions and activities, the creation of a sense of community, student interaction, and teamwork. When describing challenges, questionnaire participants discussed logistics, student behavior, time constraints, curricular concerns, and communication, or reported no challenges at all. Respondents suggested improvements be made in the areas of logistics, session content, and program scheduling, or did not believe improvements were necessary.

SUMMER BRIDGE-THEMED LEARNING COMMUNITY PROGRAM

The Summer Bridge-TLC (SB-TLC) program was designed to ensure that students have a foundation of developing academic skills, understanding college expectations, and developing a sense of connection and community prior to participating in the powerful pedagogies and engaging experiences offered in the TLC program. Summer Bridge interventions may help students tap the full power and potential of their high-impact practices (learning communities, first-year seminars, service learning) offered during the first-year.

Characteristics of Students Participating in Summer Bridge-Themed Learning Community

There were 271 first-time, full-time students who participated in the SB-TLC program in Fall 2012 and 282 in Fall 2013 (9% of the 2013 cohort). The number of SB-TLC sections has gradually increased over the past 6 years. Only 195 students participated in 2007. In the most recent program offered in 2013, there were 40 African American students (14%), 24 Hispanic/Latino students (9%), and 7 Asian American students (3%) participating. The number of African American students participating was greater compared to the proportion in the cohort general population (14% compared to 9%, respectively). The vast majority of students participating were female (75%) and 106 (38%) participating were first-generation students (neither mother nor father attended college). SB-TLC participants had significantly lower SAT scores (avg. 998) compared to nonparticipants (avg. 1037). The average HS GPAs were similar for participants (3.39) compared to nonparticipants (3.38).

Effects of Summer Bridge-Themed Learning Community Program on Retention and Academic Performance

Shown in Table 9 are the SB-TLC students' fall GPAs by school SB-TLC intervention offered. Results suggest that there is variance in students' outcomes based on the SB-TLC type offered. Students in sections offered by the Schools of Nursing and Science performed better than expected (adjusted by incoming levels of academic preparation as measured by HS GPAs and SAT scores). **Please use caution in interpreting findings due to the small sample sizes in each section and the fact that there are factors beyond SAT Scores and HS GPAs that affect academic success outcomes.**

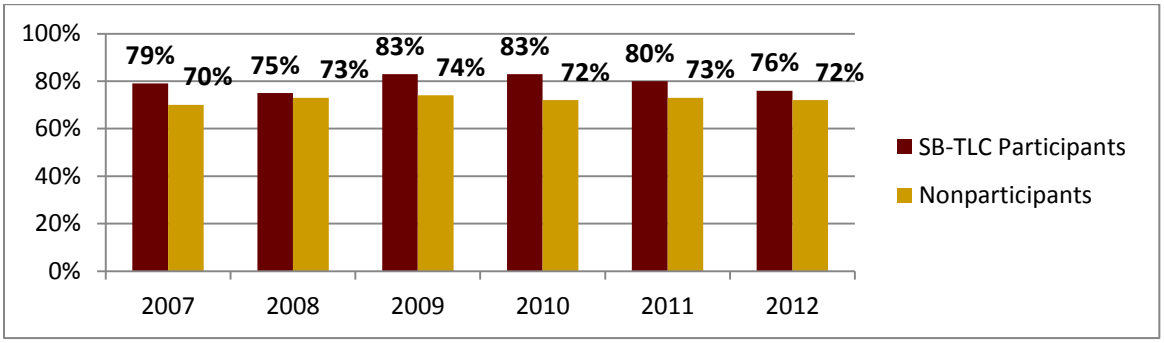
Table 9. SB-TLC Program Types/Schools and Students' Fall Semester Academic Performance

SB-TLC Type	N*	Actual Fall GPA	Adjusted Fall GPA**
Business	21	2.70	3.04
Education	24	2.92	3.11
Nursing	59	3.20	2.96
Science	24	2.91	2.64
Liberal Arts	40	2.96	3.06
SPEA	43	2.62	2.76
University College	64	2.86	2.86
Overall	275	2.90	

*Missing cases are excluded from analyses. Some students withdrew after census and did not have fall semester GPAs while other students had missing HS GPAs and SAT scores.
**Adjusted while taking into account HS GPAs and SAT scores and based on ANCOVA results.
Note: Green shading indicates that actual Fall GPA is above expected or adjusted.

Students who participate in the SB-TLC program have consistently had higher persistence rates and graduation rates in the aggregate. The 4-year graduation rate for 2009 participants was 24% compared to 19% for nonparticipants. The one-year retention rate for the 2012 cohort was 76% compared to 72% for nonparticipants. Shown in Figure 8 are the one-year retention rates over a 6-year period.

Figure 8. SB-TLC Participants' One-Year Retention Rates Compared to Nonparticipants



Note: One-Year retention rates significantly are higher for Summer Bridge –Themed Learning Community participants compared to nonparticipants even when taking academic preparation and demographics into account (HS GPAs, SAT Scores, Gender, Income Level, and Admit Date).. The difference was not significant for the 2008 cohort.

Results of hierarchical logistic regression procedures suggest that participation in the Summer Bridge program prior to participation in multiple high-impact practices contributed to retention rates more than participation in high-impact interventions without Summer Bridge (First-Year Seminars and Themed Learning Communities), even when controlling for student characteristics. In other words, we found that the SB-TLC intervention contributed to a larger proportion of variance in the one-year retention rate than the other programs tested in the model. Our investigations suggest that participation in multiple high-impact practices can have synergistic positive effects on students' levels of academic success and that offering summer bridge interventions can create a sense of readiness for high-impact practices offered during the first year. Results are displayed n Table 10.

Table 10. Hierarchical Logistic Regression Results: High-Impact Practices and One-Year Persistence (N=2028)

	Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	95% CI	Wald Statistic	p
Step 1	Z H.S GPA	.50	.06	1.64	[1.45, 1.86]	61.50	.000
	Z SAT Score	.14	.06	1.15	[1.01, 1.30]	4.81	.028
	Z Student Motivation	.17	.06	1.18	[1.06, 1.32]	8.95	.003
	Low Income	-.14	.11	.87	[.70, 1.08]	1.64	.201
	Gender	-.22	.11	.81	[.64, 1.01]	3.55	.060
Step 2	Z H.S GPA	.51	.06	1.66	[1.46, 1.88]	62.08	.000
	Z SAT Score	.14	.06	1.15	[1.01, 1.30]	4.71	.030
	Z Student Motivation	.13	.06	1.14	[1.02, 1.27]	5.05	.025
	Low Income	-.16	.11	.86	[.69, 1.07]	1.97	.160
	Gender	-.22	.12	.80	[.64, 1.00]	3.70	.054
	Summer Bridge-TLC	**1.34**	**.23**	**3.83**	**[2.43, 6.05]**	**33.40**	**.000**
	TLC-FYS	.74	.19	2.09	[1.45, 3.01]	15.50	.000
	Summer Bridge (no TLC-FYS)	.91	.26	2.47	[1.47, 4.16]	11.71	.001
	FYS (no Summer Bridge or TLC)	.53	.16	1.70	[1.24, 2.32]	11.11	.001

Note. Fall 2010 cohort. FYS denotes First-Year Seminar and TLC denotes Themed Learning Community. Low Income is a dummy coded variable for received a Pell Grant = 1 or not = 0. Gender dummy coded for Female =1 or Not = 0. Intervention Variables were dummy coded as Summer Bridge-TLC, FYS-TLC no Summer Bridge, Summer Bridge only, FYS only (1=Participated and 0=Did Not Participate .for each variable. **Summer Bridge-TLC participants had a 3.83 better odds of being retained compared to non-participants (based on the odds ratio).** Nagelkerke R^2 = .092 for Step 1: Nagelkerke R^2 =.119 for Step 2 .

UNIVERSITY COLLGE FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR U110 PROGRAM

Characteristics of Students Participating in University College First-Year Seminar (U110) Program

A total of 796 first-year students participated in University College first-year seminars during Fall 2012 (beginning freshmen enrolling in at least 7 credit hours). There were 35 University College sections offered. A total of 102 African American students participated in University College first-year seminars in fall 2012 (13% of participants). A total of 62 Latino(a) students and 18 Asian American students participated in first-year seminars in fall 2012. Students who withdrew or were administratively withdrawn from their seminar course were not counted as participants (*N* = 27). Shown in Table 11 are the characteristics of students participating in the Fall 2012 program.

A total of 972 first-year students participated in University College first-year seminars during Fall 2013 (beginning freshmen enrolling in at least 7 credit hours). A total of 116 African American students participated in University College first-year seminars in fall 2013 (12% of participants). A total of 81 (8%) Latino(a) students and 32 (3%) Asian American students participated in first-year seminars in Fall 2013. Students who withdrew or were administratively withdrawn from their seminar course were not counted as participants (*N* = 36). The vast majority of participants were female (73%). It is important to note that students participating in University College First-Year Seminars have significantly lower HS GPAs (3.35 compared to 3.39) and SAT scores compared to non-participants (985 compared to 1048).

Table 11. University College First-Year Seminars 2012 Student Groups/Underrepresented Minority Participation N = 796 UC FYS, N = 2200 All Others or Nonparticipants

	UC FYS Participation		All Others IUPUI	
	N	**% of FYS Population**	***N***	**% of All Others Population**
African American	102	**13%**	197	**9%**
Asian American	18	2%	103	5%
Latino/a	62	8%	156	7%
International	20	3%	104	5%
Female	558	**73%**	1100	**50%**
First-Generation	336	42%	886	39%
Pell Grant	348	42%	887	41%
25 or Older	6	1%	29	1%
Conditional Admit	51	**6%**	67	**3%**
Part-Time Students	58	7%	127	6%
Tested into Remedial Math	667	**81%**	1412	**64%**

Note 1:Missing cases were excluded.
Note 2: Includes only beginners enrolled in at least 7 credit hours.
Note 3: Bolded items are statistically significantly and practically different based on ANOVA results or chi-square test results (p <. 05).

Students' Experiences, Perceptions of Benefits, and Learning Outcomes (Direct and Indirect)

An anonymous end-of course evaluation instrument is administered in UC FYS courses at the end of the each semester in order to assess students' perceptions of their learning experiences, course benefits, and self-reported learning outcomes. Instructional teams are provided with individual reports displaying all means and frequencies as well as typed students' responses to open-ended items as a formative assessment strategy. Aggregate results are used for program evaluation purposes. A total of 582 students responded in Fall 2013. Shown in Figures 9-17 are the results of the 2013 questionnaire administration. Results suggest that the UC U110 courses are particularly effective in helping students form friendships; feel a sense of belonging at IUPUI; understand campus resources and college expectations; identify majors or career that are aligned with their interests, values, and strengths; and know what is required to make a successful transition to an academic major. Approximately 68% would recommend the U110 course to other first-year students and 65% were *satisfied* or *very satisfied* with the course. A total of 70 (12%) students reported that they were *dissatisfied* or *very dissatisfied* with the course.

Approximately 48% of students were *satisfied* or *very satisfied* with their experiences in completing an electronic or paper-based Personal Development Plan (PDP) as a process for helping them gain a sense of purpose at IUPUI. A total of 102 (17%) students reported that they were *dissatisfied* or *very dissatisfied* with their experiences in completing a PDP. Student focus group results (shown in **Appendix E**) suggested that some instructional team members did not explain the purpose of the PDP clearly to students and students felt that the PDP process lacked a purpose. When students understood the purpose of the ePDP, they explained that the process helped them understand more about themselves and select a major or future career aligned with their values, interests, and strengths.

The questionnaire was also administered to assess student self-reported learning outcomes aligned with the PULs of Core Communication Skills, Critical Thinking, and Understanding Society and Culture. It is noteworthy that students rated gains in transitional skills higher than they rated gains in academic skills. Results suggested that students made appropriate gains in the PUL Understanding Society and Culture. A total of 68% reported that as a result of the course they made *good* or *great gains* in "Interacting with students that are different from me (on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs)" and 65% of students reported that they made *good* or *great gains* in "Having the skills and knowledge to successfully navigate in a complex and multicultural society." Results are shown in Figure 14. Students also reported acceptable gains with regard to critical thinking skills. A total of 59% reported that as a result of the course they made *good* or *great gains* in 61% "Thinking critically about information and ideas" and made *good* or *great gains* in "Thinking critically and evaluating what I read." Results are shown in Figure 13.

Questionnaire results also suggested that students are very satisfied with the instructional strategies employed by their faculty members. Additionally, students rated the advisor very highly especially in the areas of supporting students' transitions to college and being knowledgeable about university policies. See Figure 16 to view advisor results. The highest rated area of the U110 course was related to the role of the student peer mentor. Results are shown in Figure 17.

Figure 9. 2013 U110 Questionnaire Results: Students' Perceptions of Sense of Community Gains

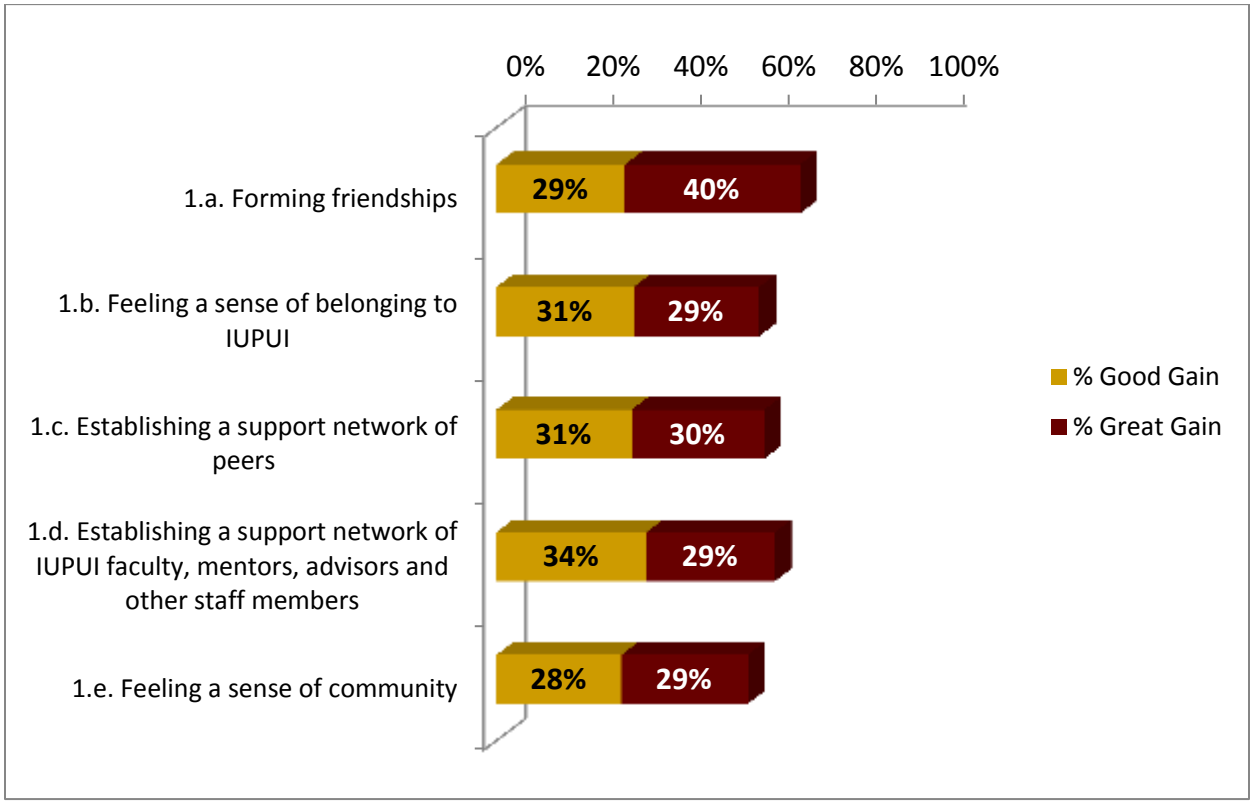


Figure 10. 2013 U110 Questionnaire Results: Students' Perceptions of Understanding College Culture and Expectations Gains

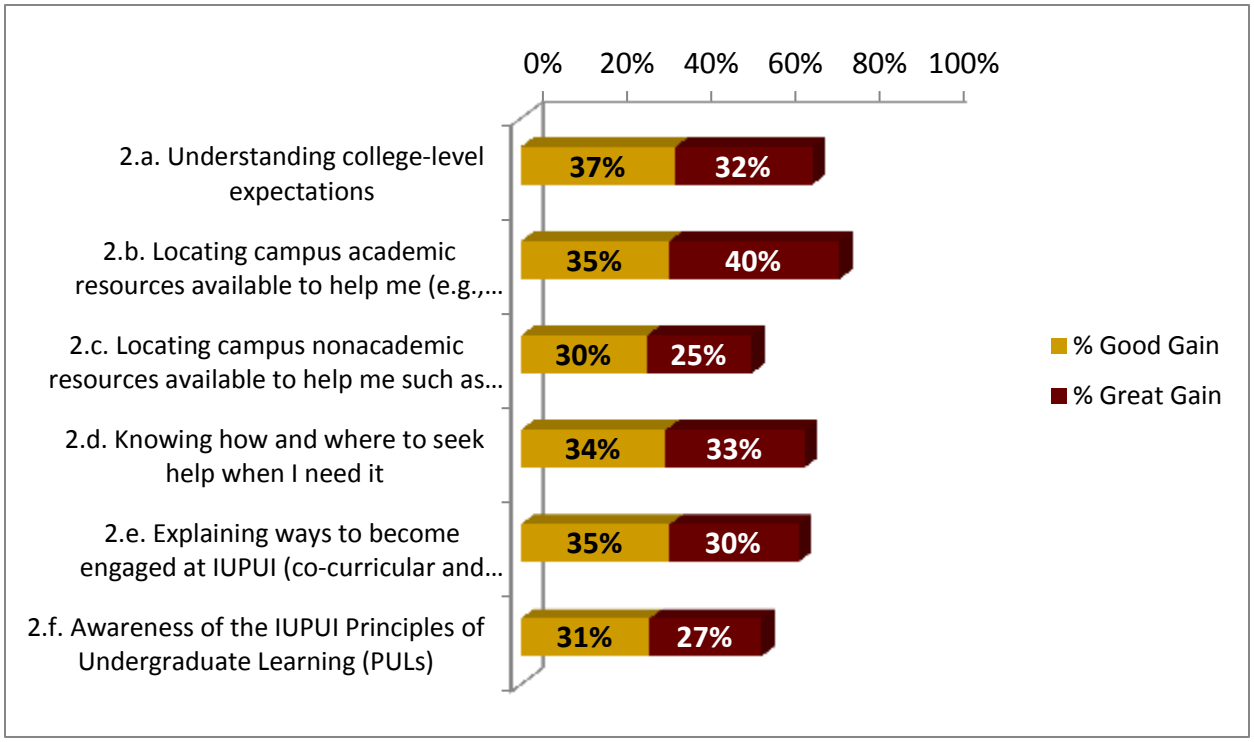


Figure 11. 2013 U110 Questionnaire Results: Students' Perceptions of Career Major Exploration Understanding Gains

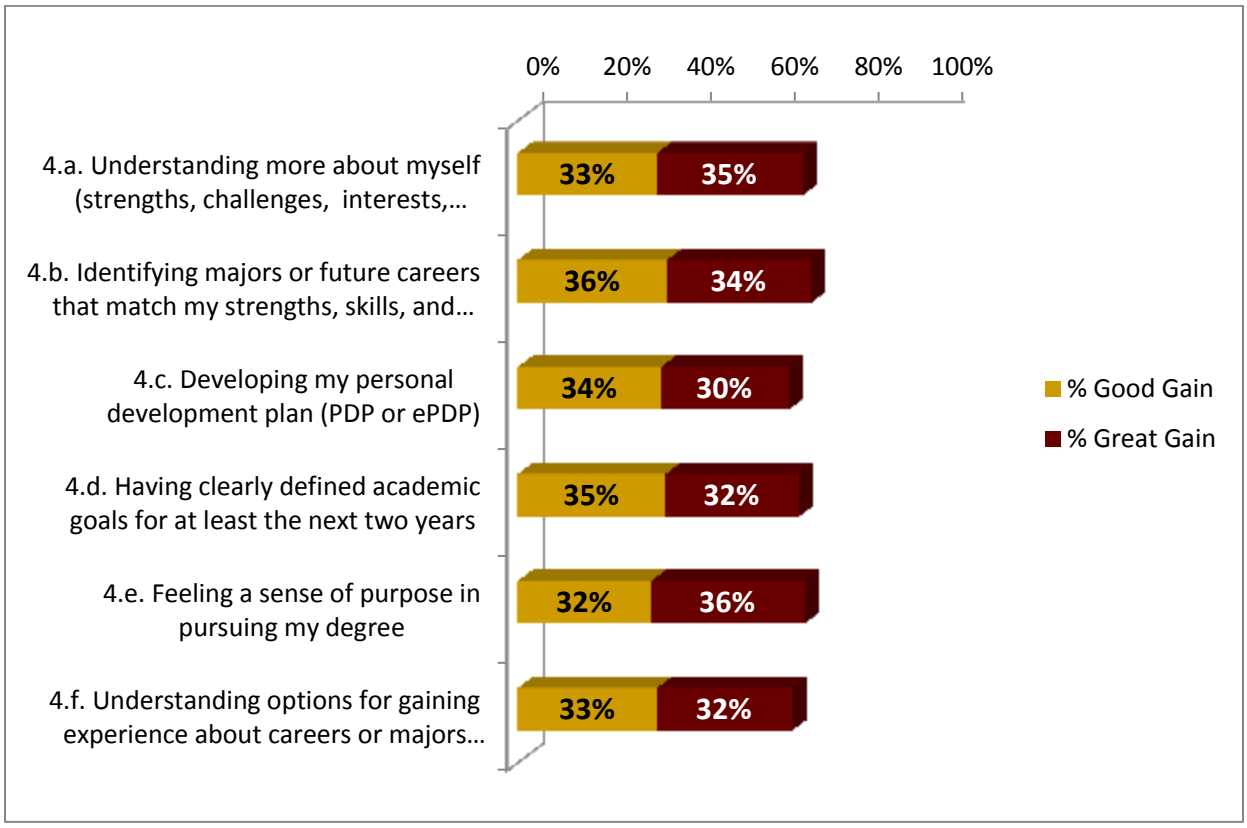


Figure 12. 2013 U110 Questionnaire Results: Students' Perceptions of Transition Skills Gains

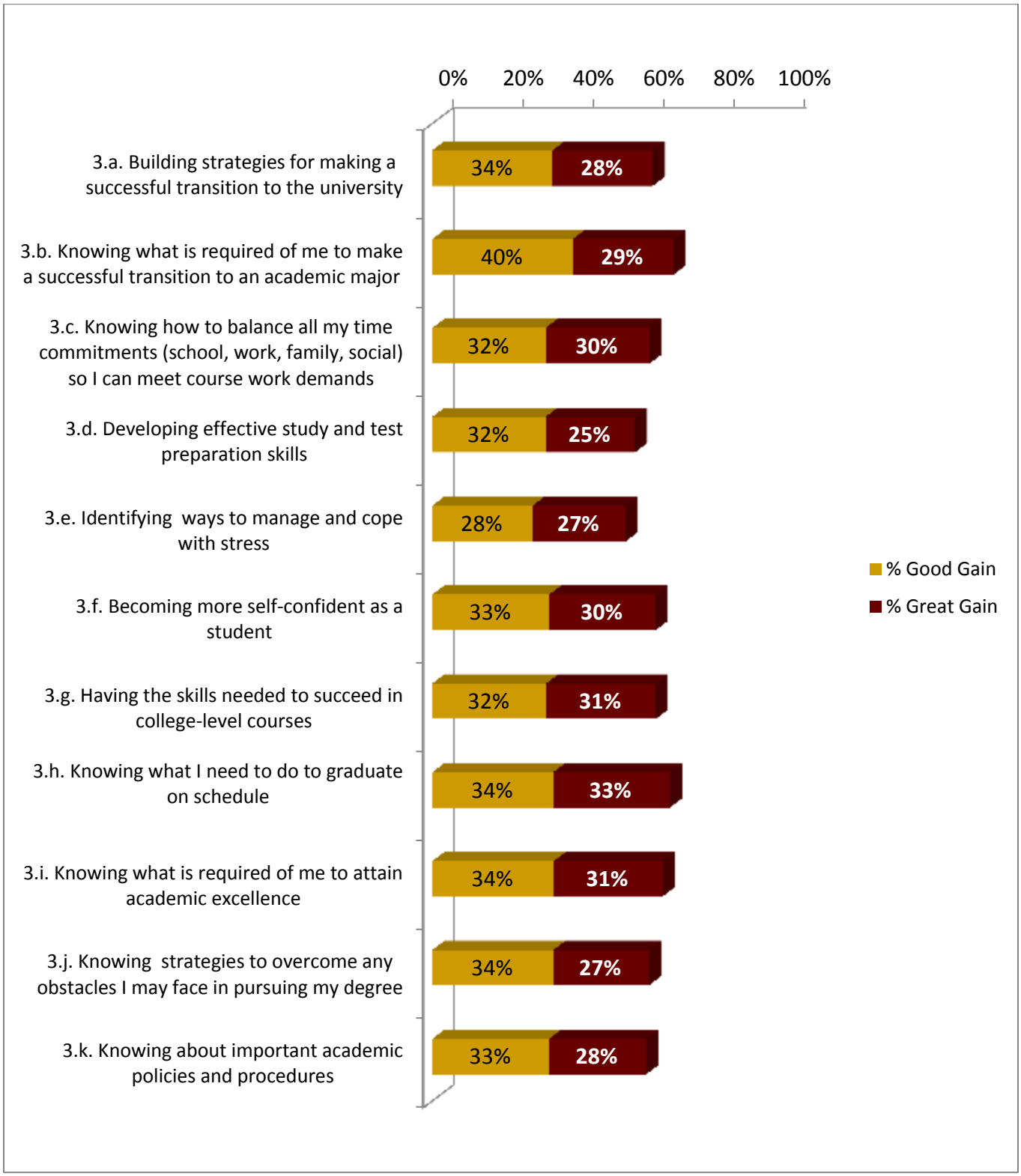


Figure 13. 2013 U110 Questionnaire Results: Students' Gains in Academic Skills and PUL Areas: Critical Communication Skills, Thinking Skills, and Information Literacy

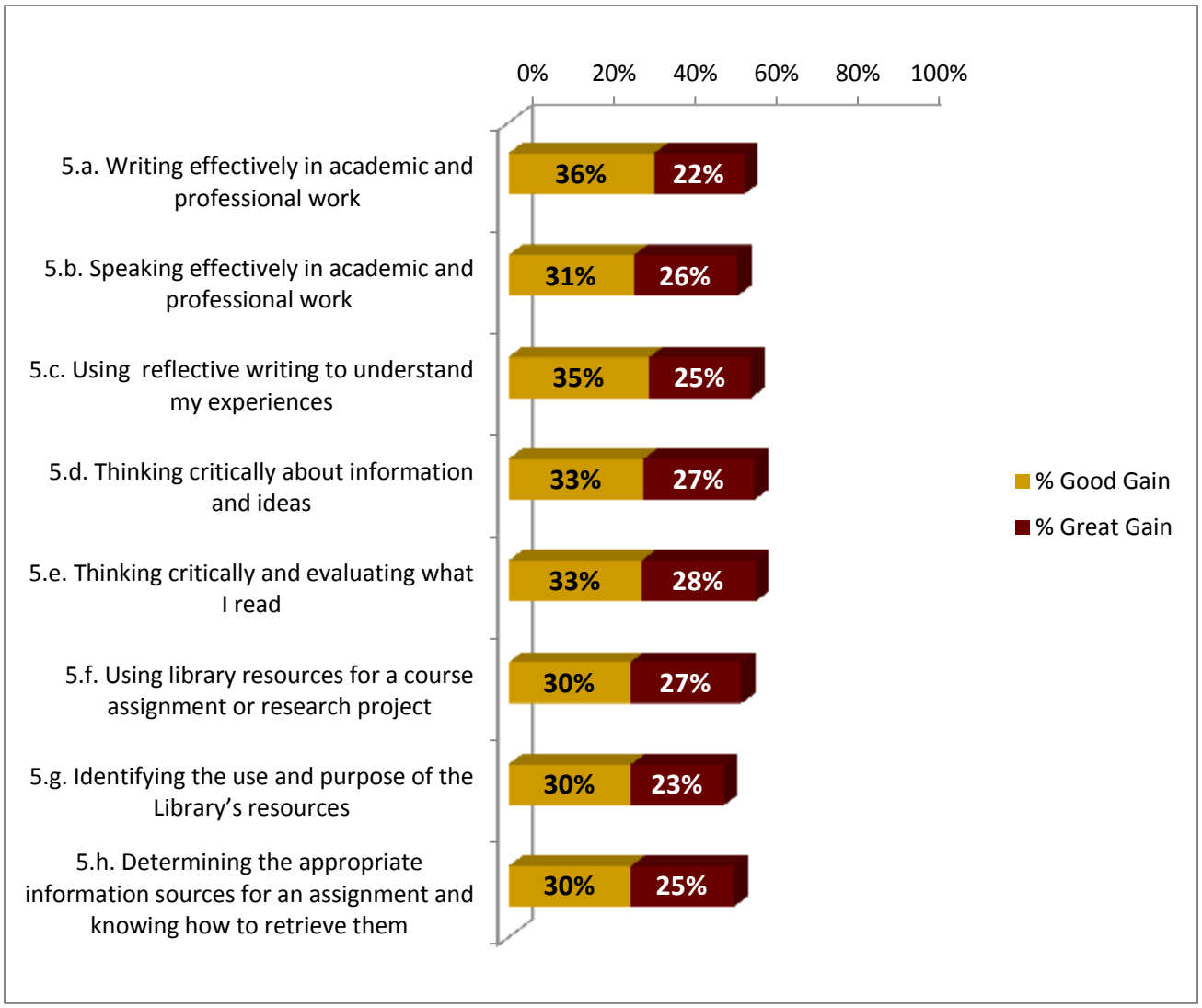


Figure 14. 2013 U110 Questionnaire Results: PUL Students' Understanding of Society and Culture Gains

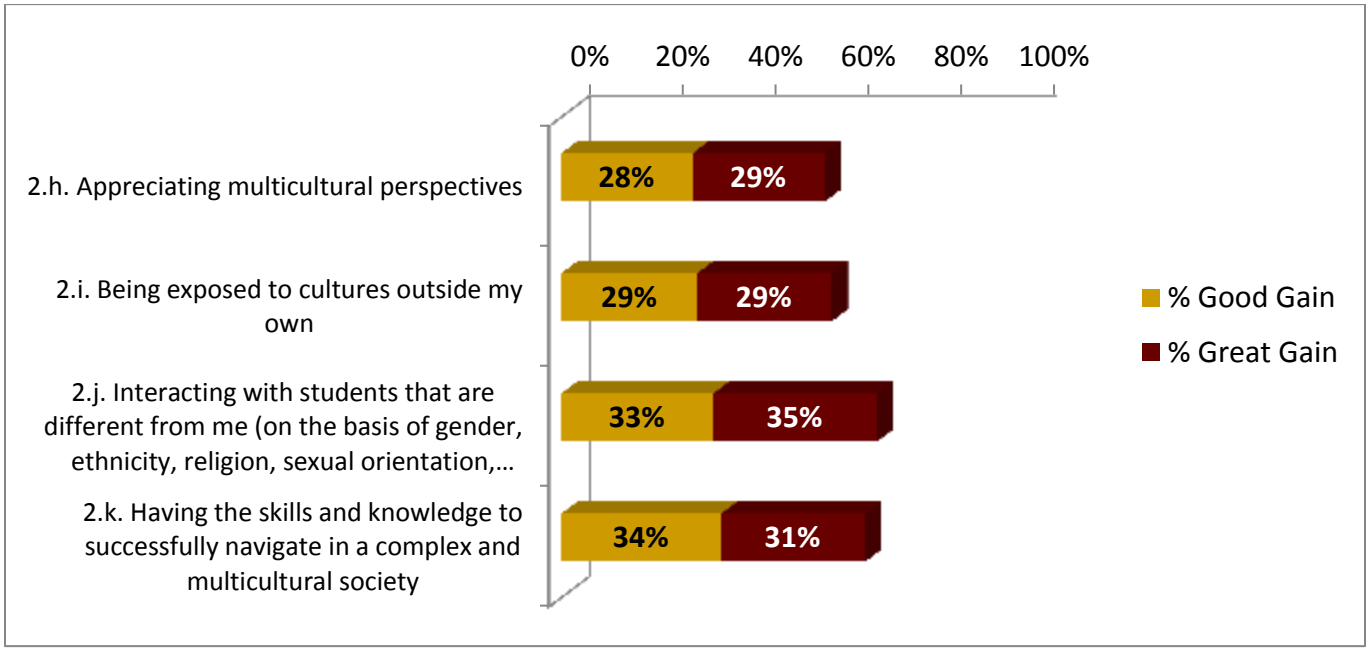
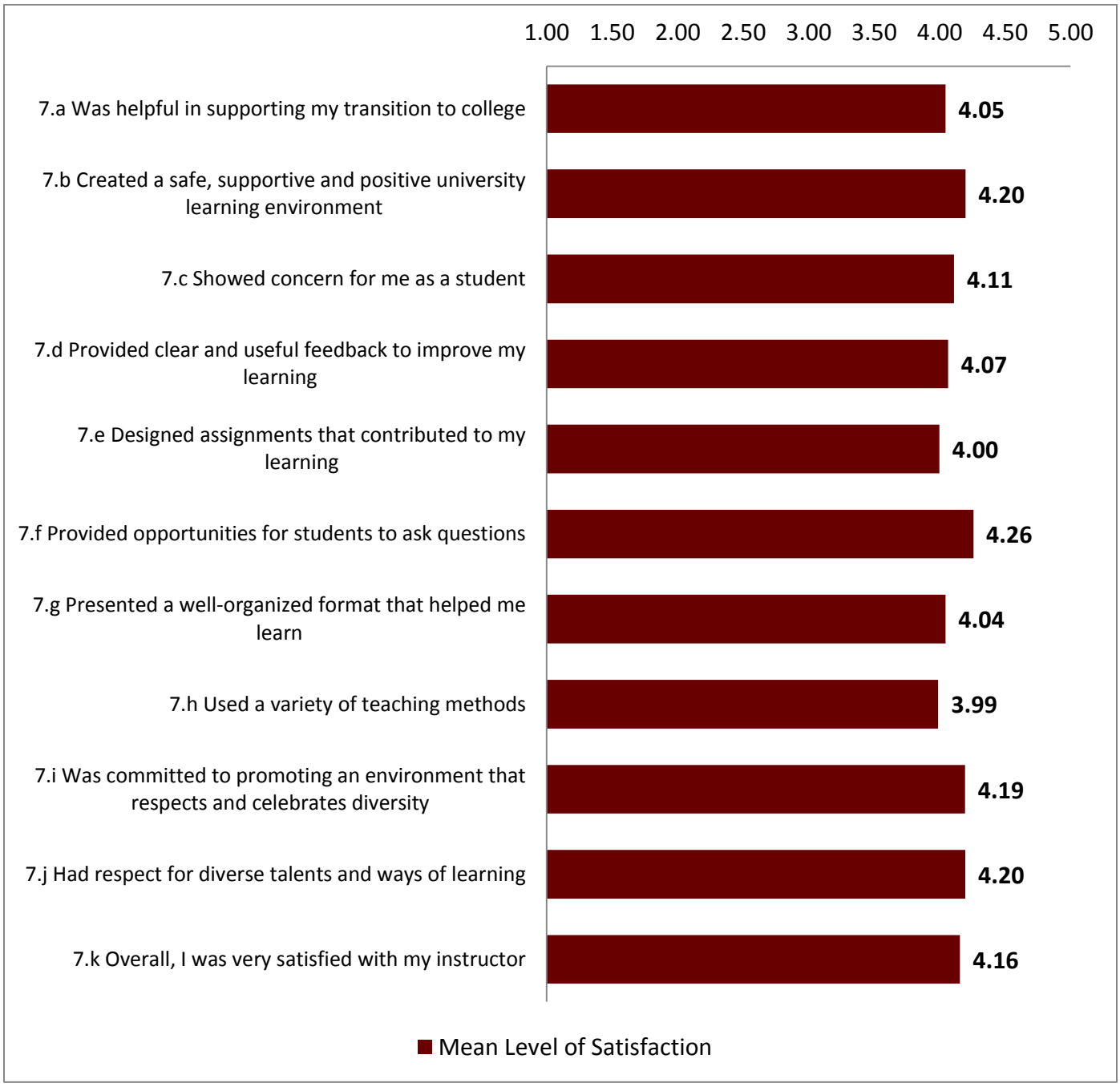
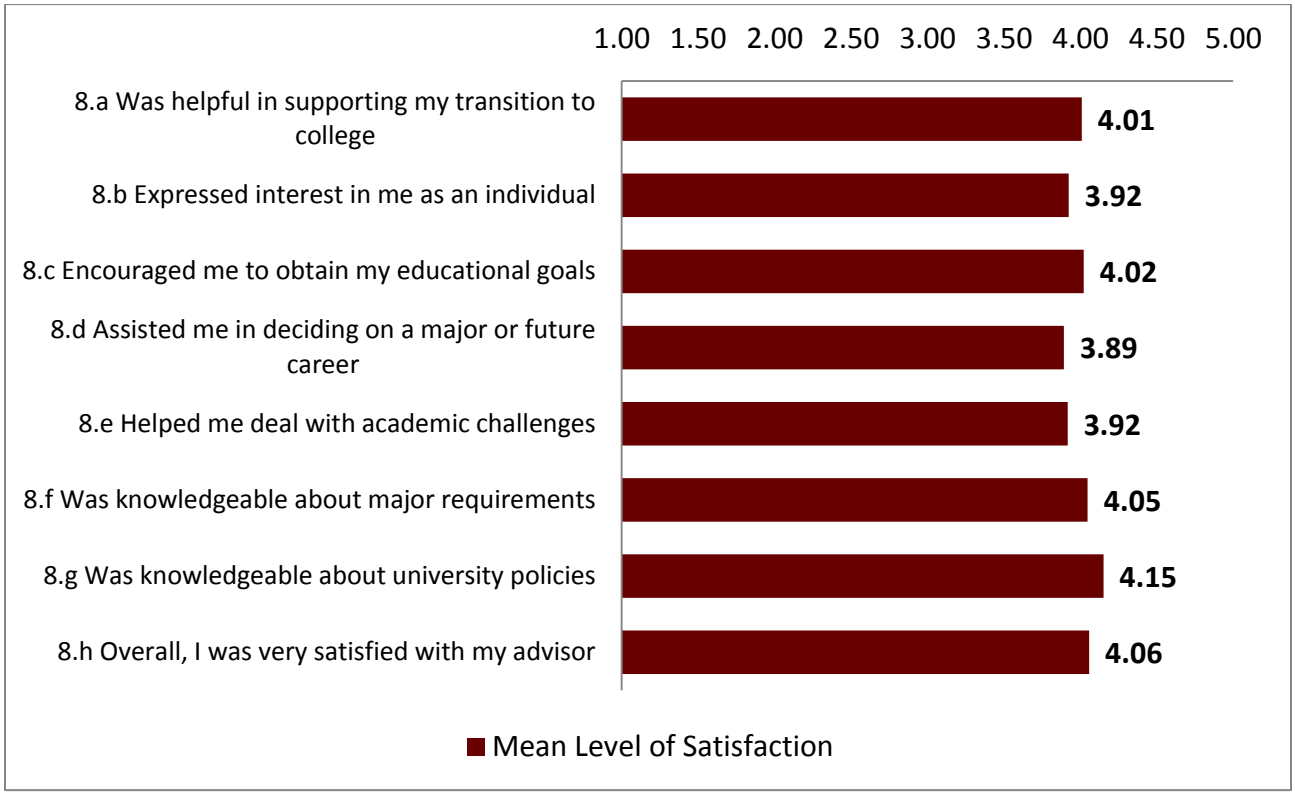


Figure 15. 2013 U110 Questionnaire Results: Students' Mean Levels of Satisfaction with Faculty and Instructional Strategies



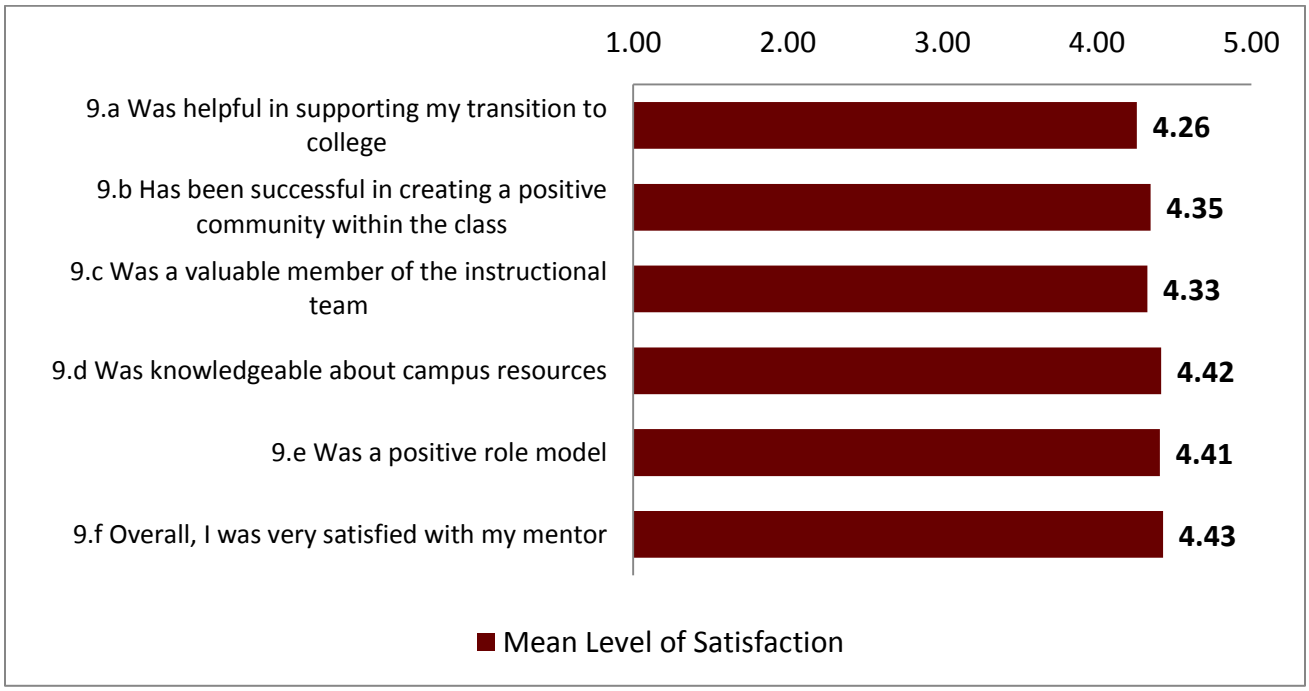
Note: Mean rating on a 5 point Likert-Type scale where 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree

Figure 16. 2013 U110 Questionnaire Results: Students' Mean Levels of Satisfaction with Advisor



Note: Mean rating on a 5 point Likert-Type scale where 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree

Figure 17. 2013 U110 Questionnaire Results: Students' Mean Levels of Satisfaction with Student Peer Mentor



Note: Mean rating on a 5 point Likert-Type scale where 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree

U110 University College Focus Group Results

A series of 13 student focus groups were conducted during Fall 2013. Please review the comprehensive U110 Focus Group Report in **Appendix E**. The purpose of the investigation was to understand students' perceptions of fall 2013 University College U110, First-Year Seminar (FYS) courses. Students enrolled in a FYS were asked to voluntarily participate in focus group interviews at the end of the semester. Students were asked to provide feedback about what they found most and least valuable about the course, suggestions for improvement, and the instructional team. Participants also provided information about their experiences completing an electronic Personal Development Plan (ePDP) and other assignments and activities. Student responses to these topic areas were de-identified, analyzed, and shared with specific instructional teams through individual feedback reports.

Trained members of the Office of Student Data, Analysis, and Evaluation (SDAE) facilitated the FYS student focus group interviews. The evaluation research project was supervised by Dr. Michele J. Hansen and approved by the IU Institutional Research Board (IRB #1310590044).

Recruitment Procedures. Students who agreed to voluntarily participate in the focus group interviews were asked to stay after class on the last day of the semester. As an incentive for participation students were provided pizza and refreshments. Prior to the start of interviews, potential student participants were given an IRB approved Study Information Sheet (SIS). SDAE team members reviewed the SIS with participants highlighting the study's purpose, its procedures, and the nature of confidentiality. Only student participants and members of SDAE were present during the FYS focus groups. The group interviews lasted 30 minutes to one hour in duration and were audio recorded.

Participants. A total of 68 students participated in (n = 13) separate FYS focus group interviews. As shown in Table 12, participants tended to be female, 18 or 19 years old, white, and studying as non-international students.

Table 12: Student Participant Demographic Characteristics

Gender		***Race / Ethnicity**	
Female	56	American Indian or Alaskan Native	1
Male	12	Asian	4
Total	68	Black or African American	13
Age		Hispanic	0
18	33	White	46
19	27	Other	1
20-24	5	Prefer not to respond	1
25 yrs. or older	0	International or Foreign Student	4
No response	3		
Total	68		

Note: participants responded to more than one race/ethnicity category.

Data Analysis. Analytical procedures were designed to facilitate an exploratory content analysis of 13 FYS focus group feedback reports. Individual feedback reports detailed major themes of discussion found within separate group interviews. This comprehensive report considers an *overall* view of *all* FYS focus groups. Therefore, its main goal is to understand and describe notable themes and patterns of discussion found across all of the FYS focus groups.

Results. Overall, it was clear students are benefiting greatly from their FYS experiences. Across all focus group discussions students described the FYS as helpful and meaningful to their learning both inside and outside of the classroom. For example, students described developing peer connections and forming friendships, being introduced to campus resources, discovering more about their major and career, and receiving instructional team support, as most valuable course aspects. Additionally, students identified these same items on a short survey as being notably helpful. Most students completed an electronic version of the personal development plan (PDP) and described the project as being helpful in planning and mapping out a future. However, some students indicated having uncertain expectations with the project or concerns with the amount of work required to complete it.

Participants spoke very positively of their instructional teams and the support they received. Specifically, students identified faculty members as having a personal interest in their success, being resourceful, and answering important questions. Academic advisors were described as being helpful in providing assistance with planning classes and declaring majors. Students often described peer mentors as supportive contacts that could provide emotional support and information on campus activities. When asked by interviewers to describe any specific needs not met by the FYS course students usually replied that the "class met most needs". However, a few students explained they could have benefited from receiving more information on campus resources and participating in more major and career discovery. Some students cited unhelpful assignments, time commitments and restraints, a need for improved group work and additional peer connection opportunities as least valuable course aspects.

Students are engaging in meaningful learning experiences through their FYS courses. Still, focused FYS improvements may need to be considered based on student feedback. For example, while many students described completing an ePDP as helpful, some students indicated having uncertain expectations with the project. FYS instructional teams may benefit from exploring new ways to communicate their expectations of the ePDP to students. Additionally, most students indicated the FYS met their needs. However, instructional teams should continue to make certain students receive information on campus resources and participate in major and career discovery. Continuing to provide meaningful pathways that allow students to develop peer connections and form friendships will establish further the value of FYS courses. Finally, it may be helpful to continue to respond to student reported least valuable aspects (e.g., unhelpful assignments and time commitments) on a course by course basis via individual feedback reports. Taken together, these results are designed to aid University College administrators, faculty, staff, and other stakeholders in further developing evidence-based FYS improvements.

Direct Measures of Student Learning: Levels of Knowledge and Skills in PULS of Core Communication and Critical Thinking

UC FYS faculty members measured direct student learning outcomes by employing a course- embedded, authentic assessment approach. Faculty collected student work (written assignments, reflections, work from students' electronic Personal Development Plans, etc.) and assessed students' levels of Core Communication and Critical Thinking Skills. Results from UC First Year Seminar Courses are displayed in Table 13. The vast majority of seminar students attained high levels of communication and critical thinking skills (78% and 76% were rated as "Effective" or "Very Effective" in their communication and critical thinking skill levels, respectively).

Table 13. University College First Year Seminar Levels of Core Communication and Critical Thinking Skills[1]

Principle of Undergraduate Learning	Sample Size Mean [2]	Not Effective	Somewhat Effective	Effective	Very Effective	Total
Core Communication	2784 3.18	288 10.3%	318 11.4%	780 28.0%	1398 50.2%	2784 100.0%
Critical Thinking	1803 3.19	181 10.0%	245 13.6%	434 24.1%	943 52.3%	1803 100.0

[1] Combined number of student ratings in all UC FYS courses in Spring 2010, Fall 2010, Spring 2011, Fall 2011, Spring 2012, Fall 2012, Spring 2013, and Fall 2013.

[2] Scale: 1 = "Not Effective", 2 = "Somewhat Effective", 3 = "Effective", 4 = "Very Effective"

Effects of U110 First-Year Seminar Program on Retention and Academic Performance

Overall, the 2012 University College first-year seminar participants earned one-year GPAs of 2.72 and had a Fall-to-Fall retention rate of 73%; 80% earned first-year GPAs above a 2.00 and 44% earned first-year GPAs above a 3.0. It is important to note that University College first-year seminars had a higher proportion of African American students, females, and conditional admits, and students testing into remedial math compared to the population of all other IUPUI students. The 2012 University College African American first-year seminar participants earned one-year GPAs of 2.45 and had a Fall-to-Fall retention rate of 78%; 74% earned first-year GPAs above a 2.00.

Shown in Table 14 are the academic success outcomes for students participating in the 2013 University College First-Year Seminar interventions. Results suggest that FYSs that are connect to Summer Bridge and SB-TLC have better outcomes compared to the other interventions. Overall, 2013 participants had a Fall-Spring retention rate of 88% and a Fall semester GPA of 2.81.

Table 14. 2013 Types of U110 First Year Seminar Interventions and Academic Success Outcomes.

U110 FYS Seminar Type*	N**	Fall GPA	% Fall Below 2.00	Fall-Spring Retention Rate
Standalone	284	2.76	21%	86%
Learning Community***	239	2.79	18%	87%
FYS-TLC	212	2.72	19%	87%
FYS-Summer Bridge	59	**3.27**	**8%**	**97%**
FYS-SB-TLC	64	**2.90**	**14%**	**94%**
FYS Online	114	**2.91**	21%	**92%**
Overall	*972*	*2.81*	*19%*	*88%*

* Categories by intervention are mutually exclusive.
****** Missing cases are excluded from analyses.
*** U110 First Year Seminar linked to at least one other course such as English W 131 in a cohort model. Not part of a Themed Learning Community.
Note: Bolded items are notably different compared to *Overall*.

Shown in Table 15 are the Fall Cumulative GPAs for students in School-Based First-Year Seminars, University College First-Year Seminars, and students not participating in any form of a First-Year Seminar. Results suggest that there is variance in students' outcomes based on the FYS type offered. Students in sections offered by the Schools Engineering, Nursing, Science, CSCI, DHYG-H, and SHRS-W performed better than expected when adjusting for by incoming levels of academic preparation (measured by HS GPAs and SAT scores). Students in no FYS section had significantly worse actual Fall GPAs compared to expected. **Please use caution in interpreting findings due to the small sample sizes in each section and the fact that there are factors beyond SAT Scores and HS GPAs that affect academic success outcomes.**

Table 15. First-Year Seminar Program Types/Schools and Students' Fall Semester Academic Performance

FYS Type	N*	Actual Fall GPA	Adjusted Fall GPA**
Business	**397**	**2.91**	**2.97**
CSCI	**45**	**2.89**	**2.70**
DHYG-H	**48**	**2.90**	**2.99**
Education	**91**	**2.98**	**3.16**
Engineering	**253**	**2.68**	**2.52**
Herron	**116**	**2.90**	**2.92**
HPER-L	**105**	**2.90**	**2.88**
Informatics	**43**	**2.85**	**2.89**
Journalism	**29**	**3.06**	**3.11**
Nursing	**59**	**3.20**	**2.97**
Science	**371**	**3.01**	**2.67**
SHRS-W	**36**	**2.99**	**2.87**
Liberal Arts	**132**	**2.91**	**3.01**
SPEA-V	**44**	**2.50**	**2.65**
Social Work	**19**	**2.98**	**3.21**
TCEM-G	**27**	**3.24**	**3.45**
Technology	**149**	**2.49**	**2.54**
University College	**930**	**2.77**	**2.83**
No First-Year Seminar	**285**	**2.49**	**2.65**
Overall	**3179**	**2.81**	

*****Missing cases are excluded from analyses. Some students withdrew after census and did not have fall semester GPAs while other students had missing HS GPAs and SAT scores.
**Adjusted while taking into account HS GPAs and SAT scores and based on ANCOVA results.
Note: Green shading indicates that actual Fall GPA is above expected or adjusted.

Instructional Team Members' Experiences with the First-Year Seminar Program

Results of Fall 2013 Instructional Team Questionnaire are shown in **Appendix F**. The purpose of the investigation was to understand instructional team members' perceptions of University College First Year Seminars (FYS). Fall 2013 UC FYS advisors, faculty members, and student mentors were asked to voluntarily respond to an anonymous questionnaire administered after the end of the semester. Participants were encouraged to share opinions regarding FYS resources, goals, teams, activities, and areas for improvement.

Results Highlights (Please see Appendix F for complete report)

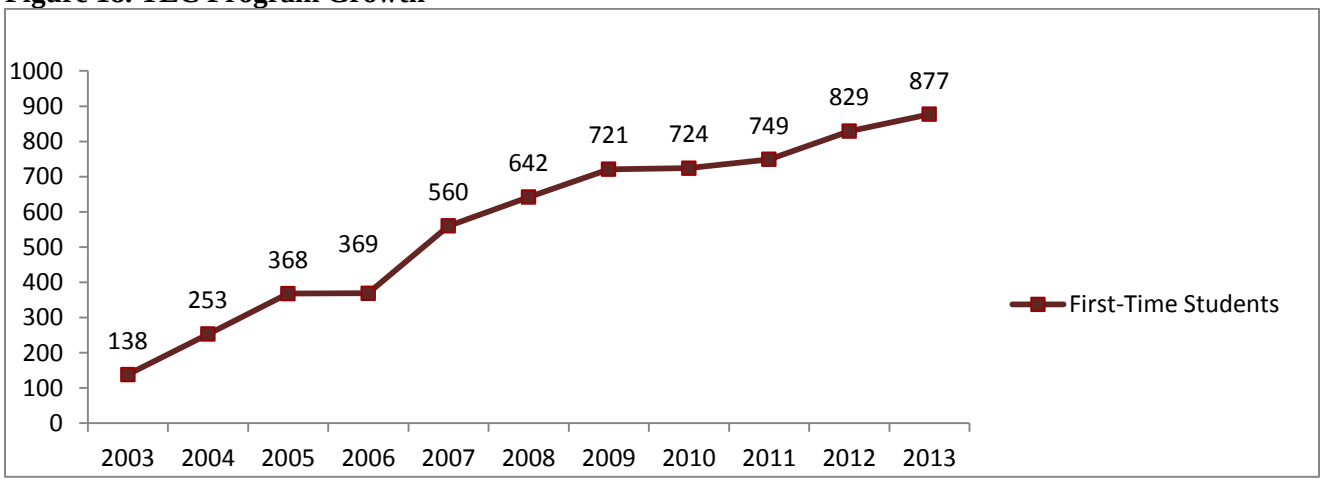
- Faculty members were satisfied with their experiences with teaching a U110 course. For example, 89% of faculty members (n=25) would recommend teaching a First Year Seminar to another faculty member. All faculty respondents (100%) believe that FYSs improve college readiness for students.
- First Year Seminar faculty members, advisors, and student mentors understand what is expected of them as members of FYS instructional teams and feel prepared to take on their roles.
- Faculty and mentors are satisfied with their FYS instructional team experience and believe their teams model collaboration for students. Advisors feel less valued by their teams and are less certain teams model collaboration well.
- Faculty members believe FYS resources need to be improved. They are especially interested in updated FYS website materials and an FYS faculty orientation. Advisors and mentors are more positive about FYS resources. They appreciate their departmental/role-related training and pre-semester preparation meetings. All are interested in more opportunities to share FYS best practices.
- Faculty members feel First Year Seminars should ease students' transition from high school to college by building a sense of community, introducing college-level expectations, and acquainting students with IUPUI resources.
- Advisors, faculty members, and student mentors believe FYS instructional team roles should be as follows: advisors should advise (e.g., help with academic planning, registration, major/career decisions), faculty should lead (e.g., create course structure and syllabus, set course tone), mentors should support students and build relationships, and librarians should teach research skills.
- Advisors and mentors both feel they contribute to student success by building relationships. Advisors also contribute by introducing university policies/practices and helping to create academic plans. Mentors feel they promote success by supporting students.
- Faculty members promote FYS goals by facilitating class discussions, assigning reflective writing, requiring student presentations/projects, and utilizing the PDP.
- 86% of faculty use the FYS template, but feel reducing the number of goals it contains and providing additional pedagogical guidance would improve the document.
- Advisors, faculty members, and student mentors agree that an update to the First Year Seminar format (e.g., adding more activities outside the classroom) would be beneficial.

THEMED LEARNING COMMUNITY PROGRAM

Characteristics of Students Participating in Themed Learning Communities

The TLC program has experienced steady growth over the past decade (2003-2013). As displayed in Figure 18, a total of 829 first-time IUPUI students were served in TLCs which represented the most students served in the program to date (30% of FT, FT Cohort). There were 39 sections offered during fall 2012 and this represented the largest number of offerings in the program's history. The program has grown tremendously since the inception in 2003 when only 138 students participated. A total of 811 students actually participated (completed the course and were not administratively withdrawn and did not withdraw). In Fall 2013, a total of 877 (25% of incoming cohort) students participated (completed the course and were not administratively withdrawn and did not withdraw; 29 students withdrew or were administratively withdrawn).

Figure 18. TLC Program Growth



It appears that the 2012 and 2013 TLC programs attracted appropriate numbers of students from underrepresented minority groups given that the proportions of students from underrepresented groups were similar to the general IUPUI first-time student population during both program years. Please see Table 16 and 17.

In 2013 TLC students had significantly lower SAT scores compared to nonparticipants (SAT Score Average 1012 compared to 1036). TLC students had similar Average HS GPAs compared to nonparticipants (3.36 compared to 3.38).

Table 16. Themed Learning Community 2012 Student Groups/Underrepresented Minority Participation
N = 811 TLCs, N = 2000 All Others or Nonparticipants

	TLC Participation		All Others IUPUI	
	N	**% of TLC Population**	***N***	**% of All Others Population**
African American	104	**13%**	167	**8%**
Asian American	28	4%	91	5%
Latino/a	71	9%	131	6%
International	1	**0%**	118	**6%**
Female	499	**62%**	1061	**53%**
First-Generation	345	**43%**	776	**39%**
Pell Grant	381	**47%**	791	**40%**
25 or Older	0	0%	26	1%
Conditional Admit	40	5%	61	3%

Note 1:Missing cases were excluded.
Note 2: Includes only first-time, full-time beginners.
Note 2: Bolded items are statistically significantly and practically different based on chi-square test results (p <. 05).

Table 17. Themed Learning Community 2013 Student Groups/Underrepresented Minority Participation
N = 877 TLCs, N = 2613 All Others or Nonparticipants

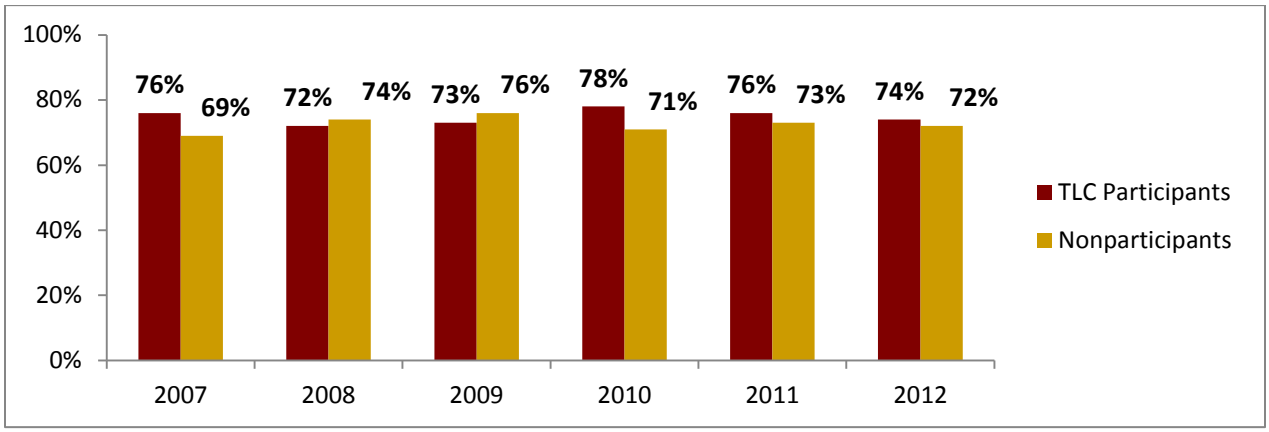
	TLC Participation		All Others IUPUI	
	N	**% of TLC Population**	***N***	**% of All Others Population**
African American	103	**12%**	219	**8%**
Asian American	28	3%	125	5%
Latino/a	83	10%	198	8%
International	1	**0%**	104	**4%**
Female	587	**67%**	1404	**54%**
First-Generation	322	37%	901	35%
Pell Grant	405	**46%**	1063	**41%**
25 or Older	1	0%	35	1%
Conditional Admit	16	2%	84	3%
Campus Housing	340	**39%**	797	**31%**

Note 1:Missing cases were excluded.
Note 2: Includes only first-time, full-time beginners.
Note 2: Bolded items are statistically significantly and practically different based on chi-square test results (p <. 05).

Effects of TLCs on Retention and Academic Performance

TLC participants have had higher one-year retention rates compared to nonparticipants, with the exception of the 2008 and 2009 program years. These were periods of rapid growth and many new instructional teams were formed. Program administrators have made data-driven changes to help ensure that the program fidelity is maintained during periods of growth. Shown in Figure 19 are the one-year retention rates over a 6-year period.

Figure 19. TLC Participants' One-Year Retention Rates Compared to Nonparticipants



Note: One-Year retention rates are significantly higher for TLC participants compared to nonparticipants even when taking academic preparation and demographics into account for the 2007, 2010, and 2011 cohorts (HS GPAs, SAT Scores, Gender, Income Level, and Admit Date).2012 one-year retention rates are not significantly different.

2011 TLC participants had significantly higher one-year retention rates of (76% compared to 73% for nonparticipants). Based on the results of a logistic regression analysis TLC participants had a 33% better odds of being retained compared to nonparticipants, even when academic preparation variables, income level, first-generation status, admit date (as a proxy for motivation) and gender were entered in the first step. Results shown in Table 18.

Table 18. Logistic Regression Predicting One Year Retention Fall 2011

	Variable	B	SE	Wald Statistic	95% CI	p	Odd Ratio
Step 1	H.S GPA	1.15	.13	77.37	2.44, 4.06	.000	3.15
	SAT Score	.00	.00	2.21	1.00, 1.00	.137	1.00
	First Generation	-.10	.10	1.03	.74, 1.10	.310	.90
	Female	-.01	.10	.01	.81, 1.21	.932	.99
	Low Income	-.18	.10	3.34	.68, 1.01	.068	.83
Step 2	H.S GPA	1.17	.13	79.33	2.48, 4.14	.000	3.21
	SAT Score	.00	.00	2.51	1.00, 1.00	.113	1.00
	First Generation	-.11	.10	1.30	.73, 1.09	.255	.89
	Female	-.02	.10	.04	.80, 1.20	.835	.98
	Low Income	-.18	.10	3.11	.69, 1.02	.078	.84
	TLC	.28	.11	7.16	1.08, 1.63	.007	1.33

Note 1: Low Income is a dummy coded variable for received a Pell Grant or not. TLC s a dummy coded variable for participated in 2011 TLC Program or Not.
Note 2: TLC participants have 33% better odds of being retained compared to non-participants (based on the odds ratio). Nagelkerke R^2 = .076 for Step 1: Nagelkerke R^2 =..080 for Step 2

Students participating in the Fall 2012 TLC program did not have significantly one-year higher retention rates or first-year GPAs compared to nonparticipants. Results are shown in Tables 19 - 22. Students in the Fall 2013 TLC had significantly higher Fall GPAs (adjusted 2.88) compared to nonparticipants (2.81).

Students from some underrepresented minority groups had significantly better academic success outcomes and retention rates compared to their peers that did not participate in TLCs during the 2012 fall semester. 2012 TLC African American participants had a fall-to-fall retention rate of 73% compared to 63% for nonparticipating African Americans. Results are shown in Table 23.

Shown in Table 24 are the First-Year Cumulative GPAs and One-Year Retention Rates for students in School-Based TLCs and University College TLCs. Results suggest that there is variance in students' outcomes based on the TLC type offered. Students in sections offered by the Schools Engineering, Nursing, Science , and HPER-L performed better than

expected when adjusting for by incoming levels of academic preparation (measured by HS GPAs and SAT scores). **Please use caution in interpreting results due to small sample sizes. Please use caution in interpreting findings due to small numbers and the fact that there are factors beyond SAT Scores and HS GPAs that affect academic success outcomes.**

Table 19. Fall 2012 TLC Program Students' Academic Success Outcomes Compared to Non-Participating First-Time, Full-Time Students

	First Year GPA	% Below 2.00 GPA	Fall-Fall Retention Rate*
TLC	2.64	22%	74%
Nonparticipants	2.72	20%	72%
Overall	2.68	20%	73%

Note 1: Missing cases were excluded.
Note 2: Bolded items are statistically significant based on an independent samples t-test or chi-square test results (p <. 001).
* Retention rate based on IUPUI Indianapolis only (includes all degree seeking – Bachelors, Associates, and Certificates).

Table 20. ANCOVA Results: Fall 2012 TLC Participation and First Year GPA

	N	First Year GPA	Adjusted First Year GPA*
TLC	791	2.63	2.95
Non-Participants	1783	2.71	2.65
Overall	2574	2.68	

Note 1: Missing cases were excluded.
Note 2: Bolded items are not statistically significant based on Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) results (p =.739).
Note 3: Partial Eta Squared =.023 indicating a small effect size.
* Covariates included in the model were High School GPA, SAT Score, Admit Date, and Income Level (received a Pell Grant or Not dummy coded where 1 = Received Pell Grant and 0 = Did NOT Receive a Pell Grant), and Gender (dummy coded where 1=Female and 0 = Not Female or Male).

Table 21. Fall 2013 TLC Program Students' Academic Success Outcomes Compared to Non-Participating First-Time, Full-Time Students

	Fall GPA	% Below 2.0 Fall GPA	Fall-Spring Retention Rate*
TLC	2.85	17%	**91%**
Nonparticipants	2.81	19%	**88%**
Overall	2.82	19%	89%

Note 1: Missing cases were excluded.
Note 2: Bolded items are statistically significant based on an independent samples t-test or chi-square test results (p <. 001).
* Retention rate based on IUPUI Indianapolis only (includes all degree seeking – Bachelors, Associates, and Certificates).

Table 22. ANCOVA Results: Fall 2013 TLC Participation and Fall GPA

	N	Fall GPA	Adjusted Fall GPA*
TLC	833	**2.86**	**2.88**
Non-Participants	2208	**2.81**	**2.81**
Overall	3041	2.83	

Note 1: Missing cases were excluded.
Note 2: Bolded items are statistically significant based on Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) results (p <. 045).
Note 3: Partial Eta Squared =.023 indicating a small effect size.
* Covariates included in the model were High School GPA, SAT Score, Enrollment Date (proxy for student motivation) , and Income Level (received a Pell Grant or Not dummy coded where 1 = Received Pell Grant and 0 = Did NOT Receive a Pell Grant), and Gender (dummy coded where 1=Female and 0 = Not Female or Male).

Table 23. Fall 2012 TLC Student Groups/Underrepresented Minority Participation and Academic Success Outcomes

	TLC PARTICIPANTS				NON-PARTICIPANTS		
	N	**First-Year GPA**	**% First-Year GPA Below 2.00**	**One-Year Retention Rate**	**First-Year GPA**	**% First-Year GPA Below 2.00**	**One-Year Retention Rate**
African American	104	2.36	**25%**	**73%**	2.31	**31%**	**63%**
Asian American	28	2.84	18%	93%	2.98	12%	88%
Latino/a	71	2.34	30%	68%	2.46	26%	69%
International	1				3.04	10%	90%
Female	499	2.72	18%	73%	2.82	17%	73%
First-Generation	345	2.58	23%	**72%**	2.54	27%	**67%**
Pell Grant	381	2.45	28%	71%	2.52	26%	68%
Campus Housing	279	2.78	17%	79%	2.91	14%	75%

Note 1: Missing cases were excluded.
Note 2: Bolded items are statistically significantly and practically different based on ANOVA results or chi-square test results ($p < .001$).

Table 24. 2012 TLC Program Types/Schools and Students' Academic Success Outcomes

TLC	N*	Actual First Year GPA	Adjusted First Year GPA**	Fall-Fall Retention Rate	Adjusted Fall-Fall Retention Rate**
Business	**43**	**2.51**	**2.58**	**74%**	**73%**
Education	**56**	**2.66**	**2.76**	**77%**	**79%**
Engineering	**67**	**2.66**	**2.35**	**82%**	**76%**
Herron	**17**	**3.12**	**3.23**	**83%**	**90%**
HPER-L	**43**	**2.74**	**2.69**	**71%**	**71%**
Nursing	**66**	**2.99**	**2.83**	**81%**	**78%**
Science	**63**	**2.52**	**2.42**	**72%**	**70%**
Liberal Arts	**130**	**2.67**	**2.70**	**73%**	**73%**
SPEA	**33**	**2.61**	**2.61**	**80%**	**79%**
Social Work	**15**	**2.32**	**2.49**	**53%**	**57%**
Technology	**33**	**2.43**	**2.48**	**67%**	**67%**
University College	**225**	**2.54**	**2.63**	**71%**	**72%**
Overall	**791**	**2.63**		**74%**	

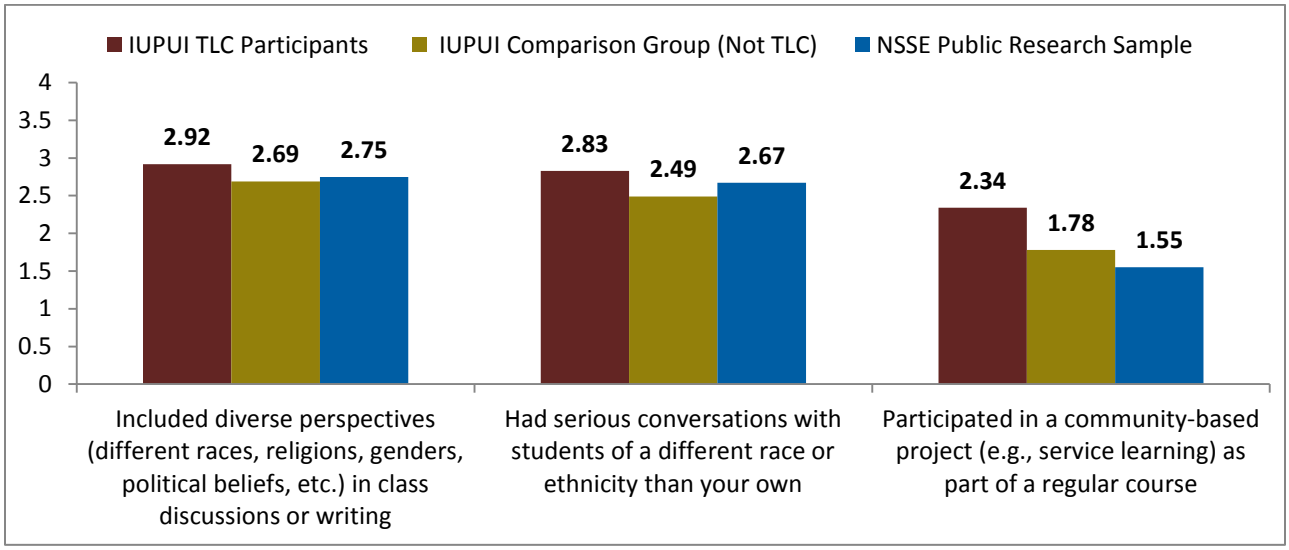
*****Missing cases are excluded from analyses. Some students withdrew after census and did not have fall semester GPAs while other students had missing HS GPAs and SAT scores.
**Adjusted while taking into account HS GPAs and SAT scores and based on ANCOVA results.
Note:. **Green** shading indicates that actual Fall GPA is above expected or adjusted.

Students' Experiences, Perceptions of Benefits, and Learning Outcomes

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is designed to assess two critical features of collegiate quality. The first is the amount of time and effort students put into their studies and other educationally purposeful activities. The second is how the institution deploys its resources and organizes the curriculum and other learning opportunities to get students to participate in activities that decades of research studies show are linked to student learning. IUPUI first-year students that participated in TLCs had higher engagement levels in critical areas compared both to other IUPUI first-year students not participating in TLCs (based on independent samples t-test results, $p<.01$) and to the comparative NSSE sample comprised of Public Research Institutions. Results are displayed in Figure 20.

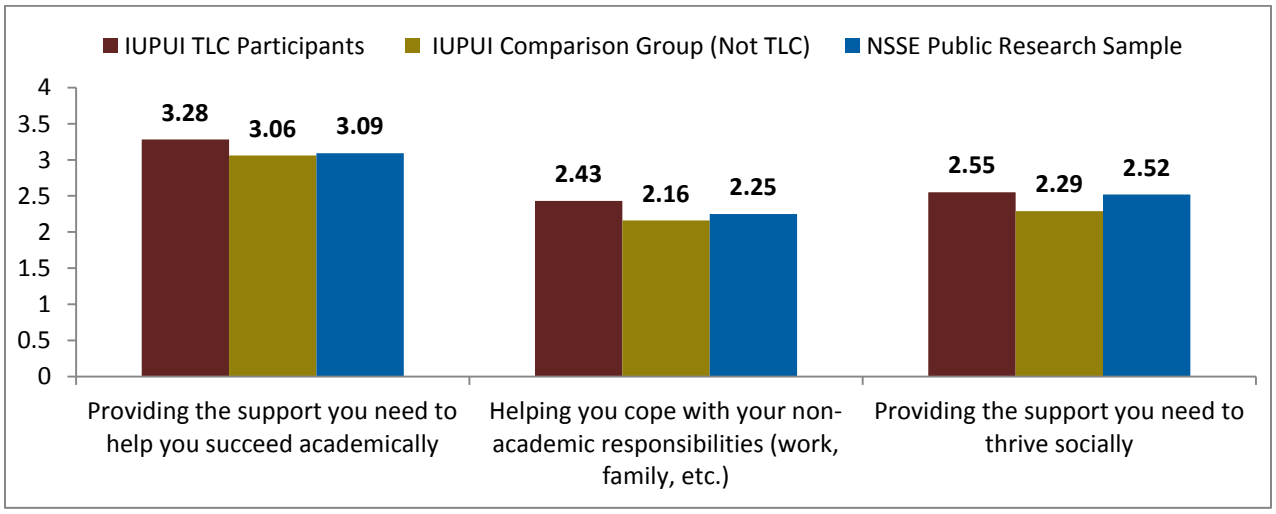
Figure 20. National Survey of Student Engagement Results

Academic and Intellectual Experiences



Note: Responses based on a 4-point scale where 1 ="never," 2="sometimes, 3="often" and 4 = "very often"

Institutional Environment

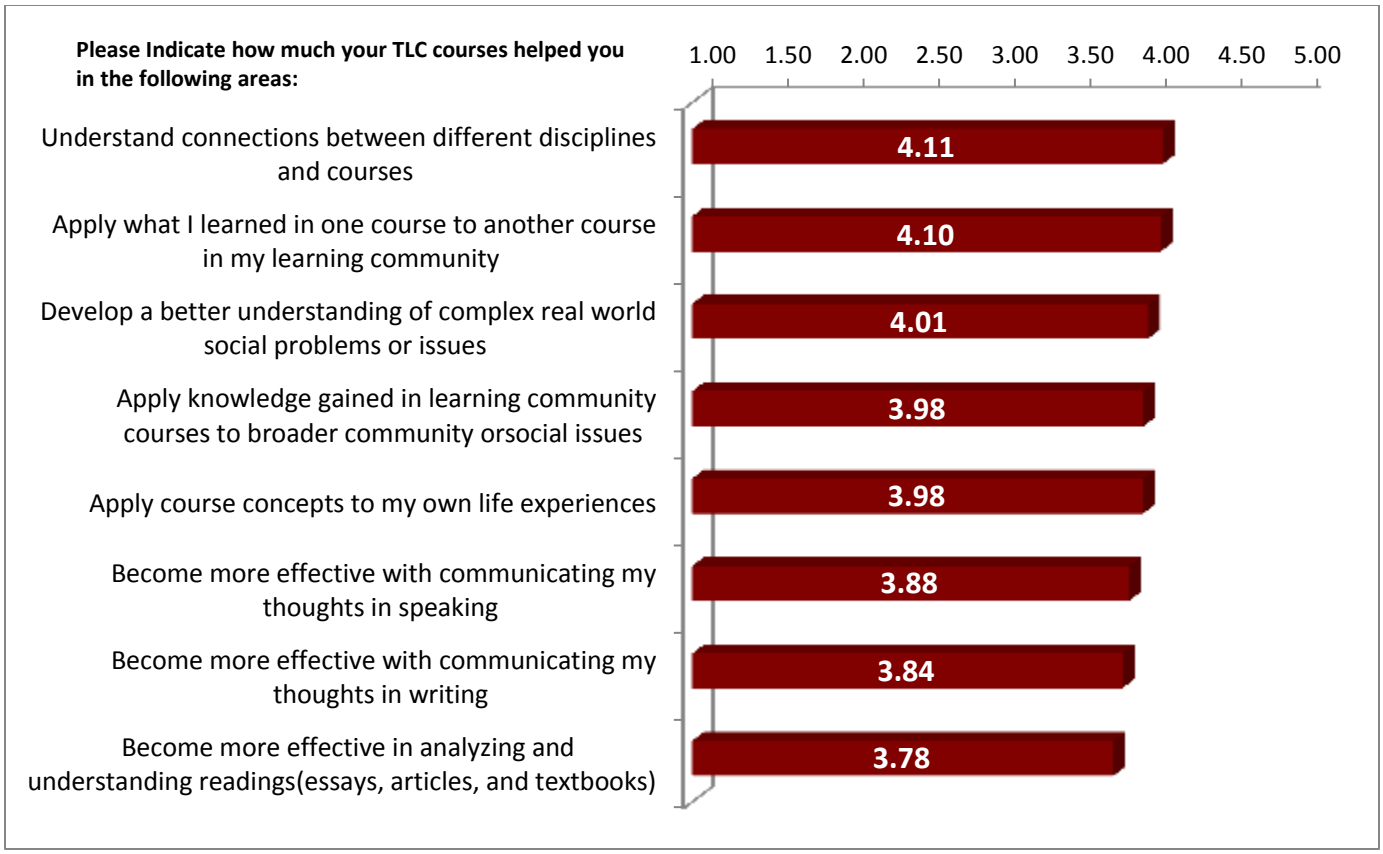


Note: Responses based on a 4-point scale where 1 ="very little," 2="some", 3= "quite a bit" and 4 = "very much"

Students are asked to respond to anonymous end-of-course questionnaires each semester. A total of 697 students responded in fall 2013. Instructional teams are provided with individual reports displaying all means and frequencies as well as typed students' responses to open-ended items as a formative assessment strategy. Aggregate results are used for program evaluation purposes. Fall 2013 results are shown in Figures 21 and 22. Students reported that the TLC program

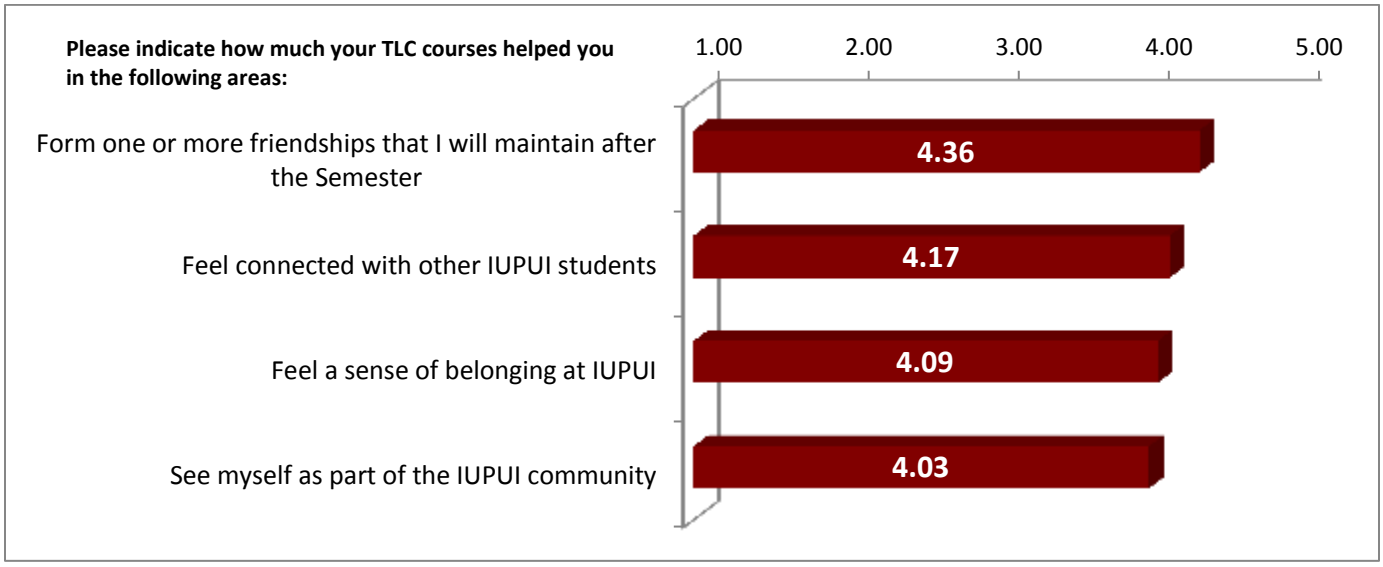
helped them improve their levels of critical thinking skills and integration/application of knowledge. Additionally, students reported high mean levels of sense of community experienced as a result the TLC program.

Figure 21. Students' Self-Reported Learning Outcomes PULs: Core Communication, Critical Thinking, and Integration and Application of Knowledge



Note: Responses based on a 5 point Likert-Type scale where 1 = Very Little, 2 = Little, 3 = Some, 4 = Much, and 5 = Very Much

Figure 22. Students' Perceptions of Sense of Community Created by the TLC Program



Note: Responses based on a 5 point Likert-Type scale where 1 = Very Little, 2 = Little, 3 = Some, 4 = Much, and 5 = Very Much

Shown in **Appendix G** is a qualitative investigation to students' responses to a series of open-ended questions on the 2012 TLC end-of-course questionnaire. The purpose of the investigation was to provide an overview of students' perceptions and opinions of the 2012 Themed Learning Community (TLC) program.

Participants enrolled in a TLC were asked to voluntarily respond to an anonymous questionnaire at the end of the program. Students provided open-ended feedback in the areas of how the TLCs contributed to their learning, what they liked most and least about the program, why they chose to enroll, and suggestions for improvement. The investigation examined notable findings of fall 2012 students' open-ended responses and also considers qualitative data of previous TLC program years (2009-2011). Students described several ways in which the TLC program contributed to their learning. These included but were not limited to: receiving college transition assistance, meeting new friends and developing connections, developing critical thinking skills, being enrolled in linked courses, developing peer support networks, and becoming more comfortable and confident. This is consistent with findings from previous program years (2009-2011) with a few exceptions. For example, students reported developing critical thinking skills as contributing to their learning with a higher frequency in 2012 compared to 2011. Additionally, students in 2012 were more likely to reference college transition assistance in their responses compared to previous TLC cohorts.

Participants also described what they liked the most about their TLC experiences. Students responded that meeting new people and forming friendships, having the same students in classes, participating in group activities and discussions, and having positive instructional team support were aspects of the TLC that they liked the most. These program components were consistently within the top four most discussed areas by participants in all four program years (2009-2012). Least liked aspects of the TLC program were also described by student participants. Some students simply indicated n/a, none, or nothing in response to this question. Still, other students described a specific linked course or component (e.g., First-year Seminar, English). Similar to previous program years, students also reported a perceived lack of organization and time commitments and restraints as least valuable aspects.

Students also provided insight into the specific reasons why they chose to enroll in a TLC. College transition assistance was the #1 most frequent response given by both the 2012 and 2011student cohorts. In comparison, it was the #3 most common response provided in 2010 and the #5 most frequent response in 2009. Similar to previous years, some students indicated that they enrolled because they were required to participate in a TLC (or they thought it was required). Finally, 2012 students also indicated that they enrolled in a TLC because it was connected to their major or career choice or they were referred or recommended into the program.

2012 TLC participants also provided a variety of suggestions for improvement. These included but are not limited to: having more (outside) group activities and discussions, improving program organization and communication, improving course and theme linkages, providing more instructional team support, and having less time commitments and restraints. These recommendations are consistent with those given by students in previous years with one notable exception. More (outside) group activities and discussions was the #2 most frequent suggestion given by students in 2012. However, it was the #6 most common suggestion in both 2011 and 2010. Finally, some students in 2012 were very specific; highlighting the "outside" component of the more group activities recommendation.

Instructional Team Members' Experiences with the TLC Program

Fall 2013 TLC faculty members were asked to voluntarily respond to an anonymous questionnaire administered after the end of the semester. Participants were encouraged to share opinions regarding TLC resources, goals, activities, and areas for improvement. The purpose of the investigation was to understand instructional team members' perceptions of Themed Learning Communities. A comprehensive report can be found in **Appendix H**

TLC Faculty Perceptions' Highlights

- The majority of TLC faculty agreed or strongly agreed that TLCs meet each of the program goals. The highest rated items were "TLCs form support networks among students in their learning communities" (mean=4.49) and "TLCs promote active and collaborative learning" (mean=4.45). The lowest ranking item was "TLCs encourage students to understand the value of diversity by exposure to multiple points of view" (mean=3.95).
- The majority of TLC faculty also agreed or strongly agreed that teaching in a TLC meets the TLC goals for faculty. The highest rated item was "teaching in a TLC has enhanced my contact with students" (mean=4.35). The lowest ranking item was "I am satisfied with my TLC instructional team experience (mean=3.97).
- 76% agreed or strongly agreed that they would "recommend teaching a TLC to another faculty member."
- Time to meet as a team outside of class (35%) and communication (30%) were ranked highest as essential items to building instructional teams. Professional development, training, recruitment and resources/support all received under 10% of responses.
- All but two responses agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I understand what is expected as a TLC instructor."
- 78% of TLC faculty reported agreed or strongly agreed to the statement "I feel prepared to teach in Themed Learning Communities."
- In terms of the helpfulness of resources, the TLC Office was highest ranked (mean=4.18) followed by the TLC retreat (mean =4.03). The lowest ranked items included articles (mean=3.33) and the TLC Oncourse site (mean=4.03)
- The greatest reported advantages of participating in a TLC include connections with faculty in other disciplines and students.
- The greatest reported challenges of participating in a TLC are the time needed for collaboration and hyperbonding.

Assessment Appendix A - Understanding the Characteristics of IUPUI First-Year Students

- The 2013 IUPUI first-time cohort includes 3252 first-time full time students and 238 part-time students. 5 year trends of part-time students are shown in Figure 1.
- Of the first-time full-time students, 64% (2078) are University College admits and 36% (1174) were admitted directly to their school. Figure 2 shows the five-year trends for dual/direct admits.
- 3% (100) of these students were conditionally admitted (Figure 3 and 3a)

Figure 1 Percent of Beginners Enrolled Part-time during First-Semester

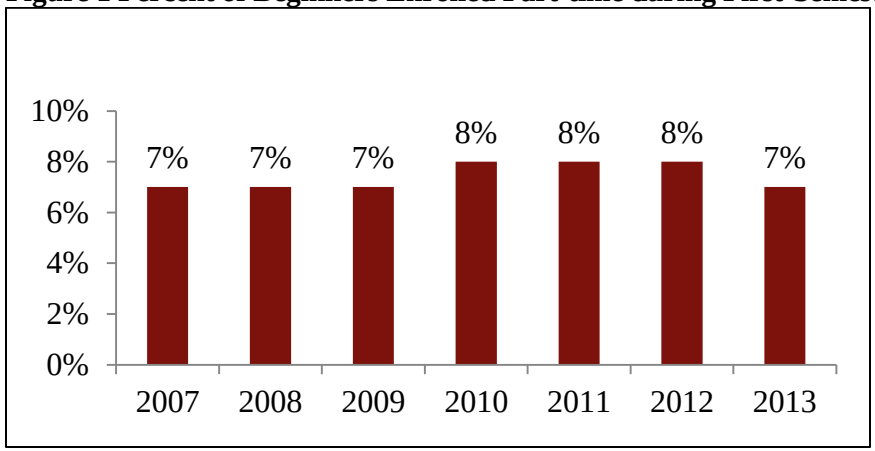


Figure 2 Percent Directly Admitted to a School (2007-2013)

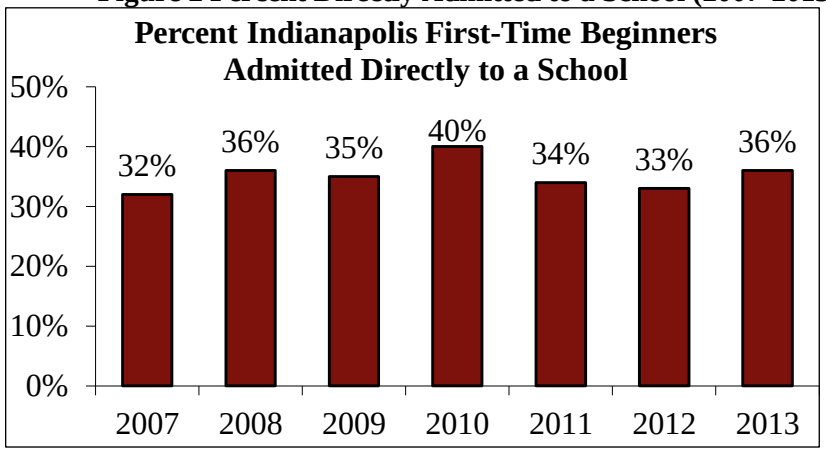


Figure 3 Number of Admitted Conditionally (2007-2013)

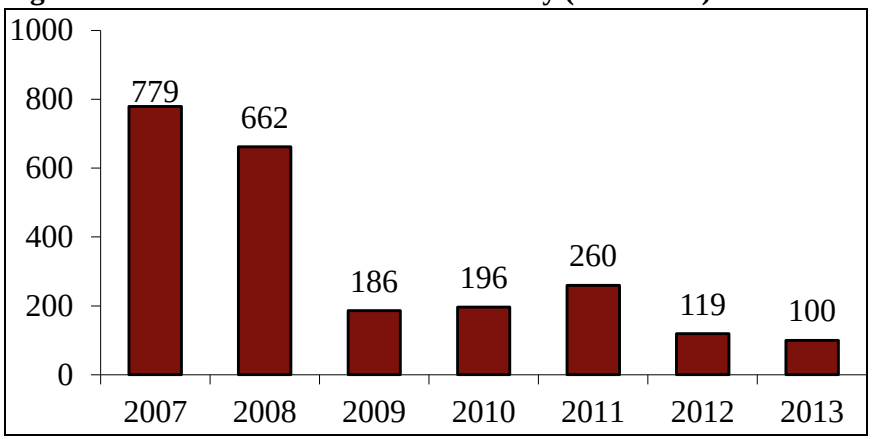
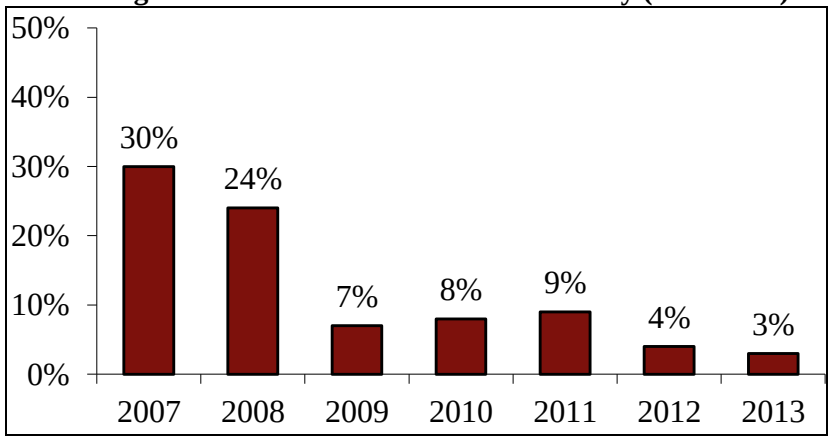


Figure 3a Percent Admitted Conditionally (2007-2013)



- 34% (1113) of the first-time full time students live in campus housing (Figures 4 and 4a)
- 1% (39) are Veterans
- 7% (235) of first-time, full time students are in the Honors College

- 35% (1138) of first-time full time are first-generation college students (neither parent attended college) (Figure 5 and 5a)

Figure 4 Number living in Campus Housing (2009-2013)

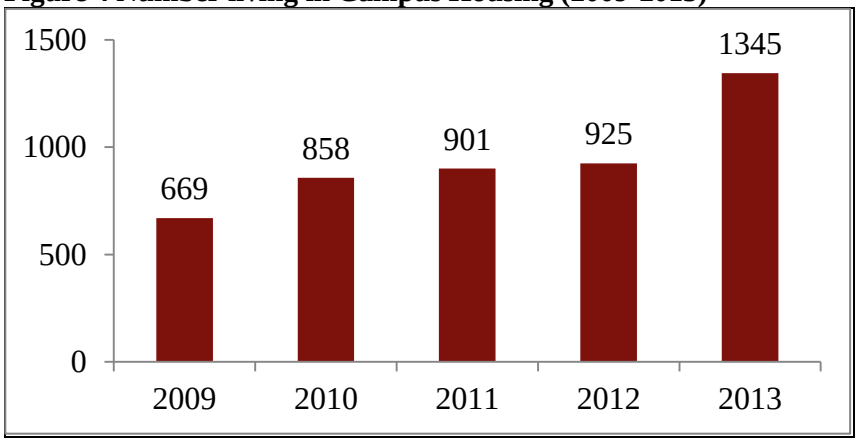


Figure 4a Percent Living in Campus Housing (2009-2013)

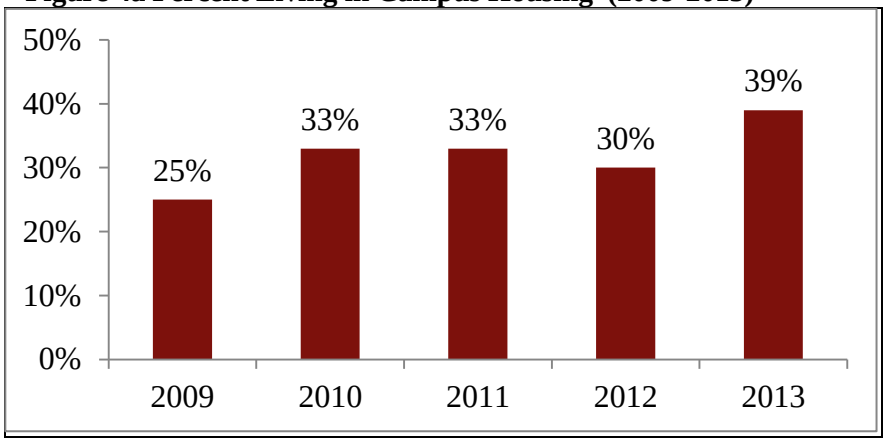


Figure 5 Number First Generation (2007-2013)

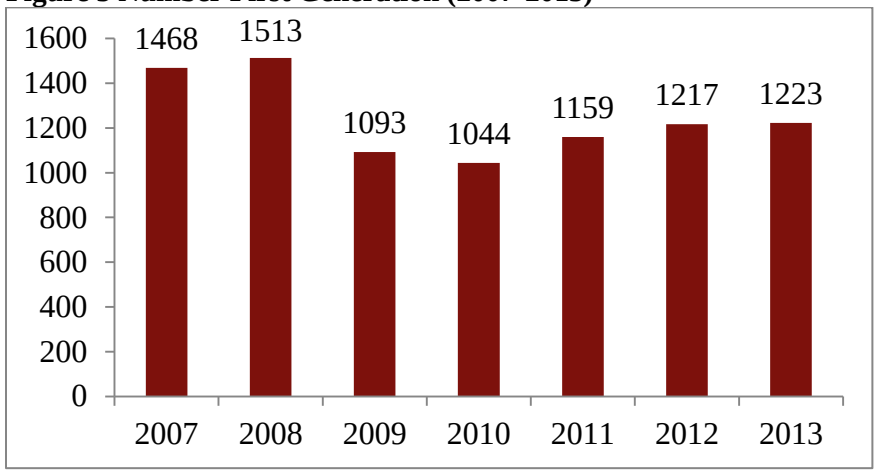
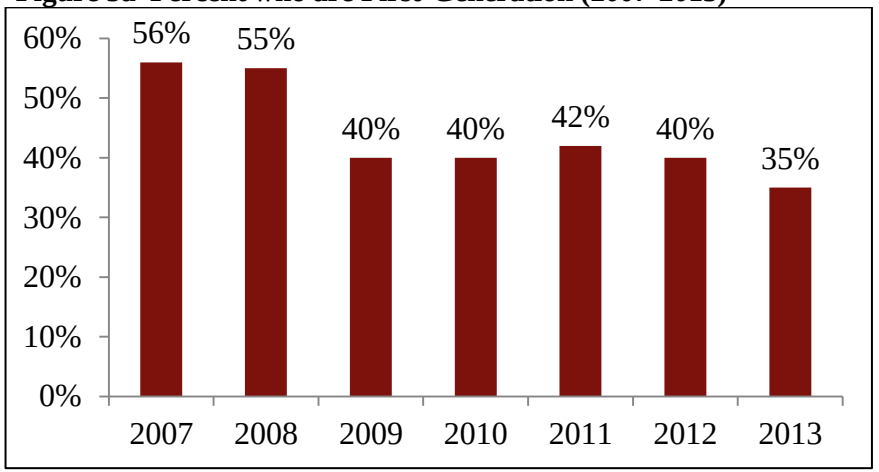


Figure 5a Percent who are First-Generation (2007-2013)



- The median age for first-time beginners is 18.75 (Figure 6)
- There are 36 (1%) first time beginners age 25 and older (Figure 7 and 7a)
- 16 (44%) of the first-time beginners over the age of 25 were enrolled part-time (Figure 7c)

Figure 6 First-Time Beginner Median Age

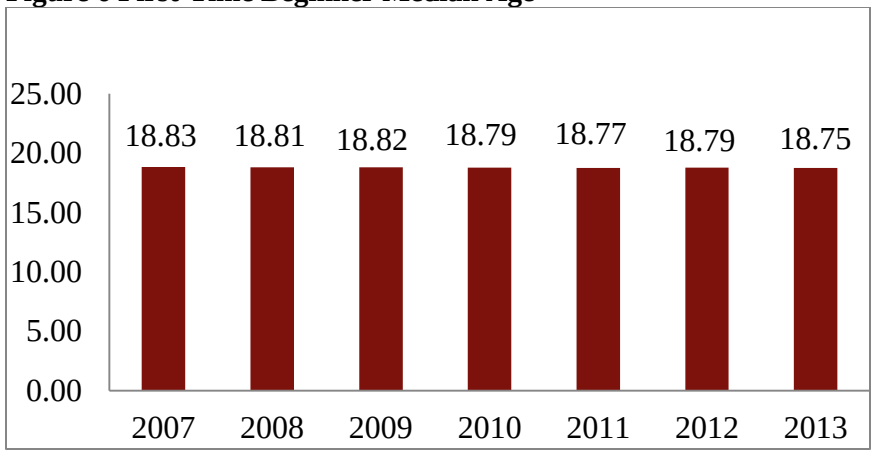


Figure 7 Number of First-Time Beginners Age 25 and Older

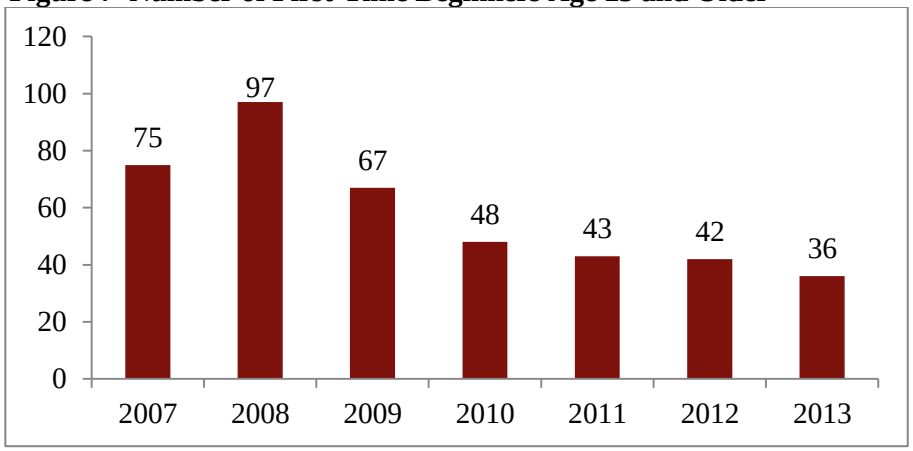


Figure 7a Percent of First-Time Beginners Age 25 or Older

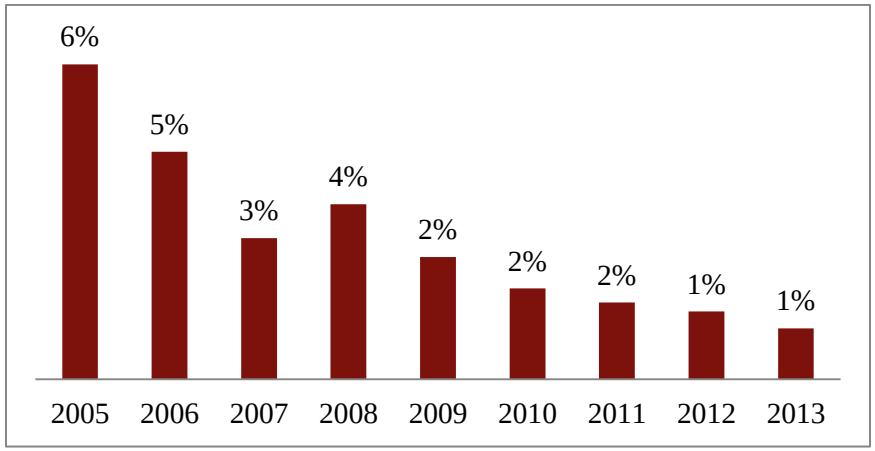
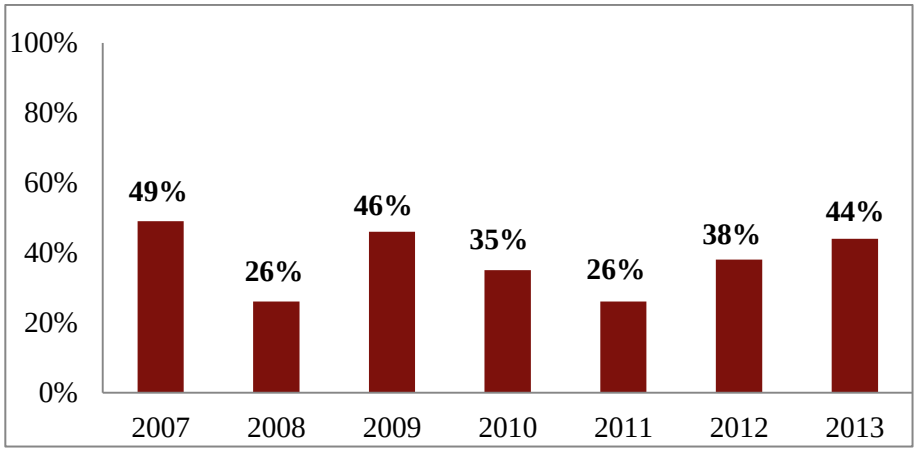


Figure 7c Percent of First-Time Beginners Age 25 or Older Enrolled Part-time



- 94% (3315) are Indiana residents (Figure 8)
- 3.1% (99) of the cohort are international students (Figure 9)
- Total cohort ethnicity can be found in Figure 10

- 9% of the total cohort are African American (Figure 11)
- 8% of the total cohort are Latino(a) (Figure 11)

Figure 8 Percent of First Time Beginner Indiana Residents

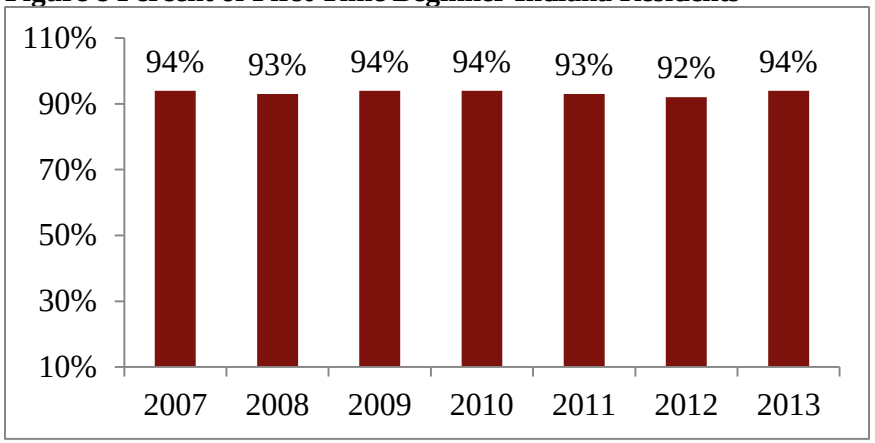


Figure 9 Percent of First-Time Beginner International Students

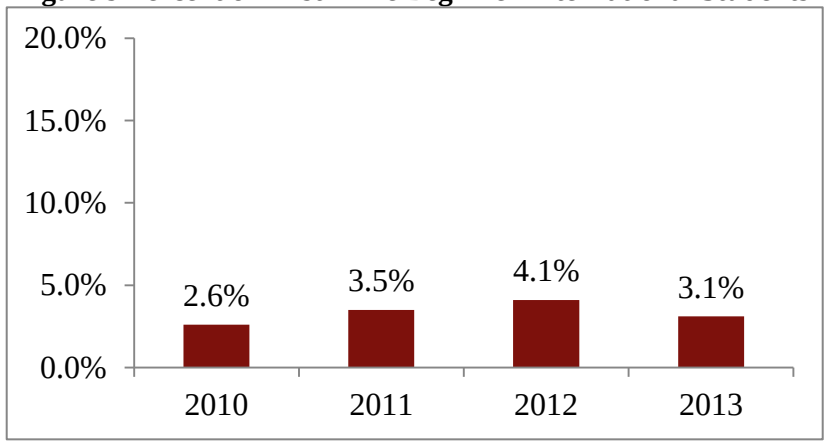


Figure 10 First-Time Beginner Ethnicity

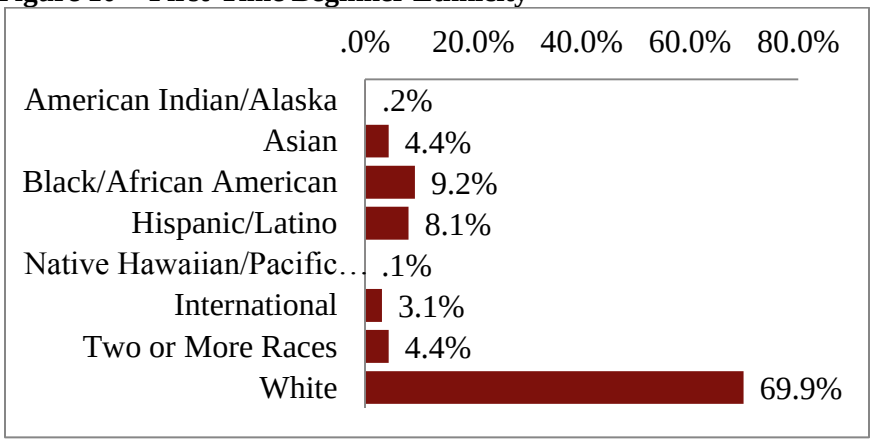
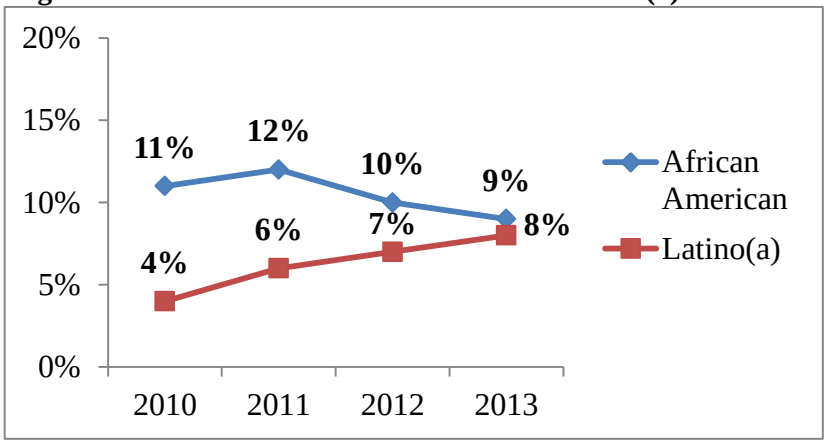


Figure 11 Percent of African American and Latino(a) Students



- 322 of the 2013 cohort are African American (Figure 12)
- 35% (108) African American students entered with a HS GPA above 3.30.
- 16% (48) African American students entered with an SAT score greater than 1015

- 281 of the 2013 cohort are Latino(a) (Figure 14)
- 58% (159) Latino(a)s entered with a HS GPA above 3.30
- 37% (100) Latino(a) entered with an SAT score greater than 1015
- Figure 13 and 15 shows the percentage of female, first generation, and 15+ credit hours attempted for both the African American and Latino(a) students in the cohort.

Figure 12 # of First-Time Beginner African American Students

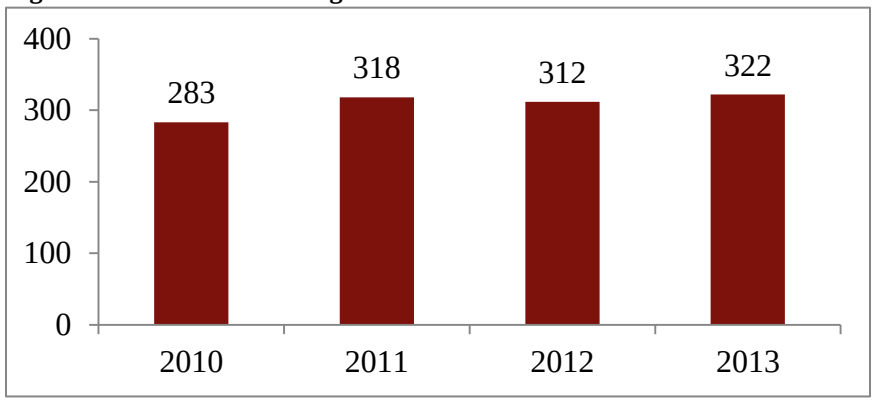


Figure 13 Comparison of Female, First-Generation, and 15+ credits

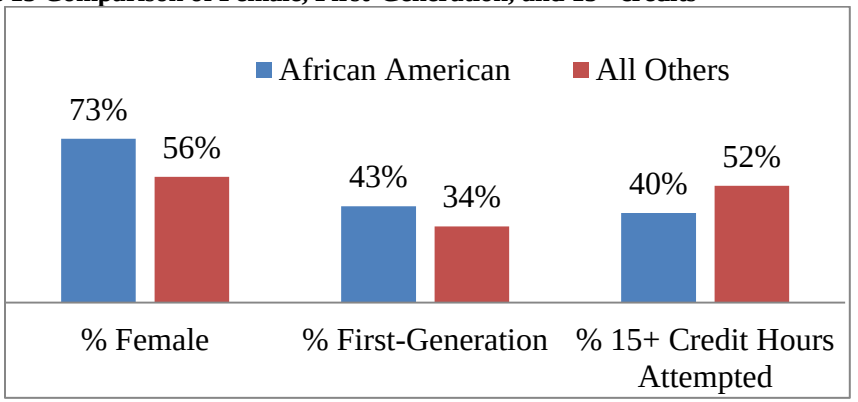


Figure 14 # of First-Time Beginner Latino(a) Students

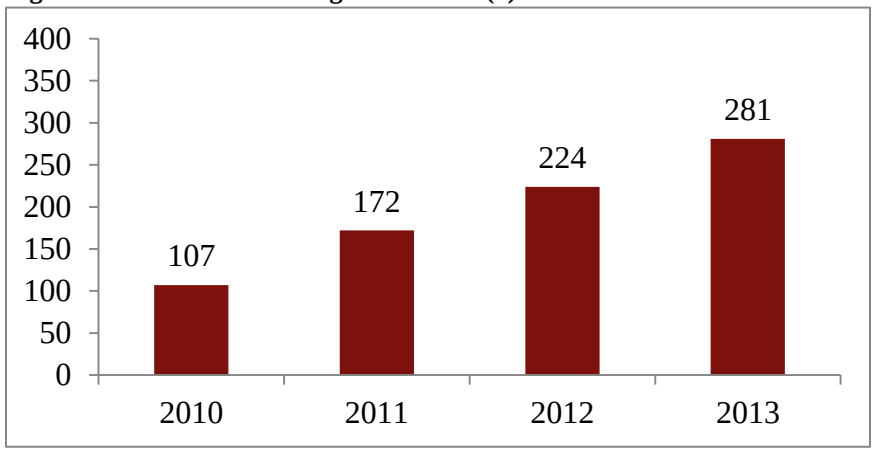
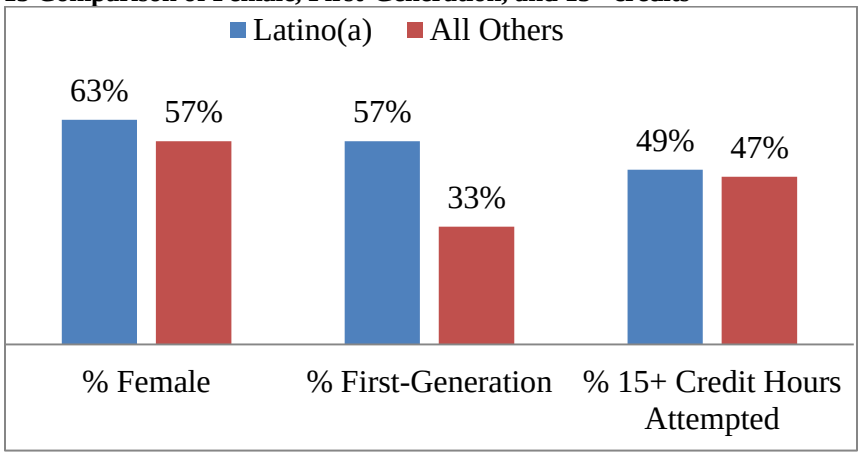


Figure 15 Comparison of Female, First-Generation, and 15+ credits



Further Characteristics of the Cohort

- With 3490 students, the cohort is larger than previous years (up from 3060) (Figure 16)

- Average HS GPA is now 3.38 (up from 3.32)
- Average SAT Score is now 1029 (up from 1023)
- 65% of our in-state students have completed a Core 40 Diploma with Academic Honors (up from 59%) (Figure 17)
- 51% are attempting 15 or more credit hours in their first semester (up from 28%) (Figure 18)

Figure 16 Total Number of Students in The Fall 2013 Cohort

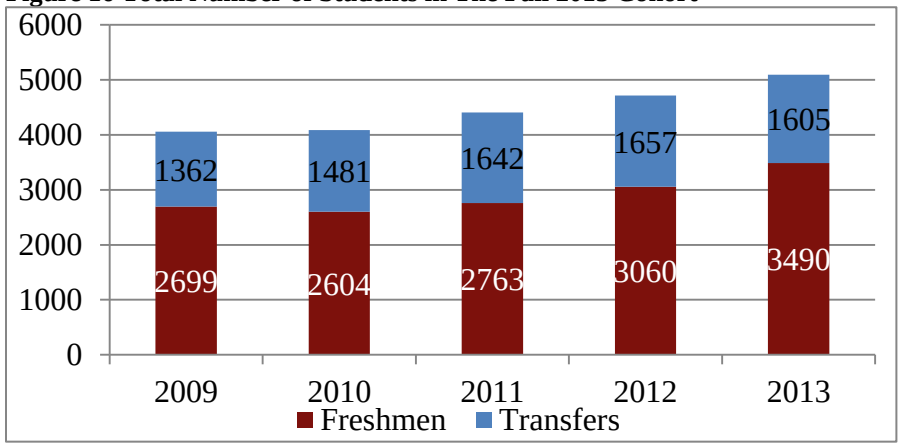


Figure 17 # of Freshman with Academic Honors Diplomas

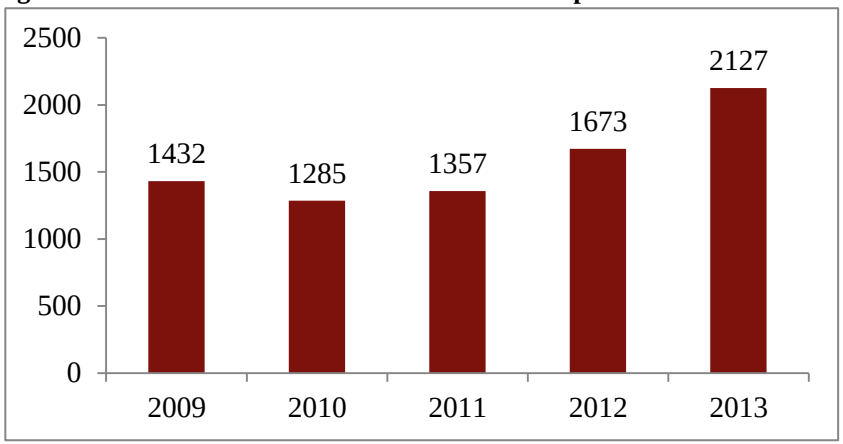
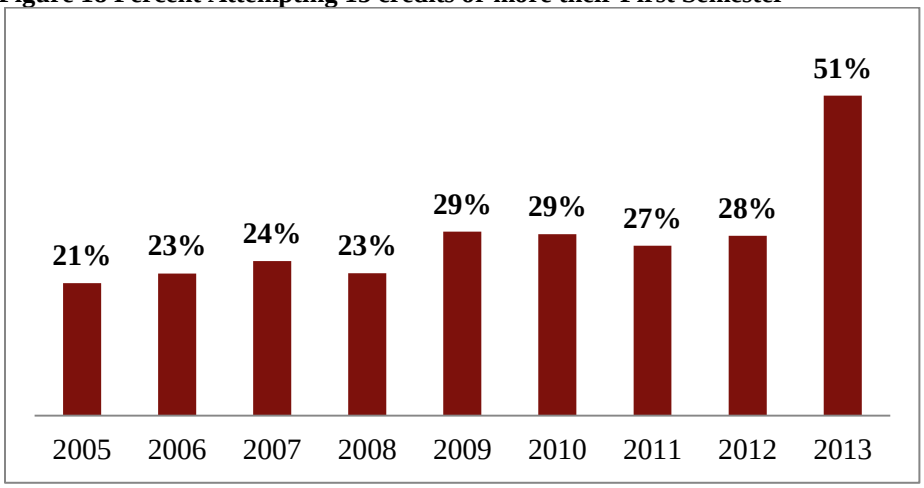


Figure 18 Percent Attempting 15 credits or more their First Semester



Entering Student Survey[1]

[1] Based on first-time, full-time survey respondents, which may not represent the cohort total.

Sense of Belonging
Based on survey responses of "Moderately Agree or Strongly Agree"

- 67% (1227) feel a sense of belonging at IUPUI
- 59% (1084) feel they are a member of the IUPUI community
- 62% (1140) feel that they fit right in on campus
- 49% (893) feel connected with other IUPUI students
- 64% (1166) see themselves as part of the IUPUI community
- 67% (1207) believe it is important for them to graduate from IUPUI (e.g. rather than from another college)

Commitment to and Pride in IUPUI
Based on survey results of "Moderately or Strongly Agree"

- 14% (238) plan to transfer to another institution
- 20% (353) report it would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this college.
- 74% (1290) are proud to tell others they go to school here
- 66% (1149) report that they are extremely glad that they chose IUPUI over other colleges
- 6% (105) report that there's not much to be gained by sticking with this college indefinitely
- 13% (221) report they could just as well be attending a different college with the same major.
- 4% (69) report that deciding to attend IUPUI was a definite mistake on their part.

Academic Hope
Based on survey responses of "Mostly or Definitely True"

- 64% (1111) report that if I should find myself in a jam, I could think of many ways to get out of it.
- 73% (1281) report that at the present time, I am energetically pursuing my goals.
- 56% (1004) report there are lots of ways around any school-related problems that I face
- 75% (1315) report that right now I see myself as pretty successful
- 73% (1288) report that I can think of many ways to reach my current academic goals
- 81% (1412) report that I see myself meeting the goals that I have set for myself.

Past Behavior

Based on survey results of "Often or Very Often"

- 5% (88) report they came to class late
- 21% (367) report they waited until the last minute to get assignments done
- 14% (245) report they went to class without being fully prepared
- 89% (1548) report they strive for excellence in school work
- 83% (1437) report they comprehend all reading assignments
- 80% (1380) report they come to class with all required reading completed
- 72% (1252) report they revise papers to improve writing
- 64% (1118) report they ask questions in class

Time Commitments

Figures 19 and 20 illustrate how many hours per week first-time full-time students in the 2013 cohort expect to spend on typical activities during their first year of college

Figure 19 Hourly Breakdown of Student Activities

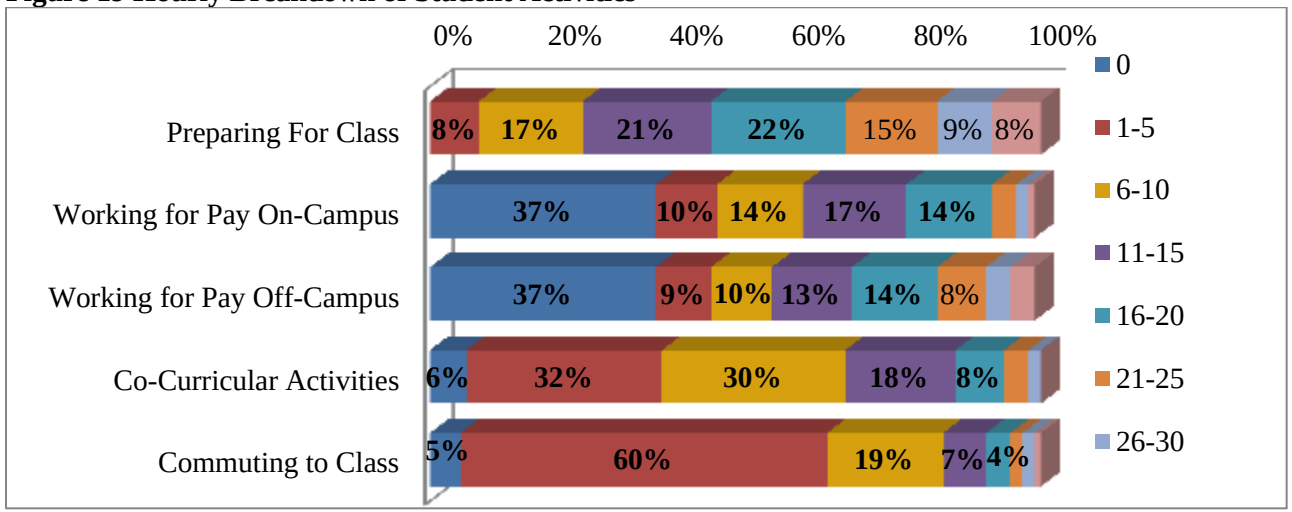
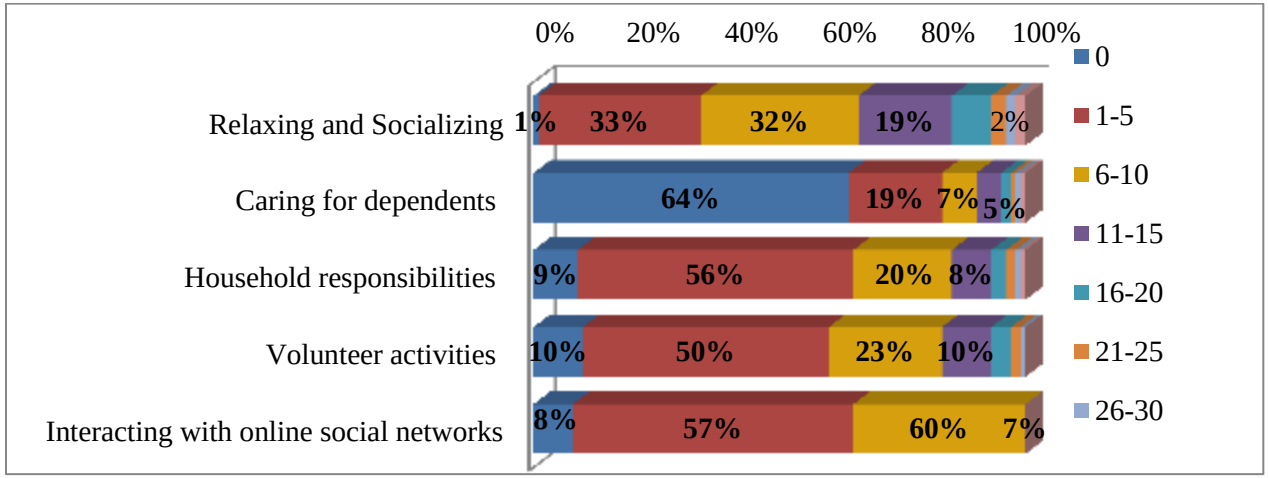


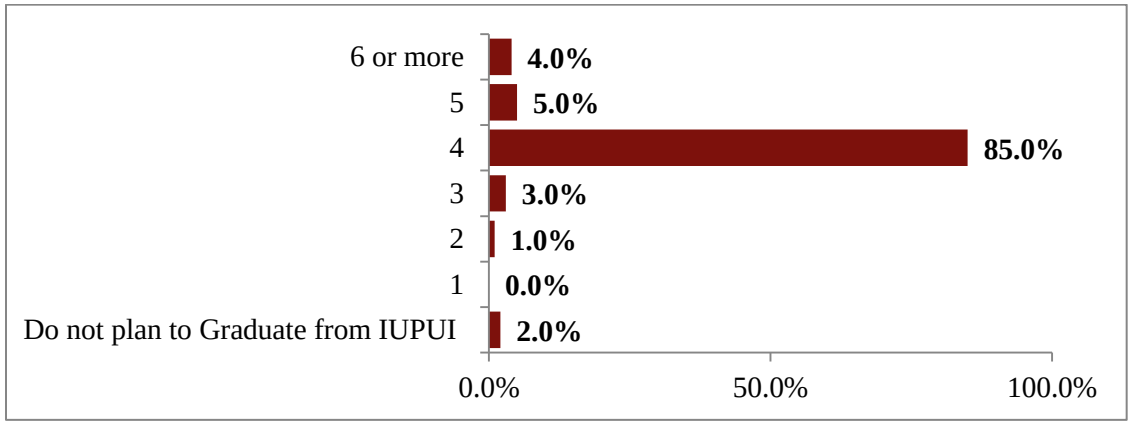
Figure 20 Hourly Breakdown of Student Activities Continued



Estimate of Time to Graduation

Figure 21 displays beginning students' estimate about how long it will take them to graduate from IUPUI. 85% believe they will graduate from IUPUI in 4 years.

Figure 21.Expected time to Graduate



Concerns about Financing Education

- 25% (N=433) indicated they had no concerns about financing their education.
- 63% (N=1083) indicated they had some concern about financing their education.

- 13% (N=217) indicated they had major concern about financing their education.

Expectations

Based on survey responses of "Some chance or Very good chance"

- 31% (534) indicated they may change their major field.
- 38% (650) indicated they may change their career choice.
- 92% (1583) indicated they would make a "B" average
- 98% (1680) indicated they would be satisfied with college life.
- 87% (1490) indicated would experience stress while balancing work and school-related responsibilities
- 74% (1257) indicated they would experience stress while balancing family and school-related responsibilities
- 89% (1517) indicated they would participate in student clubs/groups
- 91% (1551) indicated they would participate in events and activities on campus
- 84% (1428) indicate they would participate in service learning or community service
- 82% (1396) indicated they would work on research with a professor.
- 53% (904) indicated they would participate in study abroad or international travel related to school
- 84% (318) indicated they would get tutoring or peer mentoring help in specific courses.
- 65% (1106) indicated they would enroll in summer courses
- 84% (1435) indicated they would exercise on campus.
- 97% (1652) indicated they would make good choices for personal health (healthy eating, lifestyle, etc.)

The top ten most important reasons impacting the decision to select IUPUI:

1. Availability of specific academic programs (majors)
2. Institutions academic offerings such as courses, certifications, and degrees
3. Opportunity for an IU or Purdue degree
4. Job, career, and internship opportunities available in Indianapolis while attending school
5. Graduates get good jobs
6. Availability of financial aid/scholarship
7. Cost
8. IUPUI's reputation
9. Social opportunities associated with IUPUI located in the city of Indianapolis

Assessment Appendix B: University College Student Demographic Summary, Fall 2012

	N	%
Total	6798	
Ethnicity		
American Indian/Alaskan Native	10	<1%
African American	1002	15%
Asian American	257	4%
Hispanic	432	6%
International	246	4%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	5	<1%
Two or more races	285	4%
Other	4561	67%
Gender		
Female	3936	58%
Male	2862	42%
SAT		
1200 +	381	6%
800-1190	4166	61%
400 – 790	463	7%
None on file	1788	26%
High School Percentile Rank		
Top 10%	408	6%
11% - 25%	1053	15%
26% - 50%	1819	27%
Bottom 50%	911	13%
None on file	2607	38%
High School GPA		
3.0 – 4.0	3156	46%
2.99 – 2.0	1886	28%
1.99 – 1.0	73	1%
<1.0	2	<1%
None on file	1681	25%
Student Level		
High School Student	114	2%
Certificate first year	9	<1%
Certificate second year	5	<1%
Associate Freshman	244	4%
Associate Sophomore	185	3%
Baccalaureate Freshman	2772	41%
Baccalaureate Sophomore	1824	27%
Baccalaureate Junior	918	14%
Baccalaureate Senior	352	5%
Undergrad Special	375	6%

Assessment Appendix C: Summer Bridge Qualitative Investigation of Students' Experiences

2012 Qualitative Report

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June, 2012

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of students' perceptions and opinions of the 2012 Summer Bridge program. The program is designed for incoming freshmen and is held in August before fall classes begin. Throughout the two-week program students establish early success networks with faculty, advisors, librarians, and student mentors. Summer Bridge students also become familiar with campus, meet new friends, learn to handle college-level expectations in reading and writing, and receive individualized math support. Taken together, these program goals are designed to facilitate a successful student transition to IUPUI.

During the summer of 2012 over 500 IUPUI students participated in Summer Bridge. At the conclusion of the program students were asked to voluntarily respond to an anonymous questionnaire. Students provided open-ended feedback in the areas of what they found most and least valuable about the program as well as suggestions for improvement. This report examines notable findings of 2012 Summer Bridge student responses and also considers qualitative data of previous program years (2008-2011). For electronic copies of this and other assessment reports please visit: research.uc.iupui.edu.

Major Findings

Students described what they valued most about their Summer Bridge experiences. Students responded that meeting new people and forming friendships, learning to navigate campus and participating in tours, and receiving college transition assistance were aspects of the program that they valued the most. These three components were consistently the most discussed areas by participants across all five program years (2008-2012). It is meaningful that a larger percentage of students responded with these answers in 2012 than in previous cohorts. For example, 26% of 2012 participants described receiving college transition assistance as a most valuable aspect. In comparison, only 15% of students in the 2011 cohort indicated this response. Additionally, in 2012 some students described experiencing feelings of a "head start" as a most valuable aspect. This answer did not emerge as a notable response in previous years.

Least valued aspects of the Summer Bridge program were also described by student participants. Many students simply indicated n/a, none, or nothing in response to this question. Mathematics components was the #2 most common answer given by the 2012 cohort. However, it received a much lower rate of response in 2012 (13%) compared to 2010 (22%) when it was the #1 answer. Similar to previous program years, in 2012 reading and writing activities was the #3 least valuable aspect. Group activities and discussions was also described by some students as a least valuable Summer Bridge component. It was the #4 most common answer provided in 2012 and the #3 response in 2011.

2012 Summer Bridge participants also provided a variety of suggestions for improvement. These included but are not limited to: having more (outside) group activities and discussions, less time commitments and restraints, more college transition assistance, more peer interaction opportunities, greater instructional team support, and to improve organization and communication. These recommendations are consistent with those given by students in previous years with a few notable exceptions. First, (outside) group activities and discussions was suggested with greater frequency in 2012 (17%) compared to 2011 (12%) and 2010 (11%). In recent years there has been a gradual increase in the percentage of students suggesting less time commitments and restraints: 2010 (10%), 2011 (12%), 2012 (14%). Finally, in 2012 some students suggested having more college transition assistance as a way to improve Summer Bridge. This answer did not emerge as a notable suggestion in other program years.

Possible Implications

Analysis of the 2012 Summer Bridge qualitative data reveals several possible implications. First, students are reporting that the program is valuable and helping to facilitate successful transitions to IUPUI. It is meaningful that in 2012 a larger percentage of students indicated college transition assistance as a most valuable aspect than in any previous program year. Additionally, for the first time a notable number of students described that they experienced feelings of a "head start" through participating in Summer Bridge. Conveying that past participants felt a sense of a "head start" to college may be considered as an effective communication approach for recruiting future students in marketing materials. It is promising that students view the program in this positive light. It seems that participants desire help and encouragement in their transitions. It may be helpful to further develop how students gain an understanding for expectations, become more comfortable and confident, and learn study and time management skills (Table 1, p. 9).

It is also notable that some students identified mathematics components, reading and writing activities, and group activities and discussions as least valuable aspects. While these finding are consistent with previous program years they should not be overlooked. Faculty, advisors, librarians, and student mentors should continue to collaborate and find new ways to effectively engage students in these program areas. The data have shown that Summer Bridge activities are most valued when they help students meet new people and gain friendships, navigate campus, transition to college, include the support of the instructional team, and lead to a greater understanding of IUPUI. While it is important to maintain the integrity and focus of each subject area (e.g., math, writing) it may be helpful to incorporate some of these aspects into individual activities or lesson plans where appropriate.

Students suggested that having more (outside) group activities and discussions may improve Summer Bridge. This recommendation was given with greater frequency in 2012 (17%) than in 2011 (12%) or 2010 (11%). Some of the students were very specific in their more group activities recommendation by focusing on the "outside" component (Table 3, p. 13). This may be a possible avenue for future curriculum innovation and program development. Finally, there has been a gradual increase in the percentage of students indicating less time commitments and restraints as a recommendation. Planning efforts should be conscious of these concerns as the Summer Bridge program grows to serve more students.

Assessment of the Summer Bridge program is an on-going process. This process is designed to identify both program areas of achievement and those in need of improvement. A detailed account of students' self-reported perceptions of the Summer Bridge program are provided on the following pages and include numerous examples of actual student comments (Tables 1-3, pp. 9-14). It may be helpful to share this information with program stakeholders and instructional teams as appropriate. Ideally, through gaining an understanding of students' Summer Bridge experiences we will be able to further understand effective teaching and learning.

Introduction

The IUPUI Summer Bridge program is a program for incoming freshmen held in August before fall classes begin. Participants are divided into groups of approximately 20-25 students based on their major or interest in exploring an area of study. Throughout the two-week program students establish early networks of success with faculty, advisors, student mentors, and librarians. Summer Bridge students also "make friends with other freshmen, learn to handle college-level expectations for reading and writing, receive individualized support for math, begin connecting with a school and major, and gain experience with technology" (bridge.uc.iupui.edu). Taken together, these program goals are designed to facilitate a successful student transition to IUPUI. The goal of this assessment report is to identify students' opinions and perceptions of Summer Bridge through examining open-ended questionnaire response feedback.

Sample

During the summer of 2012 over 500 IUPUI students participated in the Summer Bridge program. Students were asked to voluntarily participate in a questionnaire at the conclusion of the program. Three open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire in a further effort to gather students' perceptions and opinions 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 = 519)
2.) Please describe what you found least valuable about the Summer Bridge program. (n = 483)
3.) What specific suggestions do you have for improving the Summer Bridge program? (n = 468)

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 theme categories. The theme categories allowed for individual student perceptions of the 2012 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. Listed below is the total number of individual student responses and the average number of codes assigned to those comments.

Total Individual Student Comments:	1470
Total Codes Assigned:	2326
Average Number of Codes Assigned to Individual Student Comment:	1.582

Results

Through the examination of open-ended response feedback a wide variety of students' perceptions of the 2012 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 assess 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 method of result presentation will aide 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 electronic copies of this and other assessment reports please visit (research.uc.iupui.edu).

2012 Program Highlights

Specific Thematic Codes are in Quotations ("---")

Most Valued Aspects of the 2012 Summer Bridge Program:

- "Meeting New People and Forming Friendships" was the most common response (40%) given by student respondents when they were asked to describe most valuable aspects of the 2012 Summer Bridge program**.**
- 33% of student respondents indicated "Campus Navigation & Tours" as a most valuable component of Summer Bridge. Within this category many students described finding specific "Classroom Locations" as being helpful.
- 26% of students described "College Transition Assistance" as being a most valuable aspect. Within this category students identified "Gaining an Understanding for Expectations", "Became More Comfortable & Confident", and "Study, Time, & Financial Aid Information" as helpful.
- Student also considered other areas of Summer Bridge to be most valuable program aspects: "Gaining an Understanding for Campus Resources (12%)"; "Instructional Team Support" (9%); "Feelings of a Head Start"(9%); and "Gaining a Greater Understanding for IUPUI" (8%).

Least Valued Aspects of the 2012 Summer Bridge Program:

- "N/A, None, Nothing" was the most common response (23%) provided by students when they were asked to indicate the least valuable component of the 2012 Summer Bridge program.
- 13% of student respondents considered "Mathematics Components" to be a least valuable aspect of the Summer Bridge program. 12% of students indicated "Reading & Writing Activities" as a least valuable program component.
- 12% of participants described "Group Activities & Discussions" as least valuable aspects. Within this category some students indicated "Outside Field Trips" and "Icebreakers" as not valuable.
- Students also considered other aspects of the Summer Bridge program to be least valuable: "General Positive Comment" (9%); "Time Commitments & Restraints" (7%); "Not Meaningful, Helpful, & Productive (Busy Work)" (6%); "Classes/Sessions" (5%); and "Repetitive, Boring, Uninteresting"(5%).

Suggestions for Improving the Summer Bridge Program:

- 21% of students gave a response of "N/A, None, Nothing" when asked to provide suggestions for improving the Summer Bridge program.

- 17% of students suggested that the program could benefit from "More or Improved Group Activities & Discussions". Within this suggestion some students specified that there could be more "Outside Activities & Fieldtrips" as well as "Icebreakers".

- 14% of respondents suggested that there be "Less Time Commitments & Restraints". Within this category some students proposed the idea of "Shorter Days" and "More Free Time".

- Other suggestions for improving Summer Bridge included: "General Positive Comment" (13%); "More College Transition Assistance" (9%); "More Peer Interaction Opportunities" (8%); "Improve Mathematics Components" (6%); "More Fun, Interactive, & Engaging" (5%); "More Instructional Team Support" (5%); and "Improve Organization & Communication" (5%).

Five (5) Year Comparison Highlights:
2008 – 2012 Summer Bridge Program
Specific Thematic Codes are in Quotations ("---")

Most Valued Aspect of the Summer Bridge Program (2008 – 2012)

- "Meeting New People and Forming Friendships" was the most common response provided across Summer Bridge cohorts when students were asked for opinions of most valuable program aspects. It was the #1 response in 2012 (40%), 2011 (33%), 2010 (42%), 2009 (39%), and 2008 (41%).

- Student participants across all cohorts indicated "Campus Navigation & Tours" as a most valuable program aspect. It ranked as the #2 most common response in 2012 (33%), 2011 (24%), 2010 (38%), 2009 (32%), and 2008 (29%).

- "College Transition Assistance" was the # 3 most valuable program aspect identified by the 2012 Summer Bridge cohort (26%). It was the #4 most common response in 2011 (15%), 2009 (18%), and 2008 (16%). It was also the #3 response in 2010 but with a lower percentage (14%).

- In 2012, 9% of students reported "Feelings of a Head Start" as a most valuable aspect of Summer Bridge. This answer did not emerge as a notable response in any of the previous program years.

Least Valued Aspects of the Summer Bridge Program (2008 – 2012)

- 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 in 2012 (23%), 2011, (27%), 2010 (29%), 2009 (19%), and 2008 (25%).

- "Mathematics Components" was also identified as a least valuable program aspect by some students. It was the #2 response in 2012 (13%), 2011 (12%), 2010 (22%) and 2009 (14%).

- "Reading & Writing Activities" was the #3 least valuable aspect given in 2012 (12%). In comparison, it was the #5 most common response in 2011 (9%). It is important to consider that some students specified "Journal Components" within this category.

- "Group Activities & Discussions" was also described as a least valuable Summer Bridge aspect. It was the #4 response given by students in 2012 (12%). In comparison, it was the #3 response in 2011 (11%); #5 in 2010 (10%) and 2009 (8%); and #4 in 2008 (7%).

Suggestions for Improving the Summer Bridge Program (2008-2012)

- "N/A, None, Nothing" was the #1 most common suggestion indicated for Summer Bridge program improvement given in 2012 (21%), 2011 (22%), 2010 (28%), and 2008 (28%). It was the #2 most common suggestions for improvement provided in 2009 (21%).

- "More or Improved Group Activities and Discussion" was the #2 suggestion for Summer Bridge improvement provided by the 2012 (17%), 2011 (12%) and 2010 (11%) cohorts. In 2012, it was reported with higher frequency and included the idea of "Outside Activities and Field Trips".

- "Less Time Commitments and Restraints" was the #3 most frequent suggestion for improvement given by the 2012 (14%), 2011 (12%), and 2010 (10%) cohorts. It was the #1 most common suggestion for improvement in 2009 (29%) the #2 most frequent suggestion in 2008 (15%).

- In 2012, 9% of students suggested "More College Transition Assistance" as a way to improve Summer Bridge. This answer did not emerge as notable in any of the previous program years.

Table 1: Most Valuable Aspects of the 2012 Summer Bridge Program (n = 519)

Please describe what you found <u>most</u> valuable about the Summer Bridge program:

Most Valued Aspect	N	%	Examples of Actual Student Comments
Meeting New People & Forming Friendships	209	40%	• "Meeting new people." • "Making new friends." • "Making awesome friends." • "Helping me meet new people." • "The friendships and connections I made." • "The meaningful relationships I made with my classmates." • "I found that it is important to get connected with people." • "Meeting people of different backgrounds from me, friends." • "Meeting new people who are in the same career interest as you." • "Meeting new people who were nervous about starting college too." • "What I found most valuable was making new friends and meeting people from different parts of the world." • "Meeting new people and feeling more connected with the IUPUI campus."
Campus Navigation & Tours	170	33%	• "Campus tour." • "Finding my way around the campus." • "Learning where things are on campus." • "Touring the campus (including the tour at NIFS)." • "The tour of campus and walking around campus to locate buildings. • "I found touring the campus very beneficial. I know my way around a lot better than before." • "I found the locations of buildings, classes, and services were my most valuable thing."
***Classroom Locations* (28)**			• "Help finding classes." • "Learning where classes are located." • "I found going to our different classes most valuable." • "Learning where my classes are before everyone comes to campus."
College Transition Assistance	136	26%	• "Learning the transition from high school to college." • "Learning how to think and work at a college level." • "The best part is how well they helped you transition to college." • "Helped me prepare to attend and do well in my college classes and in the college environment."
***Gaining an Understanding for "Expectations"* (28)**			• "Learning about what is expected of me in college." • "Learning and understanding faculty expectations." • "Knowing what to expect from college life, teachers, and courses."
***Became More Comfortable & Confident* (22)**			• "I am familiar with the campus and feel more confident in myself." • "The level of comfort it gave me with starting college and broadened perspectives." • "Summer Bridge prepared me for college and helped me to feel more comfortable going on the first day."
***Study, Time, & Financial Aid Information* (20)**			• "The advice on time management." • "Learning about study skills, and knowing to be prepared to take notes as soon as class begins." • "The reassurance that I can succeed. As well as the helpful tips of how to study & the kinds of resources that are available."

Continued

Table 1: (Continued)

Most Valued Aspect	N	%	Examples of Actual Student Comments
Gaining an Understanding for Campus Resources ***Technology*** **(14)**	63	12%	• "Learning about the resources." • "I learned the resources available for research." • "Finding out what resources are available here." • "Introducing us to all of the resources & expectations." • "Learning about the library resources available to students." • "My most valuable experience was learning all of the resource centers and making great friends." • "That we were shown /told about all the resources available like the MAC, writing center, Bepko, etc." • "Using the online resources/meeting others in my major." • "Using Oncourse to send our journals, because before I didn't really know what Oncourse was used for." • "I found many things that are helpful for me such as how I can deal with IUPUI technology like, Onstart, Oncourse, etc."
Instructional Team Support	47	9%	• "My mentor (----) and teacher Mr(s) (----)." • "The interactions with the older students." • "My advisors, they were extremely helpful." • "The interaction between students and faculty." • "My mentor, (----), tried to connect with us and get to know us. That was really awesome." • "I felt the staff was eager and happy to have us here. I now feel comfortable on the campus." • "The enthusiastic staff made staring school two weeks early worth it. They provided valuable info to enhance my college experience." • "The fact that we had on instructor, advisor, student mentor, and librarian to help us with information from different perspectives."
Feelings of a "Head Start"	45	9%	• "Getting a jumpstart on school." • "Just learning everything two weeks before school starts." • "Getting ahead of other college freshmen by knowing the campus." • "I liked that I got a good head start at college. I feel like if I went straight into college, I would have no idea what I was doing." • "I thought all of the sessions were most valuable. I feel like I am ahead of the game because of the sessions." • "I'm more familiar with the campus and it was a good head start to college. I'm more advanced that the incoming freshman who did not do bridge." • "Whoever comes to bridge is a step in front of other students coming in. Also the fact you get to know campus and learn about your career."
Gaining a Greater Understanding for IUPUI	40	8%	• "Instructions about different parts of the university." • "They taught me everything that I need to know about IUPUI." • "It taught me the rules of IUPUI." • "Learning values of the University and friendships." • "I learned a lot about IUPUI, including the campus, classroom expectations, and how to be a successful college student." • "Understand how the University runs on school days and the various applications and sites we use in the school (Oncourse, Onestart)."

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 category.

Table 2: Least Valued Aspects of the 2012 Summer Bridge Program (n = 483)

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	110	23%	• "N/A." • "None." • "Nothing." • "Not a thing." • "Nothing at all." • "I didn't find anything invaluable."
Mathematics Components	64	13%	• "Math sessions." • "The math classes." • "Math tutoring sessions." • "Math, they are rude." • "I did not find the math sessions very valuable." • "Math, it was too loud and could not concentrate." • "Math sessions; the instructors were very rude." • "The math classes because I didn't learn anything." • "Math class, not because I don't like math but because we didn't learn anything." • "Math sessions were boring and the tutors did not know what to do or how to approach a student." • "The least valuable would be math, because we the students did not interact with each other, and the instructors need to be more upbeat."
Reading & Writing Activities **Journal Assignments (21)**	59	12%	• "Reading class." • "Writing class." • "The English class. • "The college reading class." • "The writing course, because I didn't really get much from it." • "Probably the readings, didn't have much conversation about them." • "I found the reading session least valuable because it was only once and I didn't remember much." • "The journals." • "Doing journals every night." • "The journals become repetitive." • "The daily journal, I feel like discussing them in class may be better."
Group Activities & Discussions ***Outside Activities (Field Trips)* (26)** ***Icebreakers* (13)**	56	12%	• "All the games." • "Some of the activities weren't very beneficial." • "Some of the discussions were less meaningful than others." • "The discussions where everything was repeated." • "The games because I think I should not pay to play games but to learn." • "Field trip." • "I found the Eiteljorg museum least valuable." • "I found the museum and NCAA trip least valuable because it didn't have to do w/school. It was very interesting and I liked it, but wasn't a need." • "A lot of the ice breakers." • "The Body-to-Body ice breaker." • "Ice breakers are fun but maybe not so many."

Continued

Table 2: (Continued)

Least Valued Aspect	N	%	Examples of Actual Student Comments
General Positive Comment	42	9%	• "I loved it all." • "It was all fantastic." • "Everything was valuable." • "Everything was meaningful." • "I found the whole experience to be valuable." • "I thought all was valuable and helped prepare me." • "All of classes had something that I learned from." • "Everything we did I found valuable because it will help me in the future." • "The program is great! I think the faculty did everything they could to make it a great experience." •
Time Commitments & Restraints ***Length of Day*** **(17)** ***Early Start Time*** **(6)**	35	7%	• "It takes too much time may be one week is enough." • "It took too long to attend, like better to get longer rest time." • "I thought that it was too long. Other than that I was very satisfied with what we did." • "The long hours, 9-4 seems pretty lengthy." • "How long it lasted, it was a long day. A lot of information in one day." • "How long the program is in a day, until 4 is pretty long and I don't think it keeps students occupied for so long." • "Waking up early." • "Waking up so early in the morning."
Not Meaningful, Helpful, & Productive (Busy Work)	31	6%	• "I feel like we wasted time that could've been spent elsewhere." • "Feel like there were some things that were thrown in there just to fill time." • "Some of the lectures were not that interesting and I don't feel they benefitted me that much." • "The assignments were stupid and just busy work and non-learning. No interaction with other groups." • "No meaningful connections, activities. The only thing it provided for me was stress." •
Classes / Sessions	26	5%	• "The classes." • "Some of the sessions." • "Going to sessions all day." • "Some of the pointless presentations." • "The large number of classes." • "Some sessions like college level reading and bookstore things." • "The basic skills class- I learned a lot of that in high school."
Repetitive, Boring, Uninteresting	22	5%	• "Learning the same thing every day." • "All the boring lectures." • "The boring presentations." • "Some of the lectures were already given at orientation." • "Some of the lectures that seemed to repeat." • "Some of the activities were redundant."

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 category

Table 3: Suggestions for Improving the Summer Bridge Program (n = 468)

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	98	21%	• "N/A." • "None." • "Nothing." • "I really don't have specific suggestions for the summer bridge."
More or Improved Group Activities & Discussions	79	17%	• "More activities." • "More group discussions." • "Have more activities during the bridge." • "More in-class activities: both small group and whole class."
***Outside Activities & Fieldtrips* (34)**			• "More outdoor activities/ make some class sessions outside." • "Think we should learn more about what surrounds the campus." • "Maybe do more fun stuff, like go to the zoo or museum to experience the city we're living in." • "I would suggest doing more activities that involve Indianapolis, like going to the NCAA Hall of Champions and the City Market."
***Icebreakers* (10)**			• "New ice breakers." • "We should do more icebreakers."
Less Time Commitments & Restraints	66	14%	• "Make it shorter than two weeks." • "Less hours and at least provide lunch." • "It would be better if it was less time consuming."
***Shorter Days* (23)**			• "Shorten the days." • "Make it from 9-2pm. It's too long." • "Giving us a more "college-like" schedule instead of 9-4pm block."
***More "Free Time"* (11)**			• "More free time to explore." • "Have breaks throughout the day." • "Students don't have enough times to do themselves things like, movie house, go shopping, etc."
General Positive Comment	62	13%	• "Everything was great." • "I loved everything about it." • "I honestly thought bridge was awesome. I loved it." • "I think this program is perfect. I would not change anything." • "Keep doing what you are doing! Loved the program." • "I think it's great the faculty, advisors, and peer mentors really do a great job and make it worthwhile."
More College Transition Assistance	42	9%	• "Sitting in on more lectures." • "How to study and concentrate." • "I suggest more info on test preparation and class expectations." • "Go a little more in-depth with available resources and where they are." • "Extra information on financial aid, someone to sit down and explain."
***Campus Navigation & Tours* (20)**			• "Learn more about where buildings are." • "Walking the actual class schedule more." • "Improve showing where more classrooms are."

Continued

Table 3: (Continued)

Suggestion for Improvement	N	%	Examples of Actual Student Comments
More Peer Interaction Opportunities **(Across Bridge Groups)**	38	8%	• "Inter-group activities." • "Mix groups once in a while." • "More interaction with other bridge groups." • "More interaction with people that are in different majors." • "Having more opportunities to interact with other groups." • "Meet up with other bridge groups that way we can meet new people." • "Do more activities with all of the groups together." • "Maybe some more activities involved w/ the other groups of Bridge." • "Maybe have different Bridge class's meet, to meet more people." • "I'm not sure, I wish we could have interacted more with other groups, but we can when school starts I guess."
Improve Mathematics Components	30	6%	• "Change up the math section." • "More math mentors & smaller math groups." • "Have smaller math groups or more math faculty." • "Having an instructor teach the math courses rather than students." • "To reevaluate the math sessions to include more review." • "The math classes should have been with professors not students." • "Just the math class could improve on being in smaller groups. I felt I did not get anything out of that math class." • "I didn't like that student taught the math class. They treated us like middle schoolers." • "The math program could have been improved by helping understand what the math courses are all about. Doing math problems all day was dull and didn't help."
More Fun, Interactive, & Engaging	26	5%	• "More fun, take it easy." • "A little more hands on." • "Making things more exciting." • "Have more fun instead of being boring." • "Making sure all of the sessions are attention-holding." • "Have the teachers make the students be more active in the lesson." • "Less sitting down, lecture type session & more interaction." • "Do more interesting and entertaining sessions and/ or games." • "Make presentations/classes more interesting with activities."
More Instructional Team Support	24	5%	• "To not get frustrated so easily with students." • "Encourage the math instructors to be nice and not talk down to us." • "Having an instructor teach the math courses rather than students." • "The math classes should have been with professors not students." • "I didn't like that student taught the math class. They treated us like middle schoolers."
Improve Program Organization & Communication	22	5%	• "Communication between group leaders and session leaders could improve because sometime we weren't in the right place." • "For instructors to practice what they preach. For example don't stress time management if you can't follow it." • "Maybe scheduling events closer together in proximity so we don't walk from one side of the campus to the other so often."

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 t

Assessment Appendix D – Summer Bridge Instructional Team Perceptions

Summer Bridge Program
2013 Faculty Questionnaire Report

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this investigation was to understand instructional team members' perceptions of the Summer Bridge (Bridge) program. Summer Bridge is designed for incoming students and held in August before fall classes begin. Participants are divided into groups of approximately 20-25 students based on their major or career interests. Each group is paired with an instructional team consisting of a faculty member, advisor, student mentor, and librarian. Throughout the two-week program, students establish early networks of success with these instructional team members and "receive early support in math, writing, and communication studies (bridge.uc.iupui.edu)." Taken together, these program elements are designed to facilitate a successful student transition to IUPUI.

2013 Summer Bridge instructional team members were asked to voluntarily respond to an anonymous questionnaire administered at the end of the program. Within this survey, participants were encouraged to 1) indicate their level of satisfaction with their instructional team experience and the support provided to them throughout the Summer Bridge process, as well as the effectiveness of technology instruction sessions; and 2) provide open-ended response feedback regarding what they found most valuable about the course, the challenges they encountered during Bridge, and suggestions for program improvement.

Several strategies were used to understand participant experiences. For example, descriptive statistics were generated for closed-ended responses, and those results were compared by instructional team member role to detect any differences in satisfaction among participants. Open-ended responses were coded and then categorized into themes.

Overall, instructional team members were satisfied with their Summer Bridge experiences. Questionnaire participants responded positively that the program provided adequate support related to training and preparation (4.20 on 5.00 scale: 4=*Agree* / 5=*Strongly Agree*), conveying timely information (4.20), ongoing support during the program (4.44), and providing necessary resources (4.52). They also indicated that they had positive instructional team experiences to the extent that teams worked well together (4.57 on 5.00 scale: 4=*Agree* / 5=*Strongly Agree*), provided opportunities for all members to contribute (4.58), and communicated effectively (4.53). Those participating in the technology instruction sessions found them somewhat effective (3.96 on 5.00 scale: 3=*Neutral* / 4=*Somewhat Effective*).

Instructional team members also described their Summer Bridge experiences positively. When asked what they found most valuable about the program, the majority of respondents focused on program sessions and activities, the creation of a sense of community, student interaction, and teamwork. When describing challenges, questionnaire participants discussed logistics, student behavior, time constraints, curricular concerns, and communication, or reported no challenges at all. Respondents suggested improvements be made in the areas of logistics, session content, and program scheduling, or did not believe improvements were necessary.

Introduction

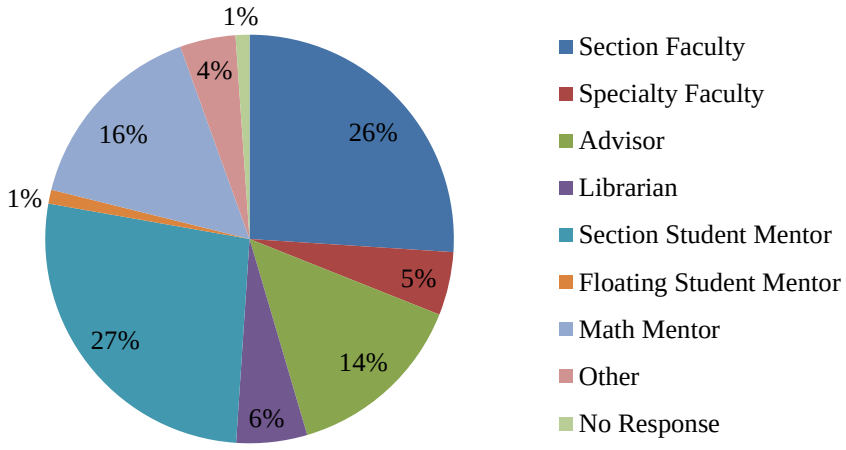
The purpose of this investigation was to understand instructional team members' perceptions of the Summer Bridge (Bridge) program. Summer Bridge is designed for incoming students and held in August before fall classes begin. Participants are divided into groups of approximately 20-25 students based on their major or career interests. Each group is paired with an instructional team consisting of a faculty member, advisor, student mentor, and librarian. Throughout the two-week program, students establish early networks of success with these instructional team members and "receive early support in math, writing, and communication studies (bridge.uc.iupui.edu)." Taken together, these program elements are designed to facilitate a successful student transition to IUPUI.

Notable findings from this investigation are presented in narrative form with accompanying tables and graphs. It is my hope that this method of presentation will lead to a further understanding of Summer Bridge by identifying areas of achievement and opportunities for improvement from the perspective of the instructional team.

Sample

All 2013 Summer Bridge instructional team members were asked to voluntarily participate in a questionnaire at the conclusion of the program. Of that population, 90 participants of varying Summer Bridge roles completed at least part of the questionnaire; however, the number of responses varied depending on the question asked.

Figure 1: Sample by Summer Bridge Role



Methods

Several strategies were used to understand instructional team members' Summer Bridge experiences. First, descriptive statistics for the responses regarding the level of support provided throughout Bridge, the instructional team experience, and the effectiveness of the technology instruction sessions were generated in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Next, those closed-ended satisfaction question responses were compared by instructional team member role using analysis of variance (ANOVA). Effect sizes were calculated when a statistically significant difference was detected among group means. (Effect sizes quantify the size of differences between groups and speak to the practical significance of a difference.)

In addition, open-ended question data was 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, instructional team member responses were arranged into topical theme categories. The theme categories allowed for individual team member perceptions of the 2013 Summer Bridge program to be considered collectively. Theme categories were considered to be emerged or notable if 5% or more of participants responded in a similar manner. While this method of analysis essentially quantifies participant comments, it does allow for 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 team members' opinions.

In a number of instances a single respondent comment addressed more than one thematic category. The concept of co-occurrence best explains this phenomenon. For example, one response could address the topical theme categories of "Interacting with and Helping Students" and "Creating a Sense of Community" simultaneously. In these instances, comments were considered in multiple analyses, areas of discussion, and accompanied tables. Listed below are the total number of individual team member responses and codes, as well as the average number of codes assigned per comment.

Total Individual Instructional Team Member Comments:	257
Total Codes Assigned:	426
Average Number of Codes Assigned per Comment:	1.66

Results

Program Satisfaction

Overall, instructional team members are highly satisfied with their Summer Bridge experience. For example, the average response for all satisfaction questions was 4.40 on a 5.0 Likert scale (4=*Agree/Somewhat Effective*; 5=*Strongly Agree/Very Effective*). Means for individual satisfaction items relating to the support provided throughout the Bridge program, the instructional team experience, and the effectiveness of the technology instruction sessions are shown below.

Table 1: Satisfaction Items

Question	N	Std. Dev.	Mean
The Summer Bridge program provided me with adequate support related to:			
Training and preparation	89	.83	4.20
Conveying timely information	89	.97	4.20
Ongoing support during the program	89	.77	4.44
Providing necessary resources	90	.74	4.52
My instructional team:			
Worked well together	89	.87	4.57
Provided opportunities for all members to contribute	89	.86	4.58
Communicated effectively	89	.92	4.53
Effectiveness of the technology instruction sessions:			
The technology instruction sessions were effective	48	1.03	3.96

Note: Responses provided on a Likert scale: 1=*Strongly Disagree/Not at all Effective*; 2=*Disagree/Somewhat Ineffective*; 3=*Neutral*; 4=*Somewhat Agree/Somewhat Effective*; 5=*Strongly Agree/Very Effective*.

Because a wide variety of instructional team roles were represented in the sample, responses to satisfaction items were compared by Bridge role using descriptive statistics. In order to determine if the observed differences among roles (see, for example, Figures 2 and 3) were statistically significant, one-factor analyses of variance were conducted. ANOVA results indicated that there was one or more statistically significant difference(s) among roles on two questions concerning instructional team experience: "worked well together" and "provided opportunities for all members to contribute".

Figure 2: "Worked Well Together" Mean by Role

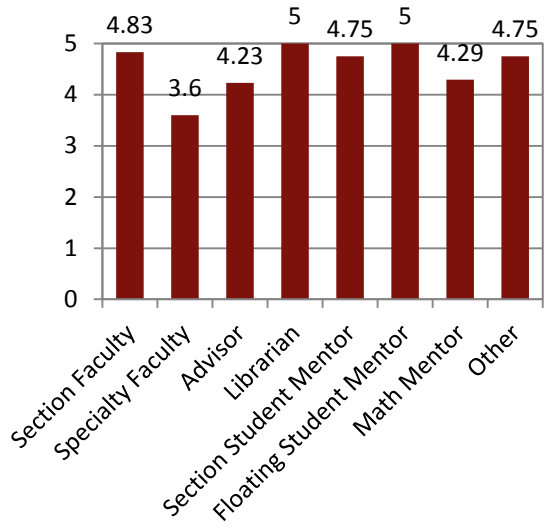
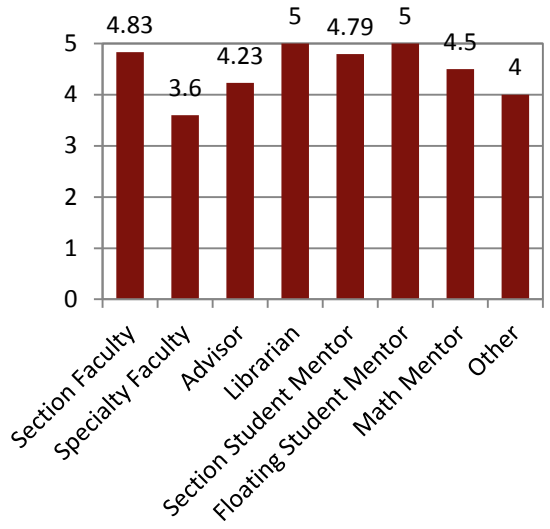


Figure 3: "Provided Opportunities for All Members to Contribute" Mean by Role



In order to demonstrate the extent of the difference between role (Section Faculty, Specialty Faculty, Advisor, Librarian, Section Student Mentor, Floating Student Mentor, Math Mentor, and Other) means and the overall mean, effect sizes were generated. Effect sizes represent the number of standard deviation units between the role and overall means. In general, an effect size of less than ±0.2 of a standard deviation is seen as trivial, between ±0.20 and 0.49 of a standard deviation is small, between ±0.50 and 0.79 is medium, and larger than ±0.80 is large. For "worked well together", effect sizes were small for all roles except librarian, floating section mentor, and specialty faculty. Being a librarian or floating section mentor had a medium positive effect on "worked well together" mean, while being specialty faculty had a large negative effect. For "provided opportunities for all members to contribute", effect sizes were small for all roles except math mentor, other, and specialty faculty. Being a math mentor had a trivial negative effect on the item mean, identifying as "other" had a medium positive effect, and being specialty faculty had a large negative effect.

Table 2: Effect Sizes for Difference in Role and Overall Mean

Question	N	Std. Dev.	Std. Error	Mean	Effect Size
My instructional team worked well together.				**Mean: 4.57**	
Section Faculty	23	0.39	0.17	4.83	0.30
Specialty Faculty	5	1.67	0.37	3.60	-1.12
Advisor	13	1.09	0.23	4.23	-0.39
Librarian	5	0.00	0.37	5.00	0.50
Section Student Mentor	24	0.44	0.17	4.75	0.21
Floating Student Mentor	1	NA	0.82	5.00	0.50
Math Mentor	14	1.27	0.22	4.29	-0.33
Other	4	0.50	0.41	4.75	0.21
My instructional team provided opportunities for all members to contribute.				**Mean: 4.58**	
Section Faculty	23	0.39	0.17	4.83	0.28
Specialty Faculty	5	1.67	0.37	3.60	-1.13
Advisor	13	1.09	0.23	4.23	-0.40
Librarian	5	0.00	0.37	5.00	0.49
Section Student Mentor	24	0.42	0.17	4.79	0.25
Floating Student Mentor	1	NA	0.82	5.00	0.49
Math Mentor	14	1.09	0.22	4.50	-0.09
Other	4	1.41	0.41	4.00	-0.67

Note: Responses provided on a Likert scale: 1=*Strongly Disagree*; 2=*Disagree*; 3=*Neutral*; 4=*Somewhat Agree*; 5=*Strongly Agree*.

Labeling: Trivial Effect Small Effect Medium Effect Large Effect

Achievements and Improvements

In addition to statistical analysis of closed-ended responses, examination of open-ended response feedback was also conducted. The open coding process yielded a wide variety of instructional team members' perceptions of their Summer Bridge experience. These perceptions included participants' opinions regarding the most valuable program aspects, the challenges faced during Bridge, and suggestions for program improvement. First, notable team member

opinions are highlighted; specific thematic response codes are in quotations. Then respondents' specific responses to each open-ended question, including examples of actual comments, are presented (Tables 3-5). It is my hope that this method of result presentation will aide Summer Bridge administrators in gaining a further understanding of the program by identifying both areas of achievement and those that may benefit from improvement.

Most valued aspects of the 2013 Summer Bridge program.

- 83% of instructional team members described "Program Sessions and Activities" as the most valuable aspect of the 2013 Summer Bridge program. Math (17%), writing (9%), and speech (6%) sessions were identified as particularly helpful.

- "Creating a Sense of Community" was the second most common response (45%) given by participants when asked about the most valuable aspect of Bridge. Opportunities for students to make friends (13%) and master campus logistics (9%) were frequently mentioned in these responses.

- 36% of respondents indicated "Interacting with and Helping Students" was a valuable aspect of the 2013 Summer Bridge program.

- "Teamwork" was valued by 25% of instructional team members. They especially appreciated cooperation efforts among teams (10%), team-building exercises (7%), and student mentor contributions (6%).

- 6% of respondents cited "Content Freedom" as the most valuable aspect of Bridge.

Summer Bridge challenges.

- 69% of questionnaire participants reported "Logistics" as a challenge during Summer Bridge. Room changes (16%), technology issues (7%), inadequate room set-ups (6%), incorrect group assignments (6%), and rushed transitions (6%) were frequently mentioned in these responses.

- "Student Behavior" (27%) was the second most-cited challenge. Lack of motivation (7%) was a common complaint in this category.

- "Timing" (16%) was also a challenge for team members, especially the feeling that there was not enough time available (9%) to meet program expectations.

- 12% of respondents felt "Program Curriculum" was a challenge.

- 9% felt "Communication" was difficult.

- 7% of instructional team members reported no challenges ("N/A, None, Nothing").

Suggestions for improvement.

- Instructional team members responded with a highly stratified list of suggestions for improving the Summer Bridge program. That list was categorized into four thematic categories for reporting purposes.

- 64% of respondents suggested improvement in "Logistics". Finalizing room schedules before Bridge begins (5%) was the logistical improvement recommended most often.

- 24% of team members suggested that the Summer Bridge program "Update Curriculum".

- Improvements in "Scheduling" were recommended by 18% of questionnaire participants.

- 12% of team members believed no improvements were necessary ("N/A, None, Nothing").

Table 3: Instructional Team Reported Most Valuable Aspects of Summer Bridge.

What aspects of the program did you find most valuable?			
Theme	**N**	**%**	**Examples of Actual Team Member Comments**
Program Sessions and Activities	73	83%	• "The programs/sessions set up for students to attend (public speaking, etc.)." • "I think it's very important for students to (at least) refresh their memories before jumping into a college math course. The IFESS gave everyone a good wake-up call without the pressure of a real math class–they could feel comfortable asking questions!" • "The writing sessions were really helpful to the students. They were happy to go to those." • "Presentation skills–the students LOVED this."
Creating a Sense of Community	40	45%	• "I really liked the opportunity for incoming freshmen to get acquainted with a school, the campus, and faculty. I see a level of confidence in these students which will serve them well." • "Opportunities for students to make friends, get questions answered, learn about IUPUI and Indianapolis community." • "Connection to the campus and community, peers." • "The bonding of the students." • "The opportunity for growth in confidence and comfort level around campus was fantastic." • "Being able to help the students get acclimated to the campus environment."
Interacting with and Helping Students	32	36%	• "I love connecting with our students." • "Loved having the chance to meet all of my

			students and help prepare them for college life." • "Knowing that we have provided our incoming students with a solid foundation for their studies." • "This was only my first time teaching Bridge and the growth in the students during these two weeks was amazing." • "To watch as students absorb and apply knowledge."
Teamwork	22	25%	• "The team collaboration in preparation for Bridge made these two weeks fly by." • "Also the activities within each group are fun, too. Activities that build bonds and better relationships amongst each other." • "I enjoyed working with my mentors. They did a wonderful job."
Content Freedom	5	6%	• "I found it very valuable that teams are given the freedom to design their curriculum." • "Opportunities to 'customize' our schedule to a certain extent and to obtain funds for special programs, etc."

N=88

Table 4: Instructional Team Reported Summer Bridge Challenges.

What challenges did you encounter during the program?			
Theme	**N**	**%**	**Examples of Actual Team Member Comments**
Logistics	59	69%	• "Last minute change of rooms." • "Daily logistics of moving from place to place were tiring, but probably unavoidable." • "Problems with OnCourse." • "My classroom was locked every day, so I had to call or find someone to unlock it. Super inconvenient!" • "Wish there were basic supplies like scissors, markers, crayons." • "Getting to sessions in a timely manner." • "Students were not always assigned to the proper group." • "Also, we had many students placed into the wrong math sections. For instance, we had several nursing students placed into Calculus but should've been in Finite due to their major."
Student Behavior	23	27%	• "Students didn't understand the program would have requirements." • "Believing that since this is Bridge they didn't

			need to treat the work assigned in class as work or behave as if the class was a 'real' college course." • "Some students did not wanna be there so it was hard on some days." • "Motivation."
Timing	14	16%	• "Time is always a challenge. Planning for fall while finding enough time with Bridge is hard to balance." • "Running out of time during sessions. Some of them felt very rushed."
Program Curriculum	10	12%	• "It's tough to process the math sessions because the students have separate sessions with very different experiences." • "The students were confused as to why they were in math when it is not required for their major."
Communication	8	9%	• "Some of the logistical information wasn't communicated well." • "Last minute schedule changes." • "Communication between mentors about dropping off and picking up students."
N/A, None, Nothing	6	7%	

N=86

Table 5: Instructional Team Reported Suggestions for Improvement.

Do you have any suggestions for improvement?			
Theme	**N**	**%**	**Examples of Actual Team Member Comments**
Logistics	53	64%	• "Having the students placed correctly in math before starting Bridge." • "Place students based on their fall math class in addition to where the student place don the math placement test." • "It would be good to have a mandatory all-Bridge meeting earlier on in which the team members could meet and start to plan. It was not possible to arrange a meeting time with all my team members, even individually! We never met as a group." • "I wish our mentor was actually in our school instead of a different major." • "Scheduling more sessions to mingle with other sections." • "It might be nice to schedule fixed paired lunches between each international section and a domestic section once during Bridge." • "It would be nice for campus rec to offer a 2-week

			pass for Bridge students. Some of my students wanted to work out and were told to wait until school started." • "Lunch should be provided." • "Technology assistance for first day with laptops."
Update Curriculum	20	24%	• "I would like to see more intentional get-to-know-you/teambuilding activities built into the formal curriculum, such as low ropes or something." • "Could the MAC mentors share their different plans, worksheets with instructors after the math sessions? This would help with interpreting what the students write about math in their journals." • "If possible, make a special session for the students who tested out of math or not taking math that semester." • "Have students do journal assignments less often or change it up." • "Many of the 'research' assignments across Bridge sections seem contrived and irrelevant to many students and don't really require library research skills and resources. UC and the librarians may need to renegotiate the librarian role in Bridge, perhaps focusing on library use basics rather than jumping into more advanced skills students are unlikely to use until their second or third year."
Scheduling	15	18%	• "Math and writing sessions should be longer and fewer." • "All Bridge team activities during the day or better advertising for night activities." • "After Bridge activities that involve staff or are open to staff, too."
N/A, None, Nothing	10	12%	

N=83

Conclusion

Based on the responses of 90 Summer Bridge instructional team members, it appears the faculty, staff, and mentors involved in the 2013 program were satisfied with their experience. Respondents indicated that they were pleased with the support offered throughout the Bridge process, their instructional teams, and the technology instruction sessions offered. They shared a wide variety of valuable program aspects, including Bridge sessions and activities, the sense of community built during Bridge, the quality of their interaction with students, instructional team cooperation, and the ability to customize their Bridge content. When asked about the challenges faced during Bridge, team members cited logistics, student behavior, timing, curriculum, and communication as hurdles, or reported they faced no challenges during Bridge participation. In their suggestions for improvement, respondents focused on logistical, curricular, and scheduling issues, or asserted the program required no changes.

Assessment of the Summer Bridge program is an ongoing process. This process is designed to identify both areas of achievement and those in need of improvement. The results of this investigation may be of use to the faculty, administrators, and staff who design and implement Summer Bridge. By sharing these findings it is hoped that a greater program understanding will be reached, yielding a more effective jumpstart to the college experience for students at IUPUI.

Assessment Appendix E – University College: U110 First-Year Seminar Student Focus Group Summary Report

University College: U110 First-Year Seminar

Student Focus Group Summary Report

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Office of Student Data, Analysis, and Evaluation
Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI)

The purpose of this investigation was to understand students' perceptions of fall 2013 University College U110, First-Year Seminar (FYS) courses. Students enrolled in a FYS were asked to voluntarily participate in focus group interviews at the end of the semester. Students were asked to provide feedback about what they found most and least valuable about the course, suggestions for improvement, and the instructional team. Participants also provided information about their experiences completing an electronic Personal Development Plan (ePDP) and other assignments and activities. Student responses to these topic areas were de-identified, analyzed, and shared with specific instructional teams through individual feedback reports. The purposes of this report are to share overall findings from the U110 FYS student focus groups and provide general recommendations for improving teaching and learning.

Method

Trained members of the Office of Student Data, Analysis, and Evaluation (SDAE) facilitated the FYS student focus group interviews. The evaluation research project was supervised by Dr. Michele J. Hansen and approved by the IU Institutional Research Board (IRB #1310590044).

Recruitment Procedures

Students who agreed to voluntarily participate in the focus group interviews were asked to stay after class on the last day of the semester. As an incentive for participation students were provided pizza and refreshments. Prior to the start of interviews, potential student participants were given an IRB approved Study Information Sheet (SIS). SDAE team members reviewed the SIS with participants highlighting the study's purpose, its procedures, and the nature of confidentiality. Only student participants and members of SDAE were present during the FYS focus groups. The group interviews lasted 30 minutes to one hour in duration and were audio recorded.

Participants

A total of 68 students participated in (n = 13) separate FYS focus group interviews. As shown in Table 1, participants tended to be female, 18 or 19 years old, white, and studying as non-international students.

Table1: Student Participant Demographic Characteristics

Gender		***Race / Ethnicity**	
Female	56	American Indian or Alaskan Native	1
Male	12	Asian	4
Total	68	Black or African American	13
Age		Hispanic	0
18	33	White	46
19	27	Other	1
20-24	5	Prefer not to respond	1
25 yrs. or older	0	International or Foreign Student	4
No response	3		
Total	68		

Note: participants responded to more than one race/ethnicity category.

Data Analysis

Analytical procedures were designed to facilitate an exploratory content analysis of 13 FYS focus group feedback reports. Individual feedback reports detailed major themes of discussion found within separate group interviews. This comprehensive report considers an *overall* view of *all* FYS focus groups. Therefore, its main goal is to understand and describe notable themes and patterns of discussion found across all of the FYS focus groups.

Content Analysis of Focus Group Feedback Reports

Individual feedback reports were constructed by SDAE members using audio files, facilitator notes, and short surveys that were completed by students during interviews. Patton (2002) describes content analysis as "referring to any qualitative data reduction or sense making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings" (p. 453). In respecting content analysis as an analytical technique a set of examination procedures were carefully followed. These procedures were based on the foundations of grounded theory methodology. Grounded theory posits that the central tenants of experience and phenomenon are held within the lives of the participants being studied (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Corbin & Strauss, 1990).

ATLAS.ti

The 13 individual feedback reports were first uploaded into ATLAS.ti, a software program that assists in the management and analysis of qualitative data. ATLAS.ti provided research support by providing the capability to code documents in an electronic "point-and-click" format. An "Object Crawler" and "Co-Occurrence" instrument, tools within the ALTAS.ti software, also assisted the coding process (Friese, 2012). Additionally, the software provided support by maintaining an organized set of documents.

Coding Process

A coding process was employed as the primary means of examination. Corbin and Strauss's (1990) work explains, "data using the grounded theory method is frequently referred to as coding to depict the process by which data are collapsed into smaller pieces of data, categorized, considered, and reconceptualized in new ways" (p. 348). Specifically, a process of *Open*, *Axial*, and *Selective Coding* was implemented as a way to examine the qualitative data. In order to effectively manage these procedures a document coding matrix was created using ATLAS.ti. The coding matrix was helpful by cataloging the frequency in which each code was assigned to the five main discussion areas (i.e., Most & Least Valuable Aspects). Aggregate data from the matrix is provided below:

Focus Group Discussion Areas	5
Total Codes Assigned	467
Average Number of Codes Assigned per Discussion Area:	93.4

Results

Several notable themes, or patterns of discussion, emerged in the focus group data through analysis. These themes are presented on the following pages and supported by actual examples of student s' interview conversations. Although names have been redacted to help promote confidentiality, this *authentic student feedback* has not been altered in any other way. It is hoped that this method of result presentation will allow for a trustworthy representation of students' FYS learning experiences.

Results are organized by five (5) main interview topics: most and least valuable FYS aspects, needs not met by the course, instructional team members and support, and the electronic Personal Development Plan (ePDP). Additionally, results from a short survey students completed during focus group interviews on FYS abilities and outcomes is included. Overall, results are designed to aid University College administrators, faculty, staff, and other stakeholders in further developing evidence based course improvements.

Most Valuable U110 FYS Course Aspects

During focus group interviews student participants reported several most valuable FYS course aspects. Students overwhelmingly described, "Developing Peer Connections and Forming Friendships" as the #1 most valuable component. This was followed by being "Introduced to Campus Resources", "Major and Career Discovery", and "Instructional Team Support". FYS students explained, although with less frequency, that participating in "Diversity Learning Experiences" and "Establishing Peer Support Networks" was valuable.

Developing Peer Connections and Forming Friendships

- "This is the class that opened up the most interactions and friendships."
- "When this class is over you have friendships. It makes you feel more comfortable."
- "Friends—the experience of being with everybody…because I feel like for most people, everyone that's been in this class is someone they will stay in contact with."

Introduction to Campus Resources

- "Learning about all the resources at IUPUI; like I use those now beyond this class."
- "I think without this class I wouldn't have known about the MAC, CAPS, and other resources."
- "How to find a book in the library. I would have never known that. And how to send (the book) to the library that your closest to (inter-library loan)."

Major and Career Discovery

- "The major career connection sheets, those were really helpful. Because it just breaks it down – real simple. It's simple."
- "You really have to understand yourself and that's one of the harder things to do." Did you do any assignments to get to that? "It was the MBTI, there were three: the Holland codes…"
- "Clinical visits were the most valuable aspect of the course because it let us physically see what our majors will require, and it gave us intel into the job environment."

Instructional Team Support

- "I knew I could talk to them if I needed something."
- "The advising really helped me. If you had any questions at any time you could ask her those."
- "I liked how we had our own mentor, our own academic advisor…I loved having them in here. It wasn't all put on the instructor. It was like split up, if we had problem we had a person to go to. "

Diversity Learning Experiences

- "The thing that was most valuable was the culture experience."
- "I think the most important part for me was learning the importance of African Americans. Before taking this class, I really didn't think that African Americans did anything…so learning that made me lift my head up higher when I walk into my other classes where there are not all African Americans (Yeah x4)."

Establishing Peer Support Networks

- "After two weeks of being in class with these people, it's just like a big family."
- "Coming here (class) and seeing people with the same facial expressions and seeing people that are experiencing the same problems; it's comforting in a way - you're not in it alone."
- "Sense of community. You feel more comfortable being in here. Where if you didn't start out in a seminar, you wouldn't be okay."

Least Valuable Aspects

FYS students also described least valuable course aspects. These included a perceived view of "Unhelpful Assignments" and experiencing "Time Commitments and Restraints". Students also suggested "Improve Group Work and Activities" and "More Opportunities for Peer Connections".

Unhelpful Assignments

- "I felt like some of the writing assignments were kinda, like, busy work and unnecessary."
- "They just tell you the same things over and over sometimes."
- "I thought it was all easy work it just took a long time to do (Yeah). I think there could have been an easier way to do what she asked then to write the full length papers. I think we could have saved a lot of paper and a lot of time and came to the same conclusions."

Time Commitments and Restraints

- "A mid-week, mid-day class would be more helpful."
- "We only meet once a week, but I just feel that the amount of time that we are here is too long."
- "(The class) shouldn't go as long as an hour and 15 minutes. I think it should be shorter. Because we would usually come in here and for like the first 15 minutes and talk about feelings; what's going on. I feel like if we cut it down to a 45 minute class we would get just as much done."

Improve Group Work and Activities

- "If you're going to do group work, do group work in class."
- "How we had to have it signed (community service / campus event form). I went to the career week and walked all through there…I had to do another on-campus event because I couldn't get a signature."
- "More class involvement outside of the classroom; the Regatta if we went as a class together. I was kind of nervous to do that alone. I went to the Regatta and stayed 10 minutes because I didn't know anyone."

More Opportunities for Peer Connections

- "I feel like I didn't make very many connections. I didn't get to know people from this class."
- "Include American students in the class too. All foreign student here (in this class). I wouldn't want to be only with American students, no– but half and half something like that would be nicer. Because you came here. If you're not interacting with the culture you're living in; how is that going to help you?"

Needs Not Met By Course

Students were reticent to describe any specific needs not met by the FYS course. However, some students specified their needs regarding "Information on Campus Resources" and "Major and Career Discovery" were not fully met. Overall, this interview topic received the least amount of responses out of the five main discussion areas.

Course Met Most Needs

- "I believe we touched all the bases of, everything we need to know, to help us perform better as a productive student."
- "I didn't really think there was (needs not met by course) it was more like – if we did something in class she was always like let me know if you guys need help, e-mail me whatever. She was always there if we needed something - I never felt like I didn't know what I was doing or know where I was going."

Campus Resources

- "I feel like the library… they could have done a lot more with."
- "Let us know some of the different places and resources we have. I feel like if we get a list – if you need help with this, there's this for you; because sometimes I'm like is there any place I can go to get help for this… And I feel like with this class – if it's an introduction to college it should help you transition."
- "I had a few people say to me – well we don't do that…like well who does do that; so just knowledge of different resources would be better."

Major and Career Discovery

- "One thing I think we should have talked more – Internships and Externships, we talked about it…but more instructions of how to get applied..."
- "For people that are still exploratory, it would have been helpful to spend a little more time on different career paths. Because I know we did it for one or two days – but I still have no clue what I want to do."

Instructional Team Members and Support

Students described their instructional teams and the support they received as overwhelmingly positive. When describing the faculty role participants explained their "Personal Interest in Success" and "Resourcefulness and Ability to Ask ?s" as most helpful. Some students described the academic advisor as providing assistance with "Planning Classes and Declaring Majors". Peer Mentors were often described as being a "Supportive Peer Contact" and "Campus Activities Resource". Finally, many students defined librarians as "Resourceful".

Faculty: Personal Interest in Success

- "(The professor) is really good at this job because I feel like she knew everyone of us. Like she kept up with us; how's this coming along, are you still thinking about this major. "
- "In college people always say it's such a large school you're just a number. But (the professor) made you feel like you're an actual person. He knows all of us by name, what we like, he actually knows one fact about us; he could call us out by our hobbies instead of our names."

Resourcefulness and Ability to Ask ?s

- "She knew a little bit about basically everything. I mean everything. And what she didn't know, she would look up and make sure to get us the answer."
- "I was able to ask questions to her and then she gave me numbers of people who I could contact to, like, learn more, job shadow or find opportunities and stuff. She helped out a lot."

Advisor: Planning Classes and Declaring Majors

- "They (advisor) were helpful with planning our next semester classes."
- "The advisor made me want to find out what I wanted to do…I don't know it might have been like all of the resources that she gave us. I felt like things were possible. She explained the degree planning sheets. It made it feel like it was possible to actually find out what I wanted to major in."

Peer Mentor: Supportive Peer Contact

- "It was nice to have someone who was, like, a peer…It wasn't like we were going to a superior. We could go to him to talk about anything. It was nice."
- "She shared personal stuff – so if I had trouble with something I talked to her about it. She made me understand that it's not just me. Everybody goes through it – she helped me get through a lot of things."

Campus Activities Resource

- "She didn't experience everything she wanted to her freshman year because she was never introduced to everything. She does a really good job of e-mailing us at least once or twice a week about everything that's going on, like the clubs and the events that are coming up."
- "He's a good mentor. He comes to this class with us…and participates in everything…He showed us how to enjoy college…he gave us tips on how to get involved, because he's very involved."

Librarians: Resourceful

- "We went to the library twice, and (the librarian) went through everything she needed to go through."
- "When we did our big project he (librarian) showed us all the library stuff, and how to get to it and search…It was helpful because I would have been so confused."

Electronic Personal Development Plan (ePDP)

Most FYS students completed an electronic version of the PDP and described the project as "Helpful in Planning and Mapping Out a Future". However some students described "Uncertain Student Expectations" and concern with the "Amount of Work Required & Pressure to Complete" the ePDP.

Helpful in Planning and Mapping Out a Future

- "It felt good to be able to get up and say in front of a bunch of people, This is who I am, this is where I come from, this is what I've done, and this is what I want to do."
- "It helped me, personally. Yeah, your advisor tells you what classes you need to take, but you don't always believe them. I think sitting down by yourself and doing that (ePDP) and then going to your advisor really helped for me."

Uncertain Student Expectations

- "I wish she (instructor) would have explained the assignments more."
- "I think always knowing why you're doing something is important. Because if you don't know why you're doing it, it's pointless to you. So, knowing why you're doing an assignment, how it's going to affect you, and what its purpose is."
- "I would like to have it (ePDP) broken down and turn it in section by section each time. Because he just kind of told us this is due on this date. The entire thing was due on one day."

Amount of Work Required and Pressure to Complete

- "It was kinda a lot of pressure for freshmen who don't even know how to sign up for classes."
- "Yes, I don't think you should do it on your first semester. Because they ask about your academic achievements. We haven't even finished our first semester and they already want us to talk about academic achievements. I don't want to say none; but we really don't have a portfolio right now."

Abilities and Outcomes

Students completed a short questionnaire during their focus group interviews. Students were asked to identify specific FYS abilities and outcomes they perceived as meaningful or helpful. Additionally, some students provided open-ended feedback, describing how the course activities promoted the learning outcomes. Table 2: FYS Abilities and Outcomes, provides a rank order of student responses and examples of actual student comments. It is meaningful that students' top survey responses are in harmony with notable interview discussion topics. For example, students identified building a sense of community, forming friendships, and seeking help when I need it, both on the questionnaire and in group discussions.

Table 2: FYS Abilities and Outcomes

Ability or Outcome	# Students	How did course help? Examples of Actual Student Responses
Building a sense of community	53	• "We all discussed problems / successes together (became closer)." • "I was able to hang around campus and meet others." • "People in same stages of life easy to get to know one another." • "Networking, getting involved, learning about campus events and clubs." • "Having the same group of people around you formed a sense of belonging."
Forming friendships	53	• "You got to know your peers." • "Being open to others and not being scared." • "I made friends with someone I now talk to outside of class." • "It gave me time to talk to my peers and build those friendships." • "Getting to know people with same issues and interests as me."
Seeking help when I need it	50	• "Talked about how it's important for us to seek help." • "This class made me aware of my resources." • "I could ask anything and someone would know what to do." • "We did a scavenger hunt and talked a lot of resources, which was helpful."
Understanding college level expectations	43	• "Talked about what's expected." • "We did talk about IUPUI policies a lot." • "We had professors come and talk to us." • "You heard from actual professors what they are looking for."
Using library resources	43	• "Tour of library". • "A librarian came and talked to us". • "Our librarian's presentation really helped." • "Knowing how to find books and using stuff online".
Time management skills	38	• "We were taught how to fit everything in". • "Had a lot of presentations about time management". • "Did a worksheet on how we use our time and how we could change."
Understanding more about myself	38	• "I found out more about myself." • "Personality tests." • "I realized more about myself, and what I really want to do."
Deciding on a major or future career	36	• "It helped me better understand my path for my future." • "The PDP helped with this a lot." • "Made me explore different majors". • "It helped reassure my confidence in my major".
Understanding about diversity and inclusiveness	36	• "Learned about different cultures." • "Learned others' backgrounds, reflection work." • "Open discussion, sharing different opinions." • "We touched on social justice, and it helped broaden my horizons."
Developing effective study skills	31	• "I know when to study." • "The tips were helpful." • "Helped me understand different ways to study."
Coping with stress	23	• "CAPS." • "Learned to breathe and take time for self". • "Learning how to use music/sports to cope with stress, Stress Killers."
Writing skills	22	• "Journaling." • "We had to do a lot of writing for this class so my writing improved."
Thinking critically	20	• "Talking to one another." • "Group discussions."

Overall Summary of Findings

Overall, it is clear students are benefiting greatly from their FYS experiences. Across all focus group discussions students described the FYS as helpful and meaningful to their learning both inside and outside of the classroom. For example, students described developing peer connections and forming friendships, being introduced to campus resources, discovering more about their major and career, and receiving instructional team support, as most valuable course aspects. Additionally, students identified these same items on a short survey as being notably helpful. Most students completed an electronic version of the personal development plan (PDP) and described the project as being helpful in planning and mapping out a future. However, some students indicated having uncertain expectations with the project or concerns with the amount of work required to complete it.

Participants spoke very positively of their instructional teams and the support they received. Specifically, students identified faculty members as having a personal interest in their success, being resourceful, and answering important questions. Academic advisors were described as being helpful in providing assistance with planning classes and declaring majors. Students often described peer mentors as supportive contacts that could provide emotional support and information on campus activities. When asked by interviewers to describe any specific needs not met by the FYS course students usually replied that the "class met most needs". However, a few students explained they could have benefited from receiving more information on campus resources and participating in more major and career discovery. Some students cited unhelpful assignments, time commitments and restraints, a need for improved group work and additional peer connection opportunities as least valuable course aspects.

Possible Implications & Conclusion

Students are engaging in meaningful learning experiences through their FYS courses. Still, focused FYS improvements may need to be considered based on student feedback. For example, while many students described completing an ePDP as helpful, some students indicated having uncertain expectations with the project. FYS instructional teams may benefit from exploring new ways to communicate their expectations of the ePDP to students. Additionally, most students indicated the FYS met their needs. However, instructional teams should continue to make certain students receive information on campus resources and participate in major and career discovery. Continuing to provide meaningful pathways that allow students to develop peer connections and form friendships will establish further the value of FYS courses. Finally, it may be helpful to continue to respond to student reported least valuable aspects (e.g., unhelpful assignments and time commitments) on a course by course basis via individual feedback reports. Taken together, these results are designed to aid University College administrators, faculty, staff, and other stakeholders in further developing evidence-based FYS improvements.

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Assessment Appendix F – University College: U110 First-Year Seminar Instructional Team Perceptions

2013 First Year Seminar
Instructional Team Questionnaire Report

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Introduction

The purpose of this investigation was to understand instructional team members' perceptions of First Year Seminars (FYS). Fall 2013 FYS advisors, faculty members, and student mentors were asked to voluntarily respond to an anonymous questionnaire administered after the end of the semester. Participants were encouraged to share opinions regarding FYS resources, goals, teams, activities, and areas for improvement.

Sample

All Fall 2013 FYS advisors, faculty members, and student mentors were asked to voluntarily participate in a questionnaire at the conclusion of the program. Of that population, 66 participants of varying Summer Bridge roles completed at least part of the questionnaire (18 advisors, 28 faculty members, and 21 peer mentors). This represents a 72% response rate overall, and 82%, 85%, and 55% response rates for advisors, faculty members, and mentors, respectively.

The majority of faculty members (57%) typically teach one FYS section per semester, though 39% teach two sections (FIGURE 1). FYS enrollment is typically 15-19 students (FIGURE 2). Approximately 61% of faculty have taught FYS as stand-alone courses, while roughly 40% have taught them as linked courses. First Year Seminars are typically two- (61%) or one-credit (39%) courses.

Figure 1: Average enrollment in FYS according to faculty

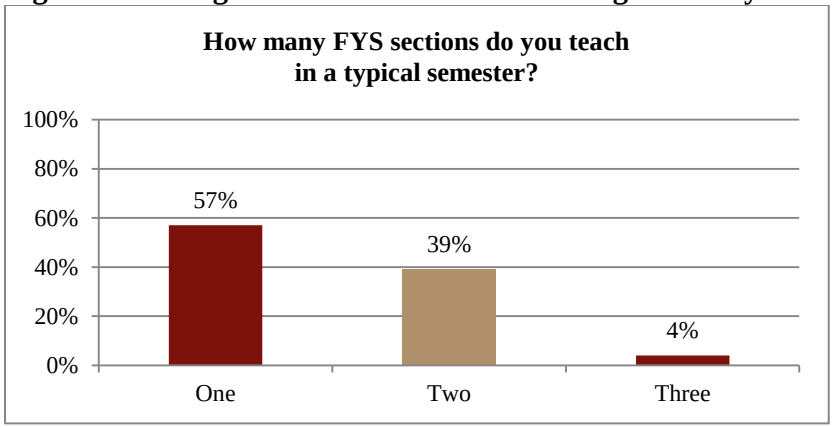
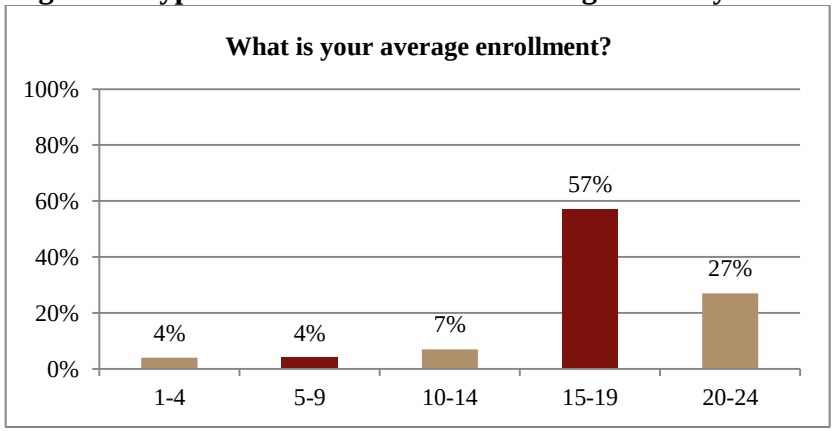


Figure 2: Typical FYS course load according to faculty



Faculty most often teach First Year Seminars in addition to their regular workload (50% of respondents). More than a quarter (26%) volunteered for the role, while an equal number (26%) participated as part of their regular workload.

Methods

Several strategies were used to understand participant experiences. Descriptive statistics for closed-ended responses were generated in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Open-ended responses were uploaded into ATLAS.ti (a software program that assists in the management and analysis of qualitative data), then coded and categorized into themes. Theme categories are typically considered to be emerged or notable if 5% or more of participants responded in a similar manner; this study's small sample size would render each comment an emergent theme at that threshold for some items, therefore areas of greater convergence (greater than 10% difference) are discussed in this report.

Results

Faculty and mentors understand what is expected of them as participants in FYS (Faculty: 4.57 on a 5.00 Likert scale where 4=*Somewhat Agree* and 5=*Completely Agree*; Mentors: 4.95*)*, feel satisfied with or valued by their instructional teams (Faculty: 4.11; Mentors: 4.75), and believe their teams model collaboration for students (Faculty: 4.11; Mentors: 4.60). Advisors also understand FYS expectations (4.17), but are less certain they are valued team members (3.56 on a 5.00 Likert scale where 3=*Neutral* and 4=*Somewhat Agree)* or that their teams model collaboration (3.33). Faculty members believe communication is the most essential ingredient to building instructional teams (54% of respondents). Results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Survey results for faculty, advisors, and peer mentors

Question	N	Mean	Std. Dev
Faculty			
I understand what is expected of a FYS (U110) instructor	28	4.57	0.69
I am satisfied with my FYS (U110) instructional team	28	4.11	0.92
My FYS instructional team models collaboration for students	28	4.11	1.10
Advisor			
I understand what is expected of me as a FYS (U110) advisor	18	4.17	0.86
I feel like a valued member of my FYS instructional team	18	3.56	1.20
My FYS instructional team models collaboration for students	18	3.33	1.37
Peer Mentor			
I understand what is expected of me as a FYS (U110) mentor	20	4.95	0.05
I feel like a valued member of my FYS instructional team	20	4.75	0.12
My FYS instructional team models collaboration for students	20	4.60	0.11

Preparation, Resources, and Professional Development

Advisors, faculty members, and student mentors feel prepared to participate in First Year Seminars.

Table 2: Preparedness for FYS participation according to faculty, advisors, and peer mentors

Question	N	Mean	Std. Dev
I feel prepared to teach in First Year Seminars	26	4.58	0.86
I feel prepared to advise in First Year Seminars	15	4.67	0.49
I feel prepared to mentor in First Year Seminars	18	4.67	0.77

When asked about the resources meant to support them, faculty did not rate any current FYS professional development offerings as "very helpful". Of those rated "somewhat helpful", the FYS Idea Exchange (4.28 on a 5.00 Likert scale: 4=S*omewhat Helpful*; 5=*Very Helpful*) and course evaluation reports (4.20) received the highest rankings. More than one-fifth of respondents rated three additional resources as "somewhat helpful": assessment information, the FYS template, and the first year programs office. The First Year Seminar website did not receive positive feedback. Of those who accessed the following items, more than 15% said website presentations, games/simulations, and discussions were "very unhelpful". Full results shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Usefulness of FYS resources as rated by faculty

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Very unhelpful	Somewhat unhelpful	Neutral	Somewhat helpful	Very Helpful
FYS Idea Exchange	18	4.28	0.75	-	17%	39%	44%	-
FYS Course Evaluation Reports	25	4.20	0.76	4%	8%	52%	36%	-
Assessment Information	19	4.11	0.57	-	11%	68%	21%	-
"A Template for FYS at IUPUI"	25	4.08	0.76	4%	12%	56%	28%	-
First Year programs office	24	3.96	1.20	-	21%	29%	42%	-
Office of Student Transitions and Mentoring Initiatives	12	3.75	0.75	-	42%	42%	17%	-
FYS Website Documents	15	3.73	0.70	7%	20%	67%	7%	-
FYS Website Syllabus Search	14	3.71	0.73	7%	21%	64%	7%	-
FYS Website Presentations	12	3.67	0.99	17%	17%	50%	17%	-
FYS Website Articles	14	3.64	0.75	7%	29%	57%	7%	-
FYS Website Games/Simulations	9	3.44	0.88	22%	11%	67%	-	-
FYS Website Discussions	8	3.38	1.06	25%	25%	38%	13%	-

Faculty members whose FYS was part of a TLC were also asked to rate the usefulness of TLC resources. The TLC website planning resources (4.67 on a 5.00 Likert scale: 3=*Neutral*; 4=S*omewhat Helpful*; 5=*Very Helpful*), TLC retreat (4.64) and TLC office (4.45) were rated the most useful TLC resources, while TLC assessment information (3.75) and the TLC OnCourse site (3.67) received the lowest ratings. Of the nine resources rated, only three (TLC retreat, TLC student feedback questionnaire reports, and TLC office) had been accessed by more than 50% of respondents.

Advisors, and especially mentors, were more positive about First Year Seminar professional development. Advisors appreciate departmental training (3 of 12 advisors; 25%), pre-course meetings (25%), and their shared drive (17%). Mentors value their mentor training (6 out of 14 mentors; 43%), student leader meetings (21%), instructional team support (21%), and OnCourse resources (14%). Some advisors and mentors, however, indicated that current professional development opportunities have not been helpful (4 of 26 advisors and mentors; 15%).

Selected advisor and mentor comments regarding helpful professional development.

- "Understanding how to do group advising, background information on study skills and time management."
- "It is very beneficial to meet in person with the entire instructional team before the start of the semester."
- "The advisors have a shared drive with tips and activities that is useful."
- "The resources I received from the OTEAM training sessions at the beginning of the mentoring experience were most helpful. Also, the UCOL U201 coursework aided me tremendously throughout the semester. The National Mentoring Symposium made mentoring an even better experience for me…Finally, there were online resources available on OnCourse that I used as references a few times throughout the semester."
- "Having weekly meetings with other mentors and them sharing experiences and ideas on how to improve as a mentor was very helpful and useful."
- "The staff were very open to listening to my ideas and concerns, allowing me to freely discuss with them what was expected of me and how to handle various situations."
- "None. I figured out how I wanted to fulfill my role in U110 by meeting with other advisors, seeing what they have done, and creating or tweaking activities on my own."
- "I feel like most of my professional development skills have come from just diving in and learning from trial and error."

When asked what additional FYS professional development opportunities they would utilize, advisors, faculty members, and student mentors all asked for opportunities to share best practices (11 of 38 advisors, faculty, and mentors; 29%), though mentors also reiterated their satisfaction with current offerings (6 of 13 mentors; 46%). Faculty are interested in an FYS orientation (4 of 17 faculty; 24%), while both faculty and advisors would like some additional pedagogical guidance (5 of 25 faculty and advisors; 20%).

Selected comments regarding desired professional development.

- "There should be a roundtable discussion every spring to reflect on the fall semester and share best practices. It needs to be structured so that the time can be best utilized. For example, I would create two or three 20-minute, small-group discussions, and then finish with a large group discussion so that the best ideas can first be narrowed down and shared in the large group. Also so that advisors more comfortable in smaller groups can be heard and ask questions."
- "I enjoy conversations with other members of the instructional team over meals. The upcoming Idea Exchange is a perfect example of these kinds of collaborations."
- "Require syllabuses and class resources to be posted in one location for everyone to access."
- "There are already so many resources available to use, I can't think of any that would help, other than a resource which kept an updated version of all events going on around campus."
- "I think the course needs an orientation for new faculty because the expectations for the course are robust and new instructors need support and guidance as they develop their plans. A mentoring program would help as well."
- "An opportunity to meet with more seasoned U110 faculty would be helpful to gain new ideas and discuss challenges with them."
- "[The professional development program] should include an orientation for new team members, sharing of pedagogical strategies and best practices, and learning about the needs of first-year students. More focus on how to build a successful instructional team."
- "Ways to engage more students, information on how to ensure the students feel they are getting value out of the course."
- "More and better ways to integrate learning; using formative class assessments in research/presentations/papers to highlight UC's first-year efforts."
- "Guidance with regard to opportunities for short-term/one-time service learning and student-generated/led charity events."

FYS Goals

According to faculty members, the eight most important goals of First Year Seminars are:

1.) Build a sense of community/sense of belonging for students
2.) Introduce collegiate-level expectations
3.) Acquaint students with campus resources
4.) Support students' transition into the university and their academic major
5.) Build self-awareness
6.) Explore academic majors and career options
7.) Help students with time management
8.) Establish student/staff/faculty networks

Selected faculty comments regarding First Year Seminar goals.

- "Create learning experiences that allow students to build a commitment to college completion by understanding college-level expectations, creating a plan for success that includes the curriculum and co-curriculum, and knowing how to access and utilize IUPUI student services as well as peers, faculty, and staff to support their college success."
- "I have come up with the four Fs: 1. Foundation: Provide students with foundational information and experiences that help make them citizens of the IUPUI campus; 2. Focus: Help students to understand how to think about higher education and their own education, how to study, how to deal with and approach professors, how to stand up for themselves, and how to be independent learners; 3. Fulfillment: Help students to find the major that is right for them by helping them see the breadth of learning available at IUPUI, to provide help and support for changing majors, and to understand that the goal of any major/career is to contribute to their society; 4. Family: Help students to feel like they belong in their U110 though not necessarily in the sense of family roles, but rather as an extended family that supports, encourages, and has discourse with one another."

FYS Instructional Team Contributions

There is some agreement among advisors, faculty members, and student mentors about the responsibilities each member of an FYS instructional team should hold. Advisors should advise (26 of 45 advisors, faculty, and mentors; 58%) and facilitate discussion (11%); faculty should lead (42%), teach (22%), and coordinate (20%); mentors should support students (33%), build relationships (29%), promote involvement (13%), and serve as role models (11%); and librarians, while not currently viewed as members of the instructional team by some (16%), should teach research skills (36%), introduce students to library capabilities (22%), and promote information literacy (11%).

Selected comments regarding instructional team contributions.

- "Advisor: Facilitate career exploration and academic planning, help students to navigate registration systems and understand process of moving into degree programs."
- "Faculty member: Facilitated most of classroom time, discussions, and activities. Organized the syllabus and events off-campus. Was main leader in instructional team collaboration."
- "Mentor: Aided students in building ePDP, facilitated team building and community building activities within the classroom, made students aware of community activities and campus activities weekly."
- "Student mentor: Gets to know students at their level, models good student habits, works with students to solve transition issues."
- "I basically utilize the librarian on the first day as part of introductions and then we don't see them again until 'Library Day' when we take a brief tour and review how to access information in the computer lab."
- "Librarian: Teach how to write a research question, acquaint students with college-level research expectations, guide through researching IUPUI's library databases, and reinforce academic integrity."

Both advisors and student mentors believe they already contribute to student success by building relationships (8 of 27 advisors and mentors; 30%) and easing the transition from high school to college (26%). In addition, advisors feel they support students by introducing university policies and procedures (7 of 13 advisors; 54%) and helping them create an academic plan (46%). Student mentors feel their role in student success involves supporting students (9 of 14 mentors; 64%), skill building (21%), resource identification (21%), and at-risk student outreach (21%).

Selected advisor and mentor comments regarding student success.

- "I contribute by participating in class, getting to know the students on a weekly basis and watching them grow over the course of a semester."
- "Help students develop strategies to adapt to the college environment."
- "With being a mentor you have taken a huge role to be devoted to being a part of a group of students' lives. They are new to the whole college life and they need that guidance from someone who has already experienced what they are about to go through."
- "I contribute to student success by providing relevant and helpful information about IUPUI, its academic offices, academic processes, and individual student career/major/course planning and individual student development."
- "I work hard to be as available to help as possible with the students, setting up one-on-one meetings to discuss involvement, time management, study skills, etc. and answering questions about assignments inside and outside class."
- "Referred students to the correct offices/webpages when certain issues and concerns came up."
- "I met one-on-one with students, especially when they were in a time of distress or at risk within the classroom."

Faculty members promote FYS goals by using discussions, reflective writing assignments, student presentations/projects, and the personal development plan. 86% of faculty members (n=24) indicate they somewhat agree or completely agree that they use the FYS template to guide their course content. To increase template usefulness, faculty recommend reducing the number of FYS goals (4 of 12 faculty; 33%) and including additional pedagogical guidance (33%), though some state that the template is currently sufficient (25%). 52% (n=14) believe that their FYS course content is aligned with that of their linked course.

Selected faculty comments regarding template improvement.

- "Boil it down to a few key points."
- "It would help if the template could be 'de-stuffed' a bit. It is very difficult to address all course objectives–and build community–in a one-credit hour class."
- "It could show how the goals for the course translate into particular activities and assignments…"
- "Incorporate more intentionally co-curricular learning opportunities to expose students to other aspects of campus life and college experience."

Areas for Improvement

Advisors, faculty members, and student mentors agree that the First Year Seminar format (10 of 39 advisors, faculty, and mentors; 26%) and curriculum (15%) should be updated. In particular, they believe the PDP should be addressed (13%). Advisors would like their role to expand (8 of 13 advisors; 62%), while faculty would appreciate a more narrow FYS scope (3 of 13 faculty; 23%) and improved preparation (15%).

Selected comments regarding overall improvement.

- "I feel it…should include more interactions with the campus as a whole–perhaps treat it more like Bridge where there are field trips and chances to explore the campus to really introduce students to the resources on campus instead of just telling them about it in a classroom."
- "Encourage and support more opportunities to get students outside of the classroom, including service-learning, experiential learning, field trips, etc."
- "I think a total revamp of the FYS content is warranted."
- "Students need to be developing their active listening, interpersonal, and discussion skills…"
- "I also feel a Plan B assignment should be mandatory in all FYS courses since college students change their majors an average of three times."
- "I do not believe the ePDP should be a requirement. Many of the students are frustrated by the program and get wrapped up in the web development itself instead of taking time to reflect upon themselves and the educational/career goals they are creating."
- "I also think that all groups should stick to one set PDP style either using WIX.com, the ePDP, or the paper PDP."
- "Also, I think that the IT people or someone fully versed in how to use the ePDP…should maybe have a class with the students on how to do everything and what ways they can use the ePDP."
- "Advisors should be assigned a certain amount of classroom time to work with and develop academic survival skills, and to cultivate basic knowledge of academic programs, policies, and processes at IUPUI."
- "The FYS should be taught by advisors…Yes, it is important to learn college level thinking, writing and other academic skills, but those important academic skills should be implemented in the academic courses…In my opinion, before a student can ever learn to be effective academically they need to be a knowledgeable college student first: learning the school calendar, learning new vocabulary, learning more details about financial aid, learning success skills, learning more about who they are and how that fits into a particular major and/or career."
- "Encourage departments to provide structured time for instructional team members to meet in August to discuss their plans for the fall."
- "Focusing on fewer items so more in-depth, quality instruction and learning can take place."

Overall Assessment

89% of faculty members (n=25) would recommend teaching a First Year Seminar to another faculty member. All faculty (100%) believe that FYS improve college readiness for students.

Conclusion

- First Year Seminar faculty members, advisors, and student mentors understand what is expected of them as members of FYS instructional teams and feel prepared to take on their roles.
- Faculty and mentors are satisfied with their FYS instructional team experience and believe their teams model collaboration for students. Advisors feel less valued by their teams and are less certain teams model collaboration well.
- Faculty members believe FYS resources need to be improved. They are especially interested in updated FYS website materials and an FYS faculty orientation. Advisors and mentors are more positive about FYS resources. They appreciate their departmental/role-related training and pre-semester preparation meetings. All are interested in more opportunities to share FYS best practices.
- Faculty members feel First Year Seminars should ease students' transition from high school to college by building a sense of community, introducing college-level expectations, and acquainting students with IUPUI resources.
- Advisors, faculty members, and student mentors believe FYS instructional team roles should be as follows: advisors should advise (e.g., help with academic planning, registration, major/career decisions), faculty should lead (e.g., create course structure and syllabus, set course tone), mentors should support students and build relationships, and librarians should teach research skills.
- Advisors and mentors both feel they contribute to student success by building relationships. Advisors also contribute by introducing university policies/practices and helping to create academic plans. Mentors feel they promote success by supporting students.
- Faculty members promote FYS goals by facilitating class discussions, assigning reflective writing, requiring student presentations/projects, and utilizing the PDP.
- 86% of faculty use the FYS template, but feel reducing the number of goals it contains and providing additional pedagogical guidance would improve the document.
- Advisors, faculty members, and student mentors agree that an update to the First Year Seminar format (e.g., adding more activities outside the classroom) would be beneficial.
- 89% of faculty would recommend teaching an FYS to another faculty member. All faculty believe First Year Seminars improve college readiness among students.

Assessment Appendix G – Themed Learning Community Student's Perceptions: A Qualitative Investigation

Themed Learning Communities (TLCs)

Qualitative Report (Fall 2012)

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of students' perceptions and opinions of the 2012 Themed Learning Community (TLC) program. TLCs are designed to facilitate students' transitions to the university and promote higher retention rates and levels of academic performance. National research has shown that participation in a TLC increases a student's academic achievement, campus involvement, and provides a constructive way to form relationships with peers and faculty (Pike, Kuh, McCormick 2008; Zhao & Kuh, 2004). This in turn leads to a more successful first-year college experience, persistence into the second year, and higher rate of graduation (Andrade, 2008; Tinto, 2000).

A total of 829 IUPUI students were enrolled in 39 separate TLC program sections during the fall 2012 semester. Participants enrolled in a TLC were asked to voluntarily respond to an anonymous questionnaire at the end of the program. Students provided open-ended feedback in the areas of how the TLCs contributed to their learning, what they liked most and least about the program, why they chose to enroll, and suggestions for improvement. This report examines notable findings of fall 2012 students' open-ended responses and also considers qualitative data of previous TLC program years (2009-2011). For electronic copies of this and other assessment reports please visit: http://research.uc.iupui.edu/

Major Findings

Students described several ways in which the TLC program contributed to their learning. These included but were not limited to: receiving college transition assistance, meeting new friends and developing connections, developing critical thinking skills, being enrolled in linked courses, developing peer support networks, and becoming more comfortable and confident. This is consistent with findings from previous program years (2009-2011) with a few exceptions. For example, students reported developing critical thinking skills as contributing to their learning with a higher frequency in 2012 compared to 2011. Additionally, students in 2012 were more likely to reference college transition assistance in their responses compared to previous TLC cohorts.

Participants also described what they liked the most about their TLC experiences. Students responded that meeting new people and forming friendships, having the same students in classes, participating in group activities and discussions, and having positive instructional team support were aspects of the TLC that they liked the most. These program components were consistently within the top four most discussed areas by participants in all four program years (2009-2012). Least liked aspects of the TLC program were also described by student participants. Some students simply indicated n/a, none, or nothing in response to this question. Still, other students described a specific linked course or component (e.g., First-year Seminar, English). Similar to previous program years, students also reported a perceived lack of organization and time commitments and restraints as least valuable aspects.

Students also provided insight into the specific reasons why they chose to enroll in a TLC. College transition assistance was the #1 most frequent response given by both the 2012 and 2011student cohorts. In comparison, it was the #3 most common response provided in 2010 and the #5 most frequent response in 2009. Similar to previous years, some students indicated that they enrolled because they were required to participate in a TLC (or they thought it was required). Finally, 2012 students also indicated that they enrolled in a TLC because it was connected to their major or career choice or they were referred or recommended into the program.

2012 TLC participants also provided a variety of suggestions for improvement. These included but are not limited to: having more (outside) group activities and discussions, improving program organization and communication, improving course and theme linkages, providing more instructional team support, and having less time commitments and restraints. These recommendations are consistent with those given by

students in previous years with one notable exception. More (outside) group activities and discussions was the #2 most frequent suggestion given by students in 2012. However, it was the #6 most common suggestion in both 2011 and 2010. Finally, some students in 2012 were very specific; highlighting the "outside" component of the more group activities recommendation.

Possible Implications

Analysis of the 2012 TLC qualitative data reveals several possible implications. First, students are self-reporting that the TLC program is contributing to their learning. Through their open-ended responses many students are specifically describing learning processes and gains that are connected with the overall TLC program mission. For example, it is notable that TLC students have identified the areas of college transition assistance and developing critical thinking skills as ways in which the program has contributed to their learning. The latter (critical thinking skills) is perhaps most promising in that it is also aligned with the IUPUI Principles of Undergraduate Learning (PULs). This achievement should be celebrated and future program and curriculum planning efforts may benefit from building upon this student-reported success.

It is also notable that college transition assistance was the #1 most valuable aspect identified by 2012 TLC students. In comparison, the #1 most common response given in 2011 and 2010 was meeting new people and developing friendships. Additionally, 2012 students reported that they enrolled in a TLC specifically for college transition assistance with higher frequency than in previous cohort years. These changes in response ranks may reflect a perceived value by students in receiving tangible resources, skills, and support related to the transition process. Further examination of this possible new trend may be needed.

An overview of qualitative findings across the past four program years (2009-2012) reveals that students are reporting many of the same suggestions for improvement and least valuable program aspects in their open-ended responses. However, it is important to highlight that a greater number of students suggested more (outside) group activities and discussions in 2012 compared to previous years. Again, some of these students were very specific in their more activities suggestion by focusing on the "outside" component. This may be a possible future avenue for curriculum innovation and program development.

Assessment of the Themed Learning Community program is an on-going process. This process is designed to identify both program areas of achievement and those in need of improvement. A detailed account of students' self-reported perceptions of the TLC program are provided on the following pages and include numerous examples of actual student comments (Tables 1-5). It may be helpful to share this information with TLC stakeholders and instructional teams as appropriate. Ideally, through gaining a greater understanding of students' TLC experiences we will be able to further understand effective teaching and learning.

References

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Zhao, C. & Kuh, G.D. (2004). Adding value: Learning communities and student engagement. *Research in Higher Education,* 45, 115-138.

Introduction

The goal of this report is to provide an overview of students' perceptions and opinions of the 2012 Themed Learning Community (TLC) program. TLCs offer an intentional first semester experience for students. Approximately 25 students co-enroll in 2-4 academic courses and a First-year Seminar (FYS) course to create each individual community. A guiding theme is chosen by professors to guide curriculum and instruction. The purpose of the TLC program is to "provide a comprehensive perspective about higher education and help students see relationships among academic courses, co-curricular activities, and the world (IUPUI, 2011).

Students enrolled in a TLC were asked to voluntarily respond to an anonymous questionnaire administered at the end of the program. Within this questionnaire students were encouraged to provide open-ended response feedback in the areas of what they liked the most and least about their community, suggestions for improvement, and reasons for participating in the program. It is our hope that highlighting these responses will assist in recognizing areas of achievement while also providing pathways for improving teaching and learning.

Sample

The qualitative section of the Themed Learning Community Evaluation Form consisted of five (5) open-ended questions that provided students with an opportunity to provide feedback about their TLC experiences in their own words. This report reflects questionnaire responses of students who participated in a TLC during the fall 2012 semester. During this time period a total of 829 IUPUI students were enrolled in 39 separate TLC sections. The number of student questionnaire responses varied depending on the question asked:

Questions:	**Fall 2012**
25.) *Please describe how your TLC experience contributed to your learning:*	595
26.) *Please describe what you liked most about your Themed Learning Community experience:*	627
27.) *Please describe what you like least about your Themed Learning Community experience:*	581
28.) *Please describe the reason(s) why you enrolled in a TLC. Why, specifically, did you choose this TLC?*	613
29.) *What specific suggestions do you have for improving the Themed Learning Communities?*	520

Method

Most students responded to the five open-ended items included in the questionnaire. Student participants' open-ended questionnaire responses were first cleaned for errors and then uploaded into ATLAS.ti, a software program that assists in qualitative data analysis (Friese, 2012). A coding process was then employed as a primary means of examination (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Srauss & Corbin, 1990). Through this process student responses were arranged into topical theme categories. These categories allowed for individual student perceptions of TLC experiences to be considered collectively. Theme categories were considered to be "emerged or notable" if 5% or more of students responded in a similar manner. In a

number of occurrences a singular student comment addressed more than one topic or category. In these instances, student comments were included in multiple analyses and tables. An understanding of student comments in the aggregate facilitates a greater understanding of TLCs. 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.

Co-Occurrence

As previously noted, in a number of instances a singular student comment addressed more than one topic or category. For example, a singular student response could address the categories of *Meeting New People and Developing Connections*, and *College Transition Assistance*, simultaneously. This singular student response would be considered in multiple analyses (and accompanied tables). Listed below is the total number of individual student comments and the average number of codes assigned to those comments.

Total Individual Student Comments, Fall 2012	2630
Total Codes Assigned:	4101
Average Number of Codes Assigned per Student Comment:	1.55

Results

Through the examination of open-ended response feedback students' perceptions of the TLCs were obtained. These perceptions included students' opinions regarding what they liked most and least about the program, suggestions for improvement, and reasons for enrolling in a specific TLC. First, a *General Result Highlights* section outlines notable opinions and perceptions of students in the fall 2012 TLC cohort. Next, a *Comparison Highlights* section is included in an effort to gain a better understanding of how fall 2012 students responded similarly or differently to questions than fall 2009-2011 TLC students. Finally, tables are also provided that detail student responses to each of the five (5) open-ended questions. These tables are sorted by question item, and include numerous examples of actual student comments.

2012 General Result Highlights (Specific Codes in "Quotations")

Q25.) Please describe how your TLC experience contributed to your learning:

- "College Transition Assistance" was the #1 most common response provided (16%) by student participants when they were asked to describe how their TLC experiences contributed to their learning.
- 12% of students described "Meeting New Friends & Developing Connections" as an aspect of their TLC experience that contributed to their learning, the #2 most frequent response given.
- "Developed Critical Thinking Skills" was also referenced by students (9%) as a way in which their TLC experience contributed to their learning, the #3 most common response provided.
- Students indicated that many other aspects of their TLC experience contributed to learning including: having "Helpful – Linked Courses" (9%); "Developed Peer Support Network" (8%), "Became More Comfortable / Confident" (7%); "Understanding Diversity, Society, & Global Issues" (6%); and "Developed Study, Time, & Stress Management Skills" (6%), among others.

Q26.) Please describe what you liked <u>most</u> about your Themed Learning Community experience:

- "Meeting New People & Forming Friendships" was the #1 most common response provided (42%) when student participants were asked to describe what they liked most about their Themed Learning Community experience.
- 18% of students described that having the "Same Students in Classes" was what they liked most about their TLC experience; the #2 most common answer given.
- 12% of students reported "Group Activities & Discussions" as a desirable course aspect. Students specified "outside activities" and "service / volunteer components" within this category.
- 10% of students indicated having "Positive Instructional Team Support (Faculty, Staff, and Mentors)" as what they liked most about their TLC program experience.

Q27.) Please describe what you like <u>least</u> about your Themed Learning Community experience:

- 16% of students indicated "N/A, None, or Nothing" when they were prompted to describe what they liked least about their program experiences; the #1 most common answer provided.
- 15% of students reported a "Specific Linked Course or Component" when describing what they liked the least about their TLC program experience. Within these responses students specified the areas of "First Year Seminar (FYS)" and "English Course" with the most frequency.
- 11% of students described perceived "Lack of Organization" as being what they liked least about their TLC experience; the #3 most common response. Within this category students often described "class scheduling difficulties" or "confusion with due dates".
- 10% indicated "Time Commitments & Restraints" as a least desirable program aspect. This was the #4 most frequent answer provided.

Q28.) Please describe the reason(s) why you enrolled in a TLC. Why, specifically, did you choose this TLC?

- When asked to describe the reason(s) for enrolling in a TLC, 19% of students reported that they thought the program would help with "College Transition Assistance". This was the #1 most common response provided. Within this category students described "feelings of a head start".
- 16% of student participants indicated that they enrolled in a TLC because it was "Required (or they thought it was required)". 13% of students reported that they enrolled in a TLC because they were "Recommended or Referred" into the program.
- 13% of students reported that they enrolled in a TLC because it was "Connected to Major or Career Choice". 11% of students indicated that they enrolled to "Meet New Friends & Develop Connections".

Q29.) What specific suggestions do you have for improving the Themed Learning Communities?

- 35% of students indicated "N/A, None, Nothing" when asked to provide suggestions for improving the TLC program; the #1 most frequent response given.
- 10% of students provided the suggestion "More (Outside) Group Activities & Discussions". This was the #2 most common recommendation provided.

- 10% of students provided the suggestion to "Improve Program Organization & Communication". Students specified the areas of "Inter-Faculty Communication"; "Confusion with Due Dates"; and "Class Scheduling" within this category.

- Other areas of improvement suggested by students included: "Improve Course & Theme Linkages" (8%); "More Instructional Team Support" (7%); "General Positive Comment" (7%); and "Less Time Commitments & Restraints" (5%).

Comparison Highlights: 2009 – 2012 TLC Cohorts

Q25.) Please describe how your TLC experience contributed to your learning:

- "College Transition Assistance" was the #1 most common response given by students in 2012 (16%) and 2009 (15%), when they were asked to describe how their TLC experience contributed to their learning. It was the #2 most common response in both 2011 (12%) and 2010 (11%).

- "Meeting New People and Forming Friendships" was the #2 most common response given by students in both the 2012 (12%) and 2009 (13%) TLC cohorts. However, it was the #1 most frequent answer by students in both 2011 (16%) and 2010 (13%).

- "Developed Critical Thinking Skills" was the #3 most common response provided in 2012 (9%) and 2010 (10%). It was also reported by students in 2011 but with less occurrence (#6, 7%).

Q19.) Please describe what you liked most about your Themed Learning Community experience:

- "Meeting New People & Forming Friendships" was the #1 most frequently coded response provided by students in 2012 (42%), 2011 (33%), 2010 (44%), and 2009 (48%) when they were asked to identify what they liked most about their TLC experiences.

- "Same Students in Classes" was the #2 most common response provided by students in 2012 (18%), 2011 (15%), 2010 (21%), and 2009 (16%) when they were asked to describe what they liked most.

Q20.) Please describe what you like least about your Themed Learning Community experience:

- "N/A, None, Nothing" was the #1 most frequent response given by students in the 2012 TLC cohort (16%) when they were asked to indicate a least valuable aspect. It was the #2 response in both 2011 (13%) and 2010 (11%), and the #5 response in 2009 (9%).

- "Specific Linked Course or Component" was the #2 most common response provided by students in both the 2012 (15%) and 2009 (10%) cohorts when they were asked to describe a least valuable TLC aspect. It was the # 1 most frequent response in 2011 (15%) and 2010 (12%).

- "Lack of Organization" (2012, 11%; 2011, 10%; 2010, 11%; 2009, 9%) and "Time Commitments and Constraints" (2012, 9%; 2011, 12%; 2010; 11%; 2009, 10%) and have been commonly reported by TLC students as the #3 and #4 least liked program aspects.

Q21.) Please describe the reason(s) why you enrolled in a TLC. Why, specifically, did you choose this TLC?

- "College Transition Assistance" was the #1 most frequent response given by students in both the 2012 (19%) and 2011 (19%) cohorts when asked to describe the reasons for enrolling in a TLC. It was the #3 most frequent answer in 2010 (18%) and #5 answer in 2009 (12%).

- "Required to Participate in a TLC (or thought was required)" was the #2 reason given by students in the both the 2012 (16%) and 2011 (15%) cohorts when asked to identify why they enrolled in the program. It was the #1 most common reason given by the 2010 cohort (19%) and the #4 most common reason provided in 2009 (16%).

- "Connected to Major or Career Choice" was the #3 most common response provided by students in 2012 (13%) and 2009 (16%). It was the #5 most common answer given in both 2011 (13%) and 2010 (13%) but with similar frequency to the most recent TLC cohort.

Q22.) What specific suggestions do you have for improving the Themed Learning Communities?

- "N/A, None, Nothing" was the #1 most frequent suggestion for improvement provided by students in 2012 (35%), 2011 (31%), 2010 (26%), and the 2009 (24%) TLC cohorts.

- "More (Outside) Group Activities and Discussions" was the #2 most common suggestion for improvement provided by students in both 2012 (10%) and 2009 (9%). It was the #6 most common suggestion given in 2011 (6%) and 2010 (7%).

- "Improve Program Organization &Communication" was the #3 most common suggestion for improvement given by both 2012 (9%) and 2011(10%) TLC students. It was the #2 most common suggestion given in 2010 (13%) and the #9 most common suggestion provided in 2009 (5%).

Table 1: How the TLC Experience Contributed to Learning (Student Reported), Fall 2012

Please describe how your TLC experience contributed to your learning: (N = 595)

Contributed to Learning Through…	N	%	Examples of Actual Student Comments
College Transition Assistance	95	16%	• "It helped me transition from high school to college." • "Helped me get better acclimated to college." • "It allowed me to adjust to college with excellent guidance." • "It helped me in every aspect of getting used to college." • "It helped to support me this semester and help me transition to college life." • "It gave me an idea of how to approach college and the demand that comes with it." • "TLC has helped me start college with a great outlook. I have made friends and made goals for my future." • "TLC helped me see how I need to grow out of my high-school self into a college student & prepared me for the rest of college."
Meeting New Friends & Developing Connections	71	12%	• "Made close friends." • "It got me to meet new people." • "Gained friends to count on." • "Easy to network with other students." • "Made it easier to connect to others." • "You are around people (with) interests as yourself." • "It was nice I met a lot of people and made good friends." • "My TLC experience contributed to my learning by helping me build relationships with others that will help me be successful."
Developed Critical Thinking Skills	53	9%	• "It helped me with my critical thinking." • "I learned to be a critical thinker when reading articles." • "My writing, thinking, and logic became better." • "It helped me understand how deep things really are." • "It taught me to use critical thinking throughout my life." • "My TLC experience allowed me to become a better critical thinker and therefore made learning a lot more efficient." • "I learned how to think about topics, issues, and concepts more critically applied PULs and RISE initiative."
Helpful – Linked Courses	51	9%	• "TLC made it easier to relate classes/subjects." • "Learned things in each class that helped in some way in the other." • "It helped me realize that the things you learn in different courses can connect." • "It helped me better see the relationships between different disciplines." • "My TLC experience allowed me to tie together my classes for a more meaningful learning environment. It helped me connect three seemingly different courses."
Developed Peer Support Network	45	8%	• "It gave me a support group." • "It made me feel like I was part of a family and helped me learn better." • "It helped a lot because I could ask my peers for help. We were a built in study group." • "It is very helpful to be able to get to know such a small but tight-knit group which made the transition to college easier." • "Basically, the friends/family I have made has improved my attendance, grades and motivation."

(Continued)

Continued – Table 1:

Please describe how your TLC experience contributed to your learning:

Contributed to Learning…	N	%	Examples of Actual Student Comments
Became More Comfortable / Confident	41	7%	• "I felt much more comfortable." • "I felt more confident as are freshman." • "It helped me become more comfortable in a classroom." • "Made me more comfortable with the campus & classes." • "I was more comfortable with everything so I feel I did better." • "I felt more comfortable with my peers so it helped my learning." • "It gave me the confidence & head start I needed to begin college on the right path."
Understanding Diversity, Society & Global Issues	37	6%	• "It made me think more thoroughly about social issues." • "Helped me appreciate diversity even more." • "It helped me have a better understanding on peace and conflict." • "It made me realize things about major world issues." • "It helped me learn more about women's social problems." • "It made me more determined to study abroad/help internationally." • "Learned about many different cultures and ideas and brought them together to gain a better understanding of the world."
Developed Study, Time, & Stress Management Skills	35	6%	• "It taught me how to manage time." • "Learned new study habits and time management." • "TLC helped me develop some studying skills." • "It helped me learn how to study more efficiently." • "It helped understand how to handle the stress of college." • "It helped with the little things that are different like studying + managing time."
Major & Career Discovery (Connections)	34	6%	• "It got me excited about being an educator." • "It showed me other medical field options." • "It helped me to decide my future career." • "It expanded my view into my major in a good way." • "Through TLC I learned a lot about myself & what I want to do with my career." • "My experience with the TLC was very interesting and it really has me thinking what I want to do with my life."
Application of Knowledge	28	5%	• "I was able to apply things I learned to my own life." • "Helped me apply what I learned to actual life situations." • "I learned some concepts that I was able to apply to other things." • "My TLC experience contributed to my learning by applying in school techniques to the real world." • "My TLC experience expanded my abilities to understand more and be able to apply what I now understand to what I will learn."
Same Students in Classes	28	5%	• "Being around the same people made me feel comfortable." • "I was able to learn more and better because I was with people I knew." • "It let me know everyone in all 3 of my classes, that way I was able to feel comfortable asking someone a question or talking to them." • "Having class with 25 of the same people all week helped me become comfortable here."

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.

Table 2: Student Reported Most Liked Aspect of the TLC Experience, Fall 2012

Please describe what you liked the most about your Themed Learning Community experience: (N = 627)

Most Liked Aspect	N	%	Examples of Actual Student Comments
Meeting New People & Forming Friendships	266	42%	• "Making friends." • "Meeting new people." • "Meeting people + making friends." • "Networking and meeting new people." • "I like the close friendships I gained." • "Made friends who share a common goal." • "Meeting other students that had different backgrounds." • "Making friends who like to learn about the same things as I do." • "I built friendships that I know will last me throughout my experience here." • "Everyone was really friendly and it made me more confident in making friends."
Same Students in Classes	111	18%	• "Peers sharing the same classes." • "Having 3 classes with the same people." • "I liked having all the same people in my classes." • "Being with the same students helped with adjusting to college." • "I enjoyed being with the same people at some point every day." • "Having classes with similar faces and going to events together." • "That I had the same people in my class whom I could get to know well." • "I liked how you're in classes with the same people. It makes it more comfortable."
Group Activities & Discussions ***Outside Activities (24)** ***Service / Volunteer Components (15)**	75	12%	• "I liked the discussions we had." • "I liked all the ice breakers that we did before class." • "I liked the pumpkin drop lab." • "I liked most of the activities we participated in as a whole." • "The trips and hands on work and discussions." • "There were a lot of activities which allowed students to integrate with each other." • "I liked most how we went to the hospitals." • "Going on field trips to the pathology lab and Med-History Museum." • "I liked our fieldtrips to the Crispus Attucks museum & the Railroad Museum in Ohio." • "I enjoyed service learning." • "Liked our experience of going to Gleaners and helping out." • "All of the service learning at elementary schools gave me a better understanding of teaching."
Positive Instructional Team Support (Faculty, Staff, Mentors)	72	11%	• "I liked having a mentor!" • "I liked that all the teachers knew me personally." • "How close I got with my professors, mentors, and counselor." • "Prof. (----) is awesome + I learned a lot." • "I like the level of attention and cooperation given to the students by the teachers." • "Everyone was friendly and nice and they actually care about helping us out in our future."

(Continued)

Continued – Table 2:

Please describe what you liked the most about your Themed Learning Community experience:

Most Liked Aspect	N	%	Examples of Actual Student Comments
Developed a Sense of Community	49	8%	• "Sense of community." • "Having a support group in small numbers." • "The family-feel I have with my classmates." • "I like that I made close friends who are my support system." • "I liked getting so close to everyone + being able to relate + talk about our future." • "Meeting some great friends and faculty that I will keep a relationship with after my TLC. I liked having peers who understood what I was going through."
Connections Between Linked Classes	40	6%	• "The integrated courses." • "My two education classes work together." • "How everything was somewhat linked together." • "I like how the teachers based their lessons off each other." • "Liked how all of the classes were related to one another." • "Connection of engineering throughout all of my classes even W131."
College Transition Assistance	32	5%	• "It helped me transition to college." • "I was informed of many opportunities offered at IUPUI. Also I was able to make an easy transition from high school to college because of the TLC." • "It was earlier to make the transition from high school to college by being involved in a TLC."

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
(*) indicates a sub-code of the larger thematic category; numbers in parenthesis (N) are based on the total number of respondents.

Table 3: Student Reported Least Liked Aspect of the TLC Experience, Fall 2012

Please describe what you liked least about your Themed Learning Community experience: (N = 581)

Least Liked Aspect	N	%	Examples of Actual Student Comments
N/A, None, Nothing	91	16%	• "N/A." • "None." • "Nothing." • "There was nothing I liked the least." • "I didn't really dislike anything from the TLC." • "I didn't really have anything for this question."
Specific Linked Course or Component ***First-year Seminar (34)**	85	15%	• "I didn't like my (-----) class." • "Some course work + the theme." • "UCOL." • "The seminar class." • "I did not like some of the activities in UCOL." • "The seminar did not feel meaningful at all times." • "The UCOL class assignments because they felt like busy work." • "The freshman class was really boring after the first couple weeks when we all got settled."
***English Course (21)**			• "W131." • "English." • "English W131 class." • "I really didn't like my English class." • "My least favorite part was the writing course of the TLC." • "I didn't agree with the teaching vs. grading in my English W131 class."
Lack of Organization ***Class Scheduling Difficulties (21)**	63	11%	• "Lack of structure." • "Not very well organized." • "Seemed somewhat unorganized at times." • "Odd class times." • "3 classes back to back." • "Too close together-more space in between classes." • "I didn't like how I couldn't pick times for my classes."
***Confusion with Due Dates (9)**			• "All of the assignments in the three classes due on the same day made this very stressful." • "The courses didn't think the end of the semester out. Everything was due on the same day."
Time Commitments & Restraints ***Long Class Time (20)**	50	9%	• "What I least liked was not having enough time." • "Not having more time in it." • "How long class is." • "That the class had to be 2 hours." • "I didn't like how long the class was; it makes me lose focus." • "Least liked some of the class periods, because some dragged on."
***Early Start Time (15)**			• "Having my class at 9 am." • "The early morning classes." • "It was 9:00 in the morning on Mondays."

(Continued)

Continued – Table 3

Please describe what you liked least about your Themed Learning Community experience:

Least Liked Aspect	N	%	Examples of Actual Student Comments
Not Meaningful, Helpful, Productive (Busy Work)	48	8%	• "I least liked all of the busy work." • "I feel like I didn't accomplish much." • "Some parts where not very important and kind of time wasting." • "The work is easy too easy. It can be somewhat pointless at times." • "Some activities we did I felt like were a waste of time and not useful." • "It wasn't at my level. The lessons and assignments weren't deep enough." • "Sometimes there wasn't a specific goal for a class so we didn't really do anything constructive."
Lack of Peer Interaction (Connections Between Groups)	36	6%	• "Only met a specific amount of people." • "How all my classes are with the same people." • "Maybe could have interacted more with other TLC groups." • "Sometimes I wish I could have more classes with different people." • "I liked being with the same people every day, but then again I didn't. It felt like high school almost at times." • "Being with the same people ALL the time. It's easy for everyone to get mad at someone."
Lack of Instructional Team Support	33	6%	• "My librarian." • "Being treated like high schoolers." • "Class mentor was closed minded." • "My academic advisor was not very helpful." • "I wish all TLC teachers cared, instead of just a few." • "My (-----) teacher, and (-----) teacher. Yet (----) teacher did get better."
General Positive Comment	32	6%	• "I loved it all." • "I enjoyed everything." • "I really liked my TLC." • "I actually liked everything about my Themed Learning Community." • "I can honestly say there wasn't anything I did not like about my TLC. I learned and gained a lot because of my TLC."
Negative Learning Environment	28	5%	• "Being treated like high school students." • "Too many rude arguments or comments." • "Some activities were very uncomfortable." • "Negativity and awkwardness in class." • "There was a lot of making fun/talking about others amongst the people in this class. It was hard to feel safe enough to learn."
Reading & Writing Components ***Journals (6)**	27	5%	• "Essay writing." • "Reading (-----)." • "The writing assignments." • "I really did not like the research paper." • "The journals were my least favorite, but I liked TLC as a whole."

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.
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Table 4: Student Reported Reasons for Enrolling in a TLC, Fall 2012

Please describe the reason(s) why you enrolled in a TLC. Why, specifically, did you choose this TLC? (N = 613)

Reasons for enrolling in a TLC	N	%	Examples of Actual Student Comments
College Transition Assistance	118	19%	• "To help transition to college." • "To help me adapt to college." • "Sounded like a good idea to help transition." • "Because it was a good way to ease into my first semester." • "Felt it would be an easy transition from high school into college." • "I felt it would help me get my bearings for school." • "To become more acclimated to college life and the campus. Also, to make connections in my anticipate field of study." • "Because I'm the first person to go to college in my family and to be honest I didn't know anything about college so I needed help."
***Feelings of a "Head start" (46)**			• "To get a head start here at IUPUI." • "I wanted the ability to get a step ahead of other freshman." • "So I could get used to college faster and easier." • "I wanted to be in Bridge to get a head start on college." • "Wanted to get a head start on what to expect in college."
Required to Participate in TLC (or thought was required)	99	16%	• "It was required." • "My scholarship requires it." • "I didn't know I had the choice not to." • "I was required for my major." • "It was required for 21st century scholars." • "I thought as a nursing major the TLC was required." • "I was under the impression that it was required." • "It was required. However, I'm glad I did. I've made a lot of friendships that will exceed this semester."
Connected to Major or Career Choice	82	13%	• "Good for my major". • "It corresponds with my major." • "Because I'm a business major." • "To make friends in motorsports." • "I am aspiring to become a nurse one day." • "It is a science based TLC which has to do with my major." • "I knew I was going to do something in the healthcare field." • "I thought it would get my foot in the door for the HPP programs."
Referred or Recommended by	81	13%	• "Recommendation." • "A friend told me it was a worth-while experience." • "I heard that it would be a great help b/c I'm an incoming freshman."
***Academic Advisor (28)**			• "Advisor recommended it." • "My advisor strongly suggested it." • "My academic advisor said it would be a good idea."
***Orientation Leader (12)**			• "Strongly suggested during orientation." • "Because my orientation leader said it was the best fit." • "My orientation helper recommended them to me."

(Continued)

Continued – Table 4

Please describe the reason(s) why you enrolled in a TLC. Why, specifically, did you choose this TLC?

Reasons for enrolling in a TLC	N	%	Examples of Actual Student Comments
Meet New Friends & Develop Connections	67	11%	• "Meet new people." • "To meet people and have fun." • "So I can make new friends in IUPUI." • "To meet people and build friendships." • "To get to know people in my same field." • "I picked the TLC because it seemed easier to get to know people."
Interested in Community "Theme"	59	10%	• "I chose this because I liked the theme." • "It seemed cool in what it was about." • "I'm interested in peace & conflict." • "I wanted to learn more about women's history." • "The African American study behind it." • "The specific theme on the classes and to meet people."
Desirable Course Schedule	48	8%	• "To make scheduling easier." • "I choose it because I liked the schedule." • "Honestly it just worked well with my schedule." • "The TLC made my schedule work out perfectly." • "I chose a TLC (to) create an organized schedule for myself." • "Because I did not want to schedule my own classes."
Potential to be Beneficial	47	7%	• "Thought it would be helpful." • "I wanted a great learning experience." • "It seemed like the right step to make the time." • "I thought it was an opportunity I should not pass up." • "It sounded like a great idea as a freshman student." • "I enrolled because I knew it'd be beneficial."
Community Learning Environment	40	7%	• "To become part of a group." • "Make friends and be a part of a community." • "Wanted to get close to one group of people and form study groups." • "Chose to be a part of TLC because it was a way to learn in a smaller community." • "I wanted to be a part of a closely knit community to ease myself into the college experience."
Did Not Choose TLC ("Placed")	38	6%	• "I didn't choose this TLC." • "I was placed in one." • "It was chosen for me." • "I didn't enroll. I was placed." • "It was given but I'm glad it was." • "I didn't really have a choice. They just put me in here."

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.
(*) indicates a sub-code of the larger thematic category; numbers in parenthesis (N) are based on the total number of respondents.

Table 5: Specific Suggestions for Improving the Themed Learning Communities (TLC) (Fall, 2012)

What specific suggestions do you have for improving the Themed Learning Communities? (N = 520)

Suggestions for Improvement	N	%	Examples of Actual Student Comments
N/A, None, Nothing	181	35%	• "N/A." • "None." • "Nothing." • "No suggestions." • "I don't have specific suggestions for improving the TLC."
More (Outside) Group Activities & Discussions	52	10%	• "More group activities." • "More discussions in class." • "More activities outside the classroom." • "Different class discussions." • "Have more discussion on current events." • "Be more creative when thinking about new activities." • "More field trips to get us involved at IUPUI." • "Be more outgoing & get out of the classroom more & explore." • "Make it more active in the community. Getting outside of class." • "More community involvement ie: more trips, and definitely volunteer work."
Improve Program Organization & Communication ***Inter-Faculty Communication (11)** ***Confusion with Due Dates (10)** ***Improve Class Scheduling (9)**	48	9%	• "Be more organized." • "Explain directly the expectations for the class." • "Clearly define what it is for incoming students." • "Make sure all the teachers are communicating." • "My profs should communicate amongst each other." • "All teachers come together and view their lesson plans." • "More communication with teachers and set due dates." • "Organization: clearly lay out what the professor is expecting & enforcing due dates." • "Spread out classes evenly." • "Don't make the classes 15 minutes apart especially when the buildings are so far apart."
Improve Course & Theme Linkages	39	8%	• "Link classes more." • "Incorporate the classes more." • "Make classes much more connected." • "Have the classes tie in to one another a little more." • "Making more elements crossover between classes." • "Make all 3 classes just a little more integrated." • "Clearly state when the theme is brought up across different areas."
More Instructional Team Support & Communication	38	7%	• "More involved teachers." • "Teacher needs to be more helpful." • "Don't make us feel like high schoolers." • "More interactions, professors don't play favorites." • "Better teacher-student relationship/knowledgeable counselors." • "Do NOT discourage the students. Telling us we will fail to gain entry to our program is unacceptable."

(Continued)

Continued – Table 5

What specific suggestions do you have for improving the Themed Learning Communities?

Suggestions for Improvement	N	%	Examples of Actual Student Comments
General Positive Comment	34	7%	• "It's perfect." • "Overall I loved my TLC." • "TLC overall was a great experience!" • "I don't have any, I had a wonderful experience." • "I thought it was very successful. Great teachers aids!" • "Give (-----) a pay raise! He was an awesome mentor!"
Improve or Cancel Specific Courses or Components ***FYS-UCOL Course (21)** ***PDP (5)**	30	5%	• "Better set up for (-----)." • "Make (-----) more clear and organized." • "Make UCOL more helpful." • "Improve the layout of success seminar." • "Make UCOL more relevant to student lives." • "Change the ePDP. It was bad." • "Remodel the pdp process."
Less Time Commitments & Restraints	25	5%	• "Less early." • "Shorten the times." • "Make it later in the day." • "Not making the class so long." • "Meet less-maybe once a week."

Notes: The remaining responses were so varied that no major themes emerged. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole.
(N) indicates the number of student responses included in analysis; percentages (%) are based on the number of question respondents.
(*) indicates a sub-code of the larger thematic category; numbers in parenthesis (N) are based on the total number of respondents.

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Assessment Appendix H – 2013 Themed Learning Community Instructional Team Questionnaire

2013 Themed Learning Community
Instructional Team Questionnaire Report

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Themed Learning Communities
Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis

February 2014

Introduction

The purpose of this investigation was to understand instructional team members' perceptions of Themed Learning Communities (TLCs). Fall 2013 TLC faculty members were asked to voluntarily respond to an anonymous questionnaire administered after the end of the semester. Within this survey, participants were encouraged to share opinions regarding TLC resources, goals, teams, professional development, advantages and challenges and areas for improvement.

Sample

All Fall 2013 TLC faculty members were asked to voluntarily participate in a questionnaire at the conclusion of the program. Forty-one participants responded to the survey, giving a 47% response rate. The majority of faculty members self-identified as being from the School of Liberal Arts (54%), with 10% of responses from Engineering and Technology and Science. All other schools had less than 10% of responses. 77% of the faculty reported participating in the program for more than 3 years.

Figure 1: Academic Appointment of Survey Participants

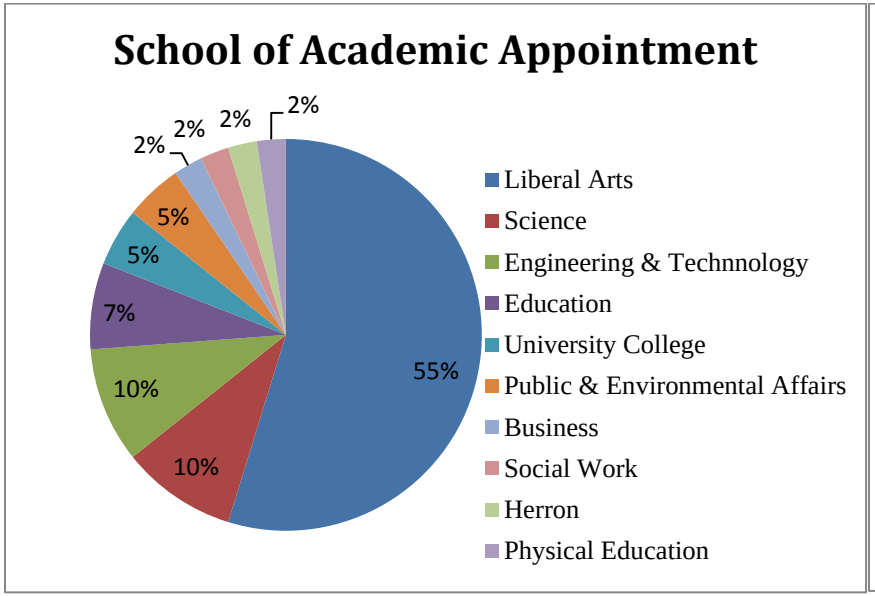
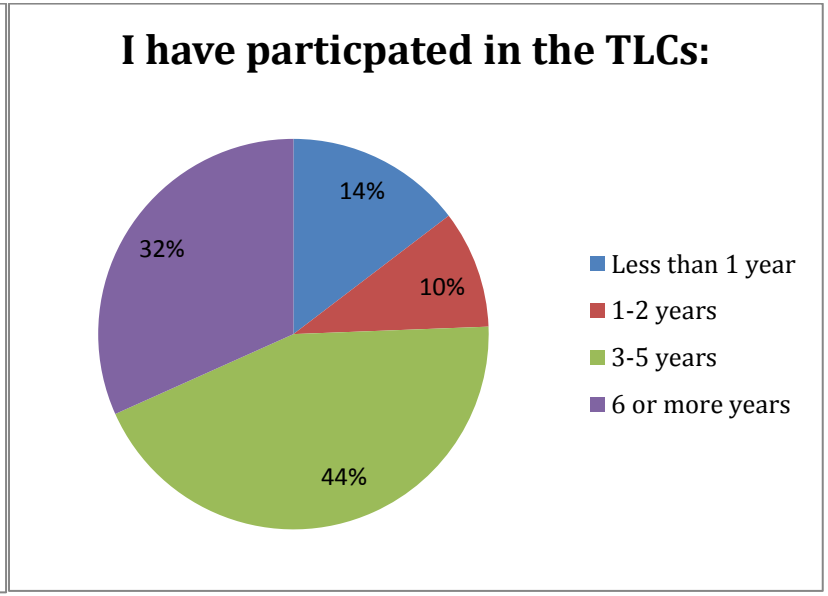


Figure 2: Years Participating in the TLCs



Results

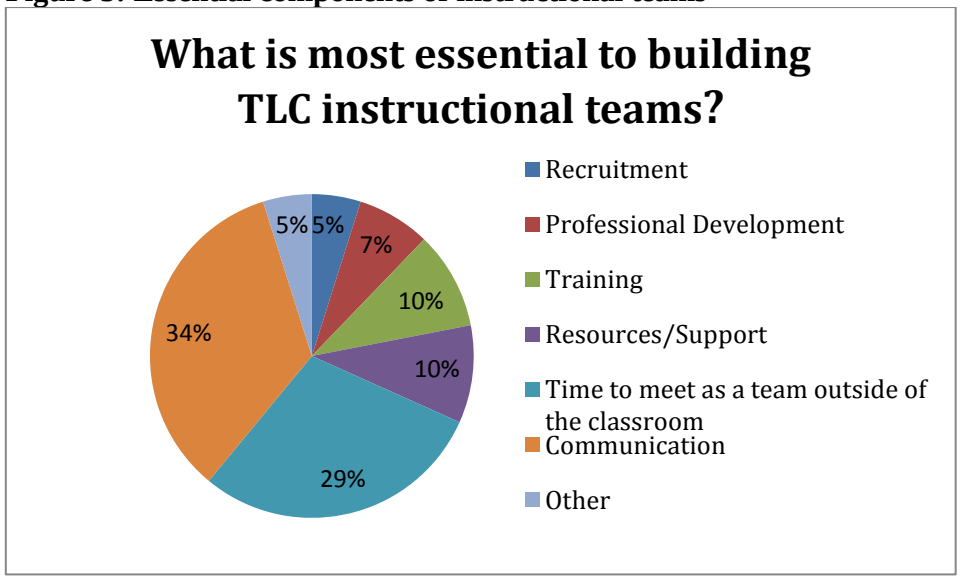
Instructional Team Roles and Experiences

Faculty understand what is expected of them as TLCs instructors (mean=4.33 on a 5.00 Likert scale where 4=*Somewhat Agree* and 5=*Completely Agree)* and tend to feel satisfied with their instructional teams (mean=4.00). Communication and time to meet outside the classroom are the most essential elements to building TLC instructional teams.

Table 1: Survey results for faculty

Question	N	Mean	Std. Dev
Faculty			
I understand what is expected of a TLC instructor	39	4.33	1.01
I am satisfied with my TLC instructional team	39	4.00	1.19
My TLC instructional team models collaboration for students	38	3.95	1.25

Figure 3: Essential components of instructional teams



Preparation, Resources, and Professional Development

The majority of TLC faculty reported feeling prepared to teach in Themed Learning Communities; 79% agreed to the statement "I feel prepared to teach in Themed Learning Communities" (mean=4.25). When asked about the resources intended to support them, the majority of faculty rated each of the resources as "somewhat helpful" or "very helpful." The most helpful resources were the TLC Office (mean =4.18) and TLC retreat (mean=4.03); the least helpful resources were articles (mean=3.33) and the TLC Oncourse site (mean=3.45). Full results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Usefulness of TLC resources as rated by faculty

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Very unhelpful	Somewhat unhelpful	Neutral	Somewhat helpful	Very Helpful
TLC Website (http://tlc.iupui.edu)	40	3.48	1.14	5%	7%	17%	24%	12%
Planning Resources	37	3.70	1.17	5%	7%	12%	29%	20%
Articles	38	3.33	1.06	2%	15%	15%	27%	7%
Assessment Information	38	3.61	1.18	2%	12%	15%	20%	20%
Best practices	38	3.82	1.20	5%	5%	12%	22%	24%
Grant & Funding Information	39	3.69	1.36	10%	5%	15%	20%	29%
TLC Oncourse site	40	3.45	1.13	7%	5%	17%	32%	10%
TLC Retreat	38	4.03	1.42	10%	5%	7%	12%	49%
TLC Student Feedback Questionnaire Reports	40	3.71	1.39	12%	10%	5%	32%	34%
TLC Office	39	4.18	1.21	5%	5%	10%	15%	49%

Professional Development

		Please describe what professional development activities would be helpful to you?
Category	**N**	**Sample Comments**
More time with other faculty and other TLCs	5	• "Brainstorming time, hearing how other TLCs effectively work as a community" • "Opportunities to explore greater interdisciplinary connections and opportunities to explore ways to join different TLCs in co-curricular activities" • "Further connection with other TLC faculty to help develop even more effective collaboration. It would be wonderful to share to an even greater degree what is working and innovative programs and syllabi sharing!" • "One idea that's been on my mind for years would be some type of occasion that occurs before the first day of class (in the fall) or maybe at the end of the first week. On this day, at some location, ALL TLC teams and all enrolled students (I know . . . that's a LOT of people!) would gather for a kind of fun kick-off. This could be purely social, but it should include maybe one group session so that each TLC group could huddle, have some face-time, interact, etc. I've always thought that when the students actually see the team all together like that, and when they feel part of the connection, the problems that occur later in the term (especially for first year students) might be avoided. It also might take away some of that initial anxiety (which, I've seen, can manifest into cliques and isolation later). Anyway, I'm glad you had the survey since that's been on my mind for a while!" • "Time to plan engaging activities with team members; to explore the TLC site together. The planning time at the retreats is minimum, and support for summer collaboration would be helpful."
Support for Integrative Assignments	5	• "More support with working with faculty and integrating assignments. I keep working with faculty members who are not interested in integrating assignments." • "I would like to see how instructors have connected their assignments and grading rubrics." • "I think more team by team work with someone from the TLC program would be useful. We each know our field, but we aren't experts in interdisciplinary approaches. Having someone from outside who could meet with the teams, critique, offer suggestions, etc. would be very helpful." • "Examples of best practices in course integration with the theme."
Information on Campus Resources/Initiatives		• "PDP/ePDP refresher before each semester" • "How to work better with the library" • "Service learning training that is not so in-depth that it makes service learning seem like an unachievable goal. I'm explaining this badly! What I mean is that service learning should be integrated in one or all of the courses, but used in a way that it complements and enriches the course material rather than taking over." • "How can TLC teams better assess growth, improvement, and/or learning in our sections so we can use that information in conference presentations"
Nothing/Unsure	3	• "Nothing at this point" • "I have no idea."
Bonded Cohorts	2	• "Perhaps talk about the group dynamic in its negative as well as its positive aspects." • "How to teach students who might not know how to learn. What to do about bad attitudes to high academic standards & expectations related to the university vs high school."

TLC Goals

When asked to evaluate the TLC Goals for students and IUPUI, the majority of faculty agreed or completely agreed that TLCs are attaining their stated goals. Eighty-six percent of faculty agreed that TLCs form support networks among students in their learning community, the highest ranked goal with a mean of 4.49. Fifty-two percent of faculty agreed or completely agreed that "TLCs encourage students understand the value of diversity by exposure to multiple points of view (mean=3.92), the lowest ranked item of the TLC goals.

Table 3: TLC Goals for students and IUPUI

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Completely Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Completely Agree
TLCs improve academic performance for students (retention, GPA, graduation rates)	40	4.20	.94	3%	3%	13%	38%	45%
TLCs improve students' satisfaction with IUPUI	40	4.08	1.02	3%	8%	10%	40%	40%
TLCs provide opportunities to integrate learning across academic and professional disciplines	39	4.26	1.02	3%	5%	10%	28%	52%
TLCs form learning support networks among students in their Themed Learning Community	38	4.49	.86	3%	-	8%	23%	63%
TLCs enhance student networking through increased contact with faculty and staff	38	4.28	1.05	5%	3%	5%	33%	53%
TLCs promote collaborative and active learning	39	4.45	.86	3%	-	8%	30%	58%
TLCs increase student identification with IUPUI	40	4.28	1.05	5%	-	13%	25%	55%
TLCs encourage students to learn reflective practices	38	4.15	.90	3%	-	18%	38%	40%
TLCs encourage students understand the value of diversity by exposure to multiple points of view	39	3.92	1.11	5%	3%	25%	28%	39%
TLCs develop and enhance skills such as communications, ethical development, critical thinking, team work, and civic engagement	37	4.22	.85	-	3%	18%	30%	43%
TLCs help students to apply classroom learning to the real world	39	4.00	1.05	-	10%	23%	23%	43%
TLCs encourage students to understand the relationship between academic learning and co-curricular activities	38	3.97	.85	-	5%	20%	43%	28%

In terms of the TLC goals for faculty, with the majority of participants agreed or completely agreed that teaching in a TLC has resulted in the stated goal.

Table 4: TLC Goals for faculty

Teaching in a TLC has:	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Completely Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Completely Agree
Enhanced my contact with students	41	4.32	1.04	2%	5%	12%	20%	61%
Helped me to design effective classroom practices	38	3.95	1.04	5%	2%	15%	42%	29%
Revitalized my interest in teaching and learning through exploring themes and interacting with faculty in other fields	41	3.98	1.17	7%	2%	17%	32%	42%
Helped to break down disciplinary boundaries and create interdisciplinary ways of looking at knowledge	38	3.90	1.16	7%	2%	17%	37%	34%
Helped to connect classroom learning to co-curricular activities	41	4.10	1.07	5%	2%	15%	34%	44%

Overall Assessment

76% of faculty members would recommend teaching Themed Learning Communities to another faculty member.

		Overall, what are the advantages of teaching in a TLC (versus separate classes)?
Category	**N**	**Sample Comments**
Connections with faculty in other disciplines	15	• "Connections with faculty outside your own discipline. The team approach, the ability for students to be together and willingness to ask questions. • "Great opportunities for collaboration among faculty (with the right team), which can enhance the student's experience and learning. Great opportunities for interdisciplinary knowledge construction and application." • "Working with an instructional team provides a sounding board for new ideas, ready-made collaboration, and motivation to improve. Students benefit from seeing instructors who collaborate as we expect them to." • "Connections between other faculty, support system, and being able to support students as a team. Also, it does help that students are so knowledgeable about campus. The integrative assignments also promote interdisciplinary learning, and this is very beneficial." • "I enjoy interacting with my fellow instructors. You get other's perspectives on students you're concerned about. I love having a mentor!" • "I did enjoy the contact and interaction with colleagues in other disciplines. • "The collaboration across courses also allows for richer exploration of perceptions and attitudes towards knowledge." • "An integrated, cohesive faculty core unit" • #1 advantage for instructors: the steady exposure to other disciplines keeps the mind alive and keeps the classroom in a steady state of evolution. • "Reinforcement of ideas to students, feedback from other faculty about student performance."
Connections with students	10	• "Students have connectivity with each other that gives them more freedom to participate in class. Having taught stand-alone and TLC in the same semester the TLC students were more eager for class but those in the stand alone seemed more mature by the end of the semester. • "Student's are more bonded and usually less fearful about participating in class discussion early on. Get to be like a mom to students :) • "The students know each other and are more comfortable quicker." • "Support for students." • "Connection to students and their needs." • "Catching student problems earlier. Student bonding and peer pressure supports the teaching/learning process" • "As mentioned in the prior questions, students are more connected with one another and with IUPUI. TLCs are a great success builder." • "The connection with the students and the students connection with course content far exceeds any I have experienced in merely teaching classes. The students truly experience knowledge in a deeper and more meaningful way. Engaged students who feel comfortable enough to open up with professors." • "Long-lasting connections with students." • "#1 advantage for students: it gives them an opportunity to make some connections (of all sorts) that give them an edge for the rest of their education • "My relationship with the students is so much better than a stand alone because their relationship with each other is stronger. I always feel like a family at the end of the semester."
Attendance	2	• "Attendance is fantastic" • "Student attendance and assignment submission rates are higher than in non-TLC FYS classes. Other than that, the benefits of TLCs are also found in the non-TLC FYS classes"
Unsure	1	• "I don't know actually."

		Overall, what are the challenges of teaching in a TLC (versus separate classes)?
Category	**N**	**Sample Comments**
The time needed for communication and integration	16	• "Students are reluctant to integrate and apply what they learn from one class to another. I don't have the time to attend the other two courses, which is what I would need in order to do this effectively (or meet regularly with the faculty in the other courses, which never happens)." • "An incredible amount of time linking the classes is typically spent by just one of the instructors. English instructors are usually the ones who are expected to conform to the guidelines of other departments." • "Trying to fit all of the needs from 3 different instructors into one TLC, especially when the majority of the "blended" projects or "common theme" projects are put into my FYS course because the two other instructors have so many other items they have to complete - the trick is to use those assignments they already have set, and find a common theme within." • "There is so much to cover and not enough time. It can be hard to know what is happening all the time in the other class to help assist the students." • "Finding outside time to meet with team." • "Lack of time for communication--communication with colleagues is so critical and SO difficult. Also, faculty must be clear to students about why and how the courses are linked, so that students see the benefits and not see the integrative activities as extra work." • "The intense demands on time, with virtually no structures to reward the work. Release time would be helpful for developing new curricula. Participation in TLCs should also be rewarded at an institutional level, incorporated into P&T, etc." • "Communication and collaboration. Coordinating overlap and complementary readings/learning opportunities." • "Time to connect with the TLC team...working to plan ahead so that the collaborations are more intentional and meaningful takes a LOT of time and energy which can be difficult when attempting to manage the schedules of 3-5 VERY busy people!" • "Finding time to collaborate with other TLC instructors is the biggest challenge. I can take more initiative in that arena." • "It is hard to get cooperation and actual work from non-FYS faculty. I don't believe this is deliberate, but rather it is a factor of time and priorities. They are willing to use integrated assignments if those assignments are given to them fully developed, but do not take initiative, and seem to consider a single instance of mentioning the theme, or a slight connection on an assignment to be sufficient." • "Faculty aren't always on the same page. It takes more time but is worth it. Finding time to meet with the team members."
Bonding of cohorts	7	• "Hyper-bonding between students can create problems. If the class dynamics are negative for some reason, it can be very hard to overcome that." • "The biggest challenge for me is when a group of students, through some sort of eerie intuition and silent complicity, decide to all hold themselves back and keep their learning experience as safe and as dull as possible (not just in my class, but in all classes). And they manage to do this because of the blocked arrangement of the TLC (so the apathy travels from class to class). This doesn't happen every fall, but I've seen it happen about twice, and it's hard to stop it, even when all the instructors recognize it and try to intervene!" • "Social issues become more apparent, such as class hyper-bonding. Also, dealing with the social structures that develop within the TLC group. They are only a year out of high school and sometimes the remnants of adolescent cliquishness rears its ugly head." • "When things go wrong (as they did with one TLC section last semester) having these students together created an atmosphere of permanent high school -- and the environment at times turned nasty, immature and really not conducive for college learning. Fortunately, this was only one section out of many TLC's I've had." • "As noted above the group dynamic, which I found to be pernicious." • "They don't always understand the way non-TLC sections understand. They also don't respect the instructor as much as the other students do, i.e. they don't realize we are in this together. Many TLC students don't realize they need to try their best and adapt to the instructor's style of teaching. They need to follow directions so that they are successful, they need to come to class and not skip class if they have other assignments that are due. Basically the main challenge is that many of them do not practice diligence and persistence in their academic life." • "When students don't feel part of the TLC group, they are likely to feel even more disconnected from IUPUI than ordinary students taking courses here."
Other	1	• "Not sure if it helps get tenure"

		How can the TLCs be improved?
Category	**N**	**Sample Comments**
Expand	4	• "More TLCs that are created by faculty and built from the ground up. The TLC office could help get faculty members together to do this." • "have a voluntary second semester....have social activities with other TLCs.....freshman dance or some activity like that.....freshman TLC bowl...." • "More of them" • "Have more of them and continue them into the Spring Semester."
Time	3	• "This is a pipedream, but those who teach in a TLC need some course release time to plan and to improve their own teaching and outreach efforts to students. • "Time to collaborate with team members is always helpful." • "A difficult question... more time in the day? :-)The collaboration is the key and intentionality in creating, organizing and maintaining the collaborations is what makes that collaboration productive! There needs to be a purposeful way to bring TLCs together before the retreat in an effort to get further along!"
No suggestions/ TLCs fine as is	2	• "Seems fine" • "I have no suggestions. I wish that I did. I did enjoy my first three years, and from that time for several years it was less fulfilling, and finally the most immediately past years I have dreaded going into that class."
More sharing	2	• "Perhaps opportunities for TLC's to get together to share experiences." • "I think there should be more meetings where participants discuss problems and brainstorm solutions in a structured environment. Have someone facilitate such sessions. Also, the director probably has great ideas but can check if they are being implemented."
Better understanding of TLCs	2	• "TLC instructional teams could use a better understanding of the theoretical foundations of TLCs. In addition, they could benefit from a review of the TLC goals." • "Make sure that all faculty involved in the TLC understand the importance of the FYS...need to get all schools/departments on board to provide viable courses for the TLCs - some depts. won't be part of TLCs because of the lower enrollment in the courses"
Other	6	• "All the departments need to be flexible with assignment expectations" • "Include all members of the TLC team in the planning and execution of the first year seminar. Perhaps that is common practice already. But in my experience, I had no idea what was happening in the first-year seminar at any point. I didn't have opportunities to contribute to the broader learning outcomes related to student development, co-curricular involvement, etc. because the first-year seminar was a complete mystery." • "Increased relevance for library component of class" • "Providing access to service-learning sites in the city; a contacts list." • "Really pairing down content." • "Describing them to students is tough, especially if they just hear about it during orientation for the first time. What I did last year since I am also the SPEA undergraduate recruiter is provided monthly emails to them and information about which SPEA TLC/Bridges we had available and what they were. So, once they got to orientation they had received 5 emails already about this."

Summary/Conclusion

- The majority of TLC faculty agreed or strongly agreed that TLCs meet each of the program goals. The highest rated items were "TLCs form support networks among students in their learning communities" (mean=4.49) and "TLCs promote active and collaborative learning" (mean=4.45). The lowest ranking item was "TLCs encourage students to understand the value of diversity by exposure to multiple points of view" (mean=3.95).
- The majority of TLC faculty also agreed or strongly agreed that teaching in a TLC meets the TLC goals for faculty. The highest rated item was "teaching in a TLC has enhanced my contact with students" (mean=4.35). The lowest ranking item was "I am satisfied with my TLC instructional team experience (mean=3.97).
- 76% agreed or strongly agreed that they would "recommend teaching a TLC to another faculty member."
- Time to meet as a team outside of class (35%) and communication (30%) were ranked highest as essential items to building instructional teams. Professional development, training, recruitment and resources/support all received under 10% of responses.
- All but two responses agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I understand what is expected as a TLC instructor."
- 78% of TLC faculty reported agreed or strongly agreed to the statement "I feel prepared to teach in Themed Learning Communities."
- In terms of the helpfulness of resources, the TLC Office was highest ranked (mean=4.18) followed by the TLC retreat (mean =4.03). The lowest ranked items included articles (mean=3.33) and the TLC Oncourse site (mean=4.03)
- The greatest reported advantages of participating in a TLC include connections with faculty in other disciplines and students.
- The greatest reported challenges of participating in a TLC are the time needed for collaboration and hyperbonding.