

**Joint Meeting of Campus Action Team on Retention Issues and
Council on Retention and Graduation
February 15, 2007—UL Lilly Auditorium**

Presiding: Scott Evenbeck and Rick Ward

Guest: Derek Price

1. Evenbeck opened the meeting and introduced Price.
2. Price gave a PowerPoint presentation. (See handout of his slides.) Additional comments are as follows:

Slide 4: Price noted that there is a 20 percent gap in retention between spring 2004 and fall 2004. This is the cohort he focused on in order to examine the factors that are affecting retention at IUPUI.

Slide 11: For the courses listed, passing it matters. Students who passed persisted.

Slide 12: Price noted that any factor he reports is statistically significant.

Slide 15: These factors “knocked out” all other predictors. It should be remembered that not every student takes these classes. For conditional admits, this is the only factor that predicts retention.

Slide 16: The first-year seminar and financial aid policy are two factors that must be tackled together. Addressing them independently will not be effective.

Slide 23: The comment was made that we could make conditional admits take a reduced course load. Someone added that forcing a reduced course load will not work because students would lose their financial aid. Price explained that we do not know if the problem is a heavy course load or the actual gateway classes. The question was raised if students’ financial need takes into account whether they live on campus or off. Price said this study takes that into account.

Slide 25: A comment was made that we are unable to say why students are failing these three gateway classes. Could it be large enrollments? Another person stated that the problem may be huge lecture courses. Another person noted that English W131 caps the number of each class at 25. Price said that he is trying to emphasize the point that we need to look at these issues. He is not suggesting that Psychology B104 is causing students to not return, but he is saying that students taking these courses are not returning. Price also looked at DFW courses, but found nothing that was statistically significant to report. Another person said that this information would argue that we need to look at the characteristics of conditional admits. Perhaps if we admit them, we should make them go to Ivy Tech first. Price said that is one option, but this would limit access to a four-year institution. Instead, we could require students participate in Summer Bridge. Another person asked if we could also look at how students perform in courses taught by full-time

faculty rather than adjuncts. Price explained that the studies that have been done on this issue show adjuncts do very well. It was mentioned that the requirements for conditional admission at IUPUI have been increased since the students in this study were admitted. Another person commented that since these three classes (Psy B104, Eng W131, and Math 001) are the basic building blocks of an undergraduate education, we should look at the high schools. If students are struggling in these classes, are they prepared when they come to college? Another person asked if we should consider the fact that since some students take these courses in high school, there may be more students failing because many have already tested out. It was noted that back in 2003 very few students took AP credits, etc. Price mentioned that Michele Hansen has data for the first-year survey. We might be able to use that to look at first-generation students. On a national level, first-generation status is significant. Question: do we need additional data to suggest that if we postpone some of these difficult gateway classes to the second year that we may lose students in the sophomore year? Are we only postponing the inevitable? Price explained that his preliminary studies show that it is possible that students taking these classes in the second year will do better. It certainly suggests that further conversation is needed. The data on block scheduling seems to show that students need this type of schedule. Price explained that he did not begin this study with the intention of focusing on conditional admits, but they popped out in this study. Question: there are three types of conditional admits, did you distinguish between these types, for example how did the students with bad test scores but good high school grades do? Price replied that he did not do this.

Slide 26: This shows that many low-income students who are eligible for aid are not getting it.

Slide 29: Unmet financial need may have been met through work, borrowing, private loans, credit card debt, or other means. Work-study is a very small portion.

Slide 31: Students may be looking at their total financial aid package and not be conscious of the need component.

After the presentation, Price suggested that students who are taking gateway classes are not returning. Many community colleges address this problem by linking similar courses to supplemental instruction. If we are going to serve students and they are not succeeding in classes, then we need to do something differently. Price appreciated the good questions and said this is the precise conversation that we need to have. The hard part will be after the conversation is over to get something done. He hopes we are successful.

3. In closing, Evenbeck noted that a lot of people are working on retention. If anyone has suggestions for the Retention Action Team, please e-mail Rick Ward. Right now is the time for the team to bring recommendations forward.