

From the Desk of the Chancellor

Transfer student study

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by Charles R. Bantz

IUPUI recognizes that every experience for new students entering campus is different; influenced by their own culture, personal experience, aptitude and aspirations. Despite the differences, our objective is to identify and meet diverse needs to assure student success.

Many students join IUPUI as first-year undergraduates or first-year graduate/professional students. But there is another growing and equally important population: students who transfer to IUPUI from other institutions of higher learning. Undergraduate transfer students represent a significant portion of our enrollment with more than 1,500 new students entering each year. They comprise 40 percent of IUPUI's bachelor's degree recipients.

Some transfer students started elsewhere and are returning home to Indianapolis, and for other transfer students, they are as far away from home as they've ever been. Some seek courses and programs unavailable at their former institutions, while others prefer the IUPUI environment, including our links with opportunities in the city or with successful alumni.

Whatever the reason, the common goal is to provide the programs, people, resources and support to help transfer students succeed academically and broaden their perspective as citizens. With so many transfer students and the expectation that the numbers will grow – what with transfer students from Ivy Tech Community College and the statewide goal of increasing college degree completion -- we want to learn more about transfer students.

In support of IUPUI's strategic plan, Our Commitment to Indiana and Beyond, the campus is embarking on a self-study to better understand the way it facilitates the transfer student experience.

IUPUI is one of seven institutions selected by the Gardner Institute to participate in the Foundations of Excellence initiative to study transfer students during the 2014-2015 academic year. This initiative is being led by Cathy Buyarski, executive director of student success initiatives in the Division of Undergraduate Education, and Gina Gibau, associate dean of liberal arts.

In the quest for better understanding, the study will include current transfer students, faculty and staff. We want to generate awareness of, and participation in, the Foundations of Excellence initiative among target audiences.

The successful integration of transfer students is central to IUPUI's mission and is in direct alignment with the IUPUI's strategic plan goal to promote undergraduate student learning and success.

The Foundations of Excellence initiative will help IUPUI evaluate all aspects of the transfer experience and officially launch on Sept. 29 with the online survey for faculty and staff, followed by a transfer student survey in November. The initiative will culminate with an institutional improvement plan designed to achieve higher levels of transfer-student learning, satisfaction and graduation.

We look forward to campus input to the team, but most importantly we look forward to improving the success of our transfer students!

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