

INDIANA UNIVERSITY BLOOMINGTON
Undergraduate Education: A Planning Document
November 2003

Though its undergraduate enrollments have grown dramatically in recent years, Indiana University Bloomington, like other public research universities, continues to place greater emphasis on the quality and reputation of its graduate programs. This relative inattention to undergraduate education has increasingly serious consequences in a period when general public and political interest in education has shifted toward this area. National ranking systems whether their criteria are objectively appropriate or not, place Indiana University Bloomington in the second-tier of peer institutions. The undergraduate population, while growing in numbers, has not grown in quality as measured by standardized test score, numbers of National Merit Scholarship winners, and similar criteria. The student profiles of some of Indiana University Bloomington's chief regional competitors, including Purdue, Miami of Ohio, the University of Illinois, and even Ball State, have become stronger, while ours have remained flat, even dropped. This lower profile in turn affects new rankings, the relative success of efforts to recruit better students, and instructional morale. Issues of the quality of the undergraduate experience, which ought to attract students to the university and of the academic quality of the students themselves, must be addressed.

Recognizing the significance of these concerns, Chancellor Brehm in Fall 2002 appointed a task force on undergraduate education to examine academic and enrollment planning issues for the Bloomington campus. In its Spring 2003 report, the task force formulated a set of general recommendations involving enrollment goals for high-ability students and students from underrepresented populations, the development of a more targeted financial aid plan using general and endowed funds, the marketing of the Bloomington campus academic experience, and plans for improving undergraduate student success and persistence. During the past year, the Chancellor also initiated discussions on comprehensively enhancing the undergraduate educational experience. These discussions focused on greater coherence in general education expectations across units, fuller incorporation of the international dimension into undergraduate education, and strengthening the contribution of the Honors College to academic opportunities across the campus.

The present document draws upon those recommendations and discussions, as well as additional contributions from the Office of Admissions, University Division, and the Honors College, among others, to set out a comprehensive plan for recruiting undergraduates with high academic potential and for providing a richer and more rewarding academic experience. The plan identifies goals, outlines implementation processes and timelines, and sets benchmarks. It is organized into two major initiatives—Enhancing Recruitment and Retention and Enhancing the Undergraduate Academic Experience—for the sake of clarity. Though treated separately here, these initiatives and their constituent elements are significantly interrelated. Direct admit programs, for instance, are successful as a recruitment tool only if they are succeeded by effective advising efforts and strong department- and school-level academic programs. Further, the success of these proposals is dependent on the active participation of campus stakeholders, and specifically on staffing and financial commitments.

I. Enhancing Recruitment and Retention

Overview of Goals and Objectives:

We propose to both raise the academic profile and increase the diversity of our undergraduate students. The plan outlined here will enable us to be more successful in our efforts to recruit and retain a larger proportion of underrepresented students, high ability students, low income/first generation students, and transfer students. Highlights of this plan include the following objectives and strategies:

- **Target enrollment increases for specific student populations, beginning in 2005, for a three-year period.**
 - Increase the number of resident students from underrepresented groups by 5%.
 - Increase the number of students with SAT scores of 1300 or higher by 7%.
 - Increase the number of transfer admissions by 5%.
- **Develop a recruitment plan for transfer students by June of 2004, and increase transfer admissions by 5% in each of the three years following.**
- **Attract greater numbers of academically strong students by means of focused financial aid policies and a modified direct admission program.**
 - Invest an additional \$300,000 in scholarship money for high ability students. This will provide sufficient funding for approximately 30 high ability students each year. The total annual cost of this initiative after four years will be approximately \$1,000,000.
- **Increase access for low income Indiana residents through recruitment and financial aid strategies.**
 - Allocate \$300,000 in 2004-05 to meet 50% of estimated need of low income Indiana residents. The total cost of this initiative after four years will be approximately \$1,000,000.
- **Complete the planning process for the endowment scholarship campaign plan that will help increase the number of undergraduate students from the following applicant groups: (1) low and moderate income students, (2) high ability students, and (3) students from underrepresented populations.**
- **Develop policies and implement a modified direct admit program for all academic units.**
- **Implement retention strategies that optimize existing campus-based financial aid and work-study programs for low and moderate income students.**
- **Move the "early warning" system for students in academic difficulty to earlier in the first semester, to enhance retention across the entire student population.**
- **Develop more retention related programming for continuing students, particularly students from historically underrepresented groups.**
- **Assign oversight of these recruitment efforts to a Recruitment and Enrollment Steering Committee by January of 2004.**

A. Target Significant Student Populations

Last year, at the request of the Chancellor, the Honors College and the Office of Admissions organized a committee to discuss mutual concerns and possibilities for undergraduate education that resulted in the creation of this planning document. The newly created Recruitment and Enrollment Steering Committee (see section I.H.) will work with the Office of Admissions and analysts in the IUB Office of Institutional Research to develop the list of peer institutions and in turn appropriate numerical targets. (The first effort at

assembling a list of relevant peer institution benchmark data appears in *Appendix A.*) Until the committee can be established and set goals and priorities, the following enrollment goals have been established for achievement over a three-year period beginning with the entering class of new students for the Fall of 2005:

1. Increase the number of resident students from underrepresented groups by 5%.
2. Increase the number of students with SAT scores of 1300 or higher by 7%
3. Increase the number of transfer student admissions by 5%.

B. Recruit Transfer Students

Indiana University Bloomington has little history of aggressively recruiting transfer students or focusing on enrollment strategies for this population, in part because the State of Indiana has not had a community college system. This situation is changing as a result of the creation of the Community College of Indiana network, which by state mandate (and funding) places the resources of Vincennes University, the state's two-year, primarily liberal arts school, on the campuses of the Indiana Vocational and Technical State College (Ivy Tech). IUB is actively participating in the state's initiatives in this area, through membership in the Statewide Transfer and Articulation Committee. Increasing the number of transfer students at IUB will help serve state policy goals; more importantly, it will enhance the quality and diversity of the student body. By June of 2004, the Office of Admissions will propose a mid-range plan for focusing more recruitment efforts on transfer students, and set a target increase of 5% in undergraduate transfer admissions in each of the three years following.

C. Refocus Financial Aid Policies

In making an Indiana University Bloomington education more affordable, financial aid helps to make the campus more attractive and enables more students to persist. One opportunity in this area is to expand the modified direct admit program to all undergraduate degree granting units (see below), and in turn to award school-specific scholarships. This step will have a modest impact on quality, diversity, and/or access for low income students. Another will be to increase scholarship awards through the Honors College. Another opportunity is to become a member of the National Merit Scholarship Program: the strategic use of relatively small amounts of merit aid to target National Merit winners could raise perception of the value IUB places on academic excellence while also raising the academic profile of the incoming group. For the longer term, the campus should set goals for an overall range of tuition income that should be set aside for general fund campus-based financial aid. This goal should be disaggregated for resident and non-resident students, and further linked to specific strategies and priorities among the various enrollment goals articulated in this plan. More specifically, financial aid funding goals should be identified for the following student populations in the priority order of, one, high ability students; two, diverse student populations; and three, low and moderate income Indiana residents.

Our short term goals for the strategic use of financial aid include the following steps:

1. Set aside \$300,000 of funds annually, beginning with the the class of 2004, to be awarded as need-based aid (in the form of four-year renewable scholarships) in order to meet 50%

- of unmet need for students whose families earn \$20,000 or less. Thus at the end of four years, the total campus commitment would be approximately \$1,000,000 per year.
2. Invest an additional \$300,000 in scholarship for high ability students. This will provide sufficient funding for approximately 30 such students each year. The total cost of this initiative after four years will be approximately \$1,000,000 per year.

D. Implement a Modified Direct Admission Program

Scholarships and perceptions of prestige are key factors in recruiting superior students.

Receiving a financial award and/or assured admission to the Biology Department as a start on the path toward the School of Medicine or to the Kelley School of Business as a first step toward a career in business can be crucial in a student's decision to attend Indiana University Bloomington. Unlike most of our public peers, our policies have historically discouraged direct admission to the school and major for first year students and have in turn minimized the number of scholarship available to entering students.

Last year an ad hoc committee co-chaired by Vice Chancellors Andrews and Hossler explored issues of direct admissions. Except for the College of Arts and Sciences and the Kelley School of Business, other campus units had not considered that option.

Participants expressed willingness to carefully explore direct admission. Most academic units believe that initially direct admissions should be a limited option, both because the tradition of the Bloomington campus encourages academic exploration and because having too high a percentage of direct admits could create an environment where students who were not so admitted would perceive themselves as "ghettoized." In addition, even a modified direct admissions program introduces questions regarding the advising, student support, and tracking of direct admit students. The University Division has a well established set of policies and procedures in place for these purposes; most academic units do not.

Adopting a modified direct admit program requires the following:

1. That academic units and departments continue to use University Division advising for direct admit students, to assure professional guidance on general degree requirements and provide access to exploratory academic possibilities;
2. That academic units proposing to employ their own advising systems for direct admit students place emphasis on collaborative arrangements with the University Division to assure that students receive productive advice not only about their majors but about their general degree requirements;
3. That the policy committee of each school set the percentage limit of direct admits and review that limit annually, taking into account the availability of resources, student satisfaction and success, and the effectiveness of the advising and support services being provided;
4. That the Campus Curriculum Committee annually review unit percentage limits and the successes of unit direct admit programs.

E. Re-focus financial aid and work-study funding, and develop new scholarship funding

The rising cost of college attendance the single greatest impediment to retention and graduation, particularly for first-generation students and students of color. Financial aid and scholarships, treated in detail elsewhere in this document, are crucial responses to this challenge. Also valuable is a viable Work-Study Program, both as a source of money to cover college costs and as a form of academic engagement. Work-study jobs, because they often engage work-study students in some facet of the life of the university, are shown by the literature to correlate with retention and graduation. Work-study wages should be increased to compete with other sources of income. The University Libraries, for example, are the largest employer of students on

campus; hourly wages for student library workers, however, hover around minimum wage, while even part-time retail jobs elsewhere in Bloomington pay significantly higher. Students, consequently, find it more lucrative to work off-campus than on.

F. Move our "early warning" system for students in academic difficulty to still earlier in the first semester

The present "early warning" system for first-year students alerts us to academic difficulties in the best of cases only in the ninth week of the first semester, a point so late--the research tells us--that students may be beyond our ability to assist them. The new Student Information System (SIS) may enable us to identify students in academic difficulty earlier in the crucial first semester and provide, to put it plainly, more intrusive advising (mandatory meetings with advisors, for example, and the construction of plans to insure academic "recovery").

G. Develop retention programs focused on continuing students, particularly students from historically underrepresented groups

The first-to-third semester retention of students from historically underrepresented groups is lower than it might be, but still not markedly lower than the campus average retention rate. But Fall 2003 enrollment figures reveal that only 3.8% of Indiana University Bloomington students are African-American, while only 2.1% are Hispanic American. In short, one could argue that our emphasis on first-year programming has borne fruit--our "retention" rate is enviably high, though there is no doubt room for improvement--but students of color are not persisting throughout the baccalaureate. There would seem to be two main reasons for this: 1) unmet financial need, which plagues first generation students to a greater extent than others; 2) a lack of engagement by students, particularly students of color, when they move off campus.

Advising and engaging students during their first year is relatively easy because most of them are part of University Division. However, once students declare a major and move departmental advising maintaining contact with students become more difficult. To address these issues, departments must be given incentives to participate in "strategic mentoring," which targets students likely to work within their disciplines.

H. Establish a Recruitment and Enrollment Steering Committee

Pursuing these important recruitment goals effectively calls for the creation of a Recruitment and Enrollment Steering Committee. This group of influential academic and non-academic administrators and key faculty members will keep the campus focused on the matters identified in this plan and assure that the constituent administrative entities are working productively. (The existence of such a committee at Purdue is one of the reasons for its recent success in achieving strategic undergraduate goals.)

II. Enhancing The Undergraduate Academic Experience

Goals:

- Clarify the Relationships of Undergraduate Programs/Degree Requirements Across Units.
- Emphasize the unique international dimension of the Indiana University Bloomington academic experience.

- Integrate honors quality opportunities, both through the Honors College and in units and departments.

A. Clarify the Relationship of Undergraduate Programs/Degree Requirements Across Units.

There is much agreement across campus regarding certain aspects of the general education—generally translated in degree language as “distribution requirements”—of Indiana University Bloomington students. But there are also crucial and intractable differences. As a result, the terrain of undergraduate lower-division curricular requirements is a complex one, and students are frequently lost and confused in negotiating. They do come to understand such ideas as “majors,” “minors,” and “electives” in fairly short order. But they struggle with the differences in the structuring of the coursework intended to “generally” educate them, to help them understand and appreciate the expanse of human knowledge.

Clarifying this terrain, or at least supplying clearer maps, can make the Bloomington academic experience, including its tradition of experimentation, more comfortable and more attractive. At present students become frustrated and disengaged in dealing with the differences in “general education” requirements and with inconsistencies in the way courses “count,” or don’t count, across schools. A student who changes majors faces a poor match between courses already taken and those now required.

The solution is not a return to the long-vexed search for a comprehensive campus-wide package of general-education requirements. Rather, with the leadership of the Campus Curriculum Committee, the shared elements of all unit general-education requirements will be identified as a campus core curriculum. Next, the Curriculum Committee will examine, and discuss with the units, similarities in requirements which might be resolved to either a specific course requirements or a group of course alternatives. But we must also presume that at the conclusion of this process, differences in distribution requirements among units will continue to exist. These differences will not only be appropriately identified but their contribution to the unique expectations of that discipline or profession articulated.

- B. Emphasize the unique international dimension of the Indiana University Bloomington academic experience.**

Among the historic academic strengths of Indiana University Bloomington are its rich engagement with the international community, particularly through cooperative teaching and research associations with foreign universities and its supportive environment for international students, and its curricular offerings in international education. Recent years have seen several programmatic initiatives building on this strength, including the creation of a new B.A. in International Studies in the College of Arts and Sciences and of a minor in International Studies coordinated through the Center for the Study for Global Change. The Kelley School of Business has adopted a formal requirement for an international focus as part of its undergraduate curriculum, and alumnus Ed Hutton has designated a major gift to fund study-abroad experiences for undergraduates. The Office of Overseas Study has experienced a significant increase in the number of students enrolling in study abroad classes and experiences for credit. Chancellor Brehm has asked an ad hoc committee to review these developments and to recommend a plan for creating a more encompassing emphasis on international education at the undergraduate level.

C. Integrate honors-quality opportunities, both through the Honors College and in units and departments.

Honors at Indiana University Bloomington means both the Honors College and the variety of honors programs and courses available to students through units and departments. Karen Hanson, recently appointed Dean of the Honors College, has a comprehensive review underway. Whatever the results of that review, the Honors College alone cannot and should not represent the extent of the campus commitment to honors activity. The campus must broaden opportunities, particularly at the departmental level and in the Honors College, for all students who are highly academically motivated to have a least one substantial honors course experience every semester, from freshman through senior year. Such expansion should involve fuller cooperation between departments and the Honors College in providing faculty to teach honors courses either in their departments or in the College, and it should also involve more flexible arrangements for facilitating enrollment in those courses between the academic entities. The Honors College needs more faculty participation. Honors programs and course opportunities at the departmental level need to be more pervasive and more coherent. Honors should be a conspicuous element of the Bloomington academic environment. The first step in this direction should be the creation, under instruction of the Chancellor, of a committee made up of Honors College representatives and interested faculty, particularly in departments with active honors programs. Its charge will be to identify the steps necessary, fiscal, administrative, and intellectual, to achieve this environment.