

# **Council on Retention and Graduation**

## **Annual Report**

### **2008–2009**

**1. What aspects of the charge to the council have provided the foci for the council, and what specific goals have you been pursuing?**

The Council on Retention and Graduation (CRG) was asked to examine current activities, to look for best practices, and to develop plans for improving the retention and graduation rates of our students, particularly underrepresented minorities. The council's work builds on earlier work by the Doubling the Numbers Task Force, the Foundations of Excellence in the First College Year Task Force (<http://uc.iupui.edu/staff/assessment/national.asp>), and the campus academic plan as well as the ongoing work of University College.

The CRG Steering Committee continued the work of the CRG task forces this year. There are four task forces in operation (sophomores, seniors, metrics, and transfer students), and a new task force for diversity is beginning operations this summer. The organization of the diversity task force was postponed until this summer to allow the new vice chancellor of diversity time to get acclimated to our campus. These task forces target specific groups for retention and graduation. The task force for metrics focused on coordinating campus assessment efforts, which will help the many retention and graduation efforts taking place across campus. In addition, Rick Ward and Gayle Williams, members of the Steering Committee and the retention action team, gave a progress report on the action team's recommendations (see Appendix A).

This year the full council focused on several issues, including the electronic portfolio, degree audits, the Passport program, assessment reports, class attendance and assignment completion as predictors of success, the research of Paul Gore (University of Utah), and the work of the CRG task forces. The full council meetings have served as an excellent opportunity to distribute information to the schools since most units are represented on the council (every school has been invited to select representatives for the council).

Retention efforts for IUPUI have centered on the retention of entering students, and the council has led efforts to examine the retention of the fall first-time, full-time cohort. These students represent only 36 percent of those who begin study at IUPUI in a given 12-month period, but this is the cohort whose retention is reported as our official retention rate. IUPUI compiles a comprehensive report on retention initiatives each year (<http://uc.iupui.edu/staff/assessment/retention.asp>). This report lists the wide range of programs in academic and administrative units working to enhance student retention. Council efforts have highlighted the curricular efforts (learning communities, first-year seminars, bridge programs, etc.) that have resulted in enhanced retention. The council has responsibility for commissioning and reviewing program evaluations that continue to affirm the effectiveness of the programs. Appendix B has a list, with actions taken, of specific objectives for 2008–2009.

**2. How have you approached each of these goals (what activities have you pursued related to each goal)?**

The fall and spring full council meetings were devoted to these goals. In the fall meeting, the council focused on the electronic portfolio, data reports generated by University College and IMIR, degree audits, the Passport program, and the work of the task forces. In the spring meeting, the council focused on assignment completion and attendance as predictors of success (research by Ken Wendeln and John Kremer), new University College policy of GPA 1.0 dismissals, and the continuing work of the task forces. In this meeting, Rick Ward also presented an update that he and Gayle Williams did. They reviewed the final report generated by the retention action team a year ago. The recommendations were reviewed and given a progress report (see Appendix A). In April, the full council was invited to join the CRG Steering Committee for a special meeting. Paul Gore (University of Utah) addressed the council and other guests for his presentation, “Implementing and Assessing Data-Driving Institutional Initiatives to Promote Student Success.” Gore has done a great deal of research on the impact of advising and career interventions on student success and retention.

Other goals for the council include highlighting data on student success such as new measures (e.g., especially with the cohort of fall, first-time, full-time students), conducting a comprehensive review of campus programming with wide distribution of best practices, inviting faculty and other council members to hear special guests, and participating in collaborative programming with the other councils.

In addition, the CRG Steering Committee has continued the work of the four task forces: Task Force on Sophomores, Task Force on Seniors, Task Force on Transfer Students, and the Task Force on Metrics. Each task force has a chair and has reported to the Steering Committee on a regular basis.

The CRG Task Force on Sophomores, with Frank Ross (Division of Student Life) as chair, reviewed national literature related to sophomores and the sophomore-year experience. Best practices from other campuses were identified and included sophomore-level mentoring, specific career development interventions for sophomores, and, most notably, sophomore seminars. They worked on collecting IMIR-generated reports of IUPUI sophomore-specific data, which had not been done before, including demographic and enrollment reports, retention reports, as well an analysis of sophomore responses from the Continuing Student Satisfaction and Priorities Survey. Upon review of the reports, task force members made recommendations for further action. A survey regarding sophomore-specific services and programs was developed and administered to all academic schools on campus. Results are forthcoming.

The CRG Task Force on Seniors, with Scott Evenbeck (University College) as chair, has been collecting data on seniors.

The CRG Task Force on Transfer Students, with Cathy Buyarski (University College) as chair, has formed five subcommittees:

- Existing Services—The committee is working to develop a list of current programs and services for transfer students on campus.
- Advising and Academic Policies/Procedures— The committee is looking at advising for transfer students at two points: prior and once enrolled. They are also working with orientation and University College to get information on transfer admits as quickly as possible so that advisors have time to evaluate credits and ask for additional information. There is a growing concern about students who want advising from IUPUI and Ivy Tech as they intend to graduate from IUPUI but will start at Ivy Tech to take transferrable courses at a lower price. A piece of advising is that advisors know why students transferred to IUPUI; we need to find a way to help advisors ask questions, get this information, etc.
- Transfer Center and Services—The committee is recommending a “cog” model with a series of points that coordinate transfer programs and services. There would be point individuals/teams in schools to be transfer coordinators. This group would come together on a regular basis and become the campus council on transfers.
- Enrollment/Recruiting and Entry Services—Advising is part of recruitment; before being admitted, students ask, “What courses do I take?” and “How long will it take me to graduate?” This is not the current practice at IUPUI. Holes exist in services for out-of-state students and international students due to lack of information/articulation. This subcommittee is exploring key questions and issues that should guide our work with transfers at the point of prospects/admission.
- Data and Research—The committee is working to develop a set of reports on transfer students that will become part of the regular data we look at (like we do with the cohort). This effort will ensure that we keep the success of transfer students at the forefront of our work.

The CRG Task Force on Transfer Students is also discussing the needs of transfer students once they are enrolled, including:

- Orientation—There is a gap for students working with schools who do not have specific programs. Andrea Engler reports that all schools are on board with serving transfer students, so it seems as if we need to make sure this is well known and tell this story. Any student who has served active duty (including beginners) will go through a transfer orientation so they have a more focused, personal experience. The Passport office is going to do pre-orientation with Ivy Tech students, which will focus on the “other” stuff in addition to the academic registration, etc., which requires that courses/grades are posted. Schools will be asked to participate in Ivy Tech Transfer Pre-Orientation Days.
- Housing—The traditional-aged transfer students are asking more questions about housing. Manlove will have a biannual off-campus housing fair.
- Pease reports that she has seen a lot of students who have lost their jobs. They are seeing both traditional-aged and returning adult transfers. The result is a growing sense of urgency.
- We need to make sure our campus is attractive to older students.
- Helman has distributed two annotated bibliographies on transfer students, which will be posted to Oncourse.

- Literature talks about a high dropout rate of transfers after the first semester of enrollment. This is mainly due to a campus being “too big,” which translates as individual attention.
- Ivy Tech Coordinated Programs is working on ways to reduce the “bigness” by having IUPUI faculty and staff making connections prior to enrollment so that relationships can continue with enrollment at IUPUI.
- Mentoring Program—Successful Ivy Tech transfers at IUPUI will be mentoring Ivy Tech students who have expressed an intention to come to IUPUI. The relationship will continue for one semester and then hopefully move into being mentors once they are at IUPUI. Charlie Johnson (University College) has a good model for bringing students from Ivy Tech to IUPUI. They are doing a pilot program this fall.

The CRG Task Force on Metrics, with Gary Pike (IMIR) as chair, has worked to combine IUPUI goals and Dean Sukhatme’s action plan. This new document has been approved. The task force will now work to make sure that the metrics used on this campus are aligned with the new document (available online at <http://www.iport.iupui.edu/iupui/visionmission/>).

The CRG Task Force for Diversity is chaired by Ken Durgans (Office of Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion). Others serving on this task force include Zephia Bryant (Multicultural Center), Cathy Buyarski (University College), Chris Foley (Undergraduate Admissions), Stephen Hundley (School of Engineering and Technology), Charlie Johnson (University College), Khadija Khaja (School of Social Work), Frank Ross (Division of Student Life), Kim Stewart-Brinston (Office of Multicultural Outreach), and Gayle Williams (University College). The task force will be meeting throughout the summer to begin their important work of helping the university retain and graduate more students from underrepresented populations.

### **3. What evidence have you collected and considered for each of the goals, and what variables are you tracking to assess progress?**

The council reviews and discusses a wide range of programs in academic and administrative units working to enhance student retention, including curricular efforts (learning communities, first-year seminars, bridge programs, etc.) that have resulted in enhanced retention. The variables include the one-year retention rate and the six-year graduation rate, but the council has broadened the variables to the success of students beyond the first year and to the mediated variables (i.e., participation in learning communities as a function of admission status) ultimately associated with increasing the retention and graduation rates.

The task forces have been reviewing literature and collecting data on their various focus areas. The CRG Task Force on Sophomores has been working to collect IMIR reports with sophomore-specific data, including demographic, retention, and enrollment reports. The task force has also been working on an analysis of sophomore responses from the Continuing Student Satisfaction and Priorities Survey. The CRG Task Force on Seniors has been collecting data to find out why some seniors do not graduate. The CRG Task Force on Transfer Students has been working to develop a set of reports on transfer students that will become part of the regular data we look at (similar to the cohort). These data will be very

helpful for many units across campus in making improvements to programs and services available to IUPUI students, which should ultimately increase the retention and graduation of these students.

**4. What have you learned in connection with each goal, and what actions are being taken to address your findings?**

We have learned that addressing only the retention of entering students will not solve our low graduation rate. We are losing many students in each year of their enrollment. The full council continues to research relevant issues that affect the retention and graduation of IUPUI students. The task forces continue their work to identify ways to help sophomores, seniors, transfer students, and diverse students to be successful and graduate in a timely manner. The Steering Committee will also work to revise the Top Ten for Retention at IUPUI (see Appendix B); this effort will be led by Rick Ward, who chaired the retention action team.

**5. With what other groups or individuals has the council engaged to pursue your goals and objectives? Are there any other groups or individuals you hope to engage in the coming months?**

The council works closely with many groups across campus, including other councils and the Gateway to Graduation Program. In the past year, the council engaged individuals from the Department of Mathematical Sciences, IMIR, Undergraduate Admissions, Enrollment Services, UITS, Kelley School of Business, School of Liberal Arts, University College, Department of Psychology, Passport Program, Office of the Registrar, Multicultural Center, Academic Affairs, Division of Planning and Institutional Improvement, and the University of Utah.

The full council is comprised of individuals from many of the schools and administrative units across campus. Every school has been invited to select representatives for the council. When the full council meets each semester (fall and spring), the entire campus is engaged in a conversation about issues related to retention and graduation.

The Council on Retention and Graduation is the context for considering new programs, particularly those developed across units, such as the Mathematics Bridge Program, the Mini-Bridge Program launched in 2006, the expanded Summer Academy Bridge Program in 2007, and the modified Summer Preparatory Program in 2009. The Steering Committee has offered suggestions to University College for advising notes, the personal development plan, and making changes to the Summer Academy Bridge Program.

The task forces are chaired by members of the CRG. The chairs are working with individuals from across campus. The council's primary activity this summer will be continuing the work of the task forces, including the new CRG Task Force for Diversity. The council seeks to better understand factors associated with retention as it works with the schools in enhancing student academic achievement and persistence.

## Appendix A

### Retention Action Team Report Update March 2009

Status	Action Item	Evidence
	<b><i>Plugging the Leak in First and Second Semesters:</i></b>	
Underway	Recruit for retention.	There has been more aggressive recruiting of high-ability students. The high ability scholarships have attracted larger numbers of students and the profile of admitted students shows a continued increase in students from the upper 50% of their class.
Underway	Develop more effective strategies for identifying entering students who are likely to struggle and use this information to better tailor retention strategies.	The Summer Success Program has been conducted successfully over the last two summers. In the summer 2009 it will include English AND Math for some students
Underway	Expand the Summer Academy Bridge Program and other remediation efforts, such as the summer math camp, to include more of the high-risk cohort.	Summer bridge expansion has been complicated by elimination of first generation scholarships linked to required attendance. But, UCOL received a small Diversity Initiative Grant to provide grants to some students from high risk populations.
Underway	Continue to expand and refine themed learning communities.	UCOL committee has been addressing this point.
Underway	Consider tighter curricular control for high-risk cohorts.	University College adopted a new dismissal policy effective fall 2008; 164 students who had < 1.0 GPA after fall term were dismissed. University College has adopted a policy, effective Fall 2009 to limit the number of withdrawals a first year student can have to one a semester.
Underway	Make more effective use of peer mentors.	University College is bringing Bonita Jacobs (University of North Texas) to campus. UNT has one of the top student financial management centers in the nation. Some schools on campus (Science, Liberal Arts, Nursing, ET, University College) are working to increase emergency funds for students.
Underway	Develop more effective "early warning" mechanisms, especially for gateway courses, and use these in conjunction with administrative withdrawals.	Early warning may be available on SIS in the fall of 2009; eventually we hope to have it as an Oncourse feature.
Underway	Create alternative format courses that start later in the semester so students can drop and add without harming their GPAs or financial aid.	The School of Liberal Arts is working on this. There are ongoing conversations about moving to a flat tuition. There are still too few short course formats that start in the latter half of the semester.
Ongoing	Develop a mechanism for dismissing students who will not achieve a pre- specified minimal GPA (e.g. < 1.0) their first semester.	There have been policy changes to dismiss students with GPAs under 1.0
Underway	Develop strengths-based advising modules that can be used in a variety of settings for students in all academic categories.	Advising and career development are being integrated. The Personal development plan has been piloted.
Ongoing	Require second-semester students who are on academic probation to participate in one of several academic support programs.	The campus has programs such as Students Taking Academic Responsibility (STAR).
	<b><i>Plugging the Leak in Retention to the Second Year:</i></b>	
Underway	Create mandatory programming for all students on probation after the first year.	UCOL students on probation after the first semester are required to participate in a second semester interventions

Status	Action Item	Evidence
Underway	Create scholarships for improvement.	There are programs such as the Road Scholars.
Underway	Address issues of connection by enhancing support for programs that link students to “powerful pedagogies” such as service learning, undergraduate research, and study abroad.	The RISE initiative will be an important new program that will support this goal.
Underway	Involve faculty in partnership with Campus and Community Life to enhance the academic components in student housing because retention of students in residence is no higher than for students living off campus.	Students in housing seem to be doing better, ongoing efforts to provide mentoring in housing and there are conversations about a learning community in the Student units.
Underway	Create more opportunities for work on campus.	There are a few programs such as the Freshmen Work Program.
Not Started	Streamline readmission and transfer policies, particularly for students in good standing who have been away for more than a semester.	Admissions is implementing some technology that will improve the response time for some of our returning student apps. They will be continuing to work with units to see if we can simplify the standards to make them easier to administer. They will also begin reviewing our communication streams to make certain students are aware of where they are in the process.
<b><i>Plugging the Leak for Transfer Students:</i></b>		
Underway	Develop special programs for freshmen transfers.	The CRG Task Force on Transfer Students is addressing this issue. University College is funding Bonita Jacobs, a national expert on transfer students, to come to campus to speak to faculty and staff about this issue.
Underway	Continue to coordinate with Ivy Tech State College to facilitate deferrals and transfers.	The Passport Program is ongoing; The CRG Task Force on Transfer Students is addressing this issue.
Underway	Continue to work with Ivy Tech State College to prepare students for success at IUPUI.	The CRG Task Force on Transfer Students is addressing this issue.
<b><i>Plugging the Leak in Retaining African American Students:</i></b>		
Underway	Provide expanded support for programs that have proven successful at retaining African Americans and other underrepresented groups.	Summer Academy Bridge Program received a President's University Diversity Initiative grant. The Olaniyan Scholars program will support up to thirty students from under-represented groups. The Norm Brown Scholars program has grown.
Underway	Continue to develop a more supportive campus environment.	The Multicultural Center is now operational with Ken Durgans as director. University College offers students the use of the Sankofa Room.
Underway	Work with community groups, Indianapolis Public Schools, the School of Education, and the Office of Admissions and Enrollment to double African American enrollments at IUPUI.	The enrollment of African American students has not doubled, but IUPUI collaborates with IPS on the Crispus Attucks Medical Magnet High School project. There are other initiatives across campus, such as the STEM Initiative and the new NIH \$1 million grant to improve minority student success in science programs.
???	Expand P-16 programming.	
<b><i>Plugging the Leak for Part-Time Students:</i></b>		
Not Started	Conduct targeted studies of this cohort to determine factors that impede persistence and degree completion.	Liberal Arts is working on this
Not	Develop specific advising strategies for part-time	

Status	Action Item	Evidence
Started	students.	
???	Review our institutional policy, which may discourage degree completion.	The School of Science is working on this.
???	Retain a portion of grant and scholarship funds for part-time students.	
	<b><i>Plugging the Leak in Students Progressing through Senior Year:</i></b>	
	Encourage programs with lower senior graduation rates to review their curricula for barriers to graduation and develop advising tools to assist students in transitioning to graduation.	
Underway	Encourage programs to routinely review files and contact “stopped out” seniors to determine if any assistance or motivation can be provided to encourage completion.	The School of Liberal Arts is working on this. Also, Kathy Johnson in the School of Science is working on this.
Not Started	Pilot the proposed “discounted senior year” in a program with relatively low senior graduation rates or high numbers of students who have reached their financial aid cap.	
Not Started	Work with General Studies to explore the possibility of recruiting more “stopped out” seniors to that degree program.	
	<b><i>Institutional Actions and Implementation Strategy Recommendations:</i></b>	
Not Started	Embark on a thorough review of IUPUI undergraduate curriculum to determine if we can more effectively engage students and remove barriers to retention while maintaining high academic standards.	The upcoming North Central Accreditation visit may provide some incentive to move this forward.
Not Started	Commit IUPUI resources to develop a center to provide students and their families with help in planning and managing their finances with an emphasis on loan and debt management.	University College is bringing Bonita Jacobs (University of North Texas) to campus. UNT has one of the top student financial management centers in the nation. Some schools on campus (Science, Liberal Arts, Nursing, ET, University College) are working to increase emergency funds for students.
Not Started	Develop a systematic and integrated campus approach for prioritizing, organizing, implementing, and assessing our efforts to address retention with the end goal of producing a “Retention Action Plan” that sets obtainable goals, plans of action, and a timetable for regular progress reports and assessment for the entire university.	No progress has been made on this recommendation



## Appendix B

### TOP TEN FOR RETENTION AT IUPUI

1. Increase scholarship support coupled with academic support for low-income and first-generation students, targeting the Twenty-first Century Scholars. National data confirm the very strong association between family income and earning a bachelor's degree. IUPUI can build on the success of Indiana's Twenty-first Century Scholars program by increasing both financial support and academic support for students enrolled at IUPUI.

#### ACTION:

- a. To address the lack of need-based scholarships at IUPUI, the Office of Student Scholarships offers an incentive scholarship for entering students who have received an admission-based (merit) scholarship and who have an expected family contribution of less than \$5,000. The incentive scholarship will match the amount of the admission-based scholarship. The federal Academic Competitiveness Grants for Pell recipients will provide additional funding for low-income students during the first two years of study.
  - b. The Office of Student Scholarships, in collaboration with University College, has expanded the Summer Academy Bridge Program with a focus on Twenty-first Century Scholars. All Twenty-first Century Scholars who receive institutional aid are required to participate in Bridge.
2. Coordinate communications for prospective and entering students. Present efforts are disjointed and uncoordinated. There is, for example, no letter from the chancellor. A systematic program of communication (printed materials, e-mails, letters, postcards, handwritten notes from students, phone calls) should be implemented.

#### ACTION:

A subcommittee on marketing from the Enrollment Management Committee has been working on this initiative. A communications calendar has been developed and is available at <http://registrar.iupui.edu/emc>.

3. Commission qualitative and quantitative research on students who have left and those who have stayed to better understand the factors that affect student success (and then address the factors working against success that are under our control).

#### ACTION:

In 2007, Derek Price, of DVP-PRAXIS LTD, conducted a study to more accurately identify the characteristics of students who initially enroll full-time at IUPUI but do not continue to enroll into the second and third academic years. For the first time, IUPUI has longitudinal analyses of student retention that includes student preparation, participation in initiatives to support retention, and student finances analyzed over time. In addition, the CRG task forces are collecting data.

4. Implement a scorecard for all schools on implementation of powerful pedagogies and programming associated with retention (scholarships, scholarships coupled with academic support, honors, service learning, learning communities and first year seminars, study abroad, undergraduate research, etc.)

**ACTION:**

The CRG Task Force on Metrics has developed a standard set of metrics for the campus. This work will be the foundation for implementing a scorecard in 2009–2010.

5. Support faculty development to enhance diversity in the curriculum. Involvement with diversity increases engagement in learning. IUPUI's students are diverse. We need to increase our attention to diversity in the curriculum.

**ACTION:**

As part of a grant from the Lumina Foundation, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) staff developed the Diversity and Learning Web site (<http://ctl.iupui.edu/diversity>). The Web site was designed to be a one-stop, user-friendly, comprehensive, online resource for faculty interested in issues of multicultural education. The Web site consists of five resource areas: (1) resource guide, (2) teaching techniques, (3) multicultural teaching and learning, (4) IUPUI resources, and (5) faculty essays. In addition, the CTL partnered with Adaptive Educational Services and Counseling and Psychological Services to host the Multicultural Teaching and Learning Institute on April 23, 2009. The CRG Task Force for Diversity will begin to address this issue during 2009–2010. The addition of the Multicultural Center and the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will benefit our campus as well.

6. Implement an enhanced program of involvement and support for parents and family members, particularly important for our low-income and first-generation students.

**ACTION:**

University College has a newsletter targeting parents of entering students and a fall program for parents and family members.

7. Develop models on campus and with community partners where work can be an asset rather than a deficit in students' educational experiences, not only through internships but also through curricular involvement and through engaging employers as partners in supporting student success.

**ACTION:**

The spring council meeting was used to discuss employing students on campus. Staff members from IMIR, University College, and Human Resources presented information to the council. In addition, a pilot program was launched under the direction of Cathy Buyarski. The Skills Bridge Program was piloted over the summer. They hope to roll out the program in the summer or fall. The program trains supervisors to look at the PULs to see how jobs and skills match the PULs. It helps students to understand the importance of

learning transferable skills and how their educational experiences are linked with professional careers.

8. Inventory administrative and academic policies and procedures, determine their impact on student success, and then address places where we are not satisfied with our performance (e.g., no academic forgiveness in place for entering students coupled with a five-year limit on changing F to W leaves many students in limbo).

**ACTION:**

Ongoing. The campus has broadened participation in the early warning and administrative withdrawal initiatives.

9. Focus on the fall, full-time, first-time cohort. Engage faculty, staff, and students in strategies to engage and understand the cohort in particular (increased communications, exit interviews, ongoing contact, reentry scholarships, etc.).

**ACTION:**

The cohort has been identified and contacts are ongoing.

10. Enhance the coordination of student financial aid and bursar policies and procedures, enlisting academic units as partners in understanding issues and serving students in ways that result in enhanced service to students.

**ACTION:**

The Office of Student Financial Aid Services (OSFAS) and the Office of the Bursar continue to move forward with collaborations to enhance services to IUPUI students. For example, OSFAS has initiated contacts with students in the first-time, full-time cohort who are unable to register due to a bursar hold and have offered to work with the students to explore avenues to remove the hold. Educational sessions have been provided for the academic unit personnel so that they have a better understanding of the federal and state regulations that mold the policies of OSFAS and the Office of the Bursar. Enhancements in student self-service have been implemented with the SIS upgrade.