Student VOICE Survey #2: Campus Social Environment

Division of Student Life
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis
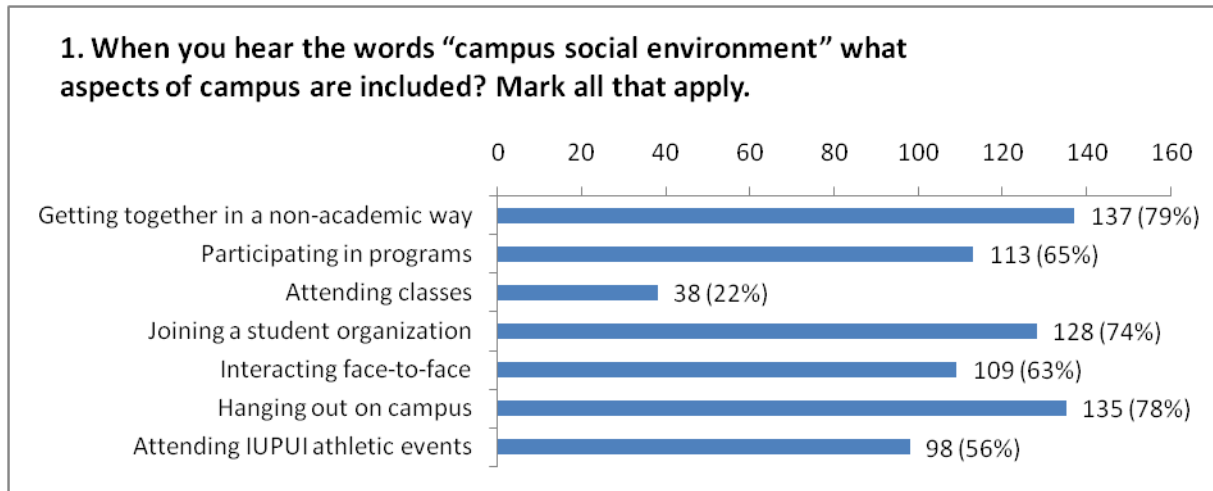March 4, 2008

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Overview

The purpose of the Student VOICE Project was to identify student recommendations for their **V**ision **O**f the **I**deal **C**ollege **E**nvironment. This is part of the development of a new master plan for Indiana University, headed by President Michael McRobbie. The project has a Web site at IUPUI: http://www.iupui.edu/~sldweb/dos/voice.html. In addition, an Oncourse site was created to host articles and discussion forums for the project.

President McRobbie launched the project at IUPUI on November 1, 2007. At that time, students were organized into five sub-committees addressing the intellectual, social, and campus-living environments, as well as the off-campus student experience and support services for students. Discussions within each sub-committee were intended to be broad-ranging and to allow members of the committee to offer specific recommendations to President McRobbie.

This project is a small-scale qualitative research study. Qualitative research focuses on depth of exploration into a topic through a variety of sources. This report provides data on just one source of information, namely an informal survey administered online. Through the survey data, committee discussions, focus groups, and other in-house data sources like NSSE and the Student Satisfaction and Priorities survey, a descriptive view of the Student VOICE will emerge.

The pages that follow contain results from the survey used for assessing the campus social environment at IUPUI (177 respondents). This survey was administered online via SurveyMonkey.com, and it was promoted through word of mouth, listservs, JagNews, and JagTV.

Question 1

1. When you hear the words "campus social environment" what aspects of campus are included? Mark all that apply.

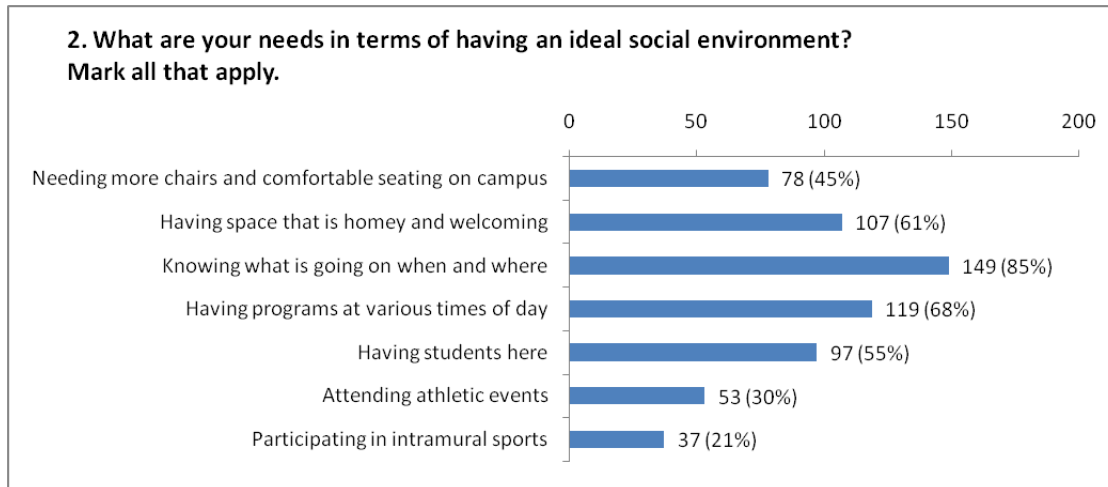| Category	Value
Getting together in a non-academic way	137 (79%)
Participating in programs	113 (65%)
Attending classes	38 (22%)
Joining a student organization	128 (74%)
Interacting face-to-face	109 (63%)
Hanging out on campus	135 (78%)
Attending IUPUI athletic events	98 (56%)

Approximately 174 people responded to this question. The "mark all that apply" nature of this question allowed for multiple response combinations that will therefore add up to a number higher than 100%. The top-ranked categories were "getting together in a non-academic way," hanging out on campus," and "joining a student organization," with percentages in the mid-to-high 70s. Program participation and face-to-face interactions were also important with percentages in the mid 60s. It should be noted that 22% of the respondents see attending classes as part of the social environment. This should be encouraging news to faculty attempting to actively engage students in the learning process: over one fifth of the respondents deem the classroom social environment as important.

Eleven respondents marked "other" and left these comments (unedited for grammar and spelling):
- Smoking Cigs
- using the bookstore, finding the registars office, using the postal services if they become available.
- living in dorms
- intramural sports
- More than athletic events. This campus is so in need of a cultural and arts scene. There needs to be more theatre and drama events, especially oppurtunites for students...not just touring and hired out events.
- Greek Life
- Nonexistent at IUPUI compared to other universities.
- living on campus
- Classroom interaction
- interacting through the web
- all of these options together

Question 2

2. What are your needs in terms of having an ideal social environment? Mark all that apply.

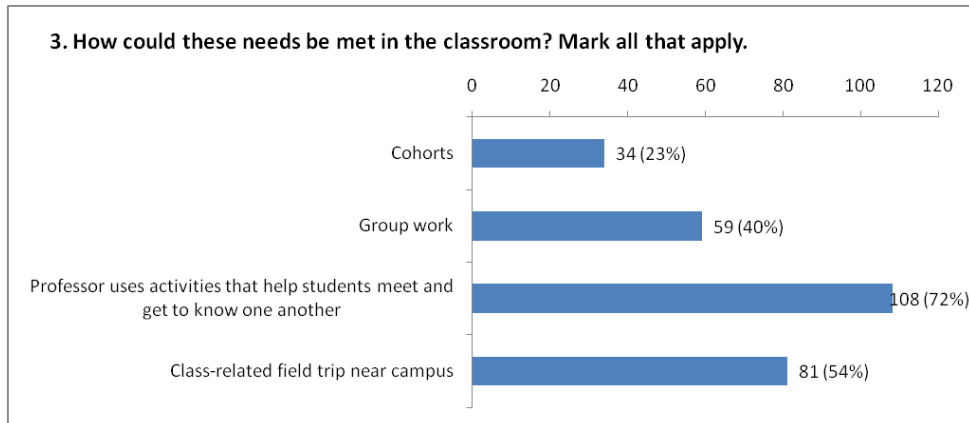|	
Needing more chairs and comfortable seating on campus	78 (45%)
Having space that is homey and welcoming	107 (61%)
Knowing what is going on when and where	149 (85%)
Having programs at various times of day	119 (68%)
Having students here	97 (55%)
Attending athletic events	53 (30%)
Participating in intramural sports	37 (21%)

There were 175 respondents for this question. The most important need was "knowing what is going on when and where;" the respondents clearly expressed a need for information on social events. Second, they were interested in programs happening at a variety of times during the day. It is likely this is due to the spread-out nature of the IUPUI campus in terms of where students live and when they take courses. There is no "typical" course time at an institution like IUPUI, so a variety of programs held at various times is appropriate. Next, respondents were interested in having a welcoming space, having fellow students around, and they expressed a need for more chairs and general seating on campus.

Twenty respondents marked "other" and left comments:
- Having a place where smokers can hang out
- Sponsor cultural activities such as Chinese Day, King Day, and Hispanic Day at IUPUI and the community in general
- living on campus
- multiple ways of communicating activities in couple weeks in advance AND last minute reminders
- More oppurtunities for student expression (theatre, arts, newspaper, etc.)
- Don't need or want one
- and places to lie down and take a nap
- Making it easy and safe to go from building to building
- We need a 24 hour study area aside from the computer lab.
- Actually having places open during weekends and after 6, for insance Campus Center services such as food court.
- parking ease
- Greek events on campus, rush week, etc.
- student nights/campus wide party night
- more convenient parking
- Adequate parking, sufficient lockers
- We need QUIET areas on campus
- Campus center is great!
- more activities that the whole school can participate in. such as concerts
- Prodvide programs for older (Mature Students)
- Having beautiful garden beds and sitting areas in them. Another is improving school spirit.
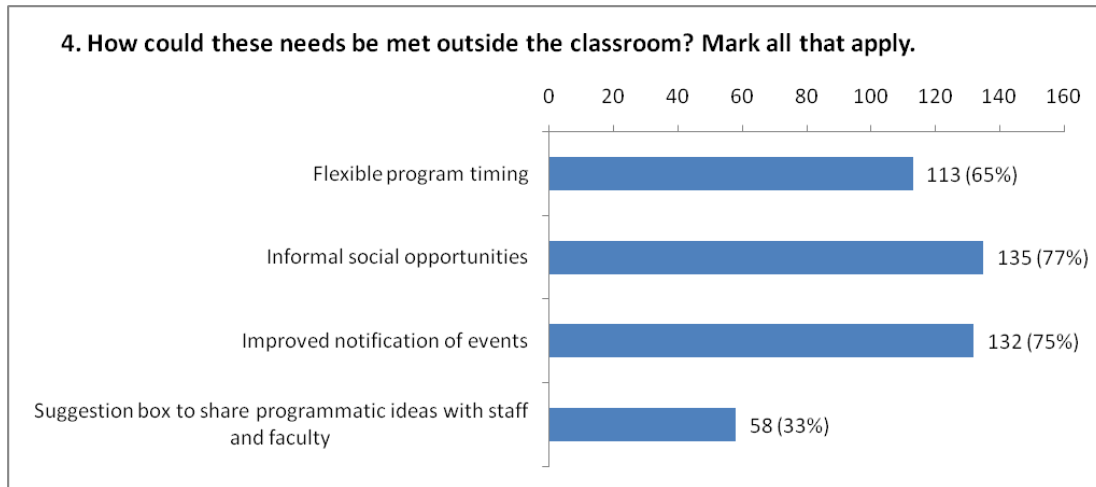
Question 3

3. How could these needs be met in the classroom? Mark all that apply.

Cohorts	34 (23%)
Group work	59 (40%)
Professor uses activities that help students meet and get to know one another	108 (72%)
Class-related field trip near campus	81 (54%)

This question received 150 responses. A large portion of the respondents indicated that in-class social activities would be the best way for students to meet one another, though as seen in some of the following 20 comments, not everyone agrees. In addition, while 40% indicated group work was a good idea, there were several comments to the contrary.

- The classroom is for learning
- have projects that help form student life
- promote cultural events in classrooms
- better chairs
- encourage students to work together on homework
- Require students to go to certain lectures (let them choose 1 of 3 for class in case there are conflicts)
- I don't think they can, I think the social environment is lacking outside of the classroom. In the class, my focus is on the course material.
- The classroom environment is fine
- flexible tutoring schedules
- group work is not always appropriate, because certain learning styles are not cunducive to group projects
- Group Stuff is not always the answer
- NO GROUP WORK
- they can't be met in the classroom
- designing the seats from a group of students' perspective
- the classrooms are structured well
- i actually prefer not to have them in the classroom. Group work, especially in certain classes, actually diminishes personal responsibility and generally leads to a single person shouldering an inordinate amount of the burden, leading to animosity between classmates, rather than cooperation. Instead, making areas available for study groups to meet on campus would be a better way to allow for a community atmosphere for those who have the time and inclination to pursue that with classmates.
- learning communities, major specific
- class trips to chicago, new york etc.
- this is a commuter campus. group-work and class related field trips are a bad idea! causes problems for many students and the practice needs to be stopped.
- comfortable chairs, good technology

Question 4

4. How could these needs be met outside the classroom? Mark all that apply.

Flexible program timing	113 (65%)
Informal social opportunities	135 (77%)
Improved notification of events	132 (75%)
Suggestion box to share programmatic ideas with staff and faculty	58 (33%)

There were 175 responses to this question. The respondents value having more information, social opportunities, and being better informed about events. Again, flexibility in program timing came up as being important.

Sixteen respondents also marked "other" and left the following comments:

- give us more dorms already
- encourage attendance at atheltic events
- want to emphasize improved notification
- I think we should have a winter formal. It would be fun!
- Anything done would be benificial.
- More student housing
- Actually having places open during weekends and after 6, for insance Campus Center services such as food court.
- better power plug connections near seating, safer parking lots, the aisles of parking lots are small and dangerous which inhibits my desire to come to campus any time other than when I have to for class
- When listing date of event on flyers, please put day of the week. Then you know exactly if you have class. Otherwise, if you have to look it up you forget.
- Extend 'orientation' type events throughout the year- like a core group to meet throughout the year- dinner outings and such
- Adequate parking, sufficient lockers
- more information from major areas of study
- Jagnews is great.
- instead of just one time, one day a week. make schedules for events more flexible
- Promote campus events with noticable signs or banners.

Question 5

Based on your responses above, briefly describe your vision of the ideal social environment at IUPUI.

There were approximately 74 responses to this open-ended question. There was a variety of responses, with some already pleased with the environment, while others were not. Four major themes emerged from these comments: 1) an interest in more social gatherings, 2) the need for better advertising/promotion of events, 3) interest in a greater number of comfortable places to congregate on campus, and 4) ample, affordable food service provided at events and more locations on campus.

In addition, several mentioned a need for increasing awareness of diversity issues in social environment programming, as well as having a wide variety of times, dates, and activities to accommodate traditional and non-traditional students. Finally, there was a further interest in an ideal social environment consisting of breaking down perceived barriers among academic departments and types of students. See the list below for the list of comments in its entirety. The comments appear as they were submitted without correcting spelling and grammar.

- More places to advertise events, would allow for more social gatherings and interactions with new faces.
- less of a commuter campus feel. More. Bigger. better programs to draw attendance to social events at iupui. MORE AND BETTER WAYS OF ADVERTISING EVENTS!
- Hanging out, sharing in conversation while smoking.
- varied times and days for programs. sometimes that might include providing programs and opportunities on multiple occaisions since such a large part of our student population have obligations off campus.
- Programs that would also include the non traditional student. There is nothing available in my opinion for us. I understand that the majority of campus activiites are geared towards the younger student, but the non traditional student does exist more at this campus than any other campus in the city.
- Social enviroment is including all races of students in the opportunities that are warranted and given to the majority,regardless of economically status, language and culture.
- Social Programs for Adults to that already have families... Such as, Mother Groups.
- More student housing, better food availability, and more sports. Especially a football or baseball team.
- Have the same event at various times of day and/or days of the week to cater to students who have class or work at the only scheduled time.
- A better friendly enviorment
- Sponsor real social events in different community locations throughout Indy and in city areas where reach cross culture exists
- Better communication between the silos that are our schools and stronger financial support of student organizations across the board who all are working toward creating an ideal social environment! We desperately need a Multi-Cultural Center!
- From what I see, the environment is too pointedly social. Outside the library there are myriad locations for students to socialize, yet virtually nowhere for students to study. While this is a social environment, it is primarily a university, and should be interested in locations to study not only to "hang out" between classes.
- I believe the social enviroment should be similiar to the one at Ball State. The majority of the students do live on campus and are able to spend time with students who are in a different

major then what they are. I believe this would better the social enviroment and promote diversity relating to not only race, ethnnity but also among the different majors and different idealogies.   It would help us increase our ability to work with other professions later in life.

- enviroment that caters to students of all ethnicities and provides services and events, activities, and foods specific to different cultures. This would allow ethnic students to feel more welcome and at home at IUPUI.
- More available lounge-type space that is comfortable to be in for extended periods of time to do any group work/studying... similar to some of the library spaces but without the worry of talking too loudly for others around. This place should also be warm... too many of the libraries are so cold it's distracting. It would be nice if there were more outdoor lounge-type areas as well for studying/general gathering to hang out when it's warmer outside. It would also be nice to have more events like movies, concerts, and shows available that are affordable to students somewhere on campus.
- A place where everyone no matter what age group can feel welcome and meet new people.
- I think that the best improvements could be made to the community seating areas in the buildings and making sure that students know of the social events going on.
- For graduate students I think that the colloquia are a good opportunity to increase the academic social environment. Not only have more of them, but maybe couple them with social opportunities like food and drink. Maybe start a "Science Cafe" for example. (http://www.sciencecafes.org)
- The idea social environment is difficult to attain with many students on cell phones and logged into web portals. Now students social environments extend way beyond campus. The best thing to possibly improve the social environment is to gather people together face-to-face to discuss things in common. This might be difficult because of the "what is in it for me?" mentality of people today. Therefore I think people will only participate in such social activities if it benefits them in a particular way.
- School supplied dinners and events. Plus group activities from class that pair you up with new/different people to understand how other people think and work.
- more clubs...physics club, math club, etc...more intramural sports
- I do not know that many people on campus, so for me to attend I would need to get to know more poeple in my class. I am also an older student so if the activities are focused around 18-21 year olds, I would NOT attend. So my vision would be a functional activity that could benefit students and faculty of all ages. There is many faculty in my major I still do not know, so getting to know more would help in many areas. Sorry my vision is not that clear at this time
- Good
- More varieties of activities. Better information and advertising.
- Especially with the addittion of the new Campus Center, IUPUI needs to go big with providing oppurtunities for students. Look at the types of events IU, PU, and BSU have for their students and bring those ideas to IUPUI. Even though we're largely a commuter campus, many students live either downtown or in the area and need more oppurtunities for nightlife and weekend activities. If your under 21, your pretty much limited to movies, the mall (until they close), or a friends house. Providing more in this area might take some time to develop a consitent following, but I think the need is definitely there.
- nice,harmony
- I am not interested in a 'social enviornment' at IUPUI, I am a grad student and simply want to come to work and be done.
- I don't know

- Frolicking in the lilly pond
- I'm a mother of infant twins, I don't have time for social environments.
- Opportunities provided by the school for students to meet fellow students. Small to medium sized groups meeting for various activities all over campus and beyond.
- My idea of a better social atmosphere is buildings that are open for both studiers and social group later in the evening with more tables and chairs. Possibly better notification of sporting events/pep rallies to improve campus team spirit. Events that take place at different times of the day, especially over lunch.
- The campus center may be a good start, because it is a centralized building for student services, clubs, events, food and comfortable lounge areas.
- I like the movie nights that IUPUI hosts. I think more events like this, something where students can hang out and share a common interest for cheap or free is a really valuable concept to college students.
- I dont think it's too special right now. The student crowds at the basketball games are down I feel. There needs to be more information. Maybe a prof could encourage students to go to certain events. And also, having events like a "fifth quarter" after basketball games would be a nice way to meet people.
- A 24/7 campus.
- it's very hard when you consider the lack of power outlets through out the campus where there seems to be places to sit & study
- A place where everyone can get involve in various activities. A indoor soccer field for students to play during the winter--keeps student in shape and healthy during the winter. Better athletic environment that would encourage most student to get involve thus lowering the rate of obesity in Indiana.
- There needs to be more planned events: dances, etc. Since everything to do in Indy id for people 21 and older.
- IUPUI still operates and functions as a commuter campus. A different mindset must be implemented if that is to be changed. I'm a returning student seeking a second degree so I'm not seeking a campus social environment in the traditional sense. My ideal therefore is to have clean well maintained comfortable facilities that are conducive to studying and learning.
- I think it needs to be enhanced that although this is a commuter campus we still need to get involved in organizations and activities to boost our experience. The only difference in our campus and a non-commuter campus is that we don't live ON campus. I think this should be promoted and encouraged.
- I would like to see a number of different programs offered at different times throughout the day to accomodate those with varying schedules.
- I think we have a lot of social events, the problem is getting the students to attend. I think if more students attend the events that are already planned, we wouldn't have to take these kinds of surveys. There needs to be more work on getting the word out.
- Comfortable both physically and socially. The classroom seating could be a lot more comfortable, not crowded like LE and not rolling chairs like CA. Couches would be nice with a way to take notes if necessary.
- Spaces where students can meet to hang out, often it includes spaces with access to food as well as internet connection and power for electronics
- A larger residential population on campus (traditional dorms and cafeterias), more adequate recreational/exercise facilities for the exclusive of IUPUI students/staff/faculty, stadium for the

- basketball team, programs/social events that take place in the evening (this might require the suttle to operate on some nights).
- Many places across campus where students can congregate between classes, where events are held, and which become places ot mingle. Ability to park is another consideration. Being a commuter student, once I know something is going on, being able to park near it, especially at night, make it more likely I will participate.
- I think it would be great if the University would sponsor "fun" events of whatever type but especially to partner with student orgs for it. You might need some people to work an event but if you have one club work it for an hour or two and then switch with another sponsoring group. I am excited about Greek Week this spring but there should be more events like that. Sponsored by CCL, get a bunch of student orgs together to have a big event for a lot of students. Maybe even work with classes or majors to have specific social events. The only limit is how far CCL wants to take it. Students are always looking for something to do.
- I don't think it's possible since IUPUI is a commuter college. My ideal social environment involves students all living in the same community (on campus) and experiencing things together whether it be group work, a sporting event, lunch or arts and entertainment.
- First of all, not having to drive around for 30 minutes to park a long distance from where you want to go would be great. Secondly, I think the new student center is a great idea but you should not have closed every other place to eat. The student center is not centrally located and often there is not enough time to get to it.
- Where students respect each other, where communication with staff is easy, where a variety of activities provide that all types of students will find something in which they feel comfortable.
- IUPUI has a different dynamic than most other universities. I think the people are going to make the difference not what "you" do or provide to the students.
- Being a commuter student doesn't really allow for much social interaction. IUPUI, by design, is not very conducive to social interactions. The disciplines are very separate. I am currently attending IUPUI classes off campus. Nice building and class space.
- The ideal social environment for me would be more seating and cozier buildings. Alot of the buildings feel "cold" and univiting.
- I think the Campus Center is a good start to creating a social environment.
- Things are getting better, but there is still room for improvement. We need to bring speakers and musicians to campus. We also need more quiet places on campus. It's not even quiet in the library!
- Living in the Campus Apartments, I feel there is a great need for a larger area for students to congregate/socialize, such as a housing community center or a Dining Hall!
- The ideal social environment at IUPUI has improved greatly due to the opening of the campus center. The ideal environment would be to always have some form of academic/non-academic entertainment events occurring almost constantly. The new campus center can provide us with this opportunity.
- My experience is that some departments do not give much information on programs that might interest students within that area. Students are unaware of what is available or where to go. Websites need to be updated.
- I believe that the ideal social enviroment would include having a place where you can just sit and hang out. Having the new student center is a drastic improvement in that aspect. If the times for meetings were more flexible it would allow everyone to participate regardless of what time they have classes.

- The social environment is good except I often find the events I want to attend are during the day while I am at work.
- i really like the new "social enviroments" in the business side of IUPUI and the campus center. They are comfortable and nice. i would like to know places to learn about campus events in those places
- I would like more cheaper iupui housing options. I would like campus to be more friend oriented. I feel like most people come to campus to go to class without bothering to make friends, then head home immediately afterward. I think that there should be other places to eat than just the campus center, also. I think that the old health department building should be turned into housing or something. I think that there should be frat houses.
- I think if students could sign up for an e-mail or something that comes maybe once a month to tell them what events will be hsppening on campus that month. Maybe there already is one, but I don't know of it.
- I just think that there need to be more events that are better publicized. Having a poster on the 2nd floor of Cavanaugh isn't enough to get people to come. I think there should also be more events geared at getting people to get to know one another instead of bringing people they already do know and that's it.
- More reasons for commuter students to stay on campus.
- Most students go home on the weekends. I think that there should be events to make them want to stay here. It is very boring on the weekends. I think that there should be a baseball team adn a track and field team. Also there should be some big name performers to come to campus and have a concert. Maybe have a fair of some sort. ahve these on the weekends so that people can still attend.
- IUPUI should be more welcoming to Greek life. It is starting to become a more traditional campus, however, instead of apartments, there should be dorms, and also there should be a few fraternity houses on or directly near campus.
- The social environment is a huge disappointment. It's really still a commuter college. Real student dorms like other colleges could change things. There is nothing to do at night or on weekends.
- a commuter campus that offers options to students when they are on campus. IUPUI is not IUB or Purdue, it is a commuter campus.
- The social environment at IUPUI needs to be welcoming and inviting to a diverse community of students. More of an imphasis needs to be place on programs that promote and respect diversity.
- Aligned with the sentiments of Alexis De Toqcueville, allowing all students, faculty and staff to have no barriers to associational life, which can lead to cooperation and compromise in the public space, thus furthering the "good society" (ideal social environment).
- I'd like to see a variety of events on campus....and ALOT of awareness PRIOR to the events!! Sometimes I miss out on really amazing things because there wasn't enough publicity. There needs to be more connecting with different groups, massive emails, fliers on campus, word of mouth, signs, and maybe it needs to be mentioned in The Sagamore.