

Enrollment Management Overview

Context and Need for an Enrollment Management Approach at IUPUI

As IUPUI implements its strategic plan, *Our Commitment to Indiana and Beyond*, the campus is renewing its focus on student success as a key component of the plan. Several of the plan's initiatives aim at enhancing our effectiveness in serving and educating students, including (1) promote undergraduate student learning and success; (2) increase capacity for graduate education; (3) transform online education; and (4) optimize our enrollment management.

Optimizing our enrollment management is crucial to IUPUI's long-term viability, as there are several factors that influence a student's college choice, academic success, retention, and timely graduation. These include the availability and quality of desired courses and degree programs, the affordability and return-on-investment of a college education, the distribution of scholarships and financial aid, the opportunities and supports provided to students in pursuit of their degree, and the overall learning, employment, and other outcomes realized as a result of college graduation. Additionally, several external pressures demand that IUPUI become more strategically focused in the management of its enrollment, including:

- *Changing demographics of students*—there is an increasingly restricted pipeline of K-12 students, greater diversity of the future college-going population, and increased likelihood that students arriving at college may have amassed some college-level course credit during completion of high school.
- *Increased competition in the higher education marketplace*—a variety of institutional types compete for a share of the college student market--particularly Indiana's market-- making it necessary for institutions to actively and effectively promote their distinctive offerings, experiences, and capabilities to prospective students.
- *Growing concerns of affordability*—students and families are increasingly concerned about the costs of college, becoming more loan-averse coupled with concerns about the employment opportunities for the graduates.
- *Declining funding sources*—state and grant funding has become increasingly difficult to obtain making tuition revenue increasingly important to the fiscal sustainability of the campus
- *Demand for and expectations of degree programs*—past enrollment patterns and behaviors of students may inform some semblance of future demand, but also through the increasing needs articulated from external stakeholders that desire an alignment of higher education offerings to meet the present and emerging economic development priorities of an institution's service region
- *Using "metrics that matter" in determining college effectiveness*—completion, productivity, and quality are indicators of how well an institution is efficiently and effectively attracting, admitting, educating, retaining, supporting, and graduating students

Types of Students that IUPUI seeks to Enroll

Against this backdrop, IUPUI is focusing its undergraduate enrollment efforts on four broad categories of students:

- *Traditionally-aged students*—IUPUI seeks to increasingly become the institution of first choice for better prepared and more diverse first-time, full-time freshmen, typically those students who are pursuing college immediately upon completion of high school, and for which college attendance is likely their principal activity.
- *Transfer and adult near-completer students*—IUPUI provides opportunities for credits from community and 4-year colleges to be articulated and distributed to specific baccalaureate degree programs at our campus, and through which various means of evidence-based credit awards (e.g., prior learning assessment; military transcript credit) are used to facilitate the degree completion of adult learners with some college but no degree.
- *Domestic, non-resident students*—IUPUI serves as an attractive option for students from other states because of the uniqueness and quality of our degree offerings, IUPUI’s robust health and life sciences program portfolio, and the dynamic learning and living advantages afforded by our urban location.
- *International students*—IUPUI leverages the reputation of its degree offerings from Indiana and Purdue Universities as a means of increasingly attracting more international students to campus, all of whom enrich both the diversity of our campus and the educational experiences for all IUPUI students.

From Enrollment Services to Enrollment Management

In order to sufficiently reach each of these types of students, IUPUI is implementing a more strategic, coordinated enrollment management approach. *Enrollment management* has long been defined as “an organizational concept and a systematic set of activities designed to enable educational institutions to exert more influence over their student enrollments. Organized by strategic planning and supported by institutional research, enrollment management activities concern student college choice, transition to college, student attrition and retention, and student outcomes. These processes are studied to guide institutional practices in the areas of new student recruitment and financial aid, student support services, curriculum development, and other academic areas that affect enrollments, student persistence, and student outcomes from college” (p.5).¹

In the past, an “enrollment services” approach emphasized the provision of services to students at key times while the enrollment management approach emphasizes a comprehensive and holistic approach to plan for and implement a coordinated student experience with the planning for and execution of the experience integrated across the campus. Comprehensive enrollment

¹ Hossler, D., Bean, J. P., & Associates. (1990). *The Strategic Management of College Enrollments*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

management which incorporates *both* undergraduate and graduate/professional students will enable IUPUI to better manage the entire student lifecycle, including how students initially come in contact with our campus, to their initial enrollment, through their graduation, and, ultimately, as an engaged and proud alumni of the campus.² Discrete components of this lifecycle include identifying and engaging the following individuals at both the undergraduate and graduate/professional levels:

- *Suspect*, individuals IUPUI identifies, contacts, and seeks to recruit as applicants for admission
- *Prospect*, individuals who make inquiries to IUPUI as prospective students who are interested in admission
- *Applicant*, suspects and prospects that successfully apply for admission to IUPUI
- *Admit*, applicants who are offered admission to IUPUI
- *Enrolled*, admitted students who subsequently enroll at IUPUI
- *Retained*, enrolled students who are successfully retained as students at IUPUI
- *Graduated*, retained students who persist to degree completion and graduate from IUPUI
- *Active Alumni*, graduates who are involved in, contribute to, and otherwise support IUPUI after graduation

Key to this vision is the envisioning of the students in each category as simply an earlier stage of the end goal—creating satisfied, successful, and active graduates of the campus. With this perspective, the individual categories are not destinations for the student to reach. Instead, they serve as important steps towards the final goal of graduating and post-graduation success. This difference in perspective will require and capitalize on collaboration across campus units who have previously been seen as distinct in their mission on campus. For example, Undergraduate Admissions is now the providers of future graduates to freshman advisors and will need to increasingly collaborate with advisors to inform them of what types of students are enrolling and what needs they may have. Conversely, advisors will then provide responses to admissions helping them refine admission and recruitment practices to better identify and recruit future classes to campus.

Strategic alignment of student recruitment, enrollment, and retention activities must balance the needs of the IUPUI campus and its internal and external stakeholders with those of individual academic units and degree programs. Thus, enrollment management at IUPUI will be:

- *Intentional*—identifying, determining, and implementing strategies, degree programs, and other interventions aimed at capitalizing on opportunities

² Wilkinson, R.B., Taylor, J.S., Peterson, A., & Machada-Taylor, M.L. (2007). *A Practical Guide to Strategic Enrollment Management Planning*. Virginia Beach, VA: Educational Policy Institute.

- *Proactive*—planning and acting in advance to deal with anticipated or expected occurrences or situations so that change can be initiated rather than acting primarily in response to events
- *Coordinated*—providing campus-level alignment of student recruitment, enrollment, and retention efforts
- *Data-driven*—using predictive analytics, yield ratios, and other evidence-based information to inform policies and practices related to enrollment management
- *Future oriented*—making strategic decisions that over time help to enhance and shape the profile of students and mix of degree programs
- *Planned*—creating specific recruitment, enrollment, and retention goals and metrics that can be used to guide the implementation of specific actions designed to achieve those goals
- *Model-driven in spending*—allocating financial aid and other resources for students in a manner that produces a measurable and desired return-on-investment
- *Focused on financial knowledge delivery*—equipping stakeholders with information about financial literacy to make wise decisions
- *Educational*—increasing external and internal stakeholder knowledge about IUPUI's range of program opportunities; our specific recruitment, enrollment, and retention plans; and college costs, financial choices, and return on investment
- *Unified*—striving for greater consistency and seamless implementation of the various recruitment, enrollment, and retention initiatives undertaken at IUPUI