2016 Strategic Plan Key Question Committee – Final Report

Question(s): *How do we increase graduation rates overall and how do we improve four-year graduation rates in particular?*

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<u>Summary:</u>

This committee investigated regional and national best practices at universities facing completion and graduation issues similar to the ones historically and currently faced at Indiana State University. In the last decade, AASCU institutions, as well as the Association of American Colleges and Universities, have worked to address poor graduation rates for all students, but especially among ethnic/racial minorities and students who are economically disadvantaged, through curriculum reform, developing and sharing best practices in teaching and implementing innovative financial aid and scholarship practices. Many of the recommendations identified below come from this good work.

Key Findings Summary

Key Finding 1	By continuing to direct resources and develop meaningful rewards for teaching and involvement in highly effective student success activities, ISU will improve its graduation rates.
Key Finding 2	A degree plan is necessary but not sufficient; we must intentionally map our curriculum (Foundational Studies and Major curricula) and create evidence-based academic pathways for specific student cohorts.
Key Finding 3	High-impact practices embedded in specific courses as well as general education and major curriculum will increase student learning, completion rates and employability.
Key Finding 4	University policies, which are seemingly neutral, can adversely affect on-time graduation.
Key Finding 5	All students (honors, typical, murky middle, at-risk, underprepared, etc.) need more academic support programs, which are implemented, evaluated and refined in a continuous feedback loop.
Key Finding 6	Students leave ISU because they cannot afford-financially-to stay enrolled.
Key Finding 7	Students leave ISU because they do not feel welcome or safe, or they fail to connect fully with the university, its staff or their fellow students.

Recommended Actions Summary

Recommended Action 1	Recruit, develop, evaluate, reward and promote good teachers; <u>Fully resource</u> the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning
Recommended Action 2	Intentionally map curriculum and create academic pathways using predictive analytic tools, as well as existing resources (e.g. MapWorks)
Recommended Action 3	Fully participate as a LEAP campus in Indiana's statewide LEAP initiative; reinvigorate our commitment to AACU's LEAP initiate, which includes high impact practices such as freshman transition courses,

	academic learning communities, living learning communities problem-based inquiry, undergraduate research, writing across the curriculum, internships
Recommended Action 4	Audit university policies. Review and revise those that adversely affect on-time graduation
Recommended Action 5	Enhance existing academic support services (e.g. bridge programs for the murky middle and mandatory supplemental instruction) and adopt, implement, and evaluate new ones (academic scholarship programs for economically vulnerable students, online brush up courses, mandatory tutorial or students taking online courses).
Recommended Action 6	Adopt tested successful financial aid practices to support students who leave not because of academics, but due to finances or economic insecurity.
Recommend Action 7	Continue to implement best socio-cultural/co-curricular practices to ensure that our students continue to feel welcomed, safe and engaged.

Background:

Indiana State University has implemented a variety of of programs, services and resources to improve its overall completion and graduation rates. Additionally, the institution has developed strategies to ameliorate academic, financial and socio-cultural obstacles to graduation. It also has instituted and plans to expand robust programming associated with residential living, academic cohorts and co-curricular opportunities.

Academic: The establishment of the University College provides a resource for first-year students to have consistent and high quality advising and support. An intrusive, developmental, proactive advising model has been implemented to provide individual-specific and directed support for first-year students in chartering their academic pathway. Additionally, the University College supports and monitors students on academic probation, as well as students readmitted to the university after academic dismissal. The Center for Student Success provides supplemental instruction in gateway courses, as well as tutoring, peer mentoring, monitored study-time and support for students with disabilities, Twenty-First Century Scholars, and academically at-risk students affiliated with the LEAP program.

Financial: The Office of Financial Aid provides financial literacy sessions for participants in New Student Orientation. Supplemental staff and expanded hours of operation during the first month of the fall term increase services to accommodate the high peak times of financial aid processing.

Socio-Cultural: The ISUcceed program sponsored by the Charles E. Brown African American Cultural Center provides cohort and individualized student services for academic, socio-cultural and personal transition to college. Sycamore Coaching, First Sycamores, Scholar Corps (as well as other units and programs affiliated with either Student Affairs or Academic Affairs) work to support and stabilize first-generation students and students who are economically at risk as these students navigate their way through the often-daunting college experience. The on-campus food bank and the Career Center's Clothing Closet assist students who are food insecure or lack the professional attire required for professional situations. Establishing the Office of Multicultural Services and Programs will provide

resources for a large and diverse student population, specifically offering resources to student who identify as multi-racial, multi-ethnic, African-American, Latino, International, LGBTQ, and female.

Residential: Expansion of academic living-learning communities provides theme and cohort based environments for students pursuing like-focused areas of study or exploration. These communities include multi-cultural, women, leadership, and academic/major interests. New programming in University Housing creates intentional social and learning environments for specific populations, including the University Apartments sophomore community, 500 Wabash twenty-one year old community, Reeve Hall sorority community, Pickerl Hall's Honors community, Sandison's nursing and applied health community, the multi-cultural men and women achieving scholarship communities and the Mill's Hall Project Success freshman communities.

Co-Curricular: Implementation of the Programs All Weekend model provides a concurrent programming model for diverse interests and populations on Saturday and Sunday. The development of the new *Icon and Legacy* initiative has resulted in an increase in intensive monthly programming throughout the academic year. Leadership development has expanded to include specific leadership development training and retreats for first-year students, international students, multi-cultural and African American students, fraternity and sorority members, student organization officers and women.

Analysis Methods:

The committee membership included representatives from Residence Life and Housing, the Faculty, Student Publications, the Student Body, the Career Center, Student Affairs and the University College. As noted above, the committee investigated the national and regional best practices in the core areas of academics, financial support, socio-cultural and co-curricular. We drew upon the resources below, as well as others, to develop our recommendations.

Arizona Assurance Scholars Program—University of Arizona
https://financialaid.arizona.edu/undergraduate/arizona-assurance-scholars-program

Better Data, Better Rates (November 29, 2011)
https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2011/11/29/report-suggests-approach-improving-graduation-rates

"Dia Familiar Latino" University Urbana-Champagne IL initiative https://oiir.illinois.edu/la-casa-cultural-latina/la-casa-events/latinao-family-visit-day/latinao-family-visit-day-spanish

Campus Co-operative Residence—University of Toronto http://www.campus.coop/

Choosing to Improve: Voices from Colleges and Universities with Better Graduation Rates (2005)
https://www.sdbor.edu/services/studentaffairs/documents/ChoosingtoImprove.pdf

Cooperative Housing—Cornell University https://living.sas.cornell.edu/live/wheretolive/co-ops/

"Examining the Tangible and Psychosocial Benefits of Financial Aid with Student Access, Engagement, and Degree Attainment" http://abs.sagepub.com/content/49/12/1636.short

Experts Debate Graduation Rates for Online Students http://www.usnews.com/education/online-education/articles/2015/01/30/experts-debate-graduation-rates-for-online-students

Fact Sheet: Focusing Higher Education on Student Success (July 27, 2015) http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/fact-sheet-focusing-higher-education-student-success

Guided Pathways to Success (less choice more direction) http://completecollege.org/the-game-changers/#clickBoxTeal

Predictive Analytics: Sharing Intel on Completion https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2014/09/17/university-innovation-alliance-kicks-big-completion-goals

https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/08/10/officials-11-partnering-universities-share-strategies-helping-students-graduate

http://www.theuia.org/sites/default/files/UIA-Vision-Prospectus.pdf

The Murky Middle (September 10, 2014) https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2014/09/10/maximize-graduation-rates-colleges-should-focus-middle-range-students-research-shows

The University Leadership Network—UT Austin https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/08/10/officials-11-partnering-universities-share-strategies-helping-students-graduate;

Tuition and Financial Aid Incentives for Improving Graduation Rates (Hanover Research, 2014) http://www.hanoverresearch.com/media/Tuition-and-Financial-Aid-Incentives-for-Improving-Graduation-Rates.pdf

Understand the Differences between a Co-Op, Internship http://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/articles/2015/03/31/understand-the-differences-between-a-co-op-internship

University of Texas-Summer Bridge http://ddce.utexas.edu/academiccenter/summer-bridge/

"Unmasking the Effects of Student Engagement on First-Year College Grades and Persistence" George D. Kuh, Ty M. Cruce, Rick Shoup, Jillian Kinzie, Robert M. Gonyea http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/jhe/summary/v079/79.5.kuh.html

Utah Valley University-Free online math refresher course (May 19th, 2015)—Utah Valley University http://higheredutah.org/free-online-math-refresher-course-at-uvu-designed-to-help-students- succeed/

What is wrong with the Completion Agenda and What Can We Do about It? (Winter 2012) https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/whats-wrong-completion-agenda%E2%80%94and-what-we-can-do-about-it

"What Matters to Student Success" Kuh, George, D. 2009 https://open.library.ubc.ca/cIRcle/collections/ubccommunityandpartnerspublicati/8689/items/1.0086031

Why College Co-Op Programs Totally Rock (2012) http://www.forbes.com/sites/troyonink/2012/02/27/why-college-co-op-programs-totally-rock/

Key Findings:

Peer universities have improved their graduation rates by:

- Focusing on ensuring high quality teaching and increased student learning
- Resourcing and rewarding effective high-quality student success initiatives
- Intentionally mapping curriculum and creating evidence-based academic pathways for specific student cohorts
- Embedding high impact practices in all curriculum
- Reviewing and modifying university policies that adversely affect on-time graduation.
- Implementing innovative financial aid and scholarship programs that support economically-at-risk students, but incentivize academic advancement
- Implementing leading edge socio-cultural/co-curricular practices to ensure students feel welcome, safe and engaged

Recommended Actions:

The committee reviewed peer institutions who have implemented programs, services and policies that have positively influenced retention and improved graduation rates. Through this review, we have identified high impact strategies that have the capacity to improve ISU's graduation rates. We offer specific recommendations within the core areas (academic, financial, socio-cultural, residential and co-curricular).

Academic:

Recruitment Practices in Keeping with the University's Mission: Develop recruitment/ hiring procedures that prioritize candidates with the capacity to teach and advise well, based upon strong inter-cultural communication skills, developmental but rigorous pedagogical practices, and an unwavering commitment to student success.

Student Success Track for Tenure and Promotion: Develop differentiated tracks to tenure/promotion—permit faculty to secure tenure/ promotion via a Student Success Track, which emphasizes high quality teaching/ advising, the development of/ participation in community engagement/experiential learning activities, and the implementation of new strategies that measurably improve student success.

> High Quality Teaching: Scholarly work on graduation and retention identifies high quality teaching as the foundation for improving persistence, retention and graduation. Indiana State University's reward structure and tenure and promotion documents should reflect the importance of high quality teaching. It matters whether there is a genuine emphasis on the quality of undergraduate teaching and learning, because academic success and degree completion are highly correlated.

A Fully Resourced Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning: To improve instruction across all disciplines, ISU should fully resource the FCTE. This includes the funding for additional staff members or faculty fellows and the monies to create incentive-based learning communities and support for faculty as they work to embed high impact practices in their courses.

> <u>Summer-Bridge Program for New Faculty and Staff</u>: Develop a mandatory summer-bridge program for new faculty/ staff where they learn about our students, the economic, socio-cultural and academic challenges students face, the strengths and value students bring to the institution, and best practices faculty and staff can employ to optimize student success.

> <u>Foundational Studies Instructor Certificates</u>: Implement a mandatory certification process for instructors of Foundational Studies courses (modules would include, Inclusive Excellence, Empowering Students from Background(s) of Poverty, Difficult Conversations, etc.).

> <u>Pedagogy Course for Incoming Faculty</u>: Because ISU is a teaching focused University with a diverse population of students, we recommend that incoming faculty at all junior-levels (assistant professors, instructors, and adjuncts) be required to participate in a pedagogy course before or during their first semester of teaching at ISU. Unlike the current New Faculty Orientation, this course will focus on best teaching practices, pedagogical approaches, and class management. While instructors coming from Education and some Humanities disciplines have had pedagogy courses as part of their doctoral coursework, most of our incoming faculty members have not had such instruction, and in order to improve student learning, such a course is necessary. Those faculty members have a pedagogy course on their academic transcripts will have met the requirement.

Resources to "Follow" Persistence, Retention and Graduation Rates: Allocate Department and College resources based on junior and senior level retention rates as well as 4 year or on-time graduation.

Curriculum Maps and Academic Pathways: Intentionally map all curriculums and create academic pathways using predictive analytic tools, as well as existing resources (e.g. MapWorks)

> <u>Warning Label</u>: ISU should provide information about degree of academic preparedness required for, as well as level of academic rigor expected in all degree programs. Many universities, as well as individual academic programs, publish academic expectations as well as data about whom they accept into selective programs or about students (graduation, secured employment) who have successfully completed their programs.

> <u>Predictive Analytics</u>: Utilize predictive analytics, a data-driven approach to predict capacity and identify students that may require enhanced supplemental instruction, financial literacy counseling, and intrusive advising.

High Impact Practices: Embed high impact practices in Foundational Studies as well as in major curriculum. Such practices include, but are not limited to, freshman transition courses for all incoming freshmen (2.0 credits of content with 1.0 credit with an academic advisor), academic learning

communities, living learning communities, problem-based inquiry, undergraduate research, writing across the curriculum and internships.

Writing Instruction across the Sycamore Community: Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses notes that while most students do not learn much in the way of critical thinking after their first three semesters in college, the one notable exception was with students who wrote frequently in their courses. A more recent study by writing specialists Paul Anderson, Robert M. Gonyea, Chris Anson, and Charles Paine, however, concludes that ""Effective writing practices are associated much more strongly than the amount of writing with greater student learning and development…There are undoubtedly instances where there is no student writing or so little that more would be salutary. However, the important lesson from our study is that quality matters -- that in many situations it would be better to place more emphasis on the design and use of the assignments than on the number or size of them." Effective writing has been repeatedly linked to student success, and thus in order to improve our own retention and completion we make the following recommendations to help improve writing instruction on our campus:

Number of Students Enrolled in Composition Courses: Decrease the number of writing students instructors teach: The National Council of Teachers of English explains, "Sound writing instruction is provided by instructors with reasonable and equitable working conditions." They further explain, "Institutions can provide reasonable and equitable working conditions by establishing teaching loads and class sizes that are consistent with disciplinary norms. No more than 20 students should be permitted in any writing class. Ideally, classes should be limited to 15. Remedial or developmental sections should be limited to 15 students. No English faculty members should teach more than 60 writing students a term." Currently, writing instructors teach five writing courses a semester with 25 students enrolled in each course. This is more than double the disciplinary recommendations. Due to current working conditions, our writing instructors cannot give our students, especially those who need the most help, what they need. Successful writing instruction requires detailed formative feedback combined with summative assessments. With 125 students a semester, best practice writing instruction is impossible.

Writing Pedagogy Series: One way to improve writing instruction on campus is to provide a Teaching of Writing series for our instructors (both those who teach in the English Department and those who teach outside of it). However, due to the working conditions of the instructors and adjuncts who often teach ISU's writing-intensive courses some sort of incentive (be it a stipend of a course release) would need to be provided in order to encourage participation. This could function like the current online teaching course that Foundational Studies offers. Because most of our instructors do not have PhDs or even MAs in Rhetoric and Composition, such a series would focus on best writing pedagogy, course design, and assessment practices. Another way to encourage best practice among writing instructors, is to give them financial support for traveling to conferences that focus on writing instruction, writing across the curriculum, and best teaching practices.

Low-Risk Writing Courses: Currently, ISU does not offer a developmental writing course. Our first-year writing series begins with English 101: Personal Writing and ends with English 105: Academic Writing. Because many of our students need intense writing instruction, we recommend adding an additional introduction to writing course that seeks to support those students in the bottom 15% of writer ability. This course should be 4 or 5 credits, meet 4 or 5 days a week, and be taught by a developmental writing specialist. These courses should not exceed 15 students. In order to encourage a higher standard in these courses (and perhaps in ENG 101), we recommend that these courses be taught Pass / Fail and that the result of the course not influence a students' GPA. While taking the course again may mean setting them behind one course, it will mean greater success in all of their other courses and will thus ultimately serve the students' needs and help them graduate sooner. Students could also move on to English 101 instead of retaking the course.

University Policies and Practices: Create new policies and audit existing policies to increase on-time graduation

Revision of Existing Policies: Revise withdrawal policies so students may only withdraw with an advisor and dean's signature. Revise drop policy so students may only drop 3.0 credits per academic semester. Revise probation policy so that students on academic probation may enroll in more than 13.0 credits. Revise SAP policy to an automatic warning for freshmen who have completed their first semester (no SAP appeal, 60 percent completion instead of 67 percent).

Personal Contact Information: Many students come from with flexible permanent home addresses and phone numbers. These students often change phone numbers and home addresses several times while they are at ISU. ISU faculty and staff have an increasing need to reach out to students for various reasons including following up on deficient interim grades, outreach from faculty about attendance, following up on registration holds, or student specific outreach. These outreach efforts often start with an email to the student, but often the ISU sense of urgency about these issues are different than the students' so they do not check or respond to email quickly if at all. The University College has used intrusive advising techniques in conjunction with the Academic Peer Advocates in Residential Life to reach out to students in a variety of ways and have found that calling students on the phone is the most effective method for reaching students.   In an effort to ensure that ISU has the most updated information on the student as possible, students should be required to update their contact information when they have to reset their password every 90 days so that we maintain updated records.

Enhanced Academic Peer Advocate (APA) Role: The Academic Peer Advocate (APA) position is a live-in student staff position in Residential Life. They are responsible for the academic transition in first-year student communities. The APA position was created six years ago, and each year the role has been updated to promote student success in the residence halls. This includes APAs in Academic Learning Communities becoming Supplemental Instructors for the course tied to the community. While this change has been successful, the role seems to be consistently in the state of transition. To utilize fully APAs on campus, the sub-committee suggests the following:

Enhance training opportunities for APAs—Enhanced training would include requiring all APAs to undergo Supplemental Instructor training, as well as partnership opportunities with the Faculty Center for Teaching Excellence.

Increase number of APAs linked to their residents' classes—Have more APA's who are not working in an Academic Learning Community serve as a peer assistant in a freshmen transition course for their residents. This would allow APA's to collaborate more closely with UC advisors and other campus partners to ensure intrusive advising and academic support is consistent.

Continue to support an academic environment—Academic Initiatives in the halls (helping residents create goals, study tables, etc.) help reinforce this environment, and the more that those initiatives can be informed by MAP Works data, the better those initiatives will serve those students.

Assessment Data on impact of the APA—Residents have shared that interactions with their APAs have positively influenced their collegiate experience. However, little assessment data exists to reinforce that specific APA initiatives positively influenced a resident's academic experience. There must be an increase in assessment data linking APA intervention to trends in retention, positive academic performance, and GPA.

Incorporate more Campus Data to MAP Works: MAP Works has been utilized as a platform to increase student retention and success. Several inputs help generate predictive results of how successful the student will be at ISU, including Campus Data and MAP Works survey results. An opportunity exists to strengthen the amount of Campus Data we add to a student's file to continuously evaluate and update a student's risk of leaving ISU. The sub-committee suggests increasing the amount of Campus Data that is loaded to MAP Works. One example of this would be working with OIT to load regularly class grades from Blackboard to MAP Works, so that UC advisors can identify if a student is struggling in one or more classes. If classroom grades were added on a more consistent basis, there would be a real-time ability to identify if a student is struggling in one or more classes, and intervention could occur earlier than during the interim grading period.

Student Bridge Programs: Expand and heavily subsidize summer bridge programs for incoming freshmen in the 2.5 to 3.25 cumulative high school GPA range (the murky middle).

New Scholarship Practices: Adopt tested scholarship practices (e.g. The Arizona Assurance Scholars Program) which ensure the academic success of low-income students.

Arizona's Assurance Scholars Program: Arizona's Assurance Scholar Program is financial aid program for low-income students designed to assist students by providing both financial aid and support services to attain successfully their bachelor's degree. The Assurance Program collaborates with college and departments on campus to provide scholars with comprehensive programming from their first year through their senior year, so that they are able to have a smooth transition into and out of the university upon graduation. The mission of Assurance Scholars is achieved through first year transition programming, mentoring, leadership, and career development, graduate/professional school preparation and cultural enrichment.

Offer Online Tutorials, Learning Modules, 1.0 credit Mini Courses for Students to Brush Up on Quantitative Literacy or Writing Skills: Universities employ these strategies to assist under-prepared students to get up-to-speed before enrolling in their first semester of classes.

Require ALL Incoming Students to Enroll in Freshmen Transition Course (FTC), a First-Year Experience (FYE) course or an Academic Learning Community: Examples include Freshman Transition course 1.0 credit—academic advisor teaches the course in which their advisees are enrolled. The grade in the course is used as a predictor of completion: "A" indicates student is focused and prepared for college where a "C" suggests that student is not necessarily prepared to succeed and persist. "C" (or worse) students receive more intrusive support the second semester.

Gateway Courses/Supplemental Instruction: Supplemental instruction embedded in gateway courses as a required component (similar to a lab/tutorial) which is graded and reflected in transcripts and academic progress.

Mandatory Orientation for Online Courses: Require all students enrolling at Indiana State to take an online orientation to prepare them for taking online classes. The orientation will be designed to both familiarize students with online class system offerings at ISU and to prepare them for taking classes in an on-line environment. Students will learn about how to use online resources to prepare for classes and how to stay connected with classmates and instructors for courses. The orientation will also to help determine an incoming student's competency level for possessing the required computer skills that are needed to successfully learn and complete online classes. Students will not be permitted to register for online classes until they complete an online orientation.

Financial:

College Score Card and Financial Aid Shopping Sheet: Increases transparency for students and families so that they can make informed decisions using tools such as the College Scorecard and the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet to select an institution that is a good financial fit, best-suited to meet their academic needs and consistent with their educational and career goals.

"Roll-Over Credits": Allow students to take unused credits during Summer term that were not used during the Fall/Spring terms. Tuition rates are consistent for full-time enrolled students whether taking 12 or 18 hours. Students should be able to roll over unused credits to the summer and be able to take courses tuition free. For example, if a student enrolled in 24 credits in the fall and spring, they could "bank" the extra 12 credits to use in the summer academic session.

Campus Co-Operative Programs: Develop co-operative programs that include free or pro-rated housing, student employment and internship opportunities to address the financial demands of college.

Student Employment Alternatives for Tuition/Fee Assistance: Indiana State University prides itself on being an affordable option for students in Indiana. This often means that many of our students are coming from lower and lower-middle economic backgrounds. These students often struggle to pay the costs associated with attending a university, even when they have a significant amount of financial aid. One way to help student offset those costs, would be to create a program similar to student employment except the jobs would directly pay for university expenses. An example would be that an

office could hire a student to work a minimum of hours a semester/week and that work would directly pay toward tuition/fees/books and any hours worked above the minimum would then be in an hourly wage. Campuses across the country have a variety of examples from co-op housing opportunities at Michigan State to the Collegiate Advantage Program through Dining Services at Eastern Michigan University.

Financial Incentives for Students to Achieve On-Time Graduation: Adopt financial incentive models to improve affordability and increase graduation rates:

> Replace Loans with Grants: Replacing the federal loans of high-need financial aid students with institutional grants, allowing these students to graduate completely or nearly loan-free.

> Free Final Semester: Encouraging on-time graduation by promising a free final semester to all students on-track to complete their degree in four years or less.

> Per-Credit Tuition Discounts: Incentivizing students that enroll in at least 15 credit hours per semester and charging a higher per-credit rate for those taking less than 15 credits per semester.

> Four-Year Completion Bonus: Registering students on a flat-rate tuition plan where they are deemed eligible for a tuition reduction and additional monetary bonus if they graduate on time.

Socio-Cultural:

Recruitment, Retention and Completion Initiatives for New/Incoming Undergraduate Populations: Implementation of targeted preview days/orientations focusing on the unique needs of emerging populations, including Latino, veteran, first-generation.

Multicultural Services and Programs: To provide support in transition to college for identified populations and to create greater cultural competencies amongst all students. The primary goal would be to increase civility and to reduce bullying and bigotry.

Housing/Residence Life: Increased staffing and greater enforcement of conduct policies promoting civility and respect. Imbedded living-learning communities provide for cohort advancement in academic and personal well-being.

New ISUcceed Scholarship Program: This university scholarship network would focus on a population with historically low retention and graduation rates. Students in the program receive additional scholarship funds (e.g., $5,000) throughout the year, but never in one lump sum. Rather, they receive $1,000 during the first month of the fall and spring semesters and $500 each month during the rest of the semester. To earn the scholarship, first-year students must attend a weekly speaker series and small group sessions with peer mentors, complete 10 hours of service a semester, have 30 hours of courses completed before their sophomore year, have a GPA of 2.0 or higher, and attend one to two network events each semester. During their second year, students are matched up with a campus partner for an internship in an area of interest for that student. (See: Arizona's Assurance Scholar Program and University of Texas-Austin's University Leadership Network)

Co-Curricular:

Introduce Prospective Students Early to Student Engagement Opportunities: Indiana State University Map Works data (2014-15) report that 64.4% respondents are "moderately" to "extremely" likely to participate in a student organization during the fall semester (Map Works, question 69: Campus Involvement: During this term, to what degree do you intend to Participate in a Student Organization). The results of ISU's NSSE report also indicate that student engagement is positively impacted by student participation in extracurricular activities.

> To more fully develop opportunities for pre-entry students to be introduced to organizations/activities/on-campus programming, the university should broaden its efforts focusing on introducing co-curricular opportunities during Campus Tours, Sycamore Preview Days and New Student Orientation (scholarship continues to support there is a strong positive relationship between engagement and student success). Specifically, prospective and admitted students should be provided information about accessing the ISU TreeHouse (OrgSync) where they can explore student organizations, learn about campus programs, and identify niche categories of interest or exploration. Enhancing a familiarity with student life creates a sense of connectedness and sense of belonging prior to a student enrolling in classes. Again, Map Works data administered during the Fall semester reveals that 26.7% of respondents indicate "not at all" or only "moderately" that they "belong here" (Map Works question 149: Sense of Belonging: Overall, to what do degree do you belong here?). In addition, 25.7% of respondents indicate "not at all" or only "moderately" regarding "fitting in" at Indiana State University (Map Works question 150: Sense of Belonging: Overall, to what degree are you fitting in?).

> By examining early-Fall data, we can assess that a quarter of our student population – primarily first year students – have not developed a sense of belonging, often impacted by a lack of engagement with co-curricular experiences.

*Expanded student organization expo and creation of pre-professional organizations connected to academic discipline and career preparednes*s: Focus on getting students engaged and connected to the campus, particularly in the critical first year.

> Indiana State University now boasts 300 different student organizations. During the first 30 days of the Fall semester, the Student Org Expo should be expanded to include additional student organization and rewards should be made available for those groups that do participate, including funding from Student Government Association. The Student Org Expo should be organized with a categorical grouping of student organizations allowing students exploring different involvement opportunities a natural flow through like-focused organization in a mapped manner. A larger venue should be sought for hosting this program, which could incorporate a demonstration area for performance-based organizations to display their talents (as opposed to simply an information table). A greater collaboration with Residential Life should be pursued which should include this experience as a component of the Residential Curriculum that all on-campus residents are exposed to and expected to participate in.

Student Affairs should work intentionally with academic departments in examining how to establish student organizations connected with each academic discipline and increasing the number of pre-professional organizations. NSSE data indicates that engagement is enhanced with strong student-faculty interaction, and these student organizations provide academic and professional growth under the guidance and advisement of a faculty member.

Implement intentional programming around why balanced engagement and involvement in student life helps with completion and 4 year graduation: The greatest impact appears to stem from students' total level of campus engagement, particularly when there is an identified linkage among academic, interpersonal, and extracurricular involvements.

Health, wellness, and recreation have a direct correlation on student persistence and retention. An assessment conducted in Fall 2015 by the PhD cohort in Education Administration (Bayh College of Education) reported that as a student's frequency in utilizing the Student Recreation Center is measured in their retention from semester to semester. The higher number of visits to the Rec Center is related to increased retention.

Fall 2014 Cohort

# of SRC Visits	# of Students	# Retained Spring 2015	Percent
1-15	302	140	46.4%
16-30	504	353	70%
31-50	313	245	78.3%
51+	403	321	79.7%

Similar data exists for previous cohorts. Based on these findings, it is essential that first year students be introduced to the Student Recreation Center and engaged in the myriad of services offered: general recreation, group fitness, intramurals, club sports, exercise, and wellness. The Fresh HIT (Healthy Inspired Trees) program should be expanded in partnership with PE 101, Residential Life, and weekend programming. The Fresh HIT program provides continued interactions with diverse students in a collaborative learning environment (NSSE: Learning with Peers).