

## **Strategic Planning Proposal**

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## **Introduction**

In an effort to uphold the prestige of IU Bloomington as an exemplary undergraduate institution, the OVPUE strategic planning initiative will concentrate on developing an adaptive approach to personal, academic, and professional transitions through implementation of a collaborative and engaging experience for first-year students. The initiative will address the dynamics of future work environments, encouraging students to prepare a competitive plan for success at the university and beyond while developing critical communication skills that will enhance educational pursuits.

## **Research**

- I. General resources available at:
  - A. <http://www.indiana.edu/~provost/plan/about.shtml>
  - B. [http://www.indiana.edu/~provost/docs/IUB-SP\\_Exec\\_Team\\_Summary\\_10.7.13.pdf](http://www.indiana.edu/~provost/docs/IUB-SP_Exec_Team_Summary_10.7.13.pdf)
  - C. <http://www.indiana.edu/~provost/docs/IUB-SP%20Mid-Course%20Summary.pdf>
  - D. <http://www.indiana.edu/~provost/docs/IUB-SP-Undergraduate12.17.13.pdf>
  - E. New Academic Directions
  - F. Old Crescent Report
  - G. 2014 Campus Strategic Plan
    1. Undergraduate Education Committee Team Report
- II. The Student Perspective
  - A. The Strategic Planning Committee identifies several problems that contribute to a fragmented and otherwise overwhelming transition for incoming freshman and transfer students.
    1. Too many resources are being presented to first-year students and knowledge of this information is not being retained.
    2. Students are not taking full advantage of the opportunities that are available to them. Although it is extremely important to plan ahead in order to graduate in four years, many students do not prioritize career or academic planning. There are also students who do not participate in extracurricular activities, which present valuable experiences for students as they enter a changing job market.
    3. Students must acknowledge the benefits of independence by acquiring skills that enable them to move ahead. Among them, technological proficiency and financial literacy are ubiquitous in modern society.
    4. Students are generally wary of career development courses (e.g. Kelley COMPASS) and do not respond enthusiastically to added requirements. Thus, the course must actively engage students and provide instruction that is relevant and flexible. Career development should not be the only agenda of this course.
  - B. In an effort to provide a cohesive representation of student perspectives, the Committee organized a focus group with the following students:

**Sara Zaheer - Political Science Major, Freshman**  
**Adam Kruchten - Math Major, Sophomore**

    1. Many career development resources are made available through the school, but few students know how to utilize them to their advantage. Although the skills that may be obtained through career development courses have value, there is no

need to create a separate class to achieve this purpose – supplemental advocacy and/or encouragement is sufficient.

- a) There are negative connotations of career development courses (easy credit).
2. Employers are looking for individuals with the right skill sets to succeed in diverse environments.
  - a) Public speaking
  - b) Technological proficiency
  - c) Resource management
  - d) Internet research
  - e) Collaboration
    - (1) Although there seems to be strong aversion for students to work in teams for projects, it is simply because people do not know how to work in a team effectively. Guided collaboration would be useful for high school students entering university with very limited experience.
    - (2) K201/K204 – Instructor emphasizes individual accountability in teams with a contract.
3. All students should get involved, whether that is through a student organization on campus or through volunteering in the community. The school should encourage active extracurricular participation to boost student success.
4. One of the greatest challenges in transitioning from high school to university life is dealing with newfound independence. The sheer amount of events, activities, and information that bombard students is an overwhelming experience. Furthermore, development of good study habits must be encouraged to facilitate a smooth transition into college-level academic material.
5. Financial literacy is essential as students are being forced to accept responsibility for their finances for perhaps the first time.

### III. Administrative Perspective

- A. Two platforms of the new Strategic Plan offer perspective into the administration's association with the formation of university-wide curriculum in professional development:
  1. Undergraduate Life
  2. Research

#### Undergraduate Life

The vision statement declares that the university hopes the undergraduate experience “launches [students] successfully into their futures.” Various factors contribute to a successful transition from the university to a career: University relationships with companies (a strong alumni network, on-campus recruiting), an office of career services (facilitates relationships between students and hiring institutions, provides guidance with interviews and resumes), and the necessary educational preparation developed through applicable studies and extra-curricular involvement.

The campus is well-positioned to integrate the value of the second point through curriculum offered or mandated to all freshmen.

1. Undergraduate Life: Objective 7--We will inspire all undergraduate students to embrace high impact curricular and co-curricular practices; assure that such practices are a part of every IUB student's experience; and create indelible connections between our undergraduates and our campus.
  - a) Career development curriculum would allow each individual school to introduce students to the extra-curricular opportunities that present opportunities for subject-oriented growth, networking, and other advantages related to different fields.
2. Undergraduate Life: Objective 9--We will enhance academic and life success for our students through high-quality and technologically-enabled advising.
  - a) This curriculum also helps the university achieve its goals of adopting "best practices and metrics for academic and career advising across our campus" and pushing its advising resources to reach "high impact."

### Research

Only one small component of the research platform applies to career development curriculum.

1. Objective 5--We will increase the impact, relevance, and value of our research and creative activity—including its impact on local and state economies—through excellent communications.
  - a) In order to increase the impact and value of this institution's research, the University should encourage or incentivize students to commit to conducting research. Moreover, producing graduates with research experience could contribute to the aforementioned vision of IU launching students into successful careers. Therefore, the career development curriculum could introduce students to available opportunities of research related to each school's academic field, which, in turn, would increase the number of students adding innovative, relevant research to local, state, and national environments.

### IV. Analysis

- A. When comparing the insights provided by students in a focus group and those presented by the Campus Strategic Plan, it becomes apparent that there are multiple areas in need of improvement that overlap between these two groups
  1. Advising
    - a) Students in the focus group mentioned they did not feel like their assigned academic advisors were effective in helping to plan classes that were required, or by providing information to help the students solve problems they might encounter. In the portion of the IUB Strategic Plan devoted to Undergraduate Life, Objective Nine outlines the goals related to improving academic and career advising.
  2. Technology Skills
    - a) The OVPUE Strategic Planning Committee has examined the addition of a class focused on teaching necessary technology skills to students. The necessity of these skills was also emphasized in the focus group, along with public speaking and presentation abilities. Under Undergraduate Life Objective Six, the proposed Certificate in Integrated Arts and Humanities

would require that students be competent in research, presentations, and be digitally literate.

3. Student Involvement

- a) Students in the focus group believe involvement in at least one campus organization not only benefits the student, but makes them more well-rounded, ultimately enhancing student contributions to the community at large. The Strategic Plan (Objective Seven, Undergraduate Life) exactly aligns with this student perspective, and looks forward to the expansion of leadership opportunities and creation of more diverse opportunities for students.

- B. Action must be taken to emphasize the availability of Indiana University's vast collection of career development and student involvement resources. A first year course designed to guide students in the navigation of university life must include and promote access to the most important of these resources without overwhelming the student with excessive information.

V. Response

A. What are the benefits of having a class versus other options?

1. Establishing a non-intensive course to inform individuals of the resources that they have as Indiana University students will prove extremely beneficial. The implementation of a first-year course can guide students through their academic and professional journeys and replace the distribution of excessive amounts of information presented to students at New Student Orientation. Given the novelty of university life, students will not willingly engage in effective career planning until it is too late. It is extremely important that all students be made aware of the graduation requirements and classes required for possible majors; thus, the first-year course can ease students into thinking ahead through required completion of a four-year plan. This structure will improve the efficacy of the advising system, as a great number of commonly asked questions can be answered in class. Requests for more serious or complex appointments can then be honored by advisors.

B. Framework

1. Geocaching

- a) A non-academic component (not limited to geocaching) is encouraged to maintain student interest. Field trips to Lilly Library, the IU Art Museum, and other campus landmarks should also be considered.

2. 8 week course → online component transition

- a) The class should be succinct and informative with an emphasis on material or information that students do not already know. As such, faculty should be flexible and work with students on areas that they identify as most important. The online component transition at the conclusion of the 8 week class will provide guided management of resources, which does not need faculty instruction. In this way, class time will not need to be allocated to tasks that do not actively engage students. Class time should be devoted to presentations, collaborative work, financial planning, etc.

3. 1-credit course, P/F

- a) Having a one-credit course would ensure that students could explore interests without it being too detrimental to their academic record. It is a good tradeoff having the class count for at least some credit as well

because students need some kind of motivation to keep up with the work but also enjoy their studies. In such a low-pressure situation, students will be able to have a unifying experience in the classroom but at the same time, be held accountable for the quality of work or attendance required.

**4. Required for graduation**

a) This requirement will ensure that all students will be required to take this unifying experience prior to graduation.

**5. Required for first year students**

a) Regardless of whether the student is an incoming freshman or a first year transfer student, he or she will need to take this course.

**Structural Insights: Several different focuses that are of benefit to first-year students are highlighted below.**

### **1. Career development:**

Planning ahead is a vital first step for students as they embark on an academic, professional, and personal journey. Knowledge of graduation requirements must be accounted for when planning for a four-year course of education. By encouraging students to reflect on their interests and all of the opportunities available to them through community and campus involvement at the start of their academic career, Indiana University will be able to boast a student body that is highly qualified for post-graduation pursuits.

**Possible models to review:** Penn State Career Services (<http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/career/students/courses.shtml>), Career Development Action Plan Berkeley (<http://hrweb.berkeley.edu/learning/career-development/career-management/planning/action-plan>)

- a) Identifying and Exploring Possible Careers
- b) Constructing a Tentative Four Year Plan
- c) Refining Job Skills
  - 1. Effective Presentations
  - 2. Collaborative Work
  - 3. Workplace Etiquette
  - 4. Critical Thinking and Analysis
- d) Building a Dynamic Resume
- e) Successful Interview Techniques
- f) Internships and Job Experience

### **2. Financial literacy:**

With our changing economy and the increasing number of problems surrounding student debt, students need to be able to effectively budget their lifestyle during and after college. Basic financial literacy skills ensure a higher chance of students living in a stable financial environment. Students must be able to gauge their own financial situation, especially when they become independent of their parent or guardian. Unfortunately, many students are ignorant of these skills when coming to college. It is for these reasons that a financial literacy course is proposed as being mandatory for incoming freshmen and other first-year students.

**Main comparison:** Texas Tech Red to Black Program (<http://www.orgs.ttu.edu/r2b/>)

- b) Establishing credit
- c) Using credit wisely
- d) Creating a budget
- e) Saving money
- f) Investment education
- g) Correcting credit report mistakes
- h) Repaying debt
- i) Organizing finances
- j) Tax planning
- k) Selecting employee benefits
- l) Expenses during or after college
- m) Buying a car or home

#### **Additional Services Offered:**

- a) Peer Financial Planners

- b) Graduate with Plan for Repaying Debt
- c) Plan for Tuition Payments
- d) Comparison of Employment Benefits

**Example #2: University of Wisconsin-Madison**

- [Wisconsin's Model Academic Standards for Financial Literacy](#)
- [Provide financial independence seminar](#)
- [NASFAA Conference materials](#) on implementing a financial literacy program includes description of UW-Madison program
- Description of program dating from 2002 in [CS Monitor story](#)

**Example #3: University of Kansas** provides a financial literacy guide with links to useful resources on the following topics

- Investing/Saving
- Exploring financial aid options
- Educational costs at KU
- Budgeting
- Balancing your checkbooks
- Consumer debt
- Credit cards
- Debt management
- Planning for life after college

**3. Technological Proficiency:**

One problem identified by the board as well as many students includes the fact that there is an apparent lack of knowledge in working with basic computer skills, such as writing an email and using Microsoft Office programs. This becomes detrimental when taking upper level classes that require such skills and when collaborating in group projects. There are some classes in the Kelley Business School such as K201/K204 that specialize in providing such technological instruction to all students who matriculate through that school, which effectively reduces the number of students who are not proficient in those skills. For these reasons, a class similar to or more “toned down” from K201/K204 should be taken by students in order to get everyone to baseline level of technological ability.

a) **Increased utilization of Lynda** (<https://ittraining.iu.edu/lynda/>)

- Lynda.com provides online video-based training on a wide range of IT topics. The service offers video-based eLearning courses on more than 1700 topics, with a primary focus on Adobe, Office, and open source applications and technologies, as well as multimedia and web development, and programming.
- Although lynda.com is ordinarily offered to anyone for a fee, through an agreement between Indiana University and lynda.com, lynda's rich course content is available free of charge to IU students, faculty, and staff through June 30, 2016. The features described below give you a personalized learning experience.
- Features of Lynda.com
  - Personalized learning experience
    - Playlists to build collections of courses you want to watch
    - Bookmarks to mark courses, chapters, videos, and specific section of videos for later viewing

- Course history to view a list of every course you've ever taken since IU implemented the LyndaCampus
  - Certificates of completion to demonstrate that you've completed that course
  - Choosing your player to view compatibility with Flash, QuickTime, or Windows Media Player
  - Communications preference with the Lynda.com monthly newsletter
- Accessibility with an iOS device
- Technological support 24/7
- System timeouts
- Ability for an instructor to use Lynda.com in classes
  - Opens doors for integration of new technology in classrooms
- Search feature for content
  - Closed captioning may also be available in newer courses for video training

b) Skills to focus on

- **Word Processing, File Editing Skills, Creating a Presentation, and Working with Spreadsheets**
  - Modifications should be made to this these after which the files will be saved and submitted.
- **Information literacy & research with IUCAT, JSTOR, etc.**
  - This topic examines your ability to identify and effectively use information resources. You will demonstrate that you are able to locate and evaluate relevant information and apply it to your research.
- **General Vocabulary and Application Knowledge**
  - Defining computer vocabulary
  - Using commonly available software
  - Manipulating windows (maximize, minimize, move, resize)
  - Using menus, toolbar buttons, and keyboard shortcuts to work within each application.

**\*4. No change necessary:**

Although the above recommendations have been thought out and researched, there are also many detrimental side effects to implementation of any 3 of the above outlined suggestions. This is because of the multiple limitations that could be cited by both members of the board as well as students. Some of these weaknesses include: over-analysis of personality traits, too much redundancy, and no maintenance of academic integrity (doing "creative projects" with crayons, markers, glue, etc.). Classes that are meant to cater to many students have the tendency to have too broad of a topic. If there is a class installed regarding this initiative, the Advisory Board suggests that the aforementioned characteristics would best be avoided to ensure high quality work and genuine learning, all while maintaining some kind of academic standard for the class to be taken seriously by students.