

Development of a Degree in Three Transfer Sophomore Merit Program
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This program was made possible through funding received by Indiana University through a multi-year grant from Lilly Endowment, Inc. This transfer merit program identifies high performing sophomores who are transferring into IU Southeast with the goal of completing their degree in 3 years. Mentoring through advising, a one credit hour career planning course, and faculty guidance within a major area was combined with small scholarships and priority scheduling to the students in the program. Each semester, progress of the students is tracked and compared to a matched GPA transfer control group to measure the impact of the program. The purpose of this program is to support high performing transfer students and help ease their transition to Indiana University Southeast while simultaneously helping them to plan their graduation date in the major of their choice.

Fourteen transfer students were identified and invited to participate in the mentor scholarship program. Each of these students had a transfer GPA of 3.0 or higher and had a designated 4 year degree they wanted to obtain at Indiana University Southeast. Each student was encouraged to take an academic planning course and meet with an academic adviser to design their 3 year to graduation plan. Originally, it was expected that they would all take the same course but that proved undoable. In the end, each student took the academic planning course which fit their schedule so they could be a part of the program. There was one designated S154 course that they were invited to take, or the specific academic planning course in their major was assigned. Four students with Business majors, three students with education majors, five with social science majors and one arts and letters students were recruited into the program. Each of these students met with the Dean of Student Success and Retention as part of their orientation to the program. Then each student was introduced to the faculty mentor in charge of their major area. All students were invited to a social events which had faculty from their major areas and other scholarship students in attendance. This began their networking into the schools and majors during the spring 2018 semester. Each semester they will be invited to social events to meet/mingle with the faculty and other students of their area.

Funding had been acquired to support 20 students in this program. However, recruiting of transfer students proved more difficult and only 16 were acquired with 2 dropping out before the program even began. The recruitment of the student students began about a month into the fall semester, and the students' transfer GPA and their decisiveness on major was used to base recruitment. Students' fall 2017 IUS GPAs were examined at the end of their first semester to see how it compared to their transfer GPA. While many of the students were recruited because of their stellar GPA from prior university or community college. Their performance their first semester at IUS was much lower than their past GPA for 50% of the recruits. The analysis revealed that 50% of the students earned a GPA at IUS about 0.90 points less than the GPA they transferred in. Thirty six percent earned about the same level GPA and two or 14% earned a slightly 0.25 higher GPA at IUS. The amount of transfer credit also varied largely across the students. The mean number of credit hours in this group was 40, with some transferring in 27-57 credits. All were classified as transfer sophomores but they did have varying levels of course experience. All students who are participating in the program have a goal of graduating from IUS in 3 or fewer years.

This program was implemented for the first time in fall 2017 cohort. In addition to the matching funds needed for the grant, IU Southeast committed to giving this cohort of students 3 years of scholarship funding to maintain their \$200 Scholarship each fall and spring semester until they graduate.

								Graduation Target
Fall 2017 Transfer Cohort	Transfer Hrs	Fall IUS GPA	Fall 2017	Spring 2018	Fall 2018	Spring 2019	Fall 2019	Spring 2020
Degree3Transfer Persist % (n=14)	39.71	2.99	100%	93%	93%			
Matched Controls Persist % (n=14)	43.07	3.24	100%	93%	71%			
Note: To assess the impact of this program a matched transfer student with the similar major, approximately the same number of transfer credits and a similar fall 2017 IUS GPA were matched to each transfer student in the program.								



Degree in Three Behavioral Contract

Goal: To graduate in four years with a Bachelor’s degree in your major

I, _____,
as a student participating in the Degree in Three program agree to the following conditions:

I will:

- Sign an agreement to participate in the Degree-in-Three program.
- Develop an academic plan with the aid of an Advisor or a Faculty member that maps out my plan to graduate in three years.
- Meet with my academic advisor each semester so that I can get priority scheduling in my classes.
- Ask for any guidance needed to adjust my schedule. Discussing career options can also be a part of my meeting with an academic advisor or a faculty member.
- Respond to Dr. Dahlgren when she sends you emails to see how things are going. She is there to answer any questions or concerns that you might have.
- Attend one or two social events a year where you get to meet professors and students in your major, and meet the other transfer students in the program.

By participating in this program:

- I will earn priority scheduling when registering for classes.
- \$200 scholarship each Fall and Spring semester until Spring 2020.

Student signature

Date