



How to Assess IU2U?: A Pre-Arrival Orientation Program's Assessment of International Student Retention, Academic Performance and Experience

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Introduction

- 8 years of full-time student services employment at Indiana University Bloomington (IUB)
- IU Higher Education Ph.D. Candidate
- Conducted surveys and a focus group analysis



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Purpose

- Employ a case study to show how assessment is implemented in real life and how a program utilized the results
- The case study is a 2017 longitudinal assessment of IUB's IU2U program



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Presentation Learning Outcomes

How IU2U learned to longitudinally assess its program

IU2U assessment outcomes

How IU2U utilized the results



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Table 1.1. What is Assessment

Assessment is the ongoing process of:

Establishing clear measurable expected outcomes of student learning

Ensuring that students have sufficient opportunities to achieve those outcomes

Systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well student learning matches our expectations

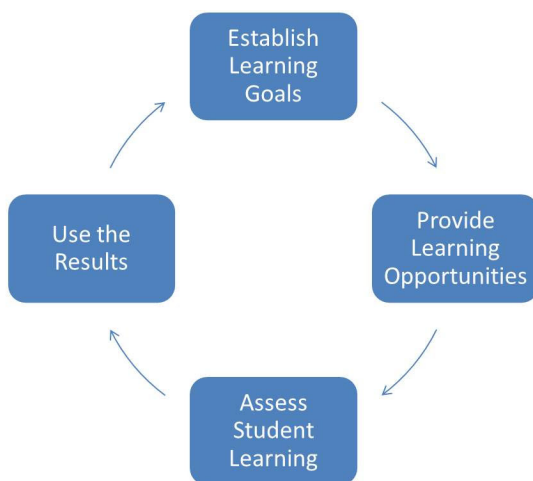
Using the resulting information to understand and improve student learning

Source: Suskie (2009) *Assessing student learning: A common sense guide* p. 4



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Suskie (2009) Assessment Cycle



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Presentation's Use of the Term Assessment

Banta and Palomba (2015) see assessment as including program evaluation and administrative effectiveness



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What is Good Assessment?

- Intentional assessment that is planned in advance of the study
- Identifying bottlenecks
- Implementing program improvements through identifying and collaborating with key partners who have responsibility for implementing the changes

(Blumberg, 2018)



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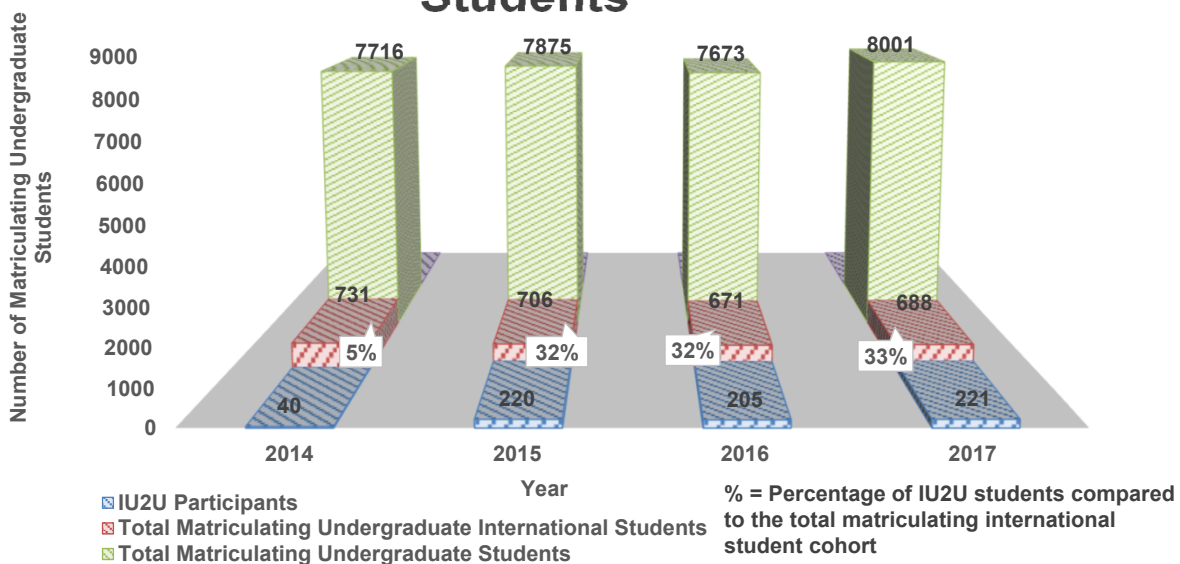
IU2U Program

- Established in 2014 for incoming IUB international undergraduate students
- Bring support and resources to students' home countries through one day orientations for students and parents
- Faculty, staff, and domestic and international student presenters



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2014-2017 Matriculating IUB Undergraduate Students



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Institutional Review Board (IRB)

- IRB approval allows for the research to be presented and published
- Submitted an IRB application and went through IRB review
- IRB Protocol 1703539614
- IRB approval is needed before the assessment begins



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IRB Tips

- Review what is needed to submit IRB as you begin planning your study
- Look at templates and other examples as you prepare your IRB protocol and documents
- Submit your initial IRB protocol ideally about 8 weeks before beginning your study
- Allow time for IRB protocol revisions in case the IRB reviewers request them



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Initial 2017 IU2U Cohort Research Questions

- To what extent does participation in the IU2U program lead students preparing for acculturation a seamless transition to IUB?
- To what extent does IU2U build participant confidence and social support for IUB study?
- From the perspective of IU2U students, which areas of IU2U programming (ex. academic programming, campus engagement, health and safety) are covered well and which areas can be improved?



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IU2U Assessment Method

- Prepared through consulting with campus survey experts and conducting a pilot survey with a few IU2U alumni
- Distributed 3 surveys on Qualtrics with Likert items and open-ended questions
 - May 2017
 - July 2017
 - October 2017
- Put surveys on easy to access Canvas platform and offered October survey respondents a chance to win a \$20 gift card



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PA5

IU2U Survey Results

2017 IU2U cohort = 230

Pre-Program Survey = 37 (16%)

Post-Program Survey = 9 (4%)

First-Semester Survey = 30 (13%)



The assessment had a low response rate issue!



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Discussion

1. How many of you have encountered low response rates in your assessment work?
2. What are some solutions to survey low response rates?



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PA5 Students in China may not be able to access the Pre-Program and Post-Program surveys on the Canvas platform. The students may have trouble accessing Canvas in China.

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2018 Additional Assessment

- Talked with Bloomington Assessment Research Lead Research Analyst/Programmer Stefano Fiorini
- Decided to add quantitative data from 4 IU2U cohorts (2014-2017) and analyze retention and cumulative GPA for all 4 cohorts
- A control group was created by another analyst through utilizing a greedy distance matching approach based on the K-means methods
- Thematic analysis was conducted on survey responses for the qualitative research question
- Took 2 months (while working full-time) to analyze and write a short report summarizing the findings



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Statistical Analysis Tips for Survey Data

- Explore the data and conduct basic descriptive statistics before doing your analysis
- Label variables with short names and create a codebook
- Save all statistical software output with dates (ex. 9.20.2017)
- Maintain a document that summarizes what you did each session and the results



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Final Quantitative Research Questions

- What is the degree of difference in academic performance (cumulative GPA) between IU2U students and the control group across all semesters of enrollment?
- What is the association between IU2U status and IU retention after one semester and one year?
- What differences exist between IU2U students and non-IU2U students for sense of belonging and comfort level in asking for help from professors, academic advisors, RAs and other residential staff, and other campus staff?



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Final Qualitative Research Question

- How do IU2U students employ sense-making and meaning-in-life during their IUB study?
- Pan (2011) resilience framework



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RQ 1: What is the degree of difference in academic performance (cumulative GPA) between IU2U students and the control group across all semesters of enrollment?

IU2U students had a significantly higher end of the semester cumulative GPA ($M = 3.21$, $SD = .67$) compared to the control group ($M = 3.07$, $SD = .84$).



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PA6 RQ 2: What is the association between IU2U status and IU retention after one semester and one year?

	One Semester			Two Semesters		
	Retained	Departed	Total	Retained	Departed	Total
IU2U	676	10	686	433	32	465
Control	661	25	686	418	47	465
Total	1337	35	1372	851	79	930

There was a significant association after the first semester ($1, 1372$) = 6.60, $p = .01$.



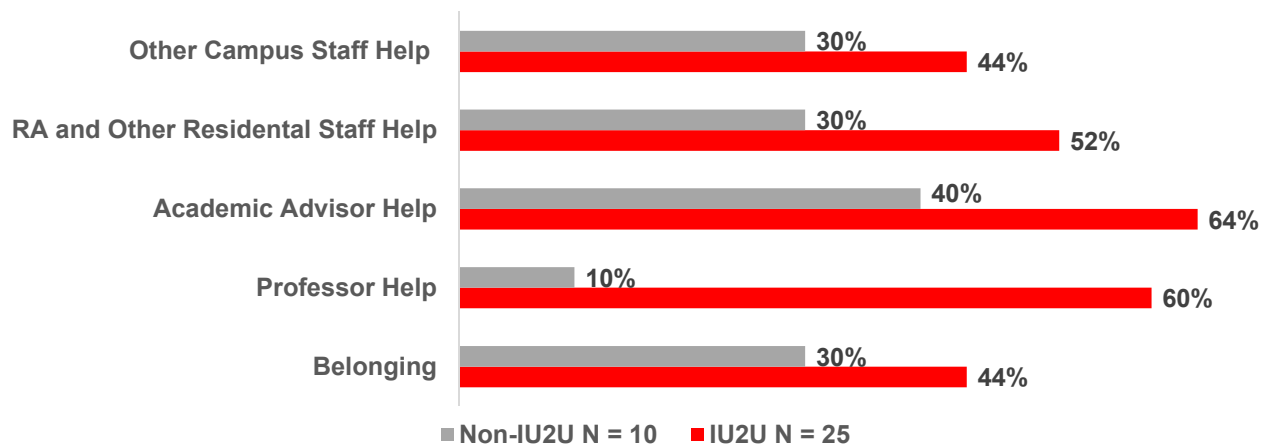
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PA6 The table data is from the beginning of the Spring 2018 semester. The second semester student numbers are lower because they do not include the Fall 2017 cohort.

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PA4 **RQ 3: What differences exist between IU2U students and non-IU2U students for sense of belonging and comfort level in asking for help from professors, academic advisors, RAs and other residential staff, and other campus staff?**



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RQ 4: How do IU2U students employ sense-making and meaning-in-life during their Indiana University Bloomington study?

Sense-making

Explain why you liked a certain part of the workshop the most.

Response about Arrival to Campus programming: "It helped me have a vivid picture of what kinds of situations I will face when I come to IU."

The student finds a way to make meaning and prepare for IUB study.



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- PA4** The chart shows the top response ("Definitely") of a four-point Likert scale for 5 October 2017 survey questions. Mann-Whitney U-Tests for Independent Samples showed that how comfortable students were approaching professors for help was significantly greater for the IU2U group (Median = 4.0) than the non-IU2U group (Median = 3.0).

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RQ 4: How do IU2U students employ sense-making and meaning-in-life during their Indiana University Bloomington study?

Global meaning-in-life

Please explain why you think students are responsible to chose their courses and majors at IUB.

“Because we’re the person who knows ourselves best and we need to plan for our future. We need to learn many skills and have a lot of things to put in our resume and attract many good companies.”

The student finds meaning through examining the question from a global perspective (i.e. post-graduation plans).



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RQ 4: How do IU2U students employ sense-making and meaning-in-life during their Indiana University Bloomington study?

Situational meaning

Please explain why you think students are responsible to chose their courses and majors at IUB.

“Different students are interested in different areas. They will enjoy university life only when they chooses [sic] the classes they really want to take. Their time will not be wasted.”

The student makes meaning of why a smaller objective, major selection, is important in the US context.



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How IU2U Utilized the Results

- 2019 IU2U cohort survey included 2017 survey items
- Data related to retention was shared with campus administrators who determine future IU2U funding
- Used data to determine number of 2020 IU2U U.S. domestic student peer mentors



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November 2018 Presentation

Wrote a paper that was accepted for publication and presentation at the 2018 National Symposium on Student Retention.



THE NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON STUDENT RETENTION
Hosted by the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange at The University of Oklahoma



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Summary of Presentation Learning Outcomes

How IU2U learned to longitudinally assess its program

IU2U assessment outcomes

How IU2U utilized the results



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Final Discussion

In groups of 4 to 5 please discuss the following questions.

1. What are other ways IU2U can conduct program assessment?
2. How can you assess individuals from other non-English speaking countries, especially if you are surveying individuals from many different countries? Should it be done in English or the individual's native language?
3. Every country has its own cultural nuances. Cultural nuances refer to how certain words are interpreted in a culture. For example "we will see about that" can mean "no" in Chinese culture. How do you account for cultural nuance in assessment?



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Questions?

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