

Retention Action Plan – Draft Indiana University South Bend December 8, 2002

Retention Statement

Indiana University South Bend consistently shows that it is successfully making Indiana University accessible to citizens of Northern Indiana. Sustained efforts are underway to ensure that students also succeed here, reaching and broadening their academic and intellectual goals. A focus on retention is necessary to fulfill the institutional mission, but speaks to the commitment and dedication of the faculty and staff as well.

The campus at Indiana University South Bend continually reaffirms its belief that students are best served by focusing on academics and students' engagement in the educational process. In reviewing current retention efforts, a clear center emerged in the faculty led academic advising process. Indiana University South Bend began admitting freshman students directly into its academic units in spring 2001. This move was prompted by national research that the greatest indicator of student success was access to and engagement with the faculty of the institution. To ensure this process, faculty determine the nature and number of contacts with students from orientation through graduation, and we continue to seek methods and occasions to enhance and broaden that interaction. As Richard J. Light affirms in the 2001 edition of his book, Making the Most of College, students benefit from faculty who "get in their way, in the most constructive sense, to help them." (22) For that reason, Indiana University South Bend's retention plan includes comprehensive and broad academic efforts on both a unit and campus wide level. Faculty and the academic focus of the institution remain primary throughout the various levels.

Finally, in a regional campus such as Indiana University South Bend, it is important to realize that not all students entering the university seek a four year degree. Throughout this report, we are beginning to design opportunities for students to work more purposefully on goal setting. This will allow the University to measure student success not only in the traditional manner of tracking students from matriculation to graduation, but in a more specific and personal way that better reflects the nature of the student body of Indiana University South Bend.

Overview of retention/persistence in fall 2002

Indiana University South Bend currently supports many diverse retention efforts both at the unit and the campus wide level. The Lilly initiative of the past five years has enabled the University to focus and identify retention programs and make tremendous gains from the 1995 base retention level of 54.2% to 66.4% for the 2001 student cohort. Many of the specific initiatives are described below, and the fundamental, recent shift from centralized to unit responsibilities is visible in the landscape of current retention efforts and their emphasis on faculty oriented initiatives.

Several critical pieces of the retention equation are being executed as this report is being written and they confidently reflect the importance of broad campus involvement in the student recruitment, retention and success process. Future targeted initiatives originate in the units with faculty leadership; they are based on a team approach at unit and campus wide levels to facilitating student success. A broad list of initiatives is available in Appendix A.

Academic unit based initiatives

Academic advising from student summer orientation to graduation is housed and managed by the units. Faculty from across campus prepare new students through the summer orientation program, providing both an introduction to the campus and its strengths and an academic overview that ranges from “what faculty expect” to program information for each major. This effort includes all students including transfer students and international students. Each unit is responsible for advising students in its disciplines; the students immediately are given names and contact information for faculty and other students (new and returning) so that they can begin to reflect upon what college will mean to them. As students advance in their field, faculty advisors work with students each semester to craft appropriate schedules and encourage co curricular experiences such as service learning, internships, independent study, etc.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, in addition to advising its majors, has developed a faculty led Advising Center that houses the undecided students and those interested in exploring other options (either change of major or additional studies). The outcome of these targeted interactions is to encourage students to recognize their choices, reach their stated goals, and continue planning for the future.

Other unit based initiatives include departmental tutoring and dedicated computer labs to support student learning, “Connection” and “Link” courses which enable students to choose courses designed to provide support and interaction for a small group of students and two disciplines, and developmental reading, composition and mathematics courses. These activities increase student engagement with the subject matter and student to student and student to faculty contact.

Other initiatives include the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences early warning system that reports academic issues in the sixth week so that advisors can help identified students to connect with appropriate services. This increases the likelihood that the student/advisors relationship can translate into improved performance. Good teaching and pedagogy of engagement is an expectation of faculty; students are provided with active learning opportunities in and outside of the classroom. New programs (such as paralegal, entrepreneurship, and informatics) complement and develop student interest and community needs. Finally, unit advisory boards help the unit match the academic material with student needs by articulating what the community requires in student outcomes.

Academic campus wide centralized initiatives

Indiana University South Bend is currently in the penultimate stage of implementing a campus wide general education requirement. The stated purpose speaks directly to the question of how we intend to challenge and thereby retain our students: “The purpose of general education at IUSB is to prepare students to be successful in their chosen professions and become valued citizens and leaders within their communities, individually enriched by their studies and stimulated by the spirit of discovery. We will create a learning environment that serves the academic, civic, cultural and career needs of an educated citizen within the global community.”

Successfully implemented, this general education curriculum will encourage students to identify and explore the connections among disciplines and other experiences on campus. Moreover these goals will be explicit; students will engage in dialogue with one another and with faculty and staff about the core literacies and values from year to year. The outcome of this transition will be a common language and expectation of intellectual involvement, not only in the classroom but also on the campus and greater community. Students will relate more directly to their college experiences, and be encouraged to apply their academic work to life beyond the university. For more information about the IUSB general education curriculum see Appendix B.

Indiana University South Bend provides a great number of services to the academic process in an academic support cluster currently called Student Academic Support Services. This clustering of services relating to and assisting student academic development is expanding to allow for students to easily be referred to the appropriate unit. Currently, this centralized unit oversees the peer mentor program, academic resource center, placement preparation workshops, placement testing, freshman threshold seminar course, supplemental instruction program, centralized tutoring, learning disabilities and disabled student services programs, career planning and placement and “choose a major” initiatives, stay@iusb and stop out student persistence programs, and campus wide orientation. These programs represent efforts to place new students in level appropriate courses, provide them with additional hours of academic support and enhance their connection to the university by giving them more information about the campus itself and what they can do while studying here.

Various other centralized retention efforts serve the campus community but are fairly specific in their function: International programs, Arts programs (such as Southhold Wind Ensemble, Philharmonic, Symphonic Choir, Toradze Piano Studio, Vocal Studio, Theatre Company, Dance, instrumental ensembles), honors program, writing center, Civil Rights Heritage Center, minority student mentoring, scholarships, academic clubs. The Civil Rights Heritage Center and the office of campus diversity provide programming that enhances faculty student interaction.

The campus also supports initiatives that are oriented to support students through social, diversity and student support programming. Some of the successful social initiatives are student clubs and government, intramural and collegiate athletics, and celebrations such as new student welcome day, IUSB Fest and Homecoming week. Many of the specific initiatives relating to diversity are included above, however, IUSB's current on campus housing benefits international students and the office of campus diversity coordinates programming from many units on campus. Finally, student welfare and support that is not specifically academic in nature is represented by the counseling center, career planning and placement center, general appearance and atmosphere at IUSB and specific programs to help students such as the health and wellness center, child development center and dental clinic.

Strengths of current retention efforts:

Indiana University South Bend considers the efforts of the units to engage and advise their majors as a fundamental and largely successful retention effort that has consumed the university's interest for the past two years. The experience gained through the Lilly initiative has enabled the University to develop unique programs to meet student needs. Considerable data supports the "connections" and "links" classes as having a significant impact on retention and individual student academic achievement. The campus student services that support the academic focus (such as supplemental instruction and peer mentor programs), persistence efforts (such as stay@iusb), and the Office of Campus Diversity have been successful in large part because they create a natural interface between students and faculty. These programs' positive effect on retention has been documented for all students, not only developmental students.

Weaknesses of current retention efforts:

Two weaknesses of current retention efforts at Indiana University South Bend have been identified: lack of coordination of efforts and lack of assessment of those efforts. A great many of the centralized programs developed in specific units have failed to realize overall campus participation and/or growth because they remain in relative obscurity and are not publicized and used by the entire campus. IUSB is beginning to address this in the context of more communication among units and also with the development of a centralized student services center that will more integrate both students and faculty widely in its development and implementation. Campus wide assessment of academic and support programs is essential as we look at the allocation of resources and the best uses for those resources in order to achieve a balance of the money spent to achieve specific outcomes. Chancellor Reck has recognized this and is establishing a campus research and assessment office.

A three year Retention Action Plan for Indiana University South Bend

Research on retention makes it clear that the university is most likely to succeed at retaining students when the following three conditions are in evidence: students need to be achieving academically and understanding the benefits of learning, faculty need to

be involving students in the learning process and communicating the connections between college and non college life and finally, the barriers to student success need to be publicly addressed.

As these conditions are achieved, Indiana University South Bend will enhance its climate of academic excellence and greater student retention will result. The following realities of student population are recognized: first, students have received uneven preparation for college and have variable levels of external support. Second, students may not have an understanding of the purpose of higher education, and may perceive a college education to be an “add on” to already busy lives including full time work, family and other obligations. Third, not all students at IUSB have the same goals, so it is important to encourage them to consider and reconsider on a regular basis their purpose for attending college. And finally, the commuter campus student body provides additional challenges to the goal of connecting and engaging students with academics and the campus. Indiana University South Bend is addressing these realities by focusing on academic faculty advising, centralized student services and campus facilities and climate, thus affirming its commitment to students and academic mission in a manner that will have a positive effect on retention.

Unit Initiatives

In preparation of this report, the deans from the Indiana University South Bend units (College of Arts and Sciences, Division of Nursing and Health Professions, School of the Arts, School of Business and Economics, School of Education and the School of Public and Environmental Affairs) were asked to report their retention initiatives and plans to the retention committee; these responses are woven into the action plan and provide clear evidence of the commitment to retention on the campus.

Student retention is, to a great degree, based on shared goals and understanding between student and faculty regarding the expectations and responsibilities of a college education. Students will be empowered as they realize that they are responsible for their college experience. Indiana University South Bend will be able to encourage increased retention by providing the following to its students: more information, and more opportunities for discussion and clarification of student responsibilities. It is a goal of the new general education core to provide students with a common opportunity to learn skills and explore the values of higher education. The implementation of the comprehensive general education program will distinguish this university as an institution that does more than encourage students to “collect” credit hours to complete a degree. The values and skills of the general education curricula will provide students with the opportunity to link academic discipline with life skills and values of citizenship in the world and to explore this interconnectivity throughout their college careers. This will be accomplished by continuing to build a strong support system for its students involving faculty advisors, faculty (in the classroom) and student services.

Direct admission of all students to the units had represented a substantial change in advising on this campus. The primary goal of this change has been to involve faculty directly with students from orientation through completion of the students’ academic

goals.

Because the effort of advising students is distributed among many faculty, the units at Indiana University South Bend have developed their separate plans and strategies to provide students and faculty with the positive advising experiences that will encourage retention.

To ensure student success, the units are developing methods of coordination and communication across campus to make certain that all students are receiving appropriate advising both on demand and at critical decision making times. Some common elements of the unit plans are outlined below.

In the next year, the faculty of the units at Indiana University South Bend will develop a comprehensive advising plan of “best practices for advising” based on research, experience, student focus groups and the demands of the particular disciplines. The model will be shared with all faculty and training will be provided to ensure that faculty have the knowledge and access to information required to positively advise students at different points in their college careers. This model will include the following elements already being developed: recurring discussions with students about both short and long term goals, extensive training and use of peer mentors, and efficient referral services and information regarding the centralized services on campus. Within the first twelve credit hours of a student’s experience at the University, students will receive both focused and individualized faculty initiated contact and exposure to services appropriate to the discipline and the individual. This contact takes place in the context of academic advising and in activities organized by the units to encourage interaction among students that include faculty.

All the units have developed plans to promote student advising and registration for subsequent semesters and to assign advisors to students in the first two weeks of each semester. These plans include repeated information to students in newsletters, postcards and letters and various contacts from advisors, peer mentors and staff. The units will be supported in this effort by the fact that the student services center will encourage, and even schedule, academic advising appointments with faculty as a critical component to student success. Additionally, units will be educating faculty to talk about advising in their courses in order to ensure that students repeatedly hear about how advising can help them and feel invited to make appointments with their advisors. In order to encourage pre registration for classes the billing system for tuition and fees will be examined and altered to reflect that the University encourages pre registration and discourages students from last minute decisions that limit the courses available to the students.

Orientation Program

The improvements in the current orientation program will include automation of placement testing for reading, mathematics and foreign language and increased communication with students about the elements of the orientation sessions. New student orientation will be expanded to provide students with more information, greater opportunity for interaction among students and faculty, and a more substantial

orientation to the campus and their role as future students.

This orientation will also be mandatory for students with fewer than 30 hours of college credit and will involve a team of students, faculty and professional staff.

In order to better prepare new students for the academic rights and responsibilities they have when attending Indiana University South Bend, the following four goals of the new student orientation program will be evident in every aspect of its planning and implementation: First, students will receive information and materials and assignments to help prepare them for a constructive orientation experience; they will be introduced to the expectations of the institution and asked to reflect on their expectations about college. Second, the pragmatic needs of the new student will be addressed including computer registration for classes, activating student email and OnCourse accounts, student IDs, access to financial aid officers, campus and library tours, and access to the Student Activities Center and the bookstore. Third, students will participate in small group focused discussions with faculty and students so that they can make connections to the campus community and its resources and begin to envision how they will participate. Finally, parents and guests of the matriculating students will participate in sessions to encourage their understanding of the process and demands of a college education and the impact a support system has on student success and choices. By seeking to connect both students and their families to the campus and to the academic process, the new student orientation program will encourage students to reflect on the transition to college life.

Following orientation, undecided students will be assigned to a faculty member who will meet with small groups of students and a peer mentor in the first two weeks of class and periodically through the first year to renew the discussions initiated at orientation, provide academic encouragement and strategies, and offer information about support resources and available workshops on such issues as time management, studying effectively, how to choose a major, talking to faculty, etc. These workshops will be organized by centralized services and widely advertised so that faculty can readily refer students to the center.

Increased use of the peer mentor program in the units

The peer mentor program at Indiana University South Bend trains advanced students to respond to and help other students; it is already a strong element in retention. Recent developments have placed more of these peer mentors in the units to accommodate the increased advising and service needs. These trained, paraprofessional students become key contact persons, especially for new students, and the units will be increasingly involved in the assessing and training these students.

Three units already use peer mentors extensively in their student contact models. The Division of Nursing and Health Professions peer mentors have an office in the unit to increase student interaction and they contribute a column to the divisional newsletter. Because these peer mentors are both advanced and academically successful students, they provide reinforcement to new students who are having difficulty with science courses as well as encouragement and advice to students regarding time management,

particular courses and opportunities in the unit.

The School of Business and Economics uses its peer mentors primarily to provide successive student initiated contacts in the course of the semester to check in with students about how the semester is progressing and to offer advice and referrals.

They also are involved in small group discussions about the demands of the business programs and they encourage students to see their advisors through calls, mailings and email contacts. The School of Public and Environmental Affairs assigns students to peer mentors as well as faculty advisors and the peer mentors initiate and receive student contacts regarding general information, meeting with advisors, and referrals for more information. All three of these programs anticipate that their reliance on peer mentors to provide an appropriate and positive interface with other students in the unit will continue to grow.

The remaining units have begun to use the peer mentors for various tasks and are developing more systematic plans for their integration into the unit's structure. The School of Education, for example, plans to pair its mentors with each section of the F100 Introduction to Teaching courses and with sections of education specific U100 Threshold Learning Seminar sections. This will provide students with both a peer mentor and a faculty member in a small class setting (under 20) to assist students in the transitions that they face in the first semesters.

The University will support **student leadership development** by organizing and promoting appropriate leadership training and mentoring for student leaders such as peer mentors. The workshops will be coordinated by the centralized student services center; units will be asked to share curricular and teaching responsibilities.

Centralized Services

Indiana University South Bend is currently developing a centralized student services center that will support the retention efforts of the units; this center will serve important functions in the efforts of retention by managing and coordinating the orientation program that helps students prepare for the college experience and by providing an inviting student services area that will assist students in the course of their semester to identify and mediate issues of academic performance. Chancellor Reck supports the creation of a welcoming environment that fosters student interactions with faculty and staff; it will involve the integration of programs and services that have been previously housed in separate buildings or previously reporting to other offices.

Some of the anticipated services to be integrated are: the Writing Center, tutoring and supplemental instruction space, classrooms and computer labs for developmental reading courses and the math/writing connections classes, peer mentors, academic resources lecturers, stay@IUSB referral program, counseling center, career services, and the office of student and community relations and campus diversity. Because learning assistance is strengthened when it is in close proximity to services, the new central, prominent location allows easy access and is not strictly developmental. The spaces envisioned are multi use in nature; their multiple functions would mean that they would be used heavily and consistently throughout the day.

The student service center will encompass many important retention initiatives and currently is scheduled to open in fall 2003. It will be a central location for academic, campus and community information and will be available after regular business hours to accommodate students taking evening courses; some important functions include an information kiosk, campus calendar, bulletin boards, and a web site integrating a user friendly interface with frequently asked questions, referral numbers and contact information, and academic program information. The center is being organized with input and conversations from around the campus including open meetings and extensive discussions with students. To ensure that the center is both useful and heavily used, every effort is being made to involve all units on campus in its planning and implementation.

Campus facilities and climate

Indiana University South Bend continues to make great strides in improving the campus facilities and atmosphere, yet areas of the campus continue to need attention. The centralized student services center will address issues of renovation of the main floor of the administration building. The facilities of the School of Education and the School of the Arts need to be increased and renovated, as do the science laboratory facilities in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Fully installed classroom technology and computer laboratory space for classes need to be addressed in order to encourage students to engage with technology. A campus calendar of public and campus events to encourage students, staff and faculty to interact around their interests and concerns would promote a feeling of ownership of the many activities already taking place on the campus of Indiana University South Bend. A comprehensive plan for programming the new Student Activities Center will be developed in coordination with student government and clubs, and units on campus; some suggested plans include a movie series, study nights with tutoring and refreshments, more fitness/wellness programming, alumni/student opportunities for interaction, and family nights.

The cultural programming, collegiate athletics, student organized events, and academic activities such as conferences and lectures/workshops need greater visibility and support in order to advance the campus' goal of increased engagement among students with faculty, staff and the community.

OnCourse and other web based technologies are already used widely as both a pedagogical tool and to increase student access to information; however, Indiana University South Bend will encourage all faculty to provide basic course information (syllabus and contact information) so that students can inform themselves about courses and course requirements. Through the University Center for Excellence in Teaching and Continuing Education, the University will also encourage faculty to explore the more detailed features of Oncourse especially the gradebook feature that allows students to see a snapshot of their performance at any time. Through the unit plans for advising and retention, students also will be encouraged to make use of the web as a resource and learning tool.

Indiana University South Bend will investigate and plan to address **three specific student welfare issues** that have been identified as critical: first, the University will examine the barriers that students with young children face, including the limited availability of childcare openings in the Children's Development Center and availability of childcare for evening classes. Second, the University will increase the information students receive regarding financial aid from before they matriculate through graduation. The University will strive to provide more flexible or individualized financial options for students particularly after the first year. Finally, the University will provide faster preliminary assessment of transferred hours for transfer students in order to facilitate student integration into the faculty advising structure as quickly and effortlessly as possible.

Three year Goals for Retention

First to second year retention (overall)

From the 1995 cohort retention percentage of 54.2%, the campus retention efforts, with the help of the Lilly initiative, allowed Indiana University South Bend to achieve 66.4% retention in the 2001 cohort. Our goal is to increase our student retention by 1% per year and achieve 70% retention with the 2005 cohort group. In addition to this goal, a fundamental change in student thinking regarding the benefits of faculty advising is the goal over the next three years. Currently we estimate (based on the numbers of the College of Liberal Sciences Advising Center) that only 30-35% of continuing students see an advisor prior to registration for the next semester. To increase this percentage, the orientation program will stress advising, the units will provide faculty and students with more information about the goals of advising at each stage of the student's career, and the University will seek to increase the number of students seeing an advisor each semester at a rate of 5% per year. New students will be automatically checklisted until they have completed orientation at which time they will have received advising and will be released to register.

2. Second to third year retention (overall)

In comparing third year retention numbers to second year, Indiana University South Bend already retains students at just over 70%. The University will explore national norms of its peer institutions to determine what additional gains are reasonable for this time period. The longer students stay enrolled, the higher their persistence; this correlation will be studied in order to establish the role of the institution versus the commitment of the students to complete their studies. In cohort groups 1997, 1998 and 1999 the University retained students at 40.9%, 37.8% and 41.9% respectively for approximately 40% retention of students from first to third year. Increases in retention from first to second year will positively affect these numbers, but moderate gains of approximately 1% per year are indicated for cohort groups 2003, 2004 and 2005 due to the additional advising and referral services created in this retention plan.

3. Retention beyond the third year to degree completion (overall)

In comparing four year retention numbers to third year, Indiana University South Bend already retains students at over 79% (1998 cohort). The number of degrees attained in that period is not considered because they are likely to be associate degrees. The University will explore national norms of its peer institutions to determine what additional gains are reasonable. In cohort groups 1997 and 1998, the University retained at students at 30.6% and 29.5% respectively. Approximately 30% of beginning students persist from first to fourth year. Increases in retention from first to second year will positively affect these numbers, but moderate gains of approximately .5% per year are indicated for cohort groups 2003, 2004 and 2005 due to the additional advising and referral services created in this retention plan. Students matriculating prior to 2003 will benefit from many of the programs and initiatives in this report, but will not have participated in important first year initiatives envisioned in the comprehensive advising from first semester to graduation.

4. Minority retention to years 2, 3 and beyond

It is the goal of Indiana University South Bend to retain our minority students at levels commensurate with all other students. Data available for African American and Hispanic students indicate that in order to substantially increase retention the University must purposefully recruit and retain such students. The census data for the region reveal that the number of minority students enrolling at Indiana University South Bend must be increased in order to meet the needs of the northern Indiana community. In the fall of 2002, Indiana University South Bend expanded its services to African American and Latino Students. In the fall of 2002, Indiana University South Bend expanded its services to African American and Latino Students with the initiation of a Minority Enhancement Initiative called "Cohort Groups for Academic Excellence" out of the office of student and community relations. The research showed that students of color experience feelings of isolation, disconnection, and frustration and that these feelings cause high stress behaviors that negatively impact grade point average, persistence and graduation.

Since these factors seem to appear no matter how successful the student may have been in high school, the University will adhere to the following goals: academic excellence, persistence, involvement in a three tier mentoring program and graduation. The program is already seeing some results and will be strengthened in the next three years. Students will be assigned faculty and student mentors to encourage interaction on campus, involvement with the Black Student Union and Latino Student Union, and an informational newsletter developed in the Office of Campus Diversity that informs the campus of events and issues for discussion regarding minority retention.

5. Retention of transfer students

Traditionally it has been assumed that transfer students already know “how college works” and therefore do not participate in traditional beginning student activities. However, this does not take into account the variety of institutions from which students transfer and the reasons they may transfer here. Indiana University South Bend will be much more deliberate in its first interactions with transfer students, requiring those with under thirty hours of college credit to attend orientation to ensure that they receive the same opportunity to consider the demands of higher education and reflect on their short and long term goals. Even if the students have more than thirty college hours, the University will immediately assign advisors to them to ensure a smooth transition and that the students understand the institutional expectations and know to identify resources that they may need. Preliminary transfer credit reports must be available to students and faculty advisors as soon as possible after admission to the university. Faculty academic advisors will receive training on “best practices” for advising transfer students so that transfer students quickly become familiar with the campus community.

Additionally, the advisor will monitor academic progress closely in the first semester to ensure a successful transition. Students under thirty hours at matriculation will receive the full benefits of the comprehensive advising available in the units. Students who enter the University closer to degree completion and/or in academic difficulty will be encouraged to create an academic plan of short term and long terms goals (such as that discussed with students at orientation) with the advisor so that they understand how the transfer affects their degree trajectory. The retention rates for transfer students from first to second year for the cohort groups 1999, 2000 and 2001 are 61.5%, 62.9% and 65.5% respectively. The University seeks to increase this percentage by over 1% a year, reaching its goal of 70% retention of transfer students in cohort group 2005 from first to second year.

Assessment of current initiatives for retention

The assessment of initiatives that are so widely distributed across the campus is complex and involves many people and much collection of data. Since students now swipe their student ID for access to the fitness facilities of the Student Activities Center, a similar device will be used in the new student services center to identify and count students who access its information desk or portal. The individual programs or areas, such as tutoring or the writing center will keep a count of students in their area. Because the ID card will identify students who use the student services center, a random number of students will be encouraged to evaluate those services, offer suggestions and provide feedback to the center. Additionally, programs that serve a great number of students will provide such students with feedback and assessment forms on a regular basis so that the program can continuously improve to help students.

In order to connect the student services center to the units, a referral system will be developed that allows the University to track student referrals and encourage students

to follow through on those referrals.

This system will be available across campus to students, staff and faculty and widely publicized. Students will receive the referral and a record of the referral will be forwarded to the program or individual to whom the student was referred; this will allow for subsequent follow up and better program assessment. Moreover the information will help programs to assess the knowledge about the program in the campus community; programs that successfully address student needs can continue improving.

Finally, advising faculty are receiving training about the information that students need and also how to track student progress. Templates for recording important details of advising meetings with students are becoming widely used in several units. This allows the university to track and encourage students to see their advisors and enables units to be accountable and set appropriate unit retention goals that will reflect the differences among units. Assessment of faculty advising will be ongoing and will include both a satisfaction survey for juniors and seniors and focus groups to determine what students wish that they had known and at what point an advisor (or other student services) might have provided that information or opportunity for discussion. The University will also assess the impact on faculty of the comprehensive advising offered to students. The campus research and assessment office will help the units create consistent ways to document and measure program and plan effectiveness.

Information/services needed to help the campus to make retention decisions

Much of the work of retention outlined in this report reflects that Indiana University South Bend is committed to being more deliberate in addressing students and giving them the tools that they need to succeed on campus.

The University faculty, staff and students will consistently model and discuss the expectations, rights, and responsibilities that students have in higher education; that will enable students to make better, more informed decisions and furnish them with the opportunity to revisit and refine those decisions in discussions embedded in the curriculum, the centralized student services center and frequent interaction among faculty, staff and students. To properly develop, coordinate and connect the various campus units involved in this substantial retention effort, the University needs to commit significant resources (such as equipment, money, space, support staff, leadership development, and reassigned faculty time) to the development and promotion of the general education curriculum, comprehensive unit based advising by faculty and the centralized student services center and orientation. In fulfilling this commitment, the University must provide the units with the resources they need to meet their retention goals.

The desire to help students find academic success at Indiana University South Bend guides this effort to increase student awareness of their responsibilities and to encourage them to engage and connect their academic goals to the campus and the community. The University will succeed in providing students with these skills, because it will have gotten "in the way, in the most constructive sense and guided students to greater academic success. The substantial, constructive cooperation that resulted in this retention action plan indicates the commitment from the faculty, staff and students of Indiana University South Bend to further improve retention and realize even more successful students.