Executive Summary: Self-Study

Summer 2011
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Introduction
In May of 2011, the IUPUI Division of Student Life conducted a self-study in preparation for the arrival of the new vice chancellor, Dr. Zebulun Davenport. Sets of questions were sent to two campus constituent groups: administrators and leaders external to the Division of Student Life, and staff members within the Division. This report provides a summary of responses from both constituent groups, starting with the external constituents followed by the internal Division units.

External Constituent Group

Method
Fifteen administrators external to the Division responded to the request for information. These included members of the Chancellor’s Cabinet, deans, members of the Student Life Services Council, and other department heads with whom the Division staff members tend to interact.

There were five questions posed to this group:
1. What are the two or three greatest strengths of the Division of Student Life?
2. Where do we need to strengthen? List two or three areas.
3. How might greater collaboration with your area contribute to Student Life’s ability to support student success better?
4. Identify any opportunities for collaboration that exist in areas other than your own, including those in the larger Indianapolis community.
5. Name an area or project for innovation that the Division of Student Life could pursue.

Responses were sent to the director of assessment and planning. After a brief overview, a summary of responses for each question follows.

Overview of Findings – External Constituent Feedback
Overall, the Division generally has very good relationships with the administrators and/or departments that responded to the request for information. Many acknowledged the necessary expansion of current programs and services in order to accommodate a growing student population. For example, numerous respondents indicated a need for more housing in addition to the development of on-campus dining and wellness/fitness resources.

There appears to be a misconception regarding the scope of the programs and services provided by the Division. There were suggestions made to collaborate with units that are currently partners to Student Life, including joint programing and in some cases shared positions. For example, there was a suggestion for Student Life and the Center for Service and Learning to work collaboratively on providing programs and services to our students. Not only do Student Life and the Center for Service and Learning currently work together on programming, the units have two joint-funded positions that foster intentional collaboration on programs related to community service. Also, suggestions were made to improve programs and services in areas where we do not have direct influence. For example, the recommendation was made to improve freshmen and transfer orientation programs; however, the Division does not have direct responsibility for these areas. There appears to be a gap in understanding of the scope of the Division’s current portfolio. This would also suggest that the Division needs to do a better job at communicating its role in some cases and become more intentional about its contributions in others.
Specific Findings – External Constituent Feedback

The section that follows is organized by the five specific questions asked of those external constituents with whom the Division staff works on a regular basis.

Perceived Strengths

The major strengths perceived by the respondents included having a talented staff and providing solid support for students. Staff members were described as friendly and as having an appropriate level of experience and professionalism:

- A positive and energetic young staff.
- The people and professionalism of the people. In most cases, I have been very impressed with the people and their professionalism.

In terms of providing solid support for students, one mentioned the Behavioral Consultation Team (BCT) as something that helps to connect students with troubling behaviors to appropriate resources. Another mentioned the changing student population:

- One strength of Student Life here at IUPUI is its ability to help define the student culture now that there are more traditional students becoming the population majority on campus, the largest component of this being the Campus Center. This causes the students to feel empowered and invested in what happens on IUPUI’s campus which is critical for student retention.

Areas for Improvement

The major areas where respondents indicated the Division’s work could strengthen were related to building more housing, partnering with other offices, and positioning the various units to succeed. In terms of building more housing, respondents indicated the university should continue building more housing, make what we have more affordable, or consider promoting the off-campus options that are available nearby. In terms of partnering, respondents considered increasing partnerships on campus, in particular with faculty.

Regarding positioning units to succeed, there were a few suggestions related to repositioning units in the Division to allow for greater productivity and clarity of mission. These suggestions ranged from simply increasing awareness of the Division’s work regarding community building, to increasing opportunities for research or reorganizing offices to better serve student needs. For example:

- The Division has strong connections to civic engagement but nothing that assists student in becoming involved in research. In both areas there should be strong ties to the Centers for Service and Learning (which there probably is) and Research and Learning (CRL) (which is almost non-existent). The Division should not duplicate the work of these major centers but should complement their work.

- Integration with academic units; there is relatively little ‘cross-talk’ between departments/schools and Student Life.

Opportunities for On-Campus Collaboration

There were numerous ideas for collaboration suggested by respondents to this question, though there were few to any common ideas for these collaborations across the respondents. It was clear, however, that more than one responding unit indicated an interest in working more closely with the Division units in a variety of ways. Highlights include:

- We can help link our graduate student organizations more effectively with initiatives with Student Life.
• The Solution Center can assist Student Life staff to access community volunteer opportunities, expand outreach into the community, etc.

• Whereas faculty in all units tend to focus on learning/academic progress, I believe that Student Life provides a more holistic lens through which to view students. It is hugely helpful when people from Student Life contribute to committees/academic endeavors and bring student development theory into important conversations. I also think that the campus could do more to support students remaining on campus in the evenings and on weekends.

• Collaborating with [my] school generally on programs could likely expose students to career paths they have not considered and empower them to persist to graduation, which will positively impact retention.

• A liaison with the IUPUI Office of Student Scholarships in regards to Continuing Student Scholarships may impact and support student success greatly. We could work to better communicate scholarship information to their student groups and clubs.

• The Office of the Registrar has individuals with knowledge and expertise about the Student Information System that could assist in SL projects that in any way connect to the Student Information System. For example, the Registrar’s office would be eager to collaborate on work related to the Student Life transcript and updates to our Residence Hall systems. Just keep in mind that the Registrar staff are a resource for these types of initiatives.

Other Opportunities for Collaboration
There were several ideas for other external collaboration opportunities, including numerous suggestions for community partnerships. A few of these suggestions relate to work the Division is currently doing, but many of the suggestions present new innovations yet to be explored. Highlights include:

• Given the campus and community climate regarding Latino students, particularly undocumented students, there will likely be a need to work with community organizations such as La Plaza, Indiana Latino Institute, Latino Youth Collective, NSH MBA, and others. The Latino Faculty Staff Council members will be great allies and advocates in this area.

• Become more engaged in the Talent Alliance, which connects IUPUI with the Indianapolis community in all matters related to education, from birth to career.

• Partner with the community, campus, and university to meet the needs of resident students, for example, student housing, resident food courts, and exercise/wellness center.

• CRL can collaborate with student organizations to promote completing the “R” in the RISE challenge by participating in CRL undergraduate research opportunities; which all provide students: support, professional development, and research skills.

Possible Innovations for Student Life to Pursue
The major theme emerging from responses to this question centered on providing more resources for health and wellness initiatives. While this is not necessarily innovative to the Division staff, who have been pondering an improvement in this area for several years, it is helpful to see reinforcement for these ideas from other campus constituent groups.

In addition, a few of the suggestions for innovation were for programs or services that the Division or other campus constituencies are already doing. This confusion supports the need to reposition the Division’s units to better communicate the programs, services, and facilities already offered by the Division to support students.
General Recommendations – External Constituents

Given the aforementioned difficulties with name recognition and communication of our programs and services, the Division leadership could consider restructuring units within the Division in order to better communicate that programs, services and activities designed to support student learning and retention. The fact that several respondents were unclear about the scope of the Division’s portfolio suggests a future strategic planning goal could involve developing greater clarity in the Division’s purpose and mission.

Second, the Division should further develop a comprehensive wellness program that involves Campus Recreation, Student Health Services, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), faculty, a wellness coordinator, and the School of Physical Education and Tourism Management.

Finally, the Division should partner with University College on the development of a co-curricular transcript. With the recently-developed initiative of the Personal Development Plan (PDP), this partnership will be a natural connection between these two important student support units.

Internal Constituent Group

Method – Internal Constituents

Responses were received from all seven Division units and four members of the Division’s Executive Team. The unit responses tended to be collaborative in nature, representing multiple voices across the units.

There were nine questions posed to this group:
1. What are the key outcomes that the division is trying to achieve on behalf of our students?
2. How do we know if these outcomes are being achieved both at the divisional and departmental levels? What is our culture of evidence?
3. Describe how your department is or is not organized or structured appropriately to achieve the outcomes for your department and those of the division. Use this question to reflect on whether or not your organization is effective.

Please utilize the SWOC (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges) approach to assist with the next several questions. It will be critical that you think globally as you address this section. Tie your responses directly to the mission of the Institution related to civic engagement, co-curricular learning, student involvement, impact to retention, and student success. Please provide at least three to five items, statements, or ideas for each question.
1. What are our greatest strengths?
2. Where do we need to strengthen (weaknesses)?
3. Where are opportunities for us to further support the mission of IUPUI by supporting civic student engagement, impacting student involvement, learning outside of the classroom, and assisting students as they transition into, through, and out of the institution? Also, think about growth opportunities for our division.
4. Does the division have **opportunities** to generate or reallocate resources in order to better support its core mission? If so, where. (Think outside the box.)

5. As we consider growth and impact to learning, what are our greatest **challenges**?

6. Identify 3 to 5 areas or projects for innovation that we as a division could pursue. (Think outside the box.)

Responses were sent to the Director of Assessment and Planning. After a brief overview, a summary of responses for each question follows.

**Overview of Findings – Internal Constituent Feedback**

The unit-level contribution to the self-study offered a diverse range of experiences and thoughts on the present state of the division. The responses are organized in the following sections according to the aforementioned questions. One theme consistent throughout the internal responses focused on staffing. Staffing appears to be one of the Division’s greatest assets in terms of attitude, experience, and contribution to the student affairs field. However, the Division’s areas for improvement also revolve around staffing issues, for example, in terms of growing the staff to more adequately serve students’ needs, meeting professional standards’ expectations for ratios of staff to students, and providing professional development to staff in a way that allows them to continue to provide the best level of support to students.

Another theme that emerged is the need for diversification of funding sources. A need for increased funding is seen across issues of staffing as mentioned above and also for the development of new physical space, such as an increase in campus housing and dining or the development of a new facility for recreation, health, and wellness.

The final area that seemed to be pervasive is the manner in which the Division communicates, both internally and externally. An improvement in internal communication can lead to increased or more efficient collaborations across units within the Division. At the same time, a change in the manner in which the Division communicates externally could lessen the aforementioned name-recognition problem.

**Specific Findings: Internal Constituent Feedback**

The section that follows is organized by the nine specific questions asked of members of the Division’s Leadership Team.

**Key Outcomes**

There are several key outcomes that the division is trying to achieve on behalf of IUPUI students. The themes that arose from respondents include **student engagement**, **student retention**, and **student development**.

In terms of student engagement, members of the Division staff support tenets of student engagement, typically defined as a combination of time spent on educationally-effective activities and perceived support from the institution (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt & Associates, 2005). Several staff members mentioned the current vision statement, “Engaging all students,” may appear to be a bit unrealistic, but nevertheless it is a vision toward which the staff strives. Enhancement of the out-of-class learning
experience was also seen as an important role that members of the Division have in their jobs to support students.

Many respondents indicated student retention and graduation as key outcomes of their work in the Division of Student Life. Several mentioned that their work assists students in making meaningful connections between their co-curricular involvement and their coursework. These connections, in addition to the personal contacts and friendships that students develop via campus involvement, may have an impact on retention and graduation.

The third and final key outcome related to student development, as exemplified by the following responses:

- Create on campus living communities that foster growth, educational success, social responsibility, cultural understanding, and leadership.
- Encourage students to become involved on the IUPUI campus through services and programing that can support student development beyond the classroom. We continually look for ways to facilitate personal development and learning by meeting the students’ needs.

Culture of Evidence in the Division

Respondents indicated the perception of a culture of evidence in the Division. Respondents appear to be comfortable using a variety of data sources for assessing the student experience. Primary methods of collecting data on students are related to tracking participation numbers and using satisfaction surveys as metrics for evaluating the impact of the Division’s work. A more recent innovation involves the use of swipe-card technology for Jagtags (student identification cards) to track student participation in specific educational programs and then sending a satisfaction or reflection survey to those specific participants afterward in order to understand their experiences. Some of the data-collection methods are quite new and need to be expanded, but the foundation for assessment is there:

- Office of Student Involvement functional areas track basic numerical and demographic data of program attendees through our online “swipe card” system. This involves requesting that students, faculty, and staff swipe their Jagtag ID card when they attend events. We are then able to aggregate this data to explore what persons from what areas of the campus are accessing our services. The current system is useful but somewhat rudimentary. We hope to expand it beyond OSI to include more units from the division.

Satisfaction Surveys are administered by several units in order to understand students’ experiences with interacting with the various units. In addition, a few units are hosting focus groups to better understand the results of satisfaction surveys, and these results are disseminated throughout the individual units.

In addition, IUPUI administers campus-wide surveys each year: the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is administered every three years, and on the off-years a home-grown Student Satisfaction and Priorities Survey is administered, each to a random sample of currently-enrolled students. Also, the recently-developed Student Pulse Survey Program allows the opportunity to administer short surveys related to hot topics two to three times each semester. The Division analyzes these various data sources each year in order to obtain an overall picture of the student experience at IUPUI.

One of the newer initiatives is the assessment of student learning outcomes, primarily based on the IUPUI Principles of Undergraduate Learning (PULs). The Division mapped a set of its programs and
services to the PULs, and currently specific offices (specifically OSI and CAPS) are in the process of analyzing data as related to this newer effort.

Organizational and Unit Effectiveness
When respondents were asked to reflect on whether or not they perceive their unit and the Division as effective, there was a wide variety of responses mostly based on issues of staffing, funding resources, and issues of organization change. Many indicated their current internal-unit structures were adequate, yet several indicated a need for more staff. Some respondents indicated a need for an increase in funding, where others mentioned considering minor reorganization or re-assignment of duties based on changes in leadership.

The responses for this question were quite diverse and therefore not easy to organize into common themes across respondents. Most respondents discussed their individual unit effectiveness and indicated that any problems were being handled internally and were not caused by issues beyond their control in the larger Division-wide organizational structure.

SWOC Analysis
The next four questions related to a SWOC analysis, or a discussion of perceived strengths, perceived weaknesses, opportunities for growth, opportunities for reallocation of resources, and perceived challenges.

Strengths
Respondents indicated that the Division’s strengths related to collaboration efforts, strong staff, good reputation on campus, and a commitment to professional development.

The Division collaborates in a variety of ways that help foster student success, including the following:

• Cross divisional committees (employee hiring, programs, events).
• Strong partnerships with University College and the Center for Service and Learning.
• Effective partnerships with university and community constituents.
• Clear communication, engaging with clients, customer service and transparency with our clients are key in our work ethic for all staff.

Respondents to this question indicated the presence of a strong, diverse staff:

• Enthusiastic/dedicated/talented staff involved at the regional and national level.
• Passion/commitment of staff to the work.
• Staff flexibility and ability to adapt to demands.
• Staff with positive and helpful attitudes – enthusiasm for helping students and IUPUI as a whole.
• Multiple new staff coming from different institutions and willing to try ideas that have not been tried at IUPUI before.

Similar to the external respondents, internal respondents indicated a solid relationship with several campus partners:

• Positive reputation across campus related to the Behavioral Consultation Team.
• Positive reputation of the collaborative and supportive work of units such as CAPS and SRRC across the campus.
• Excellent reputation among students, staff, and faculty that regularly interact with our programs, services and activities.
Finally, respondents perceive that the Division has a strong commitment to professional development in a variety of ways:

- We are one of the few Divisions on campus that requires annual performance evaluations.
- Most of us are very well informed of what resources are available to staff and students inside and outside of the division. That is a result of the employees truly caring about their jobs.
- I feel the leadership in the division is committed to the pursuit of best practices through professional staff development, improve communications between departments and effective collaboration between departments in Student Life and University College.

**Perceived Weaknesses**

Internal respondents indicated they perceive weaknesses in the Division as related to **collaboration/partnerships, staffing, name recognition on campus, funding, facilities, and strategic planning**. Note that collaboration, staffing and reputation were also cited as strengths, but there is a perception of having room for improvement in these areas as well:

**Collaboration / Partnerships**

- Lack of strong partnerships across campus can lead to duplication of programming, resource requests, and further challenges.
- Internal partnerships could be improved.
- The lack of collaboration and partnerships runs parallel to the “siloed” nature of IUPUI, yet counter to the value of collaboration and partnerships that IUPUI holds dear.

**Staffing**

- Understaffed in key areas (CAPS, Student Health, Campus Rec, SRRC).
- Staff needs to grow and develop / needs more “seasoned” staff.
- Affects ability to work across departmental boundaries or provide outreach to students.

**Reputation on campus**

- Many on campus are not aware of the programs and services offered by the Division.
- 2010 Reputation survey results demonstrate evidence of a name recognition problem that the Division has on campus.

**Funding**

- Limited funding.
- Further expand the off-campus housing fair.
- Need to develop different revenue streams.
  - Summer Conferences

**Facilities**

- Need to develop additional housing, wellness, and health facilities to live up to the “health sciences campus” designation across Indiana University.

**Strategic Planning**

- Old [current] strategic plan is stale, and yet it technically does not end until 2012.
- All departments need to review their strategic plans, mission, vision, and goals to ensure they align with the Division’s after completed.
• A few departments need to create new strategic plans, based on staff turnover or results of recent program reviews and new Divisional strategic plans.
• Conduct a divisional alignment process to new goals strategic priorities

Growth Opportunities
Many respondents had ideas for how current programs, services, and activities could grow, primarily by way of strengthening existing campus partnerships and increasing support for wellness.

Partnerships
• Build up current partnerships including academic affairs, food services, career services, alumni affairs, athletics.
• Explore an expansion of the Orientation program to include an overnight orientation in our residential facilities. It would set students off on the right foot and can help them be mentally prepared to start their college journey.
• Develop parent programs to partner with orientation.

Wellness
• Expanding the services provided in Housing and Residence Life, Recreation Sports, and Food Services (there is wide-spread agreement among students, faculty and staff of the ever increasing need for improvement in these areas).
• Student, faculty, and staff support for building a health/wellness center.
• Increase in wellness services for all students. Continue to target resident students and also outreach to students living in nearby off-campus housing facilities.
• Health Services expansions already include opening a clinic in the Campus Center (Campus Center Student Health), limiting the out of cost expenses students will pay to see a provider and expanding our insurance billing so that we will bill for all students who have a university-sponsored health insurance plan.

Opportunities for Reallocation of Resources
In terms of opportunities to reallocate resources, themes arose in terms of non-tangible resources like collaboration, but also in terms of tangible resources like fees and staffing:

Collaboration
• There should be more collaborative efforts within the Division; there could be overlap in the marketing and support of parallel programs and services. As examples, Campus Recreation could be a huge help in attracting students to live on campus, HRL could help support and push larger campus events through OSI, and the Social Justice Programs in both OSI and HRL could be working more closely on joint efforts/projects.
• Housing/Residence Life and IUPUI Food Service can work together to make sure students living on campus have outstanding access to nutritional food options. This has started, but it’s a great opportunity for growth.
• The Social Justice Center in Housing/Residence Life needs to continue working with OSI and develop a relationship with the Multicultural Success Center.
• Housing/Residence Life, Office of Student Involvement, and the Office of Admissions can do a better job of working together to better market housing to incoming first-year students and transfer students in addition to getting involved on campus.
• Develop strong relationship with Ivy Tech in support of the Passport Program

Fees
• Institute No Show fee for psychiatry – planned for fall 2011.
• Continue to revise the student fee allocation process.
• Any fees need to be evaluated to remain student focused and not cost prohibitive to campus departments.
• Currently assess fees for services and equipment for non-university clients using the Campus Center; exploring a rate increase for departments, non-profit/government/education groups and non-university groups.
• Successful Board of Trustees approval for a dedicated health and wellness fee to be instituted for the IUPUI campus – main push should be “spearheaded” by USG and GPSG with support from Student Life.
• We need to examine if positions in the Division not currently funded by General Fee should be considered for future General Fee funding – for example, the Student Advocate position serves students so it makes sense for it to be funded by student fees.

Staffing
• Review staffing models congruent with CAS and industry standards.
• Review positions supported by student fees to determine if they are most appropriately allocated.
• Assessment of role, scope and duty of human resources; are we utilizing our staff to benefit from their collective talents with our current structure or could we form a new organizational chart with more partnerships or departments?
• Issues of social justice and diversity should be infused throughout the entire Division. Does this responsibility need to lie with just one staff member? Perhaps we could develop a joint position between Student Life and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.
• We might consider requiring a percentage of student employment positions to be work-study eligible.
• Creation of Off Campus Housing Coordinator to continue work recently started in this area.

Greatest Challenges
Respondents identified four major areas for challenges to the Division of Student Life, including financial limitations, staffing, space, and communication.

Financial limitations
• The funding model (especially for general fees) makes it difficult for Student Life to be adequately funded.
• The current fiscal climate of higher education in Indiana (including continued budget cuts).
• The maintenance and upkeep of facilities: the financial support is currently present but limited for long term sustainability.

Staffing
• Understaffing – not able to meet current demand.
• Transitions/adjustment of new staff.
• Recruitment/retention of not only students but also staff.
• Staff turnover resulting in low staff morale.
Space
- There are many requests for Campus Center space. As the campus community grows, it spills over into the Campus Center as it is the “hub” on campus. This is a wonderful opportunity but our challenges are limitations in space for: 1) seating in food areas, 2) quiet study areas, 3) general seating/lounge space, and 4) meeting space.
- Additional on-campus bed space.
- A dining center primarily for residential students.

Communication
- Communication with other non-Division campus decision-makers on the status of dining, housing, and recreation facilities. It is tough to make these decisions on capital improvements when we also need to seek approval from the powers that be in Bloomington.
- We don’t necessarily tell our story the best we can. Around campus we have some key allies and partners, but much of the rest of the campus and community doesn’t understand what we do or why we are beneficial on the campus.

Ideas for Innovation
There were numerous ideas for new programs, services and activities that could be considered by the Division in future strategic efforts. In particular, there were many ideas for expansion of the Division, for development of off-campus student services, and for an increase in partnerships both on campus and in the greater Indianapolis community.

Expansion of Division - various
- Expand the role of the Student Advocate to be more of an Ombudsman for the University.
- Have a remote Multimedia Production Center location in campus housing.
- Consult with other IU campus about establishing multimedia centers for their campuses.
- The Student Media space should be acquired by Student Life to be used for additional office space. This space has been an issue for years – and is not used by students. It is rare to see more than two (2) students in the room and they are typically the journalism student required to be there. At a minimum, this space should be utilized by individuals that serve students.
- An effort is being made to package and sell the BCT database that was created “in-house” by HELPnet.
- We should revisit the possibility of bringing OVMP (Veterans) into Student Life. This discussion should begin with Dean Sukhatme. He was supportive of this idea prior to the departure of the previous Assistant Vice Chancellor.
- Satellite Rec Center Areas: find a way to open up more of our existing space for students to work-out. Maybe have a satellite workout facility in a Housing area in the basement of Ball Hall. We may need to go in this direction to meet the needs of our students.

Expansion of Division – off-campus student services
- Off-Campus Housing under the direction of SRRC and the Student Advocate could continue to become a larger entity. We have done very well in creating budgetary resources for a unit that only has a budget line for essentially the salary of the director and the student advocate. If we could add one more full-time person the Student Advocate office could continue to grow and become a greater resource for off-campus student life.
• We have a growing population of students living with student off-campus. They need outreach education on how to live in a community, resource referrals for services (transportation, signing leases, noise ordinances, trash, responsible party hosting, cooking, shopping, voting...).
• Off-campus students also need advocacy. This includes issues in the community and a centralized office for assistance with non-academic issues such as living in housing that is safe. They also need assistance articulating to family members what it is like to be in college and what support they need to be successful.
• Create a location where students living off campus and non-traditional students can find resources to help them be successful.
• Off Campus Housing Resource Coordinator – OCHRS was established to serve the needs of our Students, Faculty and Staff by providing information and resources to help guide you through the often times overwhelming processes involved in securing off campus living.

Development of Additional Partnerships
• Build a liaison relationship to University College’s Academic and Career Planning unit specifically to enact opportunities around the personal development plan (PDP) as related to co-curricular involvement. Need much more clarity in this area. Student Life should be viewed as the experts in co-curricular involvement.
• Strategically integrate healthy living skills with Learning Community curriculum.
• Develop partnerships with local health clubs to enhance health/wellness of students, faculty, and staff.
• Collaborate with local universities – sharing/trading speakers/programming.
• Partner with the Center on Philanthropy to develop a comprehensive fundraising seminar for student affairs professionals that it grounded in student affairs and philanthropic research.
• Health Services (HS) is within the School of Medicine, which does offer some opportunities. HS can work with Departments within the School of Medicine to provide better specialty services than presently exist. HS is also closely affiliated with IU Health and IU Health Physicians and can also assist in students better utilizing such resources.

General Recommendations – Internal Constituents
There are several recommendations for the Division to consider in its future work. First, continue to focus on key strengths identified in the study: building up our staff, working with key campus constituents, and maintaining excellent rapport with student leaders.

Second, it is important to continue with the expansion of efforts related to assessment of student learning in all appropriate aspects of our work. Continued work in this area will not only help students make meaningful connections for their development, but it will also allow the Division to best demonstrate its impact on student development.

Next, the Division should develop alternate funding sources. For example, a review of existing fee structures could occur with the goal of maximizing revenue where possible. In addition, Division staff could more proactively seek development opportunities, grant funding and corporate partnerships where appropriate resulting in more revenue streams.

In addition, the Division staff needs to improve its communication. This has internal implications toward assuring a common voice. Externally, an improvement in communication can better promote the programs and services by the Division to its constituents.
Finally, the Division needs to continue its support of campus diversity initiatives. A more intentional partnership could occur with the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. In addition, the Division must infuse diversity, civic engagement, and social justice into all that it does across every service, program and activity offered to students.

Summary

This self-study is informative for helping to improve the Division’s presence at IUPUI. While it is impossible to accurately capture all voices of all internal and external constituents, the results will be used to address as many concerns as possible while highlighting the numerous already-existing strengths the Division has to offer. The results of this self-study will be shared with the leadership of the division and many of the respondents/constituents. Finally, the themes identified in this work will provide the Division with a starting point in its strategic planning process.

The information obtained in this study will allow the Division leadership to consider pursuing the following initiatives that address some of the previously-identified findings:

1. Develop coordinated programs and services focusing on parent and family services.
2. Create comprehensive health and wellness programming via:
   a. Increased resources for Campus Recreation.
   b. Expanded Student Health Services.
   c. Additional counselors at Counseling and Psychological Services.
   d. Develop a coordinated health prevention and education program.
3. Expand campus housing and dining.
4. Have greater intentionality for serving on campus-wide and community committees that impact our students and this institution.
5. Connect retention efforts with co-curriculum, in partnership with IUPUI’s Personal Development Plan (PDP).
6. Revise mission, vision, values and goals to better-align our work with the campus mission and continue the support of all students.
7. Develop intentional collaborations across various units, emphasizing a culture that encourages school spirit and the development of meaningful, deliberate partnerships.
8. Create a comprehensive development plan for the Division to identify alternative revenue streams.
9. Develop a centralized set of services to support students living off campus.

These initiatives may become solutions for issues raised in the self-study. These ideas allow us to be strategic in working with the ever-changing population of students at IUPUI by providing the highest, most up-to-date level of support for ongoing success.
Appendix A: Initial E-mail to Campus Constituents and Partners
May 17, 2011

Dear Colleagues:

In preparation for my arrival on July 1st as the Vice Chancellor for Student Life, an initiative that the leadership and I are undertaking is a divisional self-assessment. We will be using the next six weeks to complete this work. Although we have an aggressive timeline, the senior leadership team is very excited about the opportunity to provide feedback on what we are doing well, comment on areas where we can improve, and examine potential for future impact.

Each director in the division has been asked to examine his or her department and the direct reports to the VC have also been asked to do the same from their perspective. To make this self-assessment as comprehensive as possible, we would like to solicit your input as well. Because of your involvement over the past years with various Student Life initiatives, we feel that your comments will be very helpful. My intentions were to meet with each of you separately to discuss the questions listed below; however, the deadline for completion of the full assessment is August 1st. Consequently, it is necessary that this questionnaire be completed via electronic correspondence.

To complete this portion of the self-assessment quickly and allow time to incorporate this information into the final report, we would like to have your thoughts by June 6th. I realize that this is a busy time for all of us, so thank you in advance for assisting us in completing this important project. Until I arrive on campus, please email your completed responses to Robert Aaron at the information located at the bottom of this page.

Sincerely,

Zebulun R. Davenport, Ed.D.
Incoming Vice Chancellor for Student Life

From your perspective, please answer the following questions:

1. What are the two or three greatest strengths of the Division of Student Life?

2. Where do we need to strengthen? List two or three areas.

3. How might greater collaboration with your area contribute to Student Life’s ability to support student success better?

4. Identify any opportunities for collaboration that exist in areas other than your own, including those in the larger Indianapolis community.

5. Name an area or project for innovation that the Division of Student Life could pursue.
Appendix B: Initial E-mail to Division Leadership Team

May 3, 2011

Greetings all:

It is truly my pleasure to join the Division of Student Life at IUPUI. While we all are enamored with work, I am very excited about the transition to IUPUI. In preparation for the transition and for our strategic planning process, we all agreed that it would be appropriate to step back and conduct a divisional self-assessment. In direct consultation and partnership with Dr. Pomerantz and the leadership of the division, we will embark upon a project that will yield the foundation for the future of Student Life. Upon being offered the position of Vice Chancellor of Student Life, Dr. Charles Bantz was very clear about his vision and support for this division. He stated in my invitation letter that, “it will be critically important that Student Life support the institutional mission of learning, research, and engagement.” He also said, “As you move forward, please keep in mind the increasing role of student life in the campus’ development and the increasing need for a highly professional and effective student life team, the critical importance of student housing, health and wellness facilities for the campus community, and improving student success”. Based on these statements, I believe every area in the division has been addressed in some way, shape, or form. Finally, Dr. Bantz expressed his full support of a divisional self-assessment as a prelude to the creation of a new strategic plan.

As we go about this important work, please remember to be intentional and think deeply about how we integrate both the curricular and co-curricular experiences of our students in a way that helps produce graduates who are prepared to live, work and exercise citizenship in a world that is changing day by day.

Finally, we have a strong student life division, and it is important for our staff to know that we are supported by the Chancellor and the other Vice Chancellors. This self-assessment will allow us to reflect upon what we are doing well and what it would mean to move to the next level in our efforts to advance the success of our students. While this **self-assessment has a short timeline, it will serve as the prelude for the next phase of our work, which will require greater depth. So, focus on the major elements and don’t get immersed in any one particular dimension.** That said, it will be important that you are succinct, straightforward with your assessments, and look for future opportunities. **DO NOT WRITE PAGE AFTER PAGE.**

Timeline:

May 3: Dr. Pomerantz introduces the self-assessment at the Leadership Team meeting
May 17: Dr. Davenport meets with the Leadership Team to answer questions, get status reports, and generate discussions
June 30: Submit completed self-assessment to VCSL office for Dr. Davenport when he arrives July 1
Student Life Self-Assessment Instrument (for Division Leadership Team)

Below are the questions to which you should respond. Use of resources other than you and your staff are not required to complete this assessment, but if you use resources to assist in this process, i.e., other institutions for comparisons, list serves, research, literature, or any others, please indicate the source.

1. What are the key outcomes that the division is trying to achieve on behalf of our students?

2. How do we know if these outcomes are being achieved both at the divisional and departmental levels? What is our culture of evidence?

3. Describe how your department is or is not organized or structured appropriately to achieve the outcomes for your department and those of the division. Use this question to reflect on whether or not your organization is effective.

Please utilize the SWOC (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges) approach to assist with the next several questions. It will be critical that you think globally as you address this section. Tie your responses directly to the mission of the Institution related to civic engagement, co-curricular learning, student involvement, impact to retention, and student success. Please provide at least three to five items, statements, or ideas for each question.

4. What are our greatest strengths?

5. Where do we need to strengthen (weaknesses)?

6. Where are opportunities for us to further support the mission of IUPUI by supporting civic student engagement, impacting student involvement, learning outside of the classroom, and assisting students as they transition into, through, and out of the institution? Also, think about growth opportunities for our division.

7. Does the division have opportunities to generate or reallocate resources in order to better support its core mission? If so, where. (Think outside the box.)

8. As we consider growth and impact to learning, what are our greatest challenges?

9. Identify 3 to 5 areas or projects for innovation that we as a division could pursue. (Think outside the box.)

Hopefully, these directions will provide you with sufficient information to enable you to complete this self-assessment successfully. Dr. Pomerantz and I are here to assist if you have questions. As we work to create a document that will be the foundation for the future of Student Life at IUPUI, I hope we will focus on all possibilities.