From Sophomore Slump to Success: Stories of Second-Year Students

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Agenda

1. IUPUI/School Context
2. Stories of the Sophomore Year Experience
3. Sophomore Outreach Program
4. What You Can Do to Support Your Sophomores
Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI)

Campus Enrollment

Student Body

Research
School Profile

933 Undergraduates

5 majors

Sophomores 18.7%
# The Story of Our Sophomores

## School (n=175)
- 4.6% Veterans
- 49.1% Under 20
- 17.7% URM
- 57.5% female

## Campus (n=4,271)
- 6.7% Veterans
- 46% Under 20
- 23.5% URM
- 56% female
Retention by cohort year

First-time, full-time students beginning at the Indianapolis campus. Retained at any IU campus. Retrieved from Data Link.
Think back to your sophomore year of college…

1. What do you remember?
2. What were your priorities?
3. What were you involved in?
4. How did you feel about your major?
5. Did you know/meet with your academic advisor?
   - Why or why not?
“The dilemma is that the second year is often a point at which institutions tend to provide the least amount of support to the students” (2005, Graunke & Woosley)
In support of sophomores...
In support of freshmen...

- Extended orientation programs
- Dedicated first-year experience staff/offices
- First-year seminars
- Residential-based learning communities
- Welcome Week activities
- Peer mentoring
- Mandatory advising appointments
Sophomore Challenges

• Second year of college critical period of transition, adjustment, and potential confusion

• Potential confusion as leave “the safety and security” of very structured and directed first-year programs

Sophomore Challenges Continued

• May feel disconnected and overwhelmed with their new reality

• Feel increased pressure, especially to declare or commit to a major, and decreased support

• Reduced motivation when taking General Education courses

Schreiner, Miller, Pullins, & Seppelt, 2012
Sophomore Outreach Program
Outline of Program

1. Identify student population (January 2018)
2. Send initial outreach message (2\textsuperscript{nd} week of classes, Jan. 2018)
3. Hold individual advising meetings (mid-January – end of February 2018)
4. Suggest/provide follow-up action steps for students
5. Send student survey
Student Population & Initial Outreach

2017 Outreach
- Identified 172 sophomore students
  - 30 – 59 credit hours and/or started at IUPUI in Fall 2015
  - Registration hold placed
- Initial email message sent

2018 Outreach
- Identified 165 sophomore students
  - 30 – 59 credit hours and/or started at IUPUI in Fall 2016
  - Registration hold placed
- “Campaign” set up and message sent
Individual Advising Meetings

- Degree Completion
- Individualized Plan
- Potential Obstacles
- Critical Pre-requisites
- Post-Graduation Plans
Follow-up Action Steps

- Update Graduation Plan
- Graduate School Preparation Webinar
- Connect with Faculty Mentor
- Exploring Career Options
- Sophomore Experience Programs
Sophomore Supporter—NEW!

1. Junior or Senior students matched with 10 sophomore students per semester

2. Goals of the Supporter:
   - Build Community
   - Define Purpose
   - Plan a Path
Impact of the Sophomore Outreach Program
Sophomore Survey

- Sent after advising appointment via Qualtrics
- **Questions asked:**
  - Major and Post-graduation plans
  - Likert Scale questions: As a result of my sophomore advising meeting…
  - Open ended question: What was the most helpful about your individual meeting with your advisor?

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<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
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<td>29 respondents (16.8% of population)</td>
<td>55 respondents (33.3% of population)</td>
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As a result of my sophomore advising meeting...

96% strongly agreed/agreed:
- I know my status toward completing my degree
- I have an attainable graduation plan

94% strongly agreed/agreed:
- I understand the impact of not completing key pre-requisites on time

92% strongly agreed/agreed:
- I understand pre-requisites for my major
As a result of my sophomore advising meeting…

89% strongly agreed/agreed:

– I know potential obstacles that may prevent me from attaining my degree completion goals

– I have a better idea of my ability to pursue my intended post-graduation plans
Impact of the Sophomore Program

- 5% attended the Sophomore Experience Programs
- 75% updated their graduation plan
- 20 students did not attend their advising meeting before the registration period in late March (compared to 14 in 2017)
- 2-year retention increase
How can you affect a sophomore’s story?
What can Universities do to support sophomores?

- Career and Major Planning
- Financial Literacy
- Peer mentoring and relationship building
- Connection with student organizations
- Opportunities for building campus community and sense of belonging
- Opportunities for increased faculty-student interactions
- Opportunities to participate in high impact practices (research, service, study abroad)
Considerations for your own program

1. Resources for meeting with sophomores?
2. What are the needs of your student population?
3. Should you place a hold or not?
4. What offices can you collaborate with?
5. How can you incorporate career services?
Pair and Share

What would you like to do at your institution?
What opportunities and challenges do you see?
Questions?

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