

**PHASE ONE REPORT
OF THE
TASK FORCE ON LEARNING COMMUNITIES
AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF IOWA**

INTRODUCTION

The *Task Force on Learning Communities at the University of Iowa* was established by the Executive Committee of the Student Success Team in spring 2007. Pat Folsom, Assistant Provost for Enrollment Services, chairs the committee. Members include:

- Julie Brasefield, Resident Assistant, University Housing
- JoAnn Castagna, Assistant to the Dean for Special Projects, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences;
- Jane Dorman, Director of Admissions and Outreach, College of Engineering;
- Kathleen Fitzgerald, University Housing (member until July 1);
- Professor David Gier, School of Music, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences;
- Professor Steven Hitlin, Department of Sociology, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences;
- Nancy Humbles, Interim Director, Center for Diversity and Enrichment;
- Paula Kerezsi, Senior Associate Director, Academic Advising Center;
- Lindsay McConnell; student member; *and*
- Heather Stalling, Manager Residence Life – Academic Initiatives (member beginning June 18).

Ms. Carol Lammer, staff member in the Provost’s Office provides staff support for the committee.

The task force has been given the following charge to be delivered in two reports:

- To identify successful practices in learning community design and operations;
- To describe elements specific to the University of Iowa environment that shape the possibilities for learning communities; *and*
- To recommend a coherent, scalable learning communities program for the University of Iowa.

In this “Phase One Report,” we have:

- Developed a usable definition of “learning community” and a taxonomy of learning communities;
- Collected and summarized descriptions of proven practices in learning community design and operations, along with available evidence of the practices’ effectiveness;
- Inquired about models for the assessment of the outcomes associated with learning communities and summarized our findings; *and*
- Undertaken a scan of the internal environmental of the University of Iowa identifying key features worthy of consideration in the design and operations of learning communities.

The committee’s work in preparing the report was done in a number of steps and used external and internal resources. To gain a conceptual understanding of learning communities, all members received and reviewed a copy of the monograph, *Learning Communities: New Structures, New Partnerships for Learning* (Levine, National Resource Center for the First Year Experience and Students in Transition). Committee members also reviewed materials available from the Washington Center Learning Communities National Resource Center (http://www.evergreen.edu/washcenter/directory_entry.asp#). A complete list of resources is in Appendix A.

To identify proven practices in learning community design and operations, member David Gier did extensive internet research, and helped us to develop a list of institutions with programs that were most likely to be transferable to the University of Iowa. Other committee members added to his list to create a final group of programs. We then made email requests for interviews and followed up with telephone interviews with

administrators and staff in those programs. A copy of the email request and short description of each program are available in Appendices B and C. David Gier also attended the “Living Learning Institute: Sustaining Student-Faculty Engagement across Campus,” July 22-24, 2007, a conference sponsored by Academic Impressions. Information he gains from the conference will be shared with the committee and analyzed as part of our Phase Two report.

At the same time, we worked on a scan of the internal environment. We interviewed and surveyed staff involved in UI learning communities and similar first-year experiences, including the director of the University Honors Program. Copies of our survey and a chart summarizing the responses we received are available in Appendices D and E. Complete survey responses are available on the Task Force SharePoint site (see Carol Lammer for access).

We were fortunate that the committee members themselves could serve as our first resource for some aspects of the internal scan. A number of members have been involved in Learning Communities here and elsewhere, and a number of members oversee key features identified as part of our environmental scan. We also were fortunate to have a number of University reports to consult including the RISE Report and *Learning Communities and the Connection to Increased First-Year Student Retention*, a study commissioned by former Associate Provost, Lola Lopes. During our committee meetings we strove to articulate our own understandings of the full scope and possibilities for learning communities and create a shared understanding to form the basis of our report.

The preparation of this report has provided us with the materials we will use to complete our *Phase Two Report*, in which we will propose recommendations for a coherent, scalable learning communities program for the University of Iowa. As we prepare those recommendations, we will again consult widely, including discussions in the CLAS Educational Policy Committee and key stakeholders from the University programs identified our UI environmental scan.

The report that follows includes these parts:

- a definition of learning communities;
- a taxonomy of learning communities;
- a discussion of successful practices of established programs;
- a discussion of assessment practices;
- a discussion of various aspects of the UI environment;
- a brief summation; *and*
- various appendices.

I. Defining Learning Communities

Charge: Create a useable definition of Learning Communities

The term “learning communities” as described in the resources used by this committee (see Appendix A), and by institutions whose learning communities we researched in depth, encompasses a broad spectrum of programs. Some institutions offer only residentially based programs in which the community of students is defined by a shared setting; other institutions offer only linked-courses programs in which a cohort of students enroll in two or more courses in common. Still other institutions offer a variety of programs that incorporate elements of both residential and linked-courses experience. To create a useable definition the Committee examined existing written definitions for both residential learning communities and linked-courses learning communities.

Residential Experience Learning Communities

These programs typically are referred to as “learning communities,” “living-learning communities,” or “residential learning communities.” The National Study of Living-Learning Programs (NSLLP) project defines residential experience learning communities as “*programs that involve undergraduate students who live together in a discrete portion of a residence hall (or the entire hall) and participate in academic and/or extracurricular programming designed especially for them*” (National Study of Living-Learning Programs, Section I, Introduction). For this report, we will use the term living-learning communities as defined by NSLLP. A description of this project can be found on page 11 of this report

Living-learning communities usually are constructed around “themes” or concepts. Themes and concepts may be developed around:

- broadly defined academic areas (e.g. Health Sciences)
- a specific major or majors (e.g. Performing Arts, Engineering or Foreign Languages)
- specific groups of students (e.g. Honors programs, open majors, transfer students, upper class students, first-year students)
- specific extra-curricular interests (e.g. civic engagement or environmental concerns)

A more detailed description of living-learning community structure is found in the Taxonomy section below.

“Linked Courses” Experiences

The Washington Center is “a National Resource Center dedicated to the support of projects aimed at student engagement and academic achievement, particularly for students underrepresented in higher education.” [from the Center’s website, <http://www.evergreen.edu/washcenter/about1.asp>]. The Center is a rich resource for information about learning communities, especially “linked courses” experiences. The Center offers the following definition for learning communities:

A variety of approaches that link or cluster classes during a given term, often around an interdisciplinary theme, that enroll a common cohort of students. This represents an intentional restructuring of students’ time, credit, and learning experiences to build community and to foster more explicit connections among students, among students and their teachers, and among disciplines.” (“What are Learning Communities?” <http://www.evergreen.edu/washcenter/lcfaq.htm#21>)

Virtually all of the programs we examined that offer “linked courses” experiences meet the first part of this definition in that they include “linked or clustered classes during a given term and enrolled a common cohort of students.” Programs vary considerably, however, in the extent to which they foster explicit connections among students, among students and their teachers, and among disciplines. Typical components designed to foster these connections include outside-of-class activities, in-class activities, a residential experience, an integrative seminar taught by peers, faculty or staff, and completely team-taught courses. Depending on the extent of integration, linked courses experiences are called Freshmen Interest Groups (FIG), Federated Learning Communities, Paired or Clustered Classes and Team-taught or Coordinated Studies programs. A more detailed description of the various structures associated with “linked courses” experiences is found in the Taxonomy section below.

A Definition of Learning Communities for the University of Iowa

Because the committee is explicitly charged with addressing living-learning communities as well as “linked courses” learning communities, we propose a definition of learning communities broad enough to include these experiences as well as their varying permutations. We worked from the assumption that a

“community” is a group of people who share an experience. We propose that learning communities at the University of Iowa be defined as follows:

Learning communities are programs intentionally designed to foster shared learning experiences for defined groups of students. Learning communities foster meaningful institutional engagement and student success and may include living-learning programs, linked courses programs or combinations of these experiences. [Note: This definition is amended from the July 30 report in response to comments from the SST Steering Committee]

II. Taxonomy

Charge: Create a taxonomy of learning communities

This section provides a basic taxonomy of learning communities as gleaned from our research into learning community design and structure. Because successful learning communities operate within distinct institutional structures and cultures, and typically require extensive collaboration among faculty, staff and administration, in practice there are many adaptations and permutations of the designs included in this report. Although there is overlap in the design and operations of living-learning communities and linked-courses communities, for clarity, we address the taxonomies of each separately.

The designs outlined below for living-learning communities and linked courses communities typically target entering first-year students, but may serve transfer students, at-risk students, students with specific majors, students without a major (open majors), honors students and/or upper class students as well.

Living-Learning Community Taxonomy

The following classification does not exhaust the possible permutations of design within living-learning communities, but represents the common models as described in our resources. Residence hall staff, student peers (for example, 2nd year students who were community members the year before) and other staff (e.g. teaching assistants or academic advisors) and/or faculty members may be involved in programming activities across all models.

Model 1: Emphasis on shared living arrangements and common interests for the development of community

In this model, students join a living-learning community based on a shared theme (as noted above). Various learning community programming is provided for the students but no organized course activity is included. The University of Iowa’s Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) living-learning community is a good example of this model. Though students in the community may share some courses with some other members of the community, they are not enrolled in a common set of courses; however they share an interest in a general academic area. WISE also provides programming, tutoring and mentoring activities for its students.

Model 2: Living experiences supplemented by shared course experiences. Living-learning communities of this sort include a course or courses specifically developed for the members of the community. Participation in the course/courses may be voluntary or required. Other programming is also provided. Several of the current UI learning communities (Art and Design, Iowa Writers) offer students the opportunity to enroll in a specific course; others have done so in the past and may in the future.

Model 3: *Strong emphasis on shared academic experiences.* In these living-learning communities, all students in the community are also enrolled in one or more (usually more than one) courses. At the far end of this continuum, students may be advised as members of the community take multiple courses together, and the courses are team-taught or are taught in cooperation, with faculty meeting to coordinate various aspects of the educational experience. The University of Iowa has no current learning community that fits this model. Neither did we find a pure example among the institutions we targeted for successful practices; however, the Indiana FIG program approximates it most closely. At Indiana, FIG students enroll in several courses in common and live together in a residence hall. The FIG seminar is run by a student peer who also lives in the learning community and students are assigned to advisors located in their residence halls.

Integration as a variable in defining living-learning communities

In general, learning communities can be characterized by their level of integration; that is, how much *intentionally structured interaction* occurs among students, students and program personnel (faculty, staff, peers), and the degree of curricular integration. The models outlined above range from a relatively low level of integration (Model 1) to a high level of integration (Model 3).

Each of the models of living-learning communities described above also can be viewed in terms of the level of their physical and spatial integration. The list below begins with:

- LC students are housed in neighborhoods. “Neighborhoods” may include rooms within a single residence hall that are in close proximity and housing within several residence halls that are in close proximity to one another.
- LC students are housed on one residence hall floor, but do not comprise the entire floor.
- LC students comprise the entire residence hall floor.
- LC students comprise the entire residence hall.

Linked Courses Communities Taxonomy

Note: Information for this section is derived from following sources: Washington Center website, MacGregor, et al “Learning Community Models” and from our interviews

According to our written resources, there are three *basic* models for linked courses communities that differ in the extent to which

- the student cohort makes up the entire class
- faculty collaborate
- courses are linked thematically and/or topics are integrated

Model 1: *Student Learning Community Cohorts Created in Larger Classes (FIG, Federated Learning Communities).* In this model:

- Students register for 2-4 courses, but they are not the only students in the course;
- Faculty DO NOT coordinate topics or assignments; and
- Intellectual connections and community-building often take place in an additional integrative seminar. Only the student cohort enrolls in the common seminar. This seminar may be led by upper class peer (common in the “FIG” communities, professional staff or a faculty member. The focus may help students develop study and problem solving and introduce them to campus resources.

Examples from our examination of established practices include

- Indiana University FIG program in which students take 2-3 courses together plus a seminar taught by a student peer;
- University of Texas FIG program in which students enroll in 2-4 courses plus a seminar taught by a professional staff member (academic advisor and others) and a student peer.
- University of Oregon FIG program in which students enroll in 2 academic classes taught by faculty plus a seminar, College Connections. College Connections is taught by one of the academic class faculty instructors and a FIG academic assistant (FA). The faculty member and the FA collaborate on the design of the seminar which helps the students make connections between the academic classes. Faculty teaching in a FIG may choose to collaborate.

Model 2: Paired or Clustered Classes. In this model:

- Two or more classes linked (sometimes by theme or content) which a cohort of students takes together.
- Faculty DO plan the program collaboratively and
- The cohort of students is the *only* student cohort in the linked courses.

We found no examples among our established programs in which the cohort of students was the only student cohort in the linked courses. We suspect this model is not easily adopted in institutions with large entering first-year student cohorts. However, most FIG programs limited the FIG reserved discussion sessions to the FIG student cohort only. We did find FIG programs (University of Oregon and IUPUI) in which the FIG seminar integrates course content.

Model 3: Team-Taught Programs (Coordinated Studies Program). In this model:

- Students take all of their courses together
- Students may meet in large group at times and in smaller groups at times;
- Course content is embedded in an integrated program of study

The closest examples of Coordinated Studies programs at our targeted institutions are those at Arizona State and IUPUI.

- In IUPUI Themed Learning Communities, the student cohort may take all of their classes together. The linked first-year seminar is team-taught by a faculty member, who serves as team leader, an academic advisor, librarian, and student mentor. The faculty member also teaches one of the linked academic courses. Course content across all of the classes is integrated. The student cohort may be part of larger classes (like the FIG model).
- Arizona State links general education courses around a theme. Combinations include a writing course that has been specially designed for the learning community program. Content, assignments are integrated; even grading may be integrated.

Integration as a variable in defining linked courses communities

The greater collaboration there is among students, faculty and across the curriculum, the more “integrated” linked courses communities are considered. Tokuno (Levine) describes the structure of linked courses communities based on intentionally designed collaboration within the four major components of these communities: students, faculty, curriculum and setting. He categorizes the various levels of collaboration as

“low,” “mid-level” and “high.” For example, if we consider faculty collaboration for the models discussed above,

- The current linked course program at the University of Iowa, Courses in Common (linked courses but no integrative seminar), would have a low level of faculty collaboration.
- Faculty involvement in FIG programs might reach a mid-level of collaboration. Paired or Clustered courses in linked courses programs would also have mid-level collaboration among faculty. The University of Oregon is an example.
- Faculty in team taught programs would have a high level of collaboration (e.g. ISU Connections or IUPUI Themed Learning Communities).

As a rule, the higher the level of integration in a learning community program, the greater the need is for extensive collaboration among participants. The three models outlined above range from least integrated to most integrated.

Additional information

Instruction in any of these models may be delivered by faculty or by faculty in concert with academic advisors, student peers, residence life staff, librarians, computer technology specialists and/or learning support specialists. In addition, all of these models may include inside-of-class (group projects) or outside of class activities (field trips, service learning opportunities, supplemental instruction) for student participants.

III. Successful Practices of Established Programs

Charge: Identify successful practices in learning community design and operations.

Because the Committee is charged with recommending a “coherent, *scalable* (emphasis added) learning community program for the University of Iowa,” committee members elected to search for successful practices at institutions similar in size and type to the University of Iowa. The committee used the following search criteria to identify successful practices in learning community design and operations:

- Programs at large, public research institutions.
- Established programs (programs in existence four years or more)
- Programs offered by institutions we consider our peers or like our peers

With one exception, IUPUI, the institutions represented in this report meet the above criteria. We included IUPUI because they have done considerable assessment and because their learning communities represent an example of a high degree of integration.

We used the resources in Appendix A, *especially the Washington Center for Improving Undergraduate Education* to search for and identify established programs. We called on the experience of committee members to identify programs as well. Table 1 provides an at-a-glance summary of the established programs we selected for closer examination; a more detailed, one-page summary of the design and some operational elements of each program is included in Appendix C.

Table 1
Snapshot of Learning Community Design and Operations of Institutions Contacted for Interviews

Institution	Program	Model(s)	% of Entering Cohort	# Students & Entering Cohort	Assessment
U of Wisconsin, Madison	First-Year Interest Groups	Linked Courses May have residential component	8-9%	560/6,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comparative retention and performance studies FIG cohort/non-FIG ▪ First-year & Senior cohort focus groups ▪ Faculty focus group + multiple opportunities to provide
U of Wisconsin, Madison	Residential Learning Communities	Living-Learning	10-15% (estimate)	1250	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National Survey of Living-Learning Communities (NSLLP) ▪ No systemic Institutional assessment
Indiana University	Freshman Interest Groups	Linked Courses + Residential Experience	6%	420/6500-7500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student questionnaire ▪ Use seminar assignments
U of Missouri	Freshman Interest Groups & Residential Learning Communities	Linked Courses FIGS with resident experience	60%	3660 in both FIGS and LC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participated in NSLLP ▪ Residual GPA study ▪ Individual building/community assessment
U of Oregon	Freshman Interest Groups	Linked Courses FIGS One-third have residential component	50%	1500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NSSE ▪ Student, Faculty, and FA evaluations of the program ▪ Comparative studies of GPA and retention for FIG/non-FIGs
U of Washington	Freshman Interest Groups	Linked Courses FIGS	70%	3500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student evaluations ▪ NSSE ▪ Other materials being sent
IUPUI	Learning Communities and Themed Learning Communities (TLC)	Tiered FYS + Linked Courses	86% in 1 of 3 options	312/2400 (in TLC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comparative retention and performance students (controlled for multiple factors) ▪ NSSE ▪ Some portfolio work
U of Texas	First-year Interest Group and "Residential Figs"	Linked Courses May have residential component	50%	3500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review of syllabi ▪ Student survey ▪ Student mentors create portfolios which are reviewed
Ohio State U (incomplete)	Learning Communities and Living Environments	Living-Learning	66% (includes Scholars)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Housing satisfaction survey ▪ End of year focus groups ▪ NSLLP
Iowa State U	Learning Communities	Linked courses and Living-Learning models	57%	2851	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NSSE ▪ Comparative retention (controlled for ACT & high school gpa) ▪ Student satisfaction surveys
Arizona State	CLAS Learning Communities	Linked Courses: FIG Optional residential experience	20%	300-400	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Writing Assessment ▪ Comparative retention studies
Purdue (incomplete)	Learning Communities	Linked Courses; Living-Learning; Combination	20-25%	1375	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NSLLP ▪ Normed diversity perspective scale ▪ Pascarella integration scale ▪ Retention studies ▪ Surveys
U of Maryland (to be interviewed)	First-Year Learning Communities and Residential Communities for Honors and "University Scholars"	Linked Courses Residential programs for Honors and "University Scholars"	Approx. 5% in FYLCs 22% in Honors and University Scholars	225/approx. 4000 900/approx. 4000	Awaiting Interview

By targeting *established* learning community programs for our external search, the committee found that we also identified *successful* learning community programs. Respondents in our telephone interviews reported that their learning communities programs have produced outcomes that meet all or most of their stated goals. These goals typically included increased first-to-second year retention, improved performance (grades), increased student social and academic engagement and increased student satisfaction (see individual program summaries).

In reviewing the information we gained from the telephone interviews, it became apparent to us that successful practices in learning community design and operations are inextricably tied to institutional culture and structure as well as program goals. That is, what is successful practice at one institution would not necessarily be directly transferable to another institution. Therefore, looking toward the committee's Phase Two charge, we looked for practices identified by respondents as *critical to the success of their programs*. A number of factors commonly considered critical for success emerged in our telephone interviews and these factors were consistent across both linked courses and living-learning communities. We discuss these factors below.

The factors commonly cited as critical to the success of learning communities are:

1. Institutions adapted standard learning community models to fit the intended goals of their programs as well as the structure and culture of the institution.

Iowa State University and IUPUI offer good examples. Over 70% of the students at IUPUI commute and roughly 30% of them enter the university with deficits in their academic preparation. The IUPUI linked courses program integrates content across courses, helping students make interdisciplinary connections. The linked first-year seminar taught by faculty, advisors, student peers and librarians provides a one-stop-shopping approach to academic services for students whose time on campus is limited.

Iowa State is a decentralized university. First-year students are directly admitted into colleges and there is no shared general education program among the colleges. Their learning community governance structure which sets criteria and funds proposals for learning communities is centralized; but community development is all done within the colleges and colleges are free to create linked course communities, living-learning communities and a variety of permutations of these models.

2. Strong, sustained central administration leadership is essential for achieving the intentional restructuring and faculty buy-in that are critical for creating successful learning community programs.

In most of our selected established programs, institutions have made implementation of learning communities a priority. For example, when one institution was creating its FIG program, the collegiate dean made it clear that departments who had received approval for new hires were expected to contribute faculty to the FIG program. And institutions with successful established practices have found a way to reward faculty through professional development funds, stipends, and teaching load credit or course buy-outs from the departments or some other means.

3. Extensive and intentionally designed collaborations between academic affairs and student affairs and governance structures that represent all stakeholders.

Virtually every one of our targeted programs included extensive collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs and among faculty, staff and students. The registrar was cited as a critical player in creating systems that worked for batch registrations; collaboration between offices of admission and housing were critical for coordinating housing assignments for living-learning communities; and collaboration among faculty and various staff (e.g. academic advisors and librarians) and students were cited as critical for instruction and programming. Because all of the

programs we examined were considered successful by their institutions, strong collaboration was already in place. The learning community program at Iowa State University offers a truly collaborative governance mode. Its learning community program has co-coordinators: one from academic affairs and one from student affairs. The approval and funding decisions for learning communities is done jointly through them. Also, all learning community committees have representation from both academic and student affairs. This collaborative structure extends to the colleges, where learning community development and implementation involves faculty, staff and students.

4. Creating criteria for learning communities that meet program goals but allow for flexibility in program design and operations.

Learning community program administrators we interviewed emphasized that there need to be criteria for developing learning communities, but the criteria should provide sufficient flexibility to meet the needs of the various, departments and targeted students. IUPUI, for example, does not provide a content “template” for its first-year integrative seminar. Rather, they provide a set of learning outcomes; departments develop seminars to meet those outcomes. Iowa State University requires proposals to include learning outcomes; the flexibility of this program has already been cited above.

5. Good assessment is essential. Sufficient, sustained resources to do good assessment are equally essential.

Program respondents at institutions with strong assessment practices (e.g. IUPUI, ISU, ASU, UO and Purdue) cited the importance of assessment for growing, marketing and improving their programs. Some programs (IUPUI) had personnel whose job responsibilities included learning community assessment. In other cases, programs could buy time or had access to institutional research personnel or offices (University of Oregon).

6. Good marketing is essential.

Learning communities may be a relatively new concept to students and parents and need to be marketed. Programs used web sites, brochures and letters to students, academic advisors, admissions, orientation and housing personnel to introduce and “sell” the learning community concept to students. Some interviewees reported that their marketing is targeted to parents as much as students, because parents understand the importance of the learning community concept whereas students are concerned that a learning community will feel more like high school than college. At least one program does all of its own marketing in order to create the desired image.

7. Technical support for learning community operations (e.g. batch registrations and housing assignments) is critical and should be in place *before* the program is implemented.

Program representatives repeatedly cited the importance of their registrars. Typical responses were “We couldn’t have done this without the active involvement of our Registrar.” In addition to the ability to do batch registrations, some programs cited the need for systems that could connect the housing application and assignment process with the admission application and acceptance process. This was especially important for living-learning community programs and for FIG programs with a residential component.

8. Substantial use of student peers supported by strong peer training programs.

Virtually all of the programs utilize student peers in their programs. Interviewees attributed much of their program’s success to the student peers, whether those peers had full responsibility for teaching a seminar, assisted with a seminar, or did programming in the living-learning communities. A number of programs indicated that students who became peers as sophomores often continued as

peers through their junior and senior years. Programs that use peers as seminar instructors or to assist in instruction provide *extensive* training, often through a specially designed course.

9. Using learning communities to leverage institutional change.

Although not precisely a “critical factor,” several interviewees noted how successful learning communities and their concomitant collaboration and successful practices, encourage successful practices throughout the institution. For example, the University of Wisconsin FIG director reports that faculty members who have taught the FIG seminar often say that it has significantly changed the way they teach their other classes. The University of Oregon reports increased collaboration among faculty members who have participated in the FIG program. And, the living-learning community director at Wisconsin discussed the ways in which successful practices in living-learning communities have now been implemented throughout the residence halls. For example, students in Wisconsin living-learning communities did not enroll in a common set of courses; however program personnel knew that many students *were* enrolled in typical first-year classes and created a system for participants to connect with other community members enrolled in the same class. That program is now web-based and is available to all students in the residence halls.

Committee members also asked respondents to cite what they found most challenging in creating and maintaining their programs. Common challenges included:

- **Funding.** Some schools indicated that funding had not been commensurate with program growth; that is, funding did not necessarily follow success. This was a concern for programs whose assessment indicated a significant positive effect on enrollment.
- **Faculty Buy-in and faculty professional development.** At a program’s inception, there are a number of faculty members who are eager participants; as the program grows, finding willing faculty outside the “choir” can be difficult. Several directors indicated that they use faculty to recruit faculty, report that the reward structure is important and that administrative support is crucial. A number of program directors indicated that faculty development—workshops, speakers, conference attendance, or summer release time for programs with content integration—was extremely important for sustaining faculty commitment.
- **Collaboration.** Respondents attribute the success of their programs to extensive collaboration, but also report that it takes a lot of work, is difficult to sustain in the “silo” structure of most large institutions and deteriorates rapidly if it is not nurtured.

IV. Assessment Models

Charge: Include models for the assessment of the outcomes associated with learning communities.

The committee looked for assessment models at both the national and institutional levels. We focused our institutional level search on the established programs we identified above. We found two national assessments in which a number of our targeted institutions participated: the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the National Study of Living-Learning Programs (NSLLP).

According to its website,

The National Survey of Student Engagement(NSSE) is designed to obtain, on an annual basis, information from scores of colleges and universities nationwide about student participation in programs and activities that institutions provide for their learning and personal development. The results will provide an estimate of how undergraduates spend their time and what they gain from

attending college. Survey items on *The National Survey of Student Engagement* represent empirically confirmed "good practices" in undergraduate education. That is, they reflect behaviors by students and institutions that are associated with desired outcomes of college.
http://nsse.iub.edu/html/quick_facts.cfm

Selected established institutions who participate in NSSE reported that they use the database of survey results to compare results for learning community participants and non-participants. An excellent example of this practice was provided by the University of Oregon (Appendix F).

The National Study of Living-Learning Programs (NSLLP) web site provided the following description of the study:

This is a multi-year study that examines how participation in living-learning programs fosters students' academic and social outcomes. In addition, the NSLLP includes a special focus on how living-learning programs may facilitate the success of women majoring in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM).

The NSLLP provides a cohesive research program that examines living-learning programs using a consistent methodology. It provides participating institutions with credible, relevant, and useful information about the learning and development of their residential student populations.
<http://www.livelearnstudy.net/>

The 2004 survey report included 34 institutions and close to 24,000 students; the 2007 study will include 50 institutions. The 2004 survey results can be found on the NSLLP web site. A copy of the report is available on the committee's SharePoint site (please contact Carol Lammer for access).

We found no comparable national assessment or survey for linked courses programs; however, the Washington Center has surveyed the 314 members of its Learning Communities Directory for institutional assessment practices. The results are outlined in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Assessment Tools/Practices Being Used by Institutions Registered With the Washington Center	
Survey Question:	
<i>Overall, how are you assessing the effectiveness of your learning community initiative?</i>	
Response Rate: 275 out of 314 registered institutions	
Student satisfaction	86% (238 out of 275)
Analysis of retention within the program	72% (199 out of 275)
Analysis of year-to-year retention at institution	70% (195 out of 275)
Faculty/student affairs satisfaction	65% (180 out of 275)
Annual program enrollment	60% (165 out of 275)
Studies of grade point averages	58% (160 out of 275)
Student learning as demonstrated in projects/portfolios	51% (142 out of 275)
Rates of course or program completion	45% (125 out of 275)
Graduation rates	36% (99 out of 275)
Student progress toward degree	35% (98 out of 275)
National instruments such as CSEQ, CCSEQ, NSSE or others	33% (91 out of 275)
Entry into or graduation from certain majors	14% (40 out of 275)

Best Practices from the Established Programs Institutions

A number of the targeted institutions we researched and interviewed have strong assessment practices. Iowa State University, the University of Oregon and IUPUI conduct controlled studies comparing the retention and performance of students who participate in learning communities with those who do not participate. IUPUI, in particular controls for substantial number of factors including background characteristics, academic preparation and other program participation. IUPUI also uses comparative NSSE data, a student feedback questionnaire which surveys student satisfaction, self-reported learning gains and faculty and student focus groups. Finally, the Arizona State FIG program, with its specific focus on writing, does a comparative writing assessment.

Please note that the assessment section is incomplete. The committee still needs to interview two of the established programs. As we have interviewed program directors, we have asked for samples of their assessment tools and reports. We plan to compile examples and include them as a stand-alone resource for a future implementation team and/or include them in the Phase Two report.

V. UI Environment Scan

Charge: Identify key features worthy of consideration in the design and operations of learning communities at the University of Iowa

In this section we examine three components of the University of Iowa environment worthy of consideration in learning community design and operations: courses or programs that worth considering because they incorporate at least some of the elements described in our taxonomy of learning communities; existing living-learning communities at the University; and environmental factors that could facilitate or impede the development of a coherent learning community program.

1. Current UI programs which have at least some of the elements/factors described in the Linked Courses taxonomy and/or shape the possibilities for learning communities at the University.

Appendix G provides a snapshot of selected programs in this section with information about their administrative home, number of students served and resources (where available).

IowaLink

IowaLink is an academic support program for recruited students who do not meet the standards for regular admission to the University. This program is perhaps the most integrated example of a linked courses learning community on the UI campus, combining elements of Models 2 and 3 in our Linked Courses taxonomy. Key learning community components include:

- Enrollment in 2-3 courses in common. All Link students enroll in Academic Seminar each semester. All Link students enroll in one of two possible large-lecture General Education Program classes. And most Link students enroll in a basic research course called Information Handling.
- Academic seminar instructors plan their sections collaboratively and meet to ensure continuity across the sections. Academic Seminar instructors meet regularly with students outside of class and may assist students in applying/relating what they are learning in seminar to other coursework.
- All students attend peer-led Supplemental Instruction out-of-class study groups for their GEP course. A portion of students' grades in Academic Seminar are from participation in the SI sessions.
- Each student also works with an academic support team including academic seminar instructors, academic advisors, peer study group leaders, and learning support personnel who collectively monitor student progress closely.

IowaLink is labor intensive and the cost per student is relatively high. As a program it most likely is less “scalable” than other internal features of the UI environment to the whole entering UI first-year cohort. As deemed appropriate, it could perhaps be expanded to include identified other at-risk students. Also, key features of the program, such as Supplemental Instruction and peer study groups could be a scalable component for either linked courses or living-learning community models (see also discussion below).

Courses-in-Common (CIC)

This program is most like a FIG or Federated Learning Community (Linked Courses Model One). Like many FIG programs we researched, Courses in Common:

- targets entering first-year students
- enrolls small groups of students (around 20 students) in the same 2-3 courses, but they are not the only students in most of the classes. Course combinations may be developed around General Education Program classes or major requirements. Most course combinations include Rhetoric and a few combinations include The College Transition. CIC students typically represent the entire cohort for Rhetoric and The College Transition.
- serves a relatively large number of students (more than 1000);
- is offered in fall semesters only
- contains course combinations that focus on General Education Program classes, but includes groupings that target specific majors as well (e.g., Engineering, Nursing, Business, health sciences). Sample combinations are included in Appendix H

From its inception, the primary purpose of CIC has been to foster social integration. From student reports, social integration has occasionally led to the formation of study groups, but study groups are not a structured component of the program. Unlike FIG programs, CIC has no integrative seminar, no programmed outside-of-class activities and does not utilize peer mentors. In the past, there was an attempt to create greater integration using a themed Rhetoric course as part of the course combinations. This proved difficult because of teaching assistant assignment constraints and the integrative efforts ultimately were abandoned (see discussion of Rhetoric below). When CIC options have included a section of 407:001 College Transition Seminar, any integration between College Transition and the other courses has been limited and initiated by the CT instructor.

Problems can arise from social integration without a concomitant focus on learning expectations. IUPUI noted that blocked courses without a seminar did not work for them because of “hyper-bonding” (cliques, negative student classroom behaviors). And the University of Oregon refocused its FIGs because of this phenomenon; adding a student academic assistant has alleviated the problem. Hyper-bonding has occurred in some CIC groups, but the instances have been small.

The College Transition (CT)

The College Transition (CT) is a stand-alone first-year experience course. Such a course is frequently an optional or a required component of living-learning communities or serves as the “cohort exclusive” course in linked communities. As it has been developed here, CT has a number of elements common to learning communities and to integrative seminars, including:

- The course is targeted to entering-first year students fall semesters.
- Sections are small (capped at 19 students during summer orientation programs)
- Community is fostered through in-class and out-of-class interactive small group activities (out-of-class activities include a campus resource scavenger hunt and attendance at Hancher events).

- Close relationships with CT instructors are fostered through self reflection writings; building relationships with other instructors is encouraged via an assigned visit with an instructor from another class.
- Course content focuses on University expectations and how to meet them.
- Course may target or be required for specific student populations (e.g., Old Gold Scholars, Opportunity at Iowa Scholars, Advantage Iowa Scholars, Iowa Biosciences Advantage Scholars).

Other than the small number of CT sections that have been linked to CIC options, CT is not currently offered in combination with other courses, nor is it an optional or required component of existing living-learning communities at the University.

In terms of learning community design, CT holds potential as an integrative seminar in a linked courses model design. Operationally, course content would need significant revision and scalability beyond its current size is an issue. Course coordinators have exhausted the qualified pool of instructors and they believe that the program has reached the maximum number sections that can be offered (57-60). Without adding faculty or peers to the instructional team, it would be difficult to increase the number of sections.

Transfer Transition (TT)

Transfer Transition is a “first-year experience” course designed specifically for transfer students. This course grew out of The College Transition (CT) and has similar elements common to learning communities as CT. Course content, while somewhat similar to CT, places a heavier emphasis on major selection and career development activities. TT is not linked to other courses or included as an option for existing living-learning communities. We include Transfer Transition as an environmental feature worthy of consideration because a few institutions offer learning communities for entering transfer students (e.g. Iowa State University, University of Texas, and University of Washington).

First-Year Seminars (FYS)

First-Year Seminars at the University of Iowa are small (15 – 16 students) themed, faculty-taught classes for entering first-year students. Other than Honors Program courses, this is the only faculty-taught small group experience designed for first-year students; most first-year students will experience *faculty* in large lecture courses. Like content-based integrative seminars affiliated with linked courses models, the small size and content theme is designed to encourage community building among the students in each course.

Currently, First-Year Seminars are tied to neither Courses in Common options nor living-learning communities; however, in fall semester 2007, three First-Year Seminars will be an optional component of three new living-learning communities (see Figure 3). Committee members believe these seminars hold the potential to be tied into other living-learning communities or to serve as part of a linked courses model.

Rhetoric

Rhetoric is a component of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences General Education Program that all CLAS undergraduates (as well as undergraduates in most other colleges) must complete. Rhetoric courses, therefore, are taken by almost all entering first-year students. Rhetoric is worthy of consideration in the design and operations of learning communities for several reasons, including:

- The use of a freshman English/composition courses in linked courses models is not unusual. For example, about 15 out of the 70 learning communities at Iowa State University include an English

course and Arizona State uses a special version of their freshman composition in their linked learning communities.

- Rhetoric classes are small, usually 22 students. Currently the courses serve as the cohort exclusive class for many of the Courses in Common options

With its focus on controversial issues as a basis for course activities, Rhetoric potentially could integrate content in a linked courses design. Operationally, however, there are problems. RhetoricTAs are not assigned until shortly before the beginning of the semester; they would have little or no time to create a syllabus that integrates course content and/or may not have expertise in the themed option. The process by which TA assignments are done would need to be substantially restructured and/or faculty would need to teach integrative sections to address this operational issue. If a future learning community program offered linked courses both fall and spring semester, it might open the possibility for greater content integration through Rhetoric. The committee would like to investigate the potential for Rhetoric further.

Supplemental Instruction (SI)

Supplemental Instruction is a peer-led academic support program that integrates study skills with specific course content. SI Leaders (peers) attend the class and read the materials for which they are responsible, after which they lead a study session for class participants in which they model how to master course content. Our research shows that SI or some other out-of-class structured learning group may be a component of both living-learning communities and linked courses communities. SI is being used at the University by the IowaLink program for General Education Program courses and by the Center for Diversity and Enrichment for students enrolled in Biology and Chemistry courses. There is no campus-wide program or centralized SI administrative unit. Like many of the learning community models, SI relies heavily on peers, thereby increasing engagement of the peers as well as the targeted students and it is scalable.

Programs using Peers and Peer Training Programs

Student peers are used in a number of programs at the University. Examples include: Orientation student advisors; Psychology Department peer advisors; New Dimensions in Learning peer tutors; Supplemental Instructions peer leaders for the Center for Diversity and Enhancement and the IowaLink program; Writing Fellows (Honors and Writing Center program); Honors peer mentors; Engineering peer tutors and mentors; undergraduate teaching assistants; Admission Visitors Center (tour guides, recruitment phone calls, outreach activities). This is not an exhaustive list; the committee did not survey the campus to find out how student peers are being used or how they are being trained. We do not believe, though, that any single program utilizing peers at the UI is as large as some of the programs we have examined (e.g. University of Oregon).

Online at Iowa (course)

Online at Iowa is an online course and currently is not paired with CIC, CT or any living-learning community. We note it here because it had an enrollment of over 2700 first-year students Fall Semester 2007, so there is a way in which it is a “shared” experience.

2. Current UI Living-Learning Communities (LLCs)

This section examines the twelve existing UI living learning communities within the context of our selected established programs. The committee surveyed current living-learning community academic liaisons to gain a better understanding of the design and operations of living-learning communities on the University of Iowa campus. We also heard presentations by committee members who are connected to the existing living-learning communities from either the academic side or the residential side. The results of the survey are summarized in Table 3, which provides an organizational snapshot of the current living-learning communities and in Appendix E, which offers more detailed information about community goals and

learning outcomes, programming and assessment. The survey questions are located in Appendix D. Complete responses are available at the Committee's SharePoint site (contact Carol Lammer).

Table 3
UI Living-Learning Communities
Organizational Snapshot

Name	Sponsor	Date Started ¹	Current Size ²	Where Housed	Budget (size, where from?) ³
Art and Design	CLAS – School of Art & Art History	Fall '07	50	Quadrangle	¼ Time TA plus small resources budget from CLAS
Citizenship, Leadership, and Service	CLAS with a faculty committee	Fall '07	39	Hillcrest	¼ Time TA plus small resources budget from CLAS
Explorations in Computing, Mathematics, & Science	CLAS with a faculty committee	Fall '07	52	Hillcrest	¼ Time TA plus small resources budget from CLAS
Health Sciences ⁴	Originally, the Assoc. Provost for Health Sciences; now Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education	2001	82	Rienow	\$1,000 programming; \$995 tutoring; \$9,702 for .25 GA budget from Provost
<i>Honors</i> <i>[Amended from July 30 report]</i>	Honors Program	1990s	275	Daum	<i>\$2500 programming; \$1300 Honors Student Coordinators; \$42,000 professional staff</i>
International Crossroads	International Programs	1970s	68	Mayflower	\$12,000 (\$10,000 in student salaries; \$2000 for programming) from fundraising and IP
Iowa Writers	Provost's Office with IWW and Writers' Workshop	2004	54	Stanley	\$1000 from Provost's Office also a ¼ time TA
Leadership Community in Business & Entrepreneurship	Tippie College of Business Administration	2000	51	Currier	\$500 from Tippie College
Men in Engineering	College of Engineering	1999	191	Burge	\$120 from College of Engineering
Multicultural Studies & Leadership	Opportunity at Iowa	2006	14	Hillcrest	\$5,600 for student salary & programming from OI
Performing Arts	CLAS – Division of Performing Arts	2002	83	Currier	\$2,500 from Foundation funds
Women in Science &	Health Science	1995-06	83	Stanley	No designated

Engineering	Colleges/Provost's Office				funds for LC
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¹Information from an Honors Program survey and other sources; in some cases exact dates do not seem to be available.

²Most LCs "fill" and some have waitlists; newer communities may have some openings

³Budgets do not include salary of University staff with other responsibilities or RA salaries paid by Residence Services.

⁴Health Sciences information was updated from material the community submitted to the HLC Entry and Transition Committee.

The UI living-learning communities do not share a common “set” of goals; however there were a number of commonly cited and/or implied goals from LLC survey respondents including

- Student persistence and retention
- Increasing student satisfaction
- Building community
- Providing students with support in their first year
- To develop specific skills (e.g., writing community, performing arts community and design community).

These commonly cited goals are consistent with goals identified by the established program institutions as well as MacGregor and Smith’s “Frequently Cited Goals for Learning Communities” (http://www.evergreen.edu/washcenter/natlcdocs/Goals_for_LCs.doc). The creation of goals or learning outcomes specific to individual living-learning community was not unusual among the established programs we examined because so many communities are designed for specific majors (e.g. Engineering) and/or student populations (e.g. first-year students, Honors students). For example, the University of Wisconsin living-learning community director describes their program as operating under a shared core value within which individual communities establish goals. What *is* unusual about University of Iowa living-learning communities is that they *lack common program level goals*. Essentially, we have learning communities, but not a learning community program.

As is evident from Figure 3 and Appendix E, UI living-communities vary substantially in size, longevity (three new communities are being offered Fall 2007), programming and resources. This makes some sense. The communities have been formed at different times, for different reasons, to address different student populations and have different sponsorship. These differentials are true to some extent for other living-learning communities we reviewed as well:

- Most programs have evolved over time so there is a mix of older, very established communities alongside new communities.
- Living-learning community size also can vary substantially at the other institutions. For example, at the University of Wisconsin, a community can comprise an entire residence hall (850 students) or be as small as 60-65 students.
- Funding for individual living-learning communities at Wisconsin and The Ohio State University comes from a number of sources as well.
- Some institutions have some “set” program features (e.g. 1 s.h. optional seminar in Wisconsin LLCs), but others, like Iowa State University, have no set level or type of programming (i.e. field trips, dinners, etc.); decisions are left up to the individual communities as long as the communities meet general criteria (e.g. stated learning outcomes). Except in programs with faculty taught seminars connected to living-learning communities, it is difficult from the information we’ve received to compare the level of faculty involvement in the communities at UI to those in the established programs.

Even given the differentials outlined above, the established programs we reviewed have clearly defined administrative/ organizational structures and overall programmatic goals/values. This was true whether the administrative responsibility for the communities rests with Housing, academic departments, or is jointly administered by student and academic affairs. The roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders—RAs, peer mentors, faculty, staff--are clearly delineated. There is no umbrella organizational structure for the living-

learning communities at the University. Colleges (CLAS, Engineering, Business, Medicine) and the Office of the Provost have served as sponsors and some departments (Theatre, Art) are providing staffing. But the roles of RAs vary among communities and a Memorandum of Understanding designed to delineate responsibilities of sponsors and University Housing has not been consistently signed. Overall, the selected established programs appear to have better defined and more collaborative relationships among the stakeholders than the communities at the University.

Despite the lack of programmatic structure, University of Iowa institutional research indicates that participation in a living-learning community has some positive effects. *Learning Communities and the Connection to Increased First-Year Student Retention* indicates that UI living-learning communities have a positive impact on retention (Holliman) and the RISE report indicates that student engagement is positively affected as well (Pascarella, Whitt). University Housing participates in the Educational Benchmarking Inventory (EBI) and the most recent survey reports that UI living-learning community participants are more satisfied than non-participants on a number of factors. At the community level, though, assessment appears to be limited to student satisfaction surveys or rely on student enrollment as an indicator of program success. The UI did not participate in the 2004 National Survey of Living-Learning Programs.

We should note here that there is a proposal by the University of Iowa Honors Program to expand and potentially restructure some of the existing living-learning communities. Currently, the Honors Program living-learning community comprises the whole of Daum Residence Hall. Honors proposes creating a second group of living-learning communities for first-year students who do not meet the requisite academic profile for the Honors Program, but who are talented and show promise for the Honors Program. Admission to these communities would involve a holistic review but would require a “bottom line” academic profile above the average for UI entering first-year cohorts. The Honors Program suggests partnering with the existing UI living-learning communities to implement such a program. The Ohio State was the only program we interviewed that had a tiered Honors model. *[This paragraph has been emended from the July 30 version]*

3. Other components of the UI Environment

In this section, our scan of the environment focuses on factors worthy of consideration because of their potential impact on the development of a coherent, scalable learning community program. We have organized the discussion by environmental strengths--those factors which could positively impact the development of learning communities—and environmental challenges--factors that could impede or make difficult the development of learning communities. We include as part of our scan, some of the factors identified by established program respondents as being critical to the success of their programs.

Environmental Strengths

Strong administrative leadership and support for learning communities. (Critical Factor 2)

The creation of this Task Force is evidence of Provost-level interest in and support for learning community development and is just one of a series of initiatives over the past six years that reflect a renewed focus on undergraduate education. In addition, there is ample evidence of administration leadership and support for the improvement of undergraduate education and undergraduate experience in general, including:

- Strategic Plan aspirations for excellence in undergraduate education are found not only in the University’s strategic plan but in the plans of the colleges as well.
- The University sought and received approval to do a self study with a special focus on undergraduate education for the Higher Learning Commission reaccreditation review.
- The creation of the Center for Research on Undergraduate Education (CRUE) in the College of Education. The Center’s initial study of the UI undergraduate experience, *Undergraduate Experiences and Outcomes at the University of Iowa* [RISE report] (Pascarella, Ernest T., Elizabeth

J. Whitt and others,) is being used strategically to set goals for the direction of undergraduate education.

- The creation of the position of Director of Student Success Initiatives in the Office of the Provost.
- The formation of the Student Success Team (SST), a broad-based committee representing all stakeholders in student undergraduate education.
- The recent formation of a CLAS Task Force to review the CLAS General Education Program.
- Strong support for undergraduate retention and enrichment initiatives in the Office of the Provost such as creation of The College Transition and the expansion of LLC.
- Strong collegiate support undergraduate retention and enrichment initiatives such as the First-Year Seminar program (CLAS), living-learning communities (CLAS, Engineering, Business, Medicine) and the Iowa Edge program (Business) and a seminar for all first-year Engineering majors (Engineering).
- The creation of a new position in University Housing, Manager Residence Life – Academic Initiatives.
- The Center for Teaching.

Extensive and intentionally designed collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs, including governance structures with representation from all stakeholders in decision-making processes. (Critical Factor # 3)

There are excellent examples of successful campus-wide curricular, administrative and programmatic collaboration that include faculty, staff and students.

Examples of administrative collaboration. Cross-college collaboration on academic policy and procedures occurs through an Associate Deans and Directors group chaired by the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education. ADD membership includes faculty and staff from both academic student affairs and collegiate personnel. A disbanded committee created to examine recruitment and retention at the University, the Enrollment Management Committee (EMC), also offers an example of administrative collaboration. This committee included faculty and staff representation from the colleges as well as academic student services and University Housing. A recently formed Student Success Team (SST) expands the focus on undergraduate education beyond recruitment and retention to student learning, student engagement and student success. For example this Task Force was established by the SST Executive Committee. SST broadens stakeholder representation as well; members include collegiate representatives, faculty, staff, students, and student affairs representation. The SST reports to Tom Rocklin, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education. These committees have the potential to support the kind of restructuring that might be necessary to implement a coherent, scalable learning community program at the University.

Examples of curricular collaboration. The University of Iowa has had a longstanding emphasis on interdisciplinarity in teaching, research and academic programming. A number of majors in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences are interdisciplinary, including African-American Studies, American Studies, Women’s Studies, International Studies, Informatics and Interdepartmental Studies. All CLAS certificate and other collegiate certificates as the International Business Certificate are interdisciplinary as well. Because the aim of many learning communities is to help students make connections across disciplines, this culture of interdisciplinarity and the willingness of faculty and departments to intentionally structure majors and certificate programs “across the silos” is a positive environmental feature for learning communities.

Examples of programmatic collaboration. Other types of extensive collaboration *within* academic affairs can be found as well. The IowaLink program described earlier in this report was developed and continues to operate as an intensely collaborative program among various academic and student support offices as well as academic departments (Rhetoric and Library & Information Science).

The Academic Advising Center also offers a good example of faculty and staff collaboration within academic affairs. In addition to other collaborations mentioned in this report, the Center has liaisons to every academic department who ensure that advisors have up-to-date information about curricular changes and advise departments on student curricular needs and enrollment management issues. For example, the Center has served as a resource to departments which have recently developed interdisciplinary majors and/or tracks: Informatics, International Studies and Interdepartmental Studies. The Center also consults with departments to create the Courses in Common options. Existing collaborations like these could facilitate the development of a linked courses program.

Finally, there is programmatic collaboration across student services and academic services units similar to the collaboration we found in some of the selected established practices. Good examples include The College Transition and the 2 Plus 2 Guaranteed Graduation Plan. Although The College Transition is administratively housed in the Academic Advising Center, course coordination is provided jointly by AAC and Orientation Services, instructors represent offices across campus and course content requires collaboration with the Career Center and University Libraries staff. Similarly, the new 2 Plus 2 Guaranteed Graduation Plan is being implemented by a team composed of staff from Admissions and the Academic Advising Center who consult extensively with University academic departments.

Good assessment is essential. Sufficient, sustained resources to do good assessment are equally essential. (Critical Factor 8)

In the past few years there has been an increased emphasis at the University on data-driven decision-making. A good example is the recent Learning Outcomes initiative under which every department at the University has created a learning outcomes assessment plan for its undergraduate students. As noted above, CRUE was established and central administration is using the RISE report strategically. And central administration continually explores viable methods to assess student learning and the student experience: the University will participate in the 2007-2008 NSSE survey and has joined Eduventures, a research consortium of colleges and universities. While the University does not have an office or designated person for institutional research, the Student Success Team Executive Committee has formed a Research Coordination Council which will determine priorities for and conduct research on undergraduate education.

Shared General Education Program. Many linked courses programs develop course combinations from their general education programs as well as for their departmental majors (e.g. Arizona State and the University of Oregon). UI undergraduate colleges, to some degree, share elements of the CLAS General Education Program. This shared model offers the potential for a *scalable* development of a linked courses program based on general education courses.

The Academic Advising Center and University Libraries. Learning community designs and operations often include academic advisors and librarians (see Arizona State, IUPUI, University of Wisconsin residential learning communities from established practices). Academic advisors teach integrative seminars, advise students in specific learning communities, help market programs to students through the orientation/registration process and develop course clusters for linked courses programs. AAC advisors already serve some of these functions: AAC advisors teach College Transition and advisors help market first-year opportunities through presentations and in one-on-one advising sessions at orientation. At least one UI living-learning community has a dedicated AAC liaison (Health Sciences). University Libraries staff provide substantial outreach and instruction for Rhetoric and for College Transition. Both AAC and University Libraries hold potential for the design and operations of learning communities at the University.

Environmental Challenges

Collaboration. In our telephone interviews, program respondents frequently cited collaboration as both a strength and challenge. They identified sustained collaboration as critical for success but noted that it was difficult to maintain and deteriorated quickly if not nurtured. Although there are good examples of collaboration and strong support for cross campus collaboration as outlined above, the University is a decentralized organization. The effect can be “entrepreneurial” program development in which there are multiple “silos” of activity instead of a coordinated effort. Our current learning communities offer a good example. As noted earlier in this report, at the University we have a number of learning communities; we do not have a learning community program.

Faculty Buy-In. Learning Community program directors we interviewed cited sustained faculty involvement as a challenge to the continued success of their programs. We believe it will be a challenge at the University of Iowa as well. The tenure and promotion model of a research institution like ours does not necessarily foster the kinds of teaching-centric focus necessary for integrated linked courses or faculty-taught integrative seminars. Faculty participants in the successful established practices we reviewed typically receive some type of compensation, whether in the form of released time, stipends, departmental course buy-outs or some other means. The University First Year Seminars offers an example of the challenge we might face in learning community development here. UI faculty who teach First Year Seminars teach on an overload and \$2,500 per course is added to the faculty member’s departmental budget. Under this arrangement CLAS has been able to make progress toward its goal of 50 courses per year, but it has not yet met the goal.

Assessment. As noted under “Environmental Strengths,” the University is making strides in assessment and the RISE report is an excellent example. For many University programs though, student satisfaction surveys remain the norm as noted by committees responsible for sections of the Higher Learning Committee reaccreditation self study. Several committee recommendations included the need for the University to create an institutional office of research. Such an office would facilitate the strong assessment cited as critical by the selected established programs we reviewed. In the meantime, “Entrepreneurial” program development without strong assessment can make it easy to start programs but difficult to end programs that do not achieve their outcomes.

Technical Support for Learning Community Operations (e.g. registration, housing assignments).

Almost every program director we interviewed emphasized the importance of having a registration system that can easily support linked courses registrations and living-learning assignments, particularly for programs that combine both. The current University mainframe student information system cannot process batch registrations like those necessary for linked courses programs. Neither is there a way to reserve courses for specific groups of students for spring semester, which currently limits Courses in Common to a fall-only program. We want to note that fall-only programs are common among our targeted institutions; but there are year-long programs as well (e.g. Iowa State University). Fortunately, a new, web-based student information system, MAUI, is under construction and the ability to do “batch registrations” has been identified as a priority. We piloted one of the new processes this summer for Courses in Common registrations. The committee believes it will be important for the learning community implementation team to work closely with the MAUI steering committee to ensure that the new system provides functionality for learning community needs.

Resources. The University is a “lean” institution in terms of personnel; it has proportionally (even taking into account our smaller enrollments) fewer faculty members and fewer staff members in its respective offices/positions than our peer institutions. It is unlikely that the development of a new learning community program with a greater degree of integration than programs and the outside-of-class activities common in the programs we have researched can be accomplished without adding personnel or providing dedicated funding.

Students. The RISE report indicates that UI students are relatively unengaged in campus activities (Pascarella, Whitt). The kind of peer mentor/instructor involvement represented by the programs included in this report could help create greater student involvement. We do have programs that use peers; but we do not have the robust tradition of peer mentoring in learning communities and/or robust tradition of peer involvement in teaching activities on the scale that exists in our selected established learning community programs.

University Housing. We list this as a challenge because the University cannot currently guarantee a room for all entering first-year students or for entering transfer students. The committee is not certain that this guarantee is necessary for increasing the number of learning communities and plans to interview the director of Housing in our Phase Two work.

VI. Summary and Looking Ahead

This has been an exciting process. We have been delighted to learn about so many successful initiatives; the people we interviewed were passionate about their programs; and we discovered some very interesting practices and approaches. We believe we have presented a thorough examination and analysis of successful design and operations even though some of our work remains incomplete:

- All of the interviews and analysis we hope to include in the Phase One Report have not yet been done. We still need to interview a number of key faculty and staff: Von Stange (University Housing), Liz Whitt (Provost), and Mary Trachsel (Rhetoric).
- Our research on established programs is incomplete. The University of Maryland could not schedule an interview prior to the deadline of this report; we had an incomplete interview with Purdue; and materials from a number of institutions were promised to us but have yet to be received. We are especially interested in the assessment materials we have requested that have not yet arrived.

Our scan of the University of Iowa environment reveals some substantial challenges but also a lot of potential. For example, where we have assessment, indications are that many of the current programs we have reviewed make a difference. Current living-learning communities and The College Transition have a positive impact on student retention. First-to-second year retention and academic performance of IowaLink students exceeds that which would be predicted from their entering academic profiles. And the RISE report indicates living-learning communities, First Year Seminars program and Courses in Common have a positive impact on student engagement. In addition, the number of first-year entering students who could be accommodated in first-year opportunities exceeds 3,000 (Appendix G).

We look forward to building on the foundation that we have created in this report to develop a proposal for a scalable coherent program for learning communities at the University of Iowa. In our Phase Two work, we anticipate consulting with key stakeholders from the University of Iowa programs we have reviewed as well as UI faculty and to re-connect with respondents from our selected established programs.

VII. Appendix

Appendix A	References and Resources
Appendix B	Email Request to Interview Selected Established Programs
Appendix C	Selected Established Program Summaries
Appendix D	UI Living-Learning Community Survey
Appendix E	Summary of UI Living-Learning Community Survey
Appendix F	Sample use of NSSE for Learning Community Assessment: University of Oregon
Appendix G	Snapshot of “Key UI Features” Programs considered in the Internal Environmental Scan
Appendix H	Sample Courses in Common Option

APPENDIX A
REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

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Interviews

See Appendix C – Selected Established Program Summaries.

APPENDIX B

EMAIL REQUEST TO INTERVIEW SELECTED ESTABLISHED PROGRAMS

Dear:

The Office of the Provost at the University of Iowa has created a Task Force on Learning Communities. The committee's ultimate charge is to recommend a coherent learning communities program for the University. To do this, the committee must identify proven practices in learning community design and operations with an eye to their potential for implementation at the University of Iowa. As chair of the committee, I am seeking your assistance. We know that you have a successful, well established program, which is a major achievement at a large research institution, and we know that the practice-based expertise you've gained will enable us to develop an excellent learning communities program at the University of Iowa. So I am writing to ask you to share your expertise and about 30 minutes of your time with a member of our Task Force.

Here are the general areas in which we seek information:

- In your opinion, what are the key features of your learning community program?
- Size (e.g. number of students participating, percent of entering first-year class participating, number of instructors)
- What are the intended outcomes of your learning community program and how do you assess whether you have met your intended outcomes?
- What processes are critical to the success of your program (e.g. criteria for and the approval process for creating a community, registration)?
- How is the program governed (e.g. reporting structure, advisory boards and their roles)?
- What resources are necessary to develop and sustain an established program like yours (funding, cost, personnel, space, etc.)?
- What are the challenges in creating and maintaining such a program?

Heather Stalling, a member of our committee, will be contacting you shortly to find a convenient time to talk with you. You can assume that we have reviewed your web site carefully, but if there are materials or information that would make the phone conversation more productive please forward them in advance. I am excited to be a part of this Task Force and look forward to learning more about your successful program.

Best,
 Pat Folsom
 Assistant Provost for Enrollment Services and
 Director, Academic Advising Center

APPENDIX C

SUMMARY OF DESIGN AND OPERATIONAL ELEMENTS OF ESTABLISHED PROGRAMS

1. ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

Contact: Dan Bivona, Faculty Director

Program: CLAS Learning Communities

Students take three to four general studies courses from faculty who work together to design and teach each learning community as an integrated whole: Example of integration of information across disciplines: material discussed by a history professor is expanded upon by a biology professor and then becomes the focus of a writing assignment done in English.

Program Design:

- linked courses around themes
- course librarians
- integrative seminars
- Writing courses specifically designed for learning communities

Program Goals/Outcomes:

- “Our research on the program shows that students who complete at least one semester in a learning community develop stronger research and writing skills in their first year than students who are not enrolled in the program.
- This program offers students a feeling of community in a large institution as well as multiple opportunities for academic engagement.

Factors Critical to the Success of the Program:

- Faculty enthusiasm and word of mouth.
- Resources for faculty, librarians, peer mentors.
- Publicity

Challenges in Creating/Maintaining the Program:

- Assessment: No baseline comparison data
 - Students get too many end-of-semester surveys
 - writing shows improvement; no other measures, yet
- Persuading students. Parents tend to agree, but not kids initially.
- Faculty buy-in and coordination. Faculty are well-compensated for collaborative time.
- Integrating Libraries to each course cluster.
- Pitching courses at freshmen level; first time courses can be too tough

Operations:

- Program is housed in College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Program is for CLAS students
- Faculty director (25% time)
- Full time recruiter/advisor (47K/year)
- 1/2 time program coordinator (English grad student)
- 1/2 time living/learning coordinator (works with peer mentors)
- 300K budget, scaling up to 500K (800 students)

2. INDIANA UNIVERSITY

Contact: Greg Smith, Assistant Dean, Student Academic Affairs, College of Letters, Arts & Sciences

Program: Freshman Interest Groups

Program Design:

Indiana University offers FIGs with a residential component. A group of 12-15 students enroll in 2-3 courses in common plus a 1 credit hour peer-led integrative seminar. FIGS are themed to help students explore academic and career options or majors and minors. The seminar is activity-based and focuses on the development of life skills (time management), study skills (collaborative learning). The seminar also helps students learn about cultural, social and academic resources on campus through outings to concerts, plays, exhibits, museums, libraries and offices. FIGs are open to any entering first-year student who is eligible for Elementary Composition. The themed grouping includes no courses that require placement test results (e.g. math, physics, chemistry, foreign language). There are not Honors designated FIGs, but Honors students may enroll in FIGs.

Program Goals/Outcomes:

The program's goal is to provide a meaningful social and academic integration to the university through community building.

Factors Critical to the Success of the Program:

- Peer Instructors. Peers teach the integrative seminar and live in the residence hall with the FIG cohort. Peers receive 60 hours of training before they teach. Fall semester they teach the seminar; spring semester they provide community building in the residence halls. They get a free room; buy the meal plan and receive \$1,000 stipend for teaching.
- Course combinations and themes that appeal to first-year students (focus on General Education and majors).
- Marketing is critical.
- Registrar. The program needs a registration system that can group the combinations and information from the data warehouse and databases.
- Extensive Collaboration (e.g. Housing, Registrar)

Challenges in Creating/Maintaining the Program:

- Collaboration (information sharing)
- Funding
- Assessment. A program like this either needs dedicated personnel for assessment or use of the time of an institutional research office.

Operations:

The program currently is housed in University Division and funded from the Dean of Faculties Office. Peers and a graduate assistant report directly to Jaceck Dalecki, FIGs director.

3. IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Contacts: Doug Gruenewald and Corly Brooke, Co-Coordinators, ISU Learning Communities

Program: Learning Communities

Program Design:

ISU has linked courses, living-learning communities, sets of common activities for a group of students within a major or themed community. English is connected to many linked courses; some linked courses communities are year-long. A seminar may be attached to linked courses to help make content connections. Seminar is taught by Coordinator who is often an academic advisor. Peers are used in some way in almost every program. Deeper student learning at the center of LCs. Must be representation from academic affairs in each community; applications for LC funding must include learning outcomes.

Program Goals/Outcomes:***From Request for Program Funding (directed to faculty and staff)***

To support Iowa State University's commitment to student learning, the Learning Community initiative seeks to enhance our undergraduates' experience by providing all interested students dynamic, focused communities in which students, staff, and faculty can learn and grow together.

Controlled persistence studies show that LC participants retained at significantly higher level. Getting \$3 million return on \$600,000 investment. Use NSSE reports for effect on student engagement/behavior.

Factors Critical to the Success of the Program:

- Assessment. Essential to show success for funding increases to grow program. Essential for marketing to students.
- Academic Affairs and Student Affairs collaboration. LCs represent the strongest collaboration on ISU campus.
- Centralized collaborative administration. Important for bringing success to attention of Provost and President
- Registrar
- Ongoing professional development. Tied to Center for Excellence in Teaching

Challenges in Creating/Maintaining the Program:

- Be sure to have technical support for registrations and housing when starting out.
- Initially spent a year developing including site visits, conferences and a retreat to hammer it out.
- Multiple types of communities make the program hard to explain to students and parents.

Operations:

The program is coordinated and funded centrally, but all community design and community operations are decentralized into the colleges and departments. Strongest student affairs/academic affairs connection on campus. Program has co-coordinators representing each area; must have representation from both sides on every committee.

4. IUPUI

Contacts: Sharon Hamilton, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs; Lauren Chisholm, TLC Coordinator; Gayle Williams, University College; Sarah Baker (oversees faculty development); Michele Hansen (assessment).

Program: Learning Communities and Themed Learning Communities

Program Design:

Tiered System available primarily fall semester. One of these three options is required for entering full-time students. Over 85% participate.

Stand along First Year Seminar (25 students per course). Course is team taught by faculty member, academic advisor, librarian and student peer. Team collaborates to create interdisciplinary instruction. FYS course content development is decentralized, but course must meet institution level criteria.

- First Year Seminar + one linked class. FYS makes disciplinary connections in seminar.
- 27 Themed Learning Communities (TLC) which link First-Year Seminar + Multiple Courses (up to 15 credit hours). Content is integrated. 18% of entering student cohort participates in a TLC.

Program Goals/Outcomes:

TLC Goals for IUPUI

- To increase retention rate for first-term students
- To improve TLC participants' GPA
- To improve TLC participants' satisfaction with IUPUI
- To improve TLC participants' graduation rates

TLC Goals for Students

- To form learning support networks among students in their community
- To enhance student contact with a network of faculty and staff
- To promote collaborative and active learning
- To understand the value of diversity by exposure to multiple points of view
- To apply classroom learning to the real world
- To understand the relationship between academic learning and co-curricular activities
- To provide opportunities to integrate learning across academic and professional disciplines that will enable students to understand their learning in coherent, comprehensive ways

Do formative and summative research that shows higher retention and higher grade points for participants—especially in the second two tiers.

Factors Critical to the Success of the Program:

- Close partnership with Registrar.
- Broad representation from all stakeholders (faculty, advisors, student life, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Learning)
- Faculty Buy-in.
- Starting small and building on success.

Challenges in Creating/Maintaining the Program:

- Recruiting and retaining faculty
- Shortage of academic advisors.

Funding.

- Faculty development.

Operations:

- Originated and coordinated in University College by a LC Coordinator.

5. UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

Contact: Based on website information; interview not yet done

Program: First Year Learning Communities

Program Design:

Not a residential program, this is a linked-courses program. The university also offers living-learning options for Honors students and “University Scholars” (see below) and a program for sophomores and above, “Beyond the Classroom” (see below).

There are 11 “clusters” with 20-25 seats in each, allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Most courses included in the clusters are 100- and 200 level and fulfill CORE (General Education) requirements.. Many clusters contain a “home” course, which integrates material from the other classes. There are two general courses that are used. One is a 1 s.h. course, The Student in the University and one is a 2 s.h. course, College and Career Advancement. Clusters can also choose another course, for example the Kinesiology cluster (Number 6) uses a version called The Kinesiology Major and Cluster 5 uses a 3 s.h. writing course.

Others courses in a cluster regularly offer sections in which seats have been set aside for cluster participants so that they can become accustomed to the University with familiar classmates.

Program Goals/Outcomes:

“Course clusters offer new students a kind of academic map. Each course in a cluster is enhanced by being taken in conjunction with the other courses in that cluster.”

Factors Critical to the Success of the Program:

Not available at this time.

Challenges in Creating/Maintaining the Program:

Not available at this time

Operations:

Part of the Office of Undergraduate Studies, which is led by the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, who is also Dean of Undergraduate Studies. The responsibilities of Undergraduate Studies include: Living-learning programs; Academic enrichment programs; Interdisciplinary and individual studies programs; Academic advising policy and assessment; CORE/General Education; Academic planning and policy; Enrollment management; and University learning outcomes assessment. There is a single staff person assigned to the First Year Learning Communities program, at the rank of Assistant Dean.

6. UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI

Contact: Kristen Temple, Associate Director, Residential Life

Program: FIG and Sponsored Learning Communities

Program Design:

- FIG
Students live together in a residence hall; take 3 core courses together; take part in a one-credit weekly FIG Proseminar; attend cultural events related to their shared interests. A FIG may e a small component within a Sponsored Learning Community.
- Sponsored Learning Communities are living-learning communities that allow students to interact with faculty and learn more about an area of interest while living with student with similar interests.

Students are not, however, enrolled in a common set of courses. These communities include sophomores, juniors and seniors as well.

Program Goals/Outcomes:

- Increased retention
- Residual gpa
- Community building
- Strong central administration support

Factors Critical to the Success of the Program:

- Breadth and depth, horizontally and vertically, of faculty and staff.
- Complex work.
- Identifying communities that are appropriate for general assignment students.

Challenges in Creating/Maintaining the Program:

- Maintaining contact with faculty.

Operations:

There is a Director of Learning Communities plus Associate and Assistant Directors, a graduate student and a FIG coordinator.

7. THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

Contact: Dr. Marilyn Linton, Director, First Year Programs

Program:

Freshman Interest Groups (FIGs); 1/3 with residential component; 1500 students participate (half the entering freshmen each year).

Oregon is one of the first universities in the country to have established learning communities; they've been in existence at Oregon since 1982. Originally providing more of a social transition to the university, since 2000 the learning communities have had more of an academic mission.

Program Design:

Each FIG at Oregon is a set of two general education courses taught by faculty members plus an integrative seminar called College Connections, which is taught by one of the faculty members and an undergraduate TA. The seminar links the two classes through field trips, hands-on activities, discussions, movies, etc.

Sixty (60) FIGS are offered each fall semester, with 25 spaces in each. Typically, they are 97% full.

Students in a residential FIG live together on a residence hall floor; there are non-FIG students on the floor as well. The undergraduate TA lives there, too, and serves as a second RA on the floor.

Program Goals/Outcomes:

Primary goals:

- Higher GPAs first semester and throughout the first year
- Higher retention rates
- Shorter time to graduation
- Quickly meet friends and study partners = Student engagement
- Faculty collaboration across campus

Positive outcomes:

- Demonstrated higher levels of academic success throughout the first year of study in both GPA and retention (research done by UO Office of Institutional Research)
- Statistically significant results for FIG students in a variety of measures, including “quality relationships with other students” and “talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor” (participate in NSSE First Year Students research)

Factors Critical to the Success of the Program:

- Participation of faculty
- Using undergraduate TAs is essential
- Collaboration across campus (Housing, Registrar, Academic Depts, etc.)
- Financial resources

Challenges in Creating/Maintaining the Program:

- Biggest challenge = financial issues
- Faculty –carefully selecting who they are and getting them involved
- Need a strong public relations focus
- Dedicated program personnel

Operations:

Personnel:

- Associate Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies with an 80% appointment for administrative responsibility of first year programs
- Program Coordinator (full –time professional staff member)
- FIG advisor (full-time professional staff member)
- Undergraduate students to do office work
- Approximately 120 faculty members to teach 60 FIGS
- 60 FIG academic assistants (undergraduate TAs)
- Housing also has hired a faculty member to serve as Director of Academic Learning Initiatives

Budget:

- \$600,000
- Most in salaries
- Faculty are paid \$2,000 for teaching a FIG (this amount hasn’t changed since 2000) ... the money goes directly to the faculty member
- Undergraduate TAs receive a \$500 stipend
- Residential component more expensive, as each residential TA gets a single room + full board for the academic year, valued at approximately \$10,000 (the Housing Office pays 60% of this cost)

Timeline:

- January: Determine FIGS, get department chair and faculty buy-in
- February: Interview students for undergraduate TA positions
- March 1st: publication “Chart Your Course” goes to print
- April 1st: publication mailed to all entering students (also online); group meetings are held with faculty members
- July: at summer orientation, students have the ability to add a FIG, change a FIG, etc.
- August 1st: final list of residential FIGs goes to the Housing Office; late August: housing assignments go out
- Late September: semester begins

8. THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Contact: Brandy Shott, Living-Learning Community Coordinator, University Housing

Program: Learning Communities and Living Environments

Program Design:

All learning communities are themed and residentially based. Students live on the same floors or near each other with the exception of MUNDO, a diversity community. A single community can comprise multiple floors. Community design is flexible. Some have communities include specific classes; some have clustered classes; and some programming only. Thematic community groups include academic/major interest, social/cultural interest, visual and performing arts interest, lifestyle (substance free). A portion of the communities are part of the Scholars Program and report to the Honors and Scholars program. There are strong partnerships with academic affairs; each community has an academic contact (faculty, advisor, departmental/academic coordinator). Learning Community coordinators meet frequently with their academic contacts. They do not use peers in programming; they use residence hall advisors. Living Environments refers to Honors Housing where there is less intentional programming.

Program Goals/Outcomes:

Assist students in connecting to campus, foster intellectual growth through learning outside the classroom. Individual communities develop independent goals and outcomes. Participate in NSSLP and do student satisfaction surveys. Note: second interview still to be scheduled.

Factors Critical to the Success of the Program:

- Partnerships with other offices
- Strong support from Housing

Challenges in Creating/Maintaining the Program:

- Maintaining contact with partners
- Keeping students invested in the community
- Finding ways to measure learning outcomes

Operations:

Learning communities administratively located under Housing (except for Scholars Program communities). Housing provides training and resources, including dedicated LC coordination positions. Coordinators work with RAs, residence hall coordinators and academic contacts for community programming. It is a programming position.

9. UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

Contact: Cassandre Alvarado, Assistant Dean, FIG Director

Program : First-Year Interest Groups (FIGs)

Program Design:

There are a number of first-year opportunities at UT – Austin, including two varieties of FIGs, one of which has a residential component [see the end of this summary for brief notes on the other programs]. The largest program is a non-residential FIG program, composed of two to four courses, typically, one of these classes is small, and a 1-hour seminar once a week. This seminar is facilitated by a peer mentor and an academic advisor or other student affairs professional. Participation in the FIG program is voluntary but students must

understand that once they enroll in a FIG they have made a commitment—only under extraordinary circumstances can students drop out of the courses in the FIG.

Program Goals/Outcomes:

- to help students connect with each other, advisors, faculty and ultimately, to help them feel connected to the institution
- to help students make the transition from being a high school learner to a university learner
- to introduce students to resources that can support their academic work at UT and other services that can give them assistance
- to provide students a positive role model in the peer mentor whose knowledge and perspective they will respect
- to be a forum where students can explore their intellectual interests

Factors Critical to the Success of the Program:

- Peers make the difference; one of the most powerful elements of the program. The peers are supervised by staff in the main office; split among the office staff – some peers work in the office. Many peers return – 70 out of the 183 this year are returning, 14 for a 3rd or 4th time.
- Registration system works to facilitate student registrations in the FIGs and the FIG office controls the course scheduling for FIGs
- Adequate support and centralization of the program with dedicated staff and an office with space for training and oversight of the peer mentors

Challenges in Creating/Maintaining the Program:

Program may have achieved as much as it can in improving retention and student satisfaction, so it is difficult to maintain enthusiasm as results plateau. Program may also have achieved maximum size, the point at which all students who want to participate can and all FIGs fill.

Operations:

The program is staffed by a full-time director and two other staff members, who are part of the new *Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies*, which [I think] reports to the Provost. There are 175 facilitators and more than 175 peer mentors. “Facilitators” are usually professional staff members (academic advisors, student services personnel). A few faculty members participate but there is no “reward,” (monetary or other) for faculty members and participation does not have a role in the expectations for faculty teaching or service.

Note: UT also has some “residential FIGs” which differ in that a) they are residential in one of two Residence Halls; b) they are year-long experiences and c) they include community service projects each semester.

And there is the TrIG (Transfer Interest Group) program. TrIGs are designed for first-semester transfer students. A TrIG is a group of 20 new transfer students who attend a weekly one-hour TrIG seminar facilitated by an academic advisor and transfer student peer mentor and take one (or more) academic class together.

And, UT also offers First-Year Seminars—many FYS, though again, not enough for every student. They are capped at 18 and are taught by “professors, administrators and staff members many of whom are outstanding figures in their fields, winners of teaching awards, and members of the university's Academy of Distinguished Teachers.” They are full weight (the equivalent of our 3 s.h. courses) courses, which fulfill the “Substantial Writing Component Course” requirement and are taught on-load.

10. UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

Contact: Steve Oliver, Assistant Director for Learning Communities

Program: Freshman Interest Groups (FIG)

Program Design:

There are two programs:

- FIG programs (first-year students) include a “pre-packaged cluster of courses” fall quarter only. Courses are independently taught and students have access to a 2 s.h. course “The University Community” facilitated by an undergraduate FIG Leader.
- TRIGS (transfer and returning students) include 1-2 departmental courses plus “The University Community.”

Program Goals/Outcomes:

Currently working on language and will send. Most assessment is qualitative.

Factors Critical to the Success of the Program:

- Use of students as instructors.
- Quarter-long training for student instructors
- Buy-in and support from the institution

Challenges in Creating/Maintaining the Program:

- Establishing and maintaining faculty involvement.
- Extending opportunities beyond the first semester (e.g. focus on the first to second year transition)

Operations:

Assistant Director for Learning Communities reports to the Director of First Year Programs.

11. UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

Contact: Greg Smith, Director, FIGs

Note: The U. of Wisconsin has two separate and distinct learning community programs – Also see #12 below

Program: First Year Interest Groups

Program Design:

FIGs are small cohorts (about 20) of students enrolled in three classes with appropriate content connections. Each FIG includes a small, content-based interdisciplinary seminar enrolling only those 20 students and is taught by a senior professor. Seminar topic is connected to the linked courses. All linked courses discussion sections are held to 20 as well. Offer students interdisciplinary learning and faculty interdisciplinary teaching opportunities. Faculty development programming is key feature of the program. Do set aside some FIGs for Honors Program students. This year they did not fill.

Program Goals/Outcomes:

- Community building among participating students
- Interdisciplinary teaching and learning

- Higher grade point averages and retention rates

Constant program assessment including faculty and student focus groups and persistence/performance studies (Office of Quality Improvement assists with focus groups)

Factors Critical to the Success of the Program:

- Support from high level administration
- Collaborations and partnerships among campus programs
- Serious program assessment
- Marketing (targeted marketing has increased underrepresented student enrollment in FIGs)
- Faculty Buy-in.

Challenges in Creating/Maintaining the Program:

- Funding commensurate with growth. Could fill twice the number of FIGs offered.
- Maintaining faculty buy-in.

Operations:

Program is housed under Letters of Arts and Sciences, Student Academic Affairs, but it serves the whole campus. A FIGs Planning Committee composed of faculty and administrative staff review and approve proposals for FIGs seminars submitted by faculty.

12. UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN, MADISON

Contact: Cal Bergen, Associate Director of Resident Life, Housing

Program: Living-Learning Communities

Program Design:

The University of Wisconsin has 5 living-learning communities, each with a different focus. LLCs are broadly themed (WISE, International, Multi-cultural) or targeted (Bradley is for first-year student transition and Chadbourne replicates life at a small liberal arts college).

Offer an optional 1 credit hour seminar specific to each community. Faculty teach the seminars but work side-by-side with staff and/or peers depending on the LLC. 90% of students in 4/5 LLCs enroll.

Seats in high demand classes (e.g. a women's studies course for the WSE LC) and/or classes that are commonly taken by first-year students are reserved for LLC students. Sets of students do not take these courses in common; the courses are linked to the LLC. Small sections are simply reserved for the hall. To enroll in those sections, student must live in the hall.

Faculty member with half-time release serves as LLC director. Responsible for recruiting and sustaining faculty involvement in the LLC.

Program Goals/Outcomes:

- To create a more seamless learning experience
- To connect and make the learning environment more coherent.

Factors Critical to the Success of the Program:

- Collaboration in both design an operations. It is a shared vision operationalized.
- Support from administration to 50% release time for Faculty Director (same as department DEO)

Challenges in Creating/Maintaining the Program:

- Maintaining Collaboration
- Person-focused. LLCs have a faculty director, not a departmental affiliation. Directors are responsible for finding their own replacements.

Operations

Program Reports to Housing. Housing (Director) provides general oversight. Associate Director of Residence Life oversees Chadbourne and facilitates LLC start up, but governance is program specific and is a shared governance model. Each LLC has Core Group: the Faculty Director, Residence Life coordinator (FTE), plus additional staff person who serves as Program Coordinator (FTE) (This is an academic staff position) to support Faculty and Res life coordinators. For smaller communities, this academic staff position is .50 FTE.

Each LLC has a budget and decides how the budget will be spent. LLCs also have steering committees: faculty, academic staff and students. The core planning group indicates how they would like to spend the LC budget, but the monetary recommendations are approved by the committee. The shared governance team also charts the course for annual and future goals

13. PURDUE UNIVERSITY

Contact: Andrew Koch, Director of Student Access, Transition and Success Programs

Program: Three types of learning communities

- Group of 20-30 first-year students who take 2 or 3 of the same courses together.
- Group of first-year students share a common academic interest and live in the same resident hall (e.g. WISP Honors who also can enroll in another LC). Some promise roommates and others don't.
- Group of first year students who take part in both of these activities.

Other amenities: Programming, mentoring, technology

Interview was interrupted—material being sent.

APPENDIX D
UI LIVING-LEARNING COMMUNITY SURVEY
PROVOST TASK FORCE ON LEARNING COMMUNITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

If you have programming schedules or other relevant documents that you think would be helpful, you can attach them as electronic copies when you return your completed survey or send hard copies to Pat Folsom, Academic Advising Center, C210 Pomerantz Center. If you have questions, please contact Pat Folsom

Please return your completed survey to Pat Folsom (pat-folsom@uiowa.edu) no later than Friday, June 22, 2007.

Survey Questions

1. What are the goals and/or student learning outcomes of your learning community?
2. The following questions focus on personnel associated with your learning community.
 - a. Who, besides yourself, works on this learning community (i.e. faculty, teaching assistants, residence hall advisors, professional staff members)?
 - b. Please describe the role of each person associated with your learning community.
 - c. What is the time commitment for each of the persons associated with your learning community?
3. What is the role of the Residence Advisor in your community? (For example, do they have a major in the community's academic area of focus or do they do programming beyond that required for their requisite RA responsibilities?)
4. The following questions focus on programming that is done in your learning community beyond standard Residence Hall programming.
 - a. What programming is offered in your community (e.g. tutoring, field trips, dinners, etc.)? Please provide specific examples of activities in your reply or attach a list.
 - b. What, if any, residence hall spaces are used for programming in your learning community?
 - c. How is programming developed and evaluated?

APPENDIX E
SUMMARY OF UI LIVING-LEARNING COMMUNITY SURVEY

GOALS, PROGRAMMING, ASSESSMENT

Name	Goals and/or learning outcomes	Programming	Course(s) offered as part of the community?	Role of RA	Assessment
Art and Design	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gain a better understanding of art-related opportunities at UI and in Iowa City. ▪ Meet other people (faculty, staff, and students) on campus who will support their learning goals through mentoring, friendship, and teaching. ▪ Learn more about the School of Art & Art History. ▪ Gain a great appreciation for art and art history through hands-on activities, events and discussions. ▪ Form a bond and positive and supportive network of peers with similar interests and ambitions. 	<p><i>Programming to be developed</i>; TA commitment of 10 hours/week; 2 faculty members are also committing time, approximately 2 – 10 hours a month, to the project.</p> <p>Most activities will occur in the School of Art and Art History; some events will be held in the Residence Hall, some off-site events are contemplated.</p>	01P:030 Art and Design Learning Community. Enrollment in this course is encouraged but not required.	Unknown at this time	Assessment plan not yet fully developed. We plan to hold a focus group with students at the end of the year and also ask them to fill out short surveys. The TA will also ask them to fill out an ACE form.
Citizenship, Leadership, and Service	Goal is to increase the satisfaction, retention, and persistence of students with an interest in citizenship, leadership, and service.	<p><i>Programming to be developed</i>; TA commitment of 10 hours/week; Faculty members are also committing time, to the project. Residence hall space will be used for programs, and possibly some off-site space will be used.</p>	610:029 Section 004 Explorations in Citizenship, Leadership, and Service. Enrollment in this course is encouraged but not required	Unknown at this time	Assessment plan not yet developed; the TA will be responsible for working with the faculty committee to create an assessment instrument (or instruments).
Explorations in Computing, Mathematics, & Science	Goal is to increase the satisfaction, retention, and persistence of students with an interest in computing, mathematics and science.	<p><i>Programming to be developed</i>; TA commitment of 10 hours/week; faculty members are also committing time, approximately to the project. Residence hall space will be used for programs, as well as departmental spaces.</p>	610:029: Section 005 Explorations in Computing, Mathematics, & Science. Enrollment in this course is encouraged but not required.	Unknown at this time	Assessment plan not yet developed; the TA will be responsible for working with the faculty committee to create an assessment instrument (or instruments).

GOALS, PROGRAMMING, ASSESSMENT (CONTINUED)

Name	Goals and/or learning outcomes	Programming	Course(s) offered as part of the community?	Role of RA	Assessment
Health Sciences	Designed to help first-year undergraduates determine a health care career choice and get a great start in their professional education.	Tours of UI health facilities, information sessions; Chemistry and math tutoring, social events.	No. Many students are in the same courses, however. Has had associated College Transition sections.	(unclear from available materials)	Annual student surveys
Honors	To combine educational challenge with personal support, intellectual community, and experiential learning.	The Honors Student Program Coordinator and the Honors Student Coordinators program the Honors House as a living-learning community in its own right and also at times, as part of the encompassing Honors Program.	None specific to the LC; students are encouraged to take an Honors First-Year Seminar or other honors course.	Daum RAs plan, implement, and advertise events of their own for the Honors House; and they work at times with the Honors Student Coordinators on joint activities for the Honors House.	Student survey and focus groups
International Crossroads	Provide a cross-cultural learning environment for domestic and international students.	Varied. Many activities in the Residence Hall.	No course currently offered; one has been offered in the past and may be offered in the future	Actively involved: attends weekly programmer meetings and gives advice and assistance about planning events.	A review was done "several years ago."
Iowa Writers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pursue and develop their interests in and their passion for writing. ▪ Are mentored by professional writers and develop their skills through workshops and sharing opportunities. 	Weekly peer review workshops; other activities with faculty and students from the Writers' Workshop; sites vary both in the Residence Hall and in other campus buildings.	Students encouraged to enroll in "Readings for Writers" an International Writing Program course open to all students. Non-credit workshops are also offered.	RA often 'shepherds' students to big events.	An end of year final survey which gives numerical data (about how many students participated in our programming and which they preferred) and qualitative responses.

GOALS, PROGRAMMING, ASSESSMENT (CONTINUED)

Name	Goals and/or learning outcomes	Programming	Course(s) offered as part of the community?	Role of RA	Assessment
Leadership Community in Business & Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Network with students having similar interests; ▪ Get involved in business and entrepreneurship organizations on campus ▪ Engage in the Tippie College of Business and the John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center. ▪ Enhance the personal, professional and leadership skills of community members ▪ Increase educational satisfaction and retention 	<p>Two professional staff members in the Tippie College of Business develop the programming and work with the RA (time estimate is 5-8 hours per month per person). Programs include: dinner with faculty & “Choosing a Major” lunches; active recruitment by I-Envision (entrepreneurial) student organization and other student organizations in the College of Business; guest speakers (corporate executives and entrepreneurs); social activities including pizza parties during finals, movie nights, bowling.</p>	Academic Leadership Seminar. Enrollment required of all students in the LC	The RA has monthly meetings with coordinators and attends and participates in the required Academic Leadership seminar.	ACE forms for the Academic Leadership Seminar. The majority of feedback is anecdotal and comes from the RA.
Men in Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide a positive living environment for first- and second-year male engineering students that is conducive to successful study ▪ Create camaraderie in this challenging major. ▪ Have a positive impact on retention and GPA. 	<p>Dinners with faculty Unofficial study groups/sessions</p> <p>Dinners organized by College of Engineering staff.</p>	No. Students are all in engineering courses, so there is commonality.	Does some programming that may be applicable to the LC; always an Engineering student	No independent assessment is done.
Multicultural Studies & Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engage new and returning students in shared experiences related to multicultural and leadership activities. ▪ Examine the multicultural elements of the university ▪ Look at ways to engage in leadership opportunities at Iowa. ▪ Create a community of respect, support, friendship, and success ▪ Give back to others through student-led service project(s). 	Social events, presentations, hands-on service learning activities, weekly meetings	No course currently offered; a first-year seminar was offered in 2006.	Ideally, assist with dissemination of information; assist with coordinating events, and inform peer student worker or coordinator of concerns or opportunities.	<p>After first year, an “informal debriefing” was done.</p> <p>Also, on-going evaluation through weekly group meetings.</p>

GOALS, PROGRAMMING, ASSESSMENT (CONTINUED)

Name	Goals and/or learning outcomes	Programming	Course(s) offered as part of the community?	Role of RA	Assessment
Performing Arts	To get students directly involved in the performing arts through arts attendance, participation and collaboration with fellow students and UI faculty.	Informal dinners; Guest artist talks; faculty conversation; Free tickets to Division of Performing Arts events; extra practice and performance space. Most activities take place in Currier Hall. Programming is developed by Division faculty and staff.	No	No direct role	Students are surveyed at the end of the year. We also keep in touch with the resident assistants to find out what the students are saying
Women in Science & Engineering	To help with the academic, social, and emotional transitions to campus life.	Learning Community draws on general WISE programming; some activities are specific to the LC, others are not.	No. Students are all in pre-health-science curricula, so there are shared course experiences	Assists students in generating ideas for programming and helps them complete and submit a WISE Event Request Form.	Data going back some years from twice-yearly surveys (again, combined with other WISE activities)

APPENDIX F
SAMPLE USE OF NSSE FOR LEARNING COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT: UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

**NSSE First Year Students:
 FIG Students vs Non-FIG Students**

FIG student means were significantly more favorable than Non-FIG student means (p<=.05)				
There was no significant difference between the means for FIG and Non-FIG students				
FIG student means were significantly less favorable than Non-FIG student means (p<=.05)				
	<u>FIG</u> <u>Mean</u>	<u>Non-FIG</u> <u>Mean</u>	<u>Difference</u> <u>(FIG- NonFIG)</u>	<u>Sig.</u>
Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together	0.64	0.08	0.56	0.00
Institutional emphasis: Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically	3.02	2.83	0.19	0.00
If you could start over again, would you go to the SAME INSTITUTION you are now attending?	3.32	3.16	0.16	0.00
Number of written papers or reports of FEWER THAN 5 PAGES	3.15	2.99	0.16	0.01
Institutional emphasis: Providing the support you need to thrive socially	2.41	2.26	0.15	0.01
Had serious conversations with students who are very different from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values	2.91	2.76	0.15	0.02
Quality: Your relationships with other students	5.58	5.44	0.14	0.11
Institutional emphasis: Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds	2.58	2.44	0.14	0.03
Worked with classmates OUTSIDE OF CLASS to prepare class assignments	2.46	2.33	0.13	0.02
Overall, how would you evaluate the quality of academic advising you have received at your institution?	2.85	2.73	0.12	0.04
Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor	1.93	1.83	0.11	0.05
Hours per 7-day week spent providing care for dependents living with you (parents, children, spouse, etc.)	1.15	1.27	-0.12	0.04
Hours per 7-day week spent commuting to class (driving, walking, etc.)	2.11	2.30	-0.19	0.00
Hours per 7-day week spent working for pay OFF CAMPUS	1.51	1.84	-0.34	0.00
Institutional emphasis: Attending campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural performances, athletic events, etc.)	2.73	2.61	0.11	0.06
Institutional contribution: Developing a personal code of values and ethics	2.54	2.44	0.11	0.11
Institutional contribution: Contributing to the welfare of your community	2.27	2.17	0.10	0.11
Institutional contribution: Understanding yourself	2.72	2.62	0.10	0.12
Institutional contribution: Thinking critically and analytically	3.19	3.10	0.09	0.09

Institutional contribution: Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	2.57	2.47	0.09	0.15
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)	2.86	2.77	0.09	0.12
Institutional contribution: Acquiring a broad general education	3.18	3.10	0.09	0.08
How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?	3.19	3.11	0.09	0.07
Institutional contribution: Writing clearly and effectively	2.90	2.82	0.08	0.15
Institutional contribution: Working effectively with others	2.75	2.66	0.08	0.17
Institutional contribution: Solving complex real-world problems	2.50	2.42	0.07	0.23
Institutional emphasis: Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	2.04	1.97	0.07	0.22
Institutional contribution: Learning effectively on your own	2.82	2.75	0.07	0.22
Institutional contribution: Voting in local, state (provincial), or national (federal) elections	2.01	1.95	0.07	0.34
Participated in a community-based project (e.g., service learning) as part of a regular course	1.33	1.27	0.06	0.16
Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own	2.62	2.57	0.05	0.41
Institutional emphasis: Using computers in academic work	3.45	3.40	0.05	0.30
Made a class presentation	1.87	1.82	0.05	0.27
Institutional contribution: Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	2.62	2.58	0.04	0.58
Quality: Your relationships with faculty members	5.11	5.08	0.03	0.73
Included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or writing assignments	2.91	2.88	0.03	0.61
Hours per 7-day week spent working for pay ON CAMPUS	1.46	1.44	0.02	0.75
Institutional contribution: Using computing and information technology	2.82	2.79	0.02	0.73
Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)	1.63	1.61	0.02	0.71
Come to class without completing readings or assignments	2.16	2.15	0.02	0.73
Quality: Your relationships with administrative personnel and offices	4.51	4.49	0.01	0.89
Foreign (additional) language coursework	0.33	0.32	0.01	0.71
Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings	3.40	3.39	0.01	0.88
Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions	2.57	2.56	0.01	0.91
Community service or volunteer work	0.29	0.28	0.01	0.86

Exercised or participated in physical fitness activities	3.08	3.08	0.00	0.95
Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources	2.95	2.95	0.00	0.95
Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept	2.91	2.90	0.00	0.95
Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment	2.02	2.01	0.00	0.98
Practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment	0.06	0.06	0.00	0.90
Used an electronic medium (listserv, chat group, Internet, instant messaging, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment	2.58	2.58	0.00	0.97
Independent study or self-designed major	0.03	0.03	0.00	0.71
Culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, etc.)	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.53
Work on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements	0.02	0.03	0.00	0.66
Institutional contribution: Speaking clearly and effectively	2.42	2.43	-0.01	0.90
Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life activities, etc.)	1.42	1.43	-0.01	0.84
Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue	2.71	2.72	-0.01	0.87
Number of problem sets (problem-based homework assignments) that take you LESS than an hour to complete	2.55	2.57	-0.02	0.79
Coursework emphasized: MAKING JUDGMENTS about the value of information, arguments, or methods, such as examining how others gathered and interpreted data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions	2.73	2.75	-0.02	0.70
Institutional emphasis: Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	2.95	2.98	-0.02	0.65
Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective	2.86	2.89	-0.02	0.66
Coursework emphasized: ANALYZING the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components	3.15	3.17	-0.02	0.61
Institutional contribution: Analyzing quantitative problems	2.67	2.69	-0.03	0.67
Coursework emphasized: MEMORIZING facts, ideas or methods from your courses and readings so you can repeat them in pretty much the same form	2.81	2.84	-0.03	0.61
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class	1.75	1.79	-0.04	0.49
Number of written papers or reports of 20 PAGES OR MORE	1.12	1.17	-0.06	0.12
Coursework emphasized: APPLYING theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	2.85	2.91	-0.06	0.31
Institutional contribution: Developing a deepened sense of spirituality	1.69	1.76	-0.07	0.28
Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	2.54	2.62	-0.08	0.14
Coursework emphasized: SYNTHESIZING and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships	2.73	2.81	-0.08	0.16

Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor	3.07	3.15	-0.08	0.12
Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	2.44	2.53	-0.08	0.18
Attended an art exhibit, gallery, play, dance, or other theater performance	1.95	2.03	-0.09	0.15
Hours per 7-day week spent preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, doing homework or lab work, analyzing data, rehearsing, and other academic activities)	4.11	4.20	-0.09	0.38
Participated in activities to enhance your spirituality (worship, meditation, prayer, etc.)	1.72	1.81	-0.09	0.16
Mark the box that best represents the extent to which your examinations during the current school year challenged you to do your best work.	5.28	5.38	-0.09	0.20
Number of written papers or reports BETWEEN 5 AND 19 PAGES	2.22	2.32	-0.10	0.08
Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor	2.45	2.56	-0.11	0.06
Hours per 7-day week spent relaxing and socializing (watching TV, partying, etc.)	4.42	4.04	0.39	0.00
Study abroad	0.01	0.07	-0.06	0.00
Received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty on your academic performance	2.48	2.60	-0.11	0.03
Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations	2.33	2.45	-0.12	0.03
Number of problem sets (problem-based homework assignments) that take you MORE than an hour to complete	2.53	2.65	-0.13	0.08
Worked with other students on projects DURING CLASS	2.17	2.31	-0.14	0.01
Hours per 7-day week spent participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)	2.02	2.18	-0.16	0.12

APPENDIX G
SNAPSHOT OF “KEY UI FEATURES” PROGRAMS IN THE INTERNAL ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Program	Administrative Home	Number of Students Served	Resources	Budget/Funding
IowaLink	Academic Advising Center	36-40	% of AAC Senior Associate Director	\$70,784
Courses in Common	Academic Advising Center	1100 fall semester	% of AAC Senior Associate Director % of Program Assistant	Embedded in AAC funds
College Transition	Academic Advising Center	1100 fall semester	% of AAC Senior Assoc. Director; Director, Orientation Services; % of Program Assistant	\$143,683
Transfer Transition	Academic Advising Center	95-100 annually	% of AAC Senior Associate Director; % of Director, Orientation Services; % of Program Assistant	See College Transition
First Year Seminars	College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	600?	% of Program Associate II 1 Faculty per section	\$125,000
Living-Learning Communities	See LLC Chart	792	See LLC Chart	See LLC Chart

Total Available First-Year Opportunities = 3732

APPENDIX H
SAMPLE COURSES IN COMMON OPTION

407:001	The College Transition			2 s.h.	20
Sec 004	11:30-12:20	T/Th	PH		
031:001	Elementary Psychology			3 s.h.	
Lec BBB	2:30-3:30	M/W	MH		540
Dis B20	11:30-12:20	M	SSH		30
Exams	5:30-7:20P	W			
GEP: Social Sciences					
169:045	Health for Living			3 s.h.	
Lec AAA	4:30-5:20	T/Th	PH		240
Dis A03	3:30-4:20	M	SH		20
GEP: Health & Physical Activity					
410:067	Team Building – Challenge Course				1 s.h.
Sec SCN	Begins 9/05/07 Ends 9/09/07				20
	6:0				