



Retention-Graduation Mapping Report Indiana University East (IU East)

A) Retention-Graduation Mapping Project Undertaken:

Over the last eight months, the Halualani & Associates team mapped and analyzed Indiana University East's current retention-graduation efforts. In this mapping, a "retention-graduation effort" was defined as "an institutional activity, program, or action that indirectly and directly contributes to the student success and completion of college for historically underrepresented and diverse undergraduate students." For IU East's retention-graduation effort mapping, Halualani & Associates identified a preselected list of 63 optimal retention-graduation effort types (22 standard, 36 targeted, and 5 signature) that according to higher education research studies and demonstrated institutional record analyses (as concluded by scholars like Estella Bensimon, Sylvia Hurtado, Vincent Tinto, among others), significantly factor in college completion for diverse students in terms of academic preparation, the creation of campus belonging and connection, and the development of academic and social support systems for students of various backgrounds (and with varying entry points into higher education).¹ This preselected list of retention-graduation efforts includes the following categories:

- **standard (baseline-impact potential) practice:** an activity, program, or action that all higher educational institutions typically implement for student success (for e.g., academic support centers, orientation sessions, peer mentoring). These are practices that most to all colleges and universities should have in place;
- **targeted (moderate impact-potential) practice:** an activity, program, or action that is specific to and customized for various diverse and historically underrepresented students (for e.g., ethnic cultural centers, scaffolded financial support-course offerings-leadership development programs for specific gender, racial, ethnic, first generation groups of students); these practices carry moderate impact potential;
- **signature (high impact-potential) practice:** an activity, program, or action that is unique, innovative, ground-breaking, and or potentially more impactful in its approach to college completion, student success, and the creation of stepping stones for excellence for diverse students (for e.g., research collaboratives that connect faculty with students, special initiatives, strategic retention planning); these practices carry high impact potential.

¹ Martínez-Alemán, A. M., Pusser, B., & Bensimon, E. M. (Eds.). (2015). *Critical Approaches to the Study of Higher Education: A Practical Introduction*. JHU Press.

The Halualani & Associates team used the aforementioned preselected list (and categories of practices) as a benchmarking guide to analyze the quantity, quality, and range of current (active) retention-graduation efforts at IU East. Examples of categories of practices from Halualani & Associates' preselected list **include (but are not limited to)** the following:

Halualani & Associates' Preselected Optimal Retention-Graduation Effort/Practice Types

| Standard Practices | Targeted Practices | Signature Practices |
|--|---|--|
| Academic Outreach | Academic Goal Setting & Planning Sessions | Research Institutes with Direct Student Links |
| Academic Resource Center | Accelerated/ Fast-tracked Developmental Education | Strategic Retention Planning |
| Academic Support Services | Cultural/Ethnic Centers | Student-Faculty Research Projects |
| Advising Through Majors | Customized Financial Aid/Scholarship Programs | Targeted Initiatives That Arise From the Institution-of-Focus |
| Assessment/Tracking System | Ethnic-Based Advising Centers | Faculty Trainings on Pedagogy, Engaging Students, & or Advising (all of those terms) |
| Disability Services | Faculty Training | Structures of Belonging |
| First Year Experience Programs (Low-Level/Basic) | Instruction at Cultural/Ethnic Centers | |
| Formal Advising Center | Learning Communities | |
| Intensive Early Advising | Living Learning Communities | |
| McNair Scholars | Peer Advising Effort | |
| Peer Mentor Efforts | Programs/Efforts Specifically for: All Students of Color (African American, Asian American, Pacific Islander, Native American, Latino/a), Commuter Students, Female Students, First Generation Students, Foster Care Youth Students, LGBTQIA Students, Military/Veteran Students, Older Aged, Students With Disabilities, Transfer Students | |
| Referral Process | Remediation/Instruction | |
| Retention Report(s) | Retention Administrators/Roles | |
| Specialized Orientation Programs/Sessions | Retention Grant | |
| Stress Management Sessions | Retention Task Forces | |
| Student Clubs/Organizations | Rigorous Data Dashboards, Metrics, & Benchmarks | |
| Study Skills Training/Workshops | Specialized Retention Evaluations of Services | |
| Summer Bridge/Pre-College Preparation Programs | Specialized Technology for Tracking/Self-Assessment | |
| TRIO Programs & Departments | Student Employment Programs | |
| Tutoring | Supplemental instruction | |
| Writing Center/Instruction | | |

B) Key Findings:

Through the retention-graduation mapping analysis, we conclude that **IU East has built an initial college completion infrastructure with 58 active retention-graduation efforts, initiatives, and programs for diverse students.** These efforts constitute 73% of our preselected list of optimal retention-graduation efforts. Moreover, 27% (21) of these preselected optimal effort types were NOT present at IU East. As a positive finding, IU East has 86% (19) of the standard practice/effort types, 56% (20) of the targeted practice/effort types, and 80% (4) of the signature practice/effort types in our preselected list of optimal retention-graduation practices. We also note that these retention-graduation efforts were sustained throughout the years, were of high program quality, and are strategically designed for the long-term time frame.

Specifically, we found the following:

- IU East's retention-graduation efforts were mostly standard (baseline impact-potential) and targeted (moderate impact-potential) types.** 48% (28) of the college completion efforts were standard practice types or ones that are typically featured at comparable universities. 38% (22) of the efforts were targeted for specific groups and had moderate impact-potential. 14% (8) of the efforts were signature types or ones designed as high-level initiatives and for high impact-potential.
- IU East featured the widest range of impact practice types out of all of the mapped campuses, spanning 43 different types.** The leading impact practice types were: academic support services (7%, 4), retention research reports (5%, 3), strategic retention planning (5%, 3), targeted initiatives (5%, 3), academic resource centers (3%, 2), disability services (3%, 2), peer mentor efforts (3%, 2), retention administrators/roles (3%, 2), summer bridge/pre-college preparation programs (3%, 2), and programs specifically for first year students (3%, 2), among others.
- Academic support programs and academic skill development programs represented the leading categories of college completion efforts for IU East.** IU East's college completion efforts encompassed the following lead thematic categories: academic support programs (21%, 12), academic skill development programs (10%, 6), advising (9%, 5), institutional research reports (9%, 5), first-year experience programs (5%, 3), and strategic retention planning efforts (5%, 3). We especially note that IU East's efforts are of considerable high quality and reflect a persistent commitment to retention-graduation since 2007.
- The majority of IU East's college completion efforts were framed for all students (or the mainstream IU East student population).** 67% (39) of IU East's efforts were designed and framed for all students while 33% (19) were designated and framed for specific diverse groups of students. The efforts that targeted diverse groups-of-focus were created for historically underrepresented students, students with disabilities, female students, first-generation students, and active duty/veteran/military students.

- **The vast majority of IU East's retention-graduation efforts were institutionalized and permanently fastened to academic programs, pathways, and policies that constitute student routines at IU East.** 97% (56) of the efforts were institutionalized and embedded in university programs. Only 3% (2) were efforts that IU East students had to voluntarily find and enroll in.
- **IU East's retention-graduation efforts are designed for all student levels.** 90% (52) are deemed for all student year levels. The remaining efforts are specifically designed for first-year, transfer, and pre-college levels.
- **IU East's college completion efforts uniquely emphasize the behavioral and affective-emotional dimensions of the student experience.** 49% (57) of the efforts stress the behavioral dimension of the student experience and or focus on how to instill specific behaviors (study skills, academic preparation, decision-making) that facilitate student success. 22% (25) of the efforts highlight the affective-emotional aspect of student experience or the academic self-confidence of students and how they feel about their education, their learning, their future, and their role as scholars. This focus on the affective-emotional is especially critical given the emotions students attribute to their college experience and how to heighten their self-reflexivity on their feelings in college. 17% of the efforts also tap into the cognitive (problem-solving, decision-making, knowledge acquisition) aspect while 12% (14) emphasizes the social/interactional (social, peer support and community-building) dimension. Ultimately, there should be an equal blend of all of these dimensions — behavior, affective-emotional, cognitive, social/interactional) to best facilitate student success and college completion. IU East is well on its way here, although more could be done in the area of social/interactional dimensions of the student experience for diverse students. The majority of IU East's efforts that emphasize behavioral and affective-emotional dimensions of the student experience, do so for historically underrepresented students.
- **Most of IU East's college completion efforts are integrated with academic programs, departments, and units.** 95% (55) of the efforts are embedded to permanent academic programs, departments, and units. These linkages represent an evidence-based high impact practice to create strong pathways for retention and graduation.
- **IU East mostly employs language and terminology with regard to college completion in terms of academic preparation and facilitating the success of historically underrepresented students.** 53% (31) of the efforts emphasize the importance of academic preparation of its students while 34% (20) speak to the importance of addressing any achievement gaps for historically underrepresented students.
- **IU East's retention-graduation efforts speak to various aspects of diversity.** The following aspects of diversity represent the leading categories: intersectionalities (24%, 52), race/ethnicity (24%, 52), gender (19%, 41), and broad culture (18%, 38).
- **All of IU East's college completion efforts are designed to last for the next five to seven years and beyond, thereby demonstrating its commitment to retention and graduation for a sustained time frame.**

C) Recommended Next Action Steps:

In terms of the delineated findings, we recommend the following next action steps:

| Recommended Action Step | Target Population |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. Continue to build up its strong retention-graduation infrastructure with efforts, initiatives, and interventions that speak to and address the needs of diverse students. | Students |
| 2. Complete a thorough and rigorous annual assessment of IU East's retention and graduation outcomes across different demographics, time frames, and conditions (in terms of the number of units taken by academic term, transfer pathways, types of courses and major fields of study) to identify needed interventions. | Students |
| 3. After recommended action step #2 has been completed, identify appropriate retention goals, targets, metrics, institutional performance measures, and key institutional performance indicators in a type of strategic retention plan. | Students |
| 4. Continue to seek out ways to connect retention-graduation efforts to related academic programs, departments, and units for maximum student engagement. | Students |
| 5. Hone in on the social-interactional dimensions of the student experience through retention-graduation efforts by creating more peer interactional opportunities and mechanisms for students to build community with other students and increase their campus belonging through friendships and networking. | Students |
| 6. Continue its record of commitment, activity, and excellence in the area of student retention-graduation through responsive efforts and mechanisms. | Students |
| 7. Design more specific group-focused efforts for diverse students in needed areas (as determined by recommended action step #2). | Students |
| 8. Determine the extent to which IU East would benefit from implementing the following types of standard (baseline impact-potential), targeted (moderate impact-potential), and signature (high impact-potential) practices for college completion: TRIO-type programs, specialized assessment and tracking systems, and specific one-stop programs for diverse students. | Students |