PRAC Assessment Grant Final Report Format

(Must be submitted within 30 days of completion of the project)

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7. Project Title: 2019 Alumni Interviews: Impacts of IUPUI Experiences on Alumni as Professionals and Contributing Members of Society

8. Project Dates: July 2019 – October 2020

Please respond to the following as thoroughly as possible:

- Provide a summary of overall project accomplishments as related to the intended outcomes of the project described in the proposal. See attached

- Describe data collection methods and provide an analysis of the findings. See attached

- Describe any obstacles/challenges encountered.

    - It is not easy to conduct alumni studies because we rely on having accurate email addresses and who is responsible for collecting those email addresses is complex. It requires Alumni Relations, the First Destination Survey, and the efforts in some of the Schools to maintain a record of their alumni emails to be willing to share their information and then cleaning (sometimes deciding which email to use if we have multiples). This is tedious and politically challenging to navigate. The second challenge was also a blessing. The number of alumni who were willing to participate in the follow-up interviews was more than we anticipated. And, lots of interest in participating all came in at once. We worked hard to follow-up with alumni as quickly as possible in hopes of actually getting them to participate. Managing logistics of meeting times, time differences, and overall communications was intense at times.

- What changes, if any, were made to address these obstacles/challenges?

    - Does the university (all of IU, the individual campuses, all of the Schools) have an agreed upon way of keeping track of alumni? And what are the policies for reaching out to those alumni? I don't believe this is an obstacle that the Office of

Community Engagement or IRDS can solve. However, it will continue to be an issue.

- In the end, while the response rate was low, we still had ~600 alumni respond so the efforts were not futile. And, we were fortunate to be able to leverage a student to assist with some of the logistics thanks to the funding provided by the PRAC grant.

Please go to this link if you would like to see previous reports that have been submitted by other grant recipients: http://planning.iupui.edu/assessment/grant-files/grant-reports.html

Impacts of IUPUI Experiences on Alumni as Professionals and Contributing Members of Society

Purpose:

IUPUI's Office of Institutional Research and Decision Support (IRDS) surveys IUPUI alumni every five years and allows units on campus to contribute to the survey questions for program improvement purposes. The IUPUI Office of Community Engagement leveraged the alumni survey to understand how alumni see themselves as "community contributors," one of the four Profiles of Learning for Undergraduate Success, a core learning outcome for IUPUI's General Education. We were particularly interested in learning which experiences and what about their experiences during college contributed to who they are now as professionals and members of their communities, several years after graduation.

Methodology:

Using a mixed methods design, we used one of the questions on the alumni survey, "How well did IUPUI prepare you to effectively engage in the following skills (not at all prepared, somewhat prepared, quite a bit prepared, and very much prepared):

- Write a well-organized final report or paper
- Prepare a formal oral presentation to communicate ideas and information
- Support an argument using appropriate (quantitative or non-quantitative) data
- Generate new ideas about how to approach an issue
- *Work with people from different backgrounds (e.g. races, ethnicities, religions, socioeconomic*
- *backgrounds, cultural, or sexual orientations)*
- Modify how I approach a problem based on the requirements of the situation
- *Understand and value cultural differences*
- *Initiate interactions with those who are culturally different*
- *Advocate for my beliefs in a civil and respectful manner*
- *Contribute to communities locally or globally*
- *Recognize my own cultural rules and biases*
- Engage in meaningful self-examination and reflection"

IRDS administered the survey to all undergraduate degree/certificate recipients from the 2014 and 2016 cohorts. Respondents who indicated "not at all prepared" or "very much prepared" for the italicized items above were asked if they would be willing to be interviewed. Those who offered to be interviewed were shared with Kristin Norris (Office of Community Engagement), who followed up to schedule 1-on-1 interviews with the alumni. Interviews were conducted via Zoom, on campus, or in person depending on the preferences of the interviewee.

The alumni survey was sent to 6,320 alumni emails accessible to IRDS with a response rate of 9.7% (N=611). Of the 611 survey respondents who indicated "not at all prepared" or "very much prepared" to the selected questions, 189 volunteered to be interviewed and 55 alumni participated.

Survey Findings

The following section represents a summary of our findings from portions of the alumni survey as well as the interviews. We start with results of student's satisfaction and participation in community-

engaged experiences, then share results of their knowledge and skills gained while at IUPUI before summarizing the findings from the interviews.

Student Satisfaction with Opportunities for Community Service or Volunteer Work

Findings from the survey indicate that alumni were very satisfied with co-curricular "opportunities to engage in community service or volunteer work," particularly when compared to other co-curricular experiences and services (See Figure 1). Additionally, whether or not a student was satisfied with "opportunities to engage in community service or volunteer work" was highly correlated with their connection to the university. Similarly, students who indicated they were "not at all connected to IUPUI" were also "dissatisfied or very dissatisfied" with opportunities for community service or volunteer work (32%).

Figure 1. Satisfaction with Co-Curricular Experience and Other Services

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Not Applicable	Mean
Opportunities to engage in community service or volunteer work	3.8%	13.3%	52.0%	30.9%	13.9%	3.10
Opportunities to develop leadership skills	4.3%	14.4%	49.2%	32.0%	6.1%	3.09
Overall social experiences at IUPUI	3.6%	13.9%	56.6%	26.0%	8.4%	3.05
Availability of support services on campus (e.g., services provided by Counseling and Psychological Services, Campus Recreation, and Office of Student Advocacy and Support)	7.5%	16.0%	51.8%	24.7%	31.7%	2.94
Opportunities to develop appreciation for diversity (e.g., outside speakers, programs, films, book discussions)	5.2%	13.9%	52.9%	28.0%	13.4%	3.04
Support in establishing or maintaining your overall health and well-being	7.5%	17.3%	55.0%	20.3%	18.5%	2.88
Opportunities for professional development (e.g., conferences, presentations)	8.7%	23.7%	43.5%	24.1%	10.6%	2.83
Opportunities to participate in international activities on campus (e.g., courses/programs with international students, using the global classroom)	7.5%	25.3%	48.5%	18.7%	27.2%	2.78
Opportunities for career development (e.g., externships, job shadowing, career workshops, internships)	10.7%	27.2%	38.8%	23.4%	9.1%	2.75
On-campus housing	15.4%	23.9%	42.0%	18.6%	61.9%	2.64

1 = Very Dissatisfied, 2 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 4 = Very Satisfied

Student Participation in Co-Curricular Experiences

According to the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), IUPUI students (freshen and seniors) report doing community service or volunteer work at a higher rate than our official peers, public doctoral universities, and in comparison to all institutions that administer NSSE (See IRDS's NSSE Report). In 2018, 52.6% of seniors indicated they did community service or volunteer work 1-20 hours per week. Results from the alumni survey align with results from NSSE – 58.9% of alumni indicated they did community service or volunteer work (not as part of a course) while at IUPUI. Additionally, those who indicated doing community service or volunteer work also indicated they were "very connected to IUPUI" (79%). Figure 2 represents the percentage of alumni respondents who did or did not participate in certain co-curricular experiences and that community service or volunteer work (not as part of a course) is the second most common type of co-curricular experience at IUPUI.

Figure 2. Participation in Co-Curricular Experiences

	Did not do this	Did this
Internship, co-op, field experience, practicum, student teaching experience, or clinical placement	38.7%	61.3%
Community service or volunteer work, not as part of a course	41.1%	58.9%
A project addressing a real-world problem	48.5%	51.5%
Community service or volunteer work as part of a course	48.6%	51.4%
Student club or organization	58.5%	41.5%
A learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together	71.4%	28.6%
Peer mentoring	75.8%	24.2%
Research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements	78.8%	21.2%
Electronic portfolio (ePortfolio/ePDP)	85.7%	14.3%
Study abroad	87.1%	12.9%
Intramural athletics	89.7%	10.3%
Fraternity/sorority	91.5%	8.5%
Student government	93.4%	6.6%
Intercollegiate athletics	96.5%	3.5%

Knowledge and Skills Gained

We examined the extent to which alumni believed IUPUI prepared them for certain knowledge and skills that are commonly associated with community-engaged learning experiences, then compared them to whether they participated in community service or volunteer work as part of a course. The following knowledge and skill items were particularly relevant based on prior research on civic learning and democratic engagement (Steinberg, Hatcher, & Bringle, 2011; National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement, 2012):

- Work with people from different backgrounds (e.g., race ethnicities, socioeconomic backgrounds, cultural, or sexual orientation)
- Understand and value cultural differences
- Initiate interactions with those who are culturally difference
- Advocate for my beliefs in a civil and respectful manner
- Engage in meaningful self-examination and reflection
- Recognize my own cultural rules and biases
- Contribute to communities locally and globally

Figure 3 illustrates that while IUPUI does a great job preparing graduates for working with diverse others (53.4% indicated "very much prepared"), preparing students to contribute to communities locally and globally (28.1% indicated "very much prepared") was the lowest ranked item. Very few students at IUPUI participate in study abroad and a recommendation for future alumni studies would be to separate locally from globally.

Figure 3. Knowledge and Skills

	Not at all prepared	Somewhat prepared	Quite a bit prepared	Very much prepared	Mean
Work with people from different backgrounds (e.g., races, ethnicities, religions, socioeconomic backgrounds, cultural, or sexual orientations)	3.7%	15.1%	27.8%	53.4%	3.31
Understand and value cultural differences	4.3%	16.8%	30.8%	48.1%	3.23
Initiate interactions with those who are culturally different	6.0%	18.9%	30.1%	44.9%	3.14
Write a well-organized final report or paper	3.0%	20.4%	37.1%	39.5%	3.13
Modify how I approach a problem based on the requirements of the situation	4.7%	19.9%	36.1%	39.3%	3.10
Prepare a formal oral presentation to communicate ideas and information	3.5%	21.9%	36.9%	37.7%	3.09
Generate new ideas about how to approach an issue	4.5%	22.1%	38.6%	34.7%	3.04
Support an argument using appropriate (quantitative or non-quantitative) data	5.0%	20.6%	41.8%	32.5%	3.02
Advocate for my beliefs in a civil and respectful manner	8.1%	22.4%	33.1%	36.5%	2.98
Engage in meaningful self-examination and reflection	9.0%	22.9%	33.0%	35.1%	2.94
Recognize my own cultural rules and biases	10.5%	22.0%	33.8%	33.8%	2.91
Contribute to communities locally and globally	12.2%	27.9%	31.8%	28.1%	2.76

When comparing the knowledge and skills gained to whether or not students participated in community service or volunteer work as part of a course, the results re-affirm the value of these experiences – the mean for every item is higher when students participated in community service or volunteer work compared to those who did not (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. Knowledge and Skills Based on Participation in Service-Learning

	Not at all prepared	Somewhat prepared	Quite a bit prepared	Very much prepared	Mean
Work with people from different backgrounds (e.g., races, ethnicities, religions, socioeconomic backgrounds, cultural, or sexual orientations)					
Participated in CS as part of a course	3.6%	11.2%	25.6%	59.6%	3.41
Did not participate in CS as part of a course	4.0%	19.4%	30.2%	46.4%	3.19
Understand and value cultural differences					
Participated in CS as part of a course	4.0%	12.6%	28.5%	54.9%	3.34
Did not participate in CS as part of a course	4.8%	21.0%	33.3%	40.9%	3.10
Initiate interactions with those who are culturally different					
Participated in CS as part of a course	4.7%	14.9%	29.0%	51.4%	3.27
Did not participate in CS as part of a course	7.2%	23.1%	31.9%	37.8%	3.00
Write a well-organized final report or paper					
Participated in CS as part of a course	2.2%	12.9%	37.8%	47.1%	3.30
Did not participate in CS as part of a course	3.9%	28.7%	35.8%	31.5%	2.95
Modify how I approach a problem based on the requirements of the situation					
Participated in CS as part of a course	3.3%	17.0%	35.1%	44.6%	3.21
Did not participate in CS as part of a course	6.0%	22.7%	37.8%	33.5%	2.99
Prepare a formal oral presentation to communicate ideas and information					
Participated in CS as part of a course	2.9%	13.7%	39.6%	43.9%	3.24
Did not participate in CS as part of a course	4.3%	31.1%	34.3%	30.3%	2.91

Work with people from different backgrounds (e.g., races, ethnicities, religions, socioeconomic backgrounds, cultural, or sexual orientations)					
Participated in CS as part of a course	3.6%	11.2%	25.6%	59.6%	3.41
Did not participate in CS as part of a course	4.0%	19.4%	30.2%	46.4%	3.19
Understand and value cultural differences					
Participated in CS as part of a course	4.0%	12.6%	28.5%	54.9%	3.34
Did not participate in CS as part of a course	4.8%	21.0%	33.3%	40.9%	3.10
Initiate interactions with those who are culturally different					
Participated in CS as part of a course	4.7%	14.9%	29.0%	51.4%	3.27
Did not participate in CS as part of a course	7.2%	23.1%	31.9%	37.8%	3.00
Write a well-organized final report or paper					
Participated in CS as part of a course	2.2%	12.9%	37.8%	47.1%	3.30
Did not participate in CS as part of a course	3.9%	28.7%	35.8%	31.5%	2.95
Modify how I approach a problem based on the requirements of the situation					
Participated in CS as part of a course	3.3%	17.0%	35.1%	44.6%	3.21
Did not participate in CS as part of a course	6.0%	22.7%	37.8%	33.5%	2.99
Prepare a formal oral presentation to communicate ideas and information					
Participated in CS as part of a course	2.9%	13.7%	39.6%	43.9%	3.24
Did not participate in CS as part of a course	4.3%	31.1%	34.3%	30.3%	2.91

Summary of Qualitative Findings

Interviewing alumni was extremely insightful and important for IUPUI in unexpected ways - the alumni were honored that IUPUI reached out to them and were excited to reconnect with the institution. Several of the interviews resulted in additional follow-ups to connect them to opportunities to re-engage with IUPUI or further their education. One unscientific but key take-away from this study is that IUPUI should reach out to alumni more often. While the Alumni Association connects with alumni, the purpose for re-connecting is different and some alumni feel as though there is a hidden agenda (donate money to IU). The alumni who were interviewed were genuinely interested in giving the university feedback about their college experiences, learning about what the university is currently doing, and how it has changed programs/offerings.

Very few alumni knew what community engagement meant, much less what the Office of Community Engagement does and why it exists. They appreciated learning that the institution is committed to working in and with the community to address pressing social issues. While participating in service-learning courses impacts student learning outcomes, many students had not considered or were unaware of IUPUI's commitments to community engagement and that their experiences during college were connected to our strategies for contributing to the greater good of society. This was a valuable process and a worthy investment for the institution.

According to Morton (1995), students prefer one distinct type of service orientation (i.e., charity, project, or social change) and that as one's integrity for one type of service increased, their preference for the type of service became blurred. For example, a high school student has a history of raising money for a breast cancer walk. Once in college, if the institution could foster an environment that increased the integrity with which the student raised money for breast cancer, they would be more likely to also get involved in other orientations towards service (e.g., get involved in breast cancer awareness campaigns, organize their own project related to breast cancer). Bringle, Hatcher, and McIntosh (2005) found limited support of this theory as well and suggested that institutions should expose students to multiple approaches to community service.

Previous research on service-learning guided our approach to coding the interviews – examining their type of engagement (current) and their intensity (depth and breadth of their engagement). Students

were then asked to reflect back to their college experiences and identify what potentially influenced how they see themselves as community contributors. The following summarizes the types of engagement, what they identified as having the greatest influence on them, and finally, their recommendations for IUPUI if they want to ensure graduates make meaningful contributions to their communities.

Types of Community Contributors

Of the 55 alumni interviewed, everyone fell into one of five categories described below:

1. **Direct Service** – alumni who choose to give of their time (volunteer), resources (donate, fundraising), or talents (pro bono services). Engagement is not associated with their professional role(s) and may or may not align with social issues they are most passionate about.
2. **Civic-Minded Professionals** – alumni who have a complex understanding of at least one social issue, including its root problems and the systemic challenges, AND have chosen a career or profession that effects that social issue. The impacts of their engagement are at the individual/personal level as opposed to addressing the systemic or policy-related issues.
3. **Change Makers** – alumni who see the systemic challenges with social issues and choose to advocate at a local, state, and/or national level. For example, testify to congress, engage local legislators, or get involved with their professional associations to address systemic issues related to their field or social issue of interest.
4. **Combination of #2 & #3** – highly engaged and well-informed civic-minded professionals. They are intentionally working to address the root causes through policy, advocacy, and their careers. They are more likely to stay abreast of current issues compared to all other types of community contributors and are intentional about the actions they take towards addressing issues. They can describe a social issue from multiple perspectives and are aware of actions they and others are taking to address the issue.
5. **Dis-engaged** (0) – alumni who couldn't identify a social issue without being prompted further, indicated they "weren't into politics" and generally put off by the idea of engagement. Consciously or unconsciously not engaged. Lack efficacy and often express distrust in the government and others in society.

In addition to coding each alumni based upon these five categories, the interviews were coded for their level of intensity, passion, or commitment to the social issue(s) addressed. Figure 5 illustrates the number of alumni within each of the five categories and their level of intensity, or as Morton describes it the integrity with which they engage.

Types of Engagement	Count	Intensity	Count
0 – Dis-engaged	10	0	5
		1	3
		2	2
		3	0
1 – Direct Service	15	1	8
		2	2
		3	5
2 – Civic-Minded Professionals	15	1	7
		2	2
		3	6
3 – Change Makers	9	1	0
		2	3
		3	6
4 – Combination of 2 & 3	6	1	0
		2	2
		3	4

Figure 5. Categories of Engagement (Count) and Level of Intensity

The most common type of community contributors were those who engage in direct service (n=15) and those who choose a career that allows them to contribute to the greater good of society (i.e., civic-minded professionals) (n=15). Nearly a third of all alumni could name at least one way that they contribute to their communities through time, resources, or their talents. Another third of alumni pursued higher education and have chosen careers that align with social issues they are passionate about.

Examples of Direct Service Profiles:

- Spends 10 months a year mentoring young black women, plans workshops, and volunteers for Indiana Black Expo. Serves on the board for Public Advocates for Community Re-Entry. Invited speaker for high school students (Alumni Association). Communications workshop for Jack and Jill of America and 100 Black Men. Women's March in Washington, D.C. (Direct Service, Intensity 3)
- Wants dentists to be more adept at working with kids with disabilities, so takes dentistry to *their* environment. Volunteers at a summer camp that is 7 hours away in an area of the country where there's a lack of access to care to begin with. (Direct Service, Intensity 2)
- Volunteers, writes legislators, stays abreast of social issues, critical consumer of information/news, donates money or resources. (Direct Service, Intensity 1)

Examples of Civic-Minded Professional Profiles:

- Masters in Business Administration - Engagement rooted in Mormon faith. Spent two years on a mission trip before coming to IUPUI. Engineering classes encouraged him to start making personal choices that were better for the environment. Volunteered consistently (8hrs/week)

during college. Got MBA and chooses to use his education to tackle clean water and clean energy on a global scale. (Civic-Minded Professional, Intensity 3)

- Non-Profit Management major - "Indianapolis has a vibrant non-profit sector. I value collaborative impact over one-time events." Passionate about access to higher education. Works for the Indiana Commission for Higher Education on addressing equity opportunity gaps across the state of Indiana. (Civic-Minded Professional, Intensity 3)
- Social Worker major - "I do what I can, but I've learned I have limits. It feels like these organizations are playing the numbers game. It's emotional work, so you have to be able to disconnect. I try to do the best for the people I work with. Systemic issues is a living breathing thing and it's fluid. Government will eventually pay attention to it or the next guy will. I don't have the time to address it." (Civic-Minded Professional, Intensity 1)

Ten alumni were coded as dis-engaged. A very small number (n=2) were extremely passionate about their lack of engagement – it was intentional because they didn't trust people, the government, mentioned that voting doesn't make a difference, and in general, thought society was in a really bad place. Of the 55 alumni, three indicated IUPUI did not prepare them well in at least one knowledge or skill (see Figure 3) and two of them were also in the dis-engaged category. But half of the dis-engaged were indifferent or lacked interest in pressing social issues.

Examples of Dis-Engaged Profiles:

- "I don't think I'm doing anything. I'm completely helpless. I voted and don't think it counted. It doesn't feel like it matters. If you're not super rich and powerful, what can you do? There's no way to imagine myself helping people. I can barely afford rent." (Dis-engaged, Intensity 2)

- "Not politically involved. I don't pay attention to the news. Used to be on the Board of League of Women Voters, but stopped doing all of that." (Dis-engaged, Intensity 1)

- "I take care of my stuff, but I don't write elected officials or advocate in other ways. Our Congress is worthless. People need term limits." (Dis-engaged, Intensity 0)

- "I'm politically conservative. I feel like I can make more of a difference on a personal level...Just focus on connecting with students and it will be fine." (Dis-engaged, Intensity 0)

The change makers (n=9) and those who were a combination of civic-minded professionals and change makers (n=6) were the most well-informed and their civic actions were taken with the greatest level of integrity. They mentioned testifying in front of Congress, held leadership roles within their professional associations and were deeply involved in shaping or developing policy.

Examples of Change Maker Profiles:

- Mechanical Engineering major - "I set up training and education at local schools because there is no college or trade school for work in my industry. I went to Washington D.C. to advocate to Senators about how legislation hurts [his profession's] ability to train the workforce." Politically independent and focuses on policies (could name all the sponsoring legislators). Politically active in HS - special election in 2007 he went door-to-door to campaigning for Rep. Carson. Worked on Clinton's campaign. Stays abreast of politics. Sees value at the city and state level as really important. (Change Maker, Intensity 3)

- Music Therapy major - "believes dialogue is important for dismantling systemic racism, which has historical roots." Volunteers through Catholic Charities to do music therapy with refugees. Highly engaged through her church and regularly participates in a group of predominantly white members who focus on social justice and race relations. (Change Maker, Intensity 3)

- English major- AmeriCorps teacher for 2 years after college, stayed on longer because the school was in rough shape (lost their charter, tough environment for the kids). Worked as a literacy coach and went into local prisons and public libraries to teach adults. "We can have lots of teachers, but there's more difficult work I can be involved in to make a bigger impact….I'm pursuing a master's degree to work on social inequities; how to empower communities through representation in public policy." (Change Maker, Intensity 2)

Examples of Combination of Change Makers & Civic-Minded Professionals:

- Informatics major – Social issues of interest include trans rights, immigrant rights, equitable access to care. Racial ally, peer facilitator, gives space to discuss topics and community organizing, volunteers a lot on the community. Uses CIT skills and looks at ethical issues in using personal data (e.g., facial recognition, AI). Protests, writes senators and elected officials. Works with the local police department to build better relationships with community residents. (Combination, Intensity 3)
- General Studies major – Social issues of interest include criminal justice reform, addiction, racism. Currently mentors addicts and helps them get re-established in life. Church led him into politics. Was part of the Purdue College Republicans while at Purdue. Considers himself an Evangelical conservative. Saw racism within Trump, which also opened his mind to racism within the church. Member of the Indianapolis GOP. Volunteers a lot through AA, his church, and other organizations. (Combination, Intensity 3)
- Nursing major – Social issues of interest include women's rights, reproductive rights, environmental sustainability, animal rights. Was a resident assistant while at IUPUI. Recognized her fellow RA's didn't have the same views as her, but had great dialogue and the in-depth diversity training was helpful. After Trump was elected, she felt compelled to use her talents in a more intentional way and took at job at Planned Parenthood. (Combination, Intensity 3)

Greatest Influences During College

Alumni were asked to reflect back to their college experiences and think about who or what was the most influential in their becoming community contributors. Research suggests that most people cannot remember and have a harder time recalling details in studies when asked to think back more than six months. These alumni graduated from IUPUI in 2014 or 2016, so were being asked to recall information from 3-5 years back. However, alumni were able to recall at least some incident, person, or program that was influential to their current levels of engagement.

Of the 55 alumni, 26 of them were able to name at least one faculty or staff member who was extremely influential during their college career and identified them as helping them become the community contributor they are today. The following quotes explain why they think faculty and staff are so important:

- "I remember events, talks, group conversations, etc. that may have been good, but the classes that help students see it [social issues] in a different way are important. That's all about having a

passionate faculty member. The best faculty will likely have someone get upset in their class. They can challenge perspectives and foster meaningful dialogue."

- "Professors who come FROM the industry are important. They are able to see the application of their course work, which solidified the active role he can play in society."
- "Professors who can tie the content to real life."

The second most common influencer mentioned was participation in high-impact practices and not just service-learning. Finally, alumni remembered on-campus programs/events as being really beneficial to their thinking. For example, the International Festival, Tunnel of Oppression, and Democracy Plaza.

Recommendations for IUPUI from Alumni

The last question asked during the interview was "do you have any recommendations for IUPUI if we seek to develop community contributors?" Many students expressed gratitude for the conversation and pride in being an alumni of the institution. Here are a few of their recommendations:

- "Create relationships and environments that foster meaningful dialogue. Teach students to "sit with uncomfortable emotions." Students need experiences that help them find themselves and something they can enjoy as a career."
- "Let staff shine. They are an asset, resource, and can be more helpful than faculty sometimes. Their interests, full scope of engagement and networks are helpful to students. Students should be encouraged to meet and talk with staff (just like they are faculty). Students need a more formal path to accessing staff. Staff are connected to alumni, organizations and things that lead to jobs and internships."
- "Racial issues should be discussed because it crosses over into everything."
- "Not sure how, but identify faculty so that students know who they can talk to about social issues. As undergrads, students don't necessarily seek out opportunities. Need a cultural shift…being civically engaged is just as important as your student/social group or event. Universities reinforce professionalization and passively doing things (e.g., check a box to say you did a HIP or 10 hours of service). It's the wrong message."
- "Being in dialogue with people who don't look like you or think like you is where learning happens. As a student, I wasn't necessarily looking for these opportunities and regret not getting involved sooner."
- "Create interdisciplinary capstones/courses. Need multi-disciplinary programs in order to solve the complex problems in society."
- "Reach out to more alumni. This is the first time I've been contacted by IUPUI. I'd love to be more involved."
- "Not enough of my professors cared about Marion County. Few lived in Marion County. Courses did not do any direct community outreach…did projects on campus instead."

Closing

The value of conducting an alumni study cannot be overstated, specifically examining the extent to which the institution develops community contributors. While many campuses have a general process of reaching out to alumni, this was unique in its purpose and process. Facilitating the interviews, including managing logistics and scheduling, was time consuming. However, the information gathered reinforced many of the things we are doing and reminded us of the importance of appreciating certain faculty and

staff, which are the greatest assets to our institutions. An additional added benefit of this study was us re-connecting the alumni to the campus. Conversations led into mentoring sessions or were an inspiration to some of them to re-engage with IUPUI that otherwise may not have happened. We connected alumni to programs and recognized the faculty who were identified along the way to let the faculty/staff know how important they were to their alumni. The emails to these faculty/staff, while time consuming, are simple gestures that can inspire them to keep doing what they are doing. So, while IUPUI may not have gotten information for immediate program improvements, we know what to keep doing and have evidence to support the work.

The findings from this study were presented at the 2020 Assessment Institute held virtually. A recording of the session and the PPT is available HERE (see session 13G; citation below).

Assessment Institute Citation:

Norris, K. & Janik, R. (2020, October). Examining alumni engagement: What institutions can do to increase depth and breadth of community impact. Assessment Institute. (Webinar).

For the campus-level summary of the alumni survey prepared by IRDS, click HERE.

Appendix A

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

BRIEF OVERVIEW.

IUPUI is grateful that you took the time to complete the alumni survey and were willing to be interviewed so that we could learn more about what it is that we do well in addition to areas for improvement. We are particularly interested in experiences that prepared you for your profession as well as how you see yourself contributing to the greater good of society. We will use your feedback to enhance learning opportunities for students as well as support and recognize faculty and staff who make lasting impacts on graduates.

Semi-structured interview questions (For all)

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself- How did you end up at IUPUI? Your major/area(s) of interest? What have you been up to since graduating?
2. Tell me a little about your passions and interests (e.g., social or political issues). Why are they of such great interest?
    a. Did your experiences while at IUPUI help you explore your passions or interests?
    b. Did these interests have any influence on your career choices/profession? If yes, in what ways?
3. In what ways do you typically try to contribute to the greater good of society/make a difference in the world (e.g., staying abreast of social issues, voting, advocacy, volunteering your time, donating to causes)?
    a. Who or what has influenced your decisions to take actions in this way (e.g., mentor, church/organization you are affiliated with)?

If they said IUPUI prepared them VERY WELL:

In the alumni survey, you said that "IUPUI prepared you very well for things like [**see alumni's survey responses to include specific item(s)**]." Can you recall a project, a program, an experience, or a faculty or staff member who had the greatest influence over your preparedness?

If they identify an experience:
    b. Can you tell me a little more about that experience (e.g., what did you do? Who did you work with? How did it challenge your thinking?)?

If they identify a faculty/staff member:

    c. What did that faculty/staff member do that influenced your growth? What made them unique?

If they said IUPUI did NOT prepare them:
4. The alumni survey asked you if IUPUI prepared you with a variety of skills and you indicated "not at all" on **[see alumni's survey responses to include specific item(s)]**. What could IUPUI

do differently to create meaningful learning experiences for students? Were there experiences that you wanted to do, but couldn't? What prevented you (e.g., time, costs)? Do you have any recommendations for IUPUI to ensure everyone is able to participate in these experiences?

Is there anything else you want to tell me? Anything that you think IUPUI should know about your experiences?

Again, thank you for participating! Your feedback is extremely helpful as IUPUI continues to think about or re-imagine how we design engaged learning experiences for students.