

PRAC Assessment Grant Final Report Format

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

Include the following:

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6. An Exploration of Residential-Based Learning Communities (RBLCs) at IUPUI
7. January 2020 - October 2021

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.
 - The intended outcomes of the projects were to understand more about why retention is higher for students in the RBLC. In other words, what is happening within RBLCs that leads to higher retention? To answer this question, we engaged in propensity score matching techniques to analyze retention information more effectively, but also included student surveying, student focus groups, staff surveying, and document analysis in the evaluation. By using Inkeles, Jessup-Anger, and Benjamin's (2018) research-based model for living-learning community best practices, we hoped to be able to map areas of strengths and growth for the overall RBLC program, as well as individual RBLCs. The project resulted in interesting qualitative and quantitative insights into the success of the RBLC program and deliverable program evaluation materials for each of the thirteen RBLCs within IUPUI's portfolio.
- Describe data collection methods and provide an analysis of the findings.
 - **Retention Analysis Using Propensity Score Matching:** Given that initial retention analysis results did not account for self-selection bias and other confounding factors, we used a statistical technique called "propensity score matching" to explore more details about student retention.
 - **ACREO Survey:** "The Assessment of Collegiate Residential Environments and Outcomes (ACREO) assesses the influence of residential environments and academic, intellectual, and social outcomes of college students" (<https://www.acreosurvey.org/>). The multi-institutional study explores relationships between institution structures, engagement types, and student

academic, intellectual, and social outcomes, and is specifically able to compare outcomes and engagement between RBLC and non-RBLC students. Many of the outcomes measured align with outcomes associated with the Profiles of Learning for Undergraduate Success (PLUS)

- **Focus Groups:** Focus groups delved into how RBLCs have supported retention and achievement of outcomes instead of what outcomes are achieved (like the ACREO survey and the retention analysis. These focus groups gave voice to student experiences in each RLBC.
- **Staff Surveys:** Interviews were conducted as an opportunity to dig into the perceived success of each RBLC from the staff's perspective utilizing the Best Practice Model as a framework.
- **Triangulation & Development Final Product:** Information from the ACREO Survey, Focus Groups, and Staff Surveys were compiled and coded for themes. These themes were organized into a triangle visual, reflective of the Best Practice Model that guided us as a theoretical framework. These final products were delivered to stakeholders in the RBLC program and utilized to improve future program development.
- *See the merged powerpoint presentation from the 2021 Assessment Institute for summaries of findings in each of these areas.*
- Describe any obstacles/challenges encountered.
 - The COVID-19 pandemic altered the timeline of our data collection, as well as the methods practically available to us to gather information. For example, we did not facilitate in-person focus groups, interviews, and our large survey administration received little response rate due to it being administered around Spring Break of March 2020.
- What changes, if any, were made to address these obstacles/challenges?
 - Instead of in-person focus groups, we opted instead for virtual focus groups. Instead of in-person interviews with staff, we opted to administer a survey to better respect changing staff demands during the height of the pandemic. Our large survey administration, utilizing the ACREO survey, had to be administered twice as its first administration began the week of Spring Break in 2020. With low response rates, we received permission to re-administer the survey in Spring 2021 free of cost. This delayed the project, but ultimately yielded more student participation. Ultimately, this timing was more effective as it aligned with the RBLC program coordinator, the residence coordinator for academic initiatives to provide results from the program as they were leaving their position. In doing so, the person coming into the role was provided access to recent, comprehensive program review to utilize in interacting with stakeholders and developing program improvements.

References

- Inkelas, K. K., Jessup-Anger, J. E., Benjamin, M., & Wawrzynski, M. R. (2018). *Living-learning communities that work: A research-based model for design, delivery, and assessment*. Stylus Publishing, LLC



An Exploration of Residential-Based Learning Communities (RBLCs) at IUPUI

Introductions



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Road Map of Session

1. Discuss impact of living-learning programs (LLPs) on student success
2. Share our assessment plan
3. Highlight our results
4. Discuss next steps



RBLCs at IUPUI

1. Residential-Based Learning Communities

- 13 communities
- Full-time staff from sponsoring unit collaborate with resident assistants (RAs)
- A part of Housing and Residence Life (HRL) at IUPUI since 2003



Initial Curiosities

1. Past data analyses revealed that RBLC students living on campus at IUPUI were 2.2 times more likely to graduate than their non-RBLC peers, though this data is slightly dated.
2. With the fall 2018 full-time bachelor degree-seeking beginners who resided in one of the RBLCs, we found their 1-year retention rate at any IU campuses is **91.3 percent** compared to **76.1 percent** among those who did not reside in an RBLC.
 - This represents a difference of **15.2 percentage points**.
3. The 1-year retention rate at IUPUI among the fall 2018 full-time bachelor degree-seeking beginners who resided in one of the RBLCs was **88.7 percent** versus **73.0 percent** among those who did not reside in an RBLC.
 - This represents a difference of **15.7 percentage points**.



Initial Curiosities

Why is there such a wide gap in the retention rates?
What impacts do these RBLCs have on students
beyond retention and GPAs?



Review of Literature on LLCs

1. Brower and Inkelas (2010) define living-learning communities as “residential housing programs that incorporate academically based themes and build community through common learning.”
2. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) classified learning communities as a high-impact practice.
3. Research has been done nationally to investigate the diversity and impact of LLPs through the National Study of Living Learning Programs, which occurred in 2007.

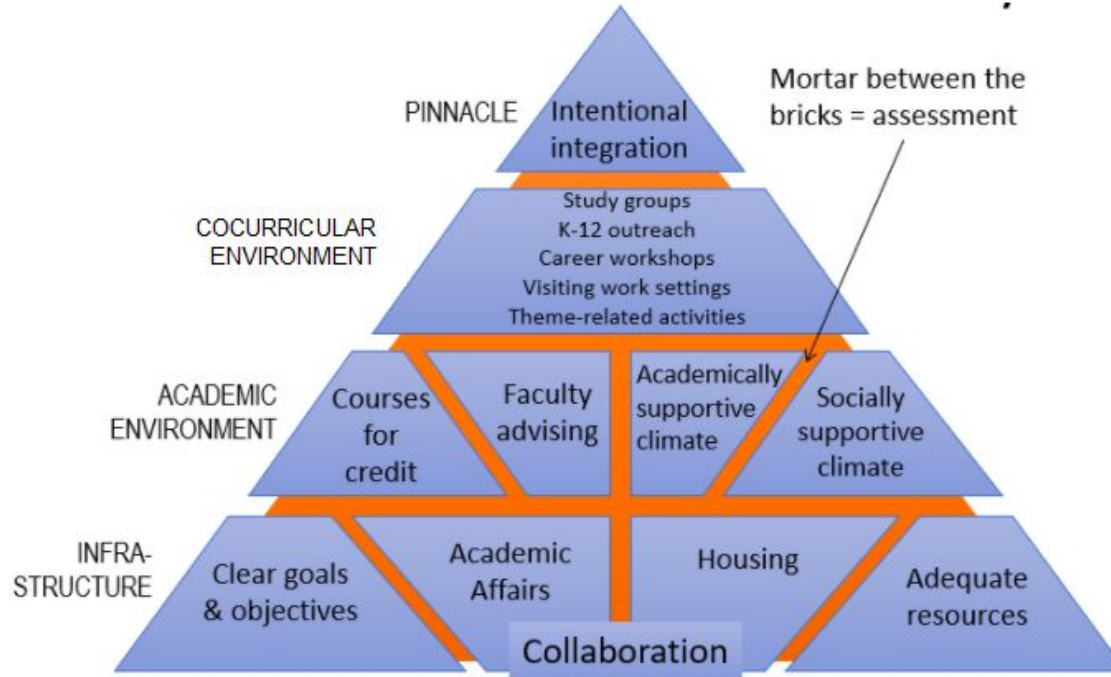


Review of Literature on LLCs

1. Association for College and University Housing Officers (ACUHO-I) recently sponsored a research grant that explored the impact of residential living via the NSSE survey. This recent exploration notes that LLCs have “widespread benefits,” especially for engagement in effective educational practices and retention and, in particular, for male students (ACUHO-I, 2021).
2. Inkelas et al. (2018) developed a comprehensive research-based model for RBLCs that synthesized the experiences of multiple campuses from the National Study of Living-Learning Programs.



Best Practice Model



(Inkelas, Jessup-Anger, Benjamin, & Wawrzynski, 2018).



Identifying Goals

1. Celebrate successes with our academic unit partners
2. Identify areas of growth for specific learning communities using nationally-benchmarked data while still adopting an institution-specific approach
3. Communicate a more meaningful story about the value-added experience of choosing to live in an RBLC
4. Triangulate our current practices against Inkelas' (2018) researched-based best practices to articulate a systemic and strategic plan for improvement



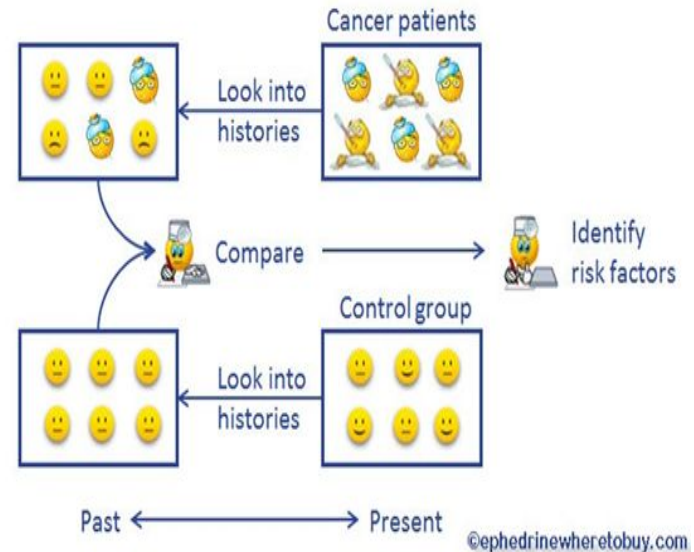
Developing the Assessment Plan

1. Mitigate confounding factors → Propensity Score Matching
2. Access external benchmarks → Assessment of College and Residential Environments and Outcomes (ACREO) Survey
3. Ground in student and staff experiences → Host student focus groups, staff interviews, examine documents
4. Triangulate holistically using theoretical framework → Best Practice Model



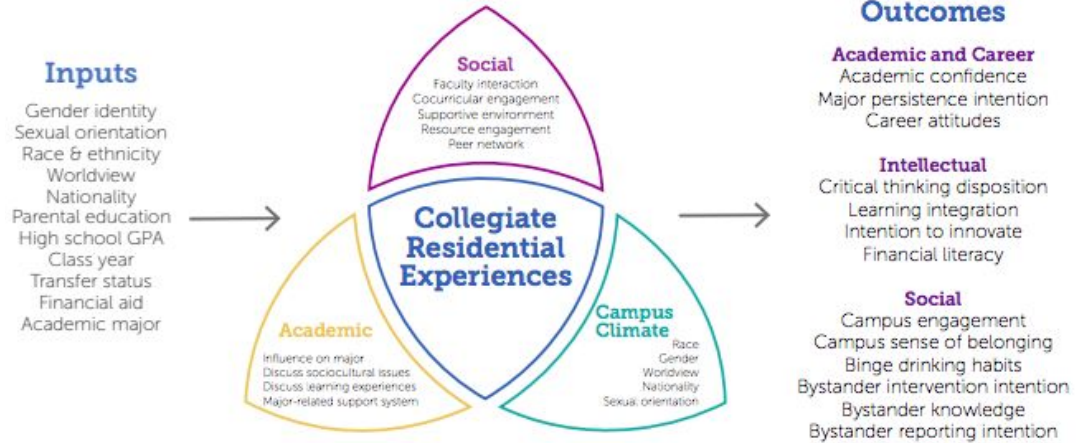
Propensity Score Matching

1. Attempts to estimate the effect of a treatment or other intervention by accounting for the covariates that predict receiving the treatment
2. Minimizes selection bias and other confounding factors (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity, age, SAT scores, unmet financial need, major)



ACREO

1. “The Assessment of Collegiate Residential Environments and Outcomes (ACREO) assesses the influence of residential environments and academic, intellectual, and social outcomes of college students”
(<https://www.acreosurvey.org/>)



ACREO

1. Opportunity to compare based on RBLCs versus on-campus versus off-campus students and RBLC categories

	ACREO Outcomes	Profiles for Undergraduate Learning <input type="text"/>
RBLC students will be able to interact more frequently and directly with faculty and staff.	Campus engagement Campus sense of belonging	Communicator: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Build relationships ● Listens actively ● Conveys ideas effectively
RBLC students will be able to network with peers who share similar interests and classes.	Campus engagement Campus sense of belonging Binge drinking habits Bystander intervention intention, Bystander knowledge, bystander reporting intention	Communicator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Build relationships Problem solver <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Thinks critically ● Collaborates Community contributor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Builds community ● Respectfully Engages Own and Other Cultures ● Behaves Ethically ● Anticipates Consequences



ACREO

1. Opportunity to compare based on RBLCs versus on-campus versus off-campus students and RBLC categories

	Communicator	Problem solver	Innovator	Community contributor
Academic confidence	X	X		
Major persistence intention		X		
Career attitudes	X	X		
Critical thinking disposition	X	X		
Learning integration	X	X		
Intention to innovate	X		X	
Financial literacy	X	X		
Campus engagement	X	X		X
Campus sense of belonging	X	X		X
Binge drinking habits	X	X		X
Bystander intervention intention	X	X		X
Bystander knowledge	X	X		X
Bystander reporting intention	X	X		X



Student and Staff Experiences

1. Focus groups will delve into how RBLCs have supported retention and achievement of outcomes instead of what outcomes are achieved (Schuh, 2016)



Changes to the Initial Plan

1. Spring 2020 not great for data collection
 - Focus groups, ACREO survey moved to Spring 2021
 - Document analysis more time effective for staff
 - Summer-Fall 2021 analysis period
 - Project delayed and now includes student feedback from AY 2020-2021



Fall 2019 and Fall 2020 Cohorts

1. Full-time beginning freshmen seeking a bachelor's degree
2. Enrolled at the IUPUI campus



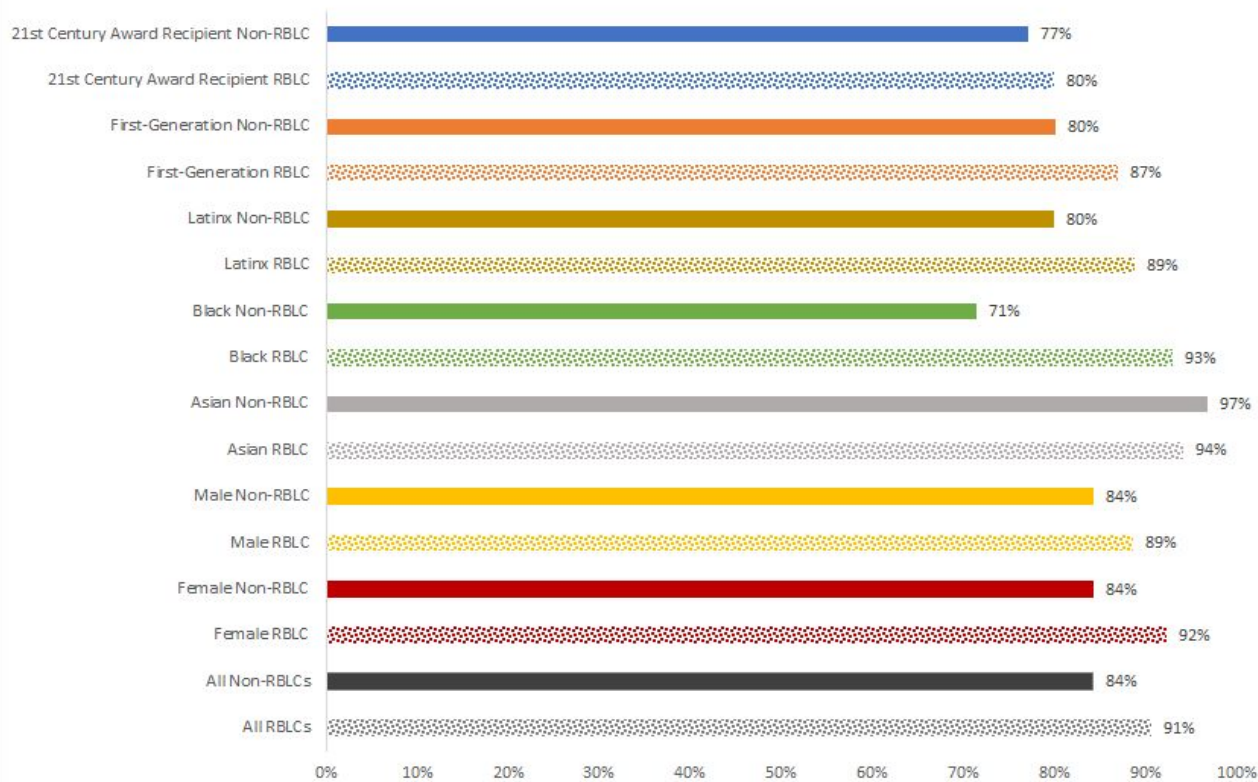
Results: Fall 2019 Cohort (Matched Data)

	A: Non-RBLC Students (n=521)	B: RBLC Students (n=531)	C: STEM LLCs (n=149)	D: Theme LLCs (n=43)	E: Academic LLCs (n=220)	F: Honors LLC (n=119)
Spring retention at IUPUI	84%	91% (A)	88%	86%	90%	97% (A,C)
1-year retention at IUPUI	75%	82% (A)	79%	77%	79%	93% (A,C,D,E)
Fall term GPA	2.77	3.10 (A)	2.83	2.43	3.07 (A,D)	3.74 (A,C,D,E)
Fall cumulative GPA	2.80	3.11 (A)	2.84	2.47	3.07 (A,D)	3.74 (A,C,D,E)
Spring term GPA	2.54	2.95 (A)	2.62	2.58	2.93 (A)	3.53 (A,C,D,E)
Spring cumulative GPA	2.78	3.12 (A)	2.83	2.60	3.11 (A,D)	3.70 (A,C,D,E)

The mean scores/percentages in bold are statistically significantly higher than those of students with the letter(s) in parenthesis at the 0.05 level.



Spring 2021 Retention at IUPUI: Fall 2019 Cohort

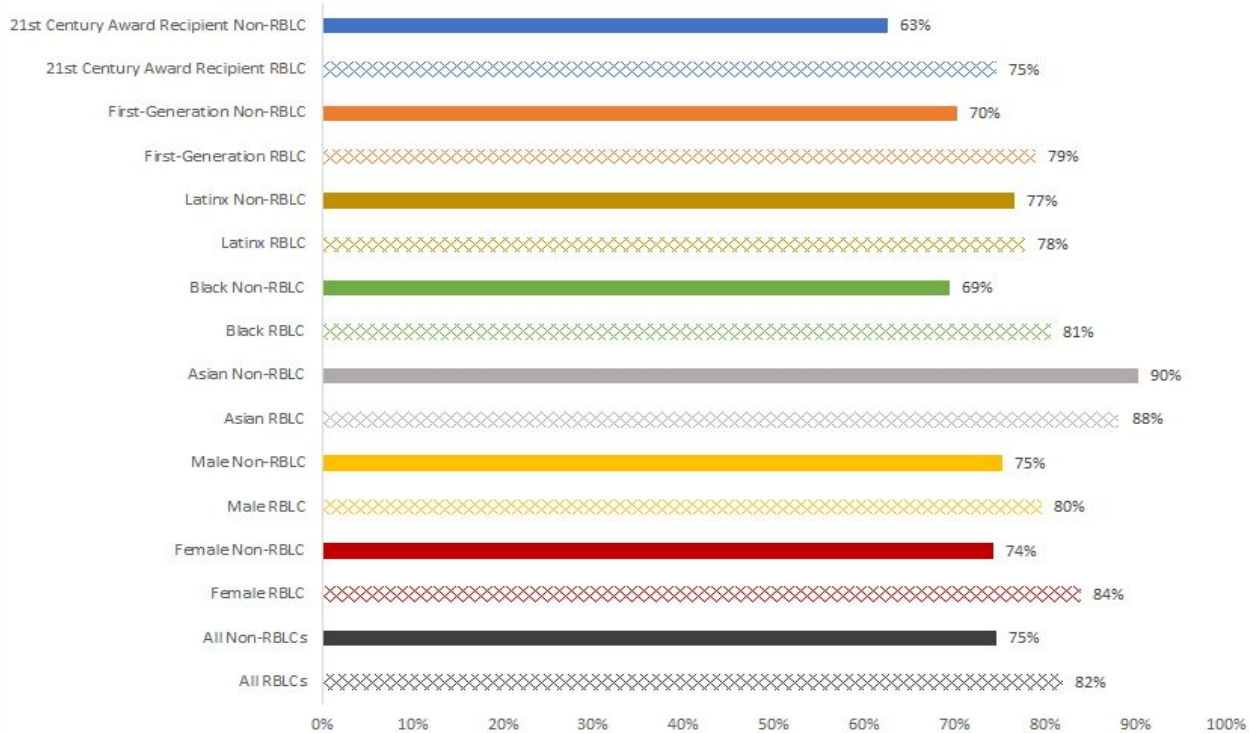


Fall 2019 Cohort

Living in an RBLC seemed to help the fall-to-spring retention rates among female, male, Black, Latinx, first-generation students and those who received the 21st Century award.



1-Year Retention at IUPUI: Fall 2019 Cohort



Fall 2019 Cohort

Living in an RBLC seemed to help the 1-year retention rates among female, male, Black, first-generation students and those who received the 21st Century award.



Fall 2019 Cohort: Fall and Spring Term and Cumulative GPAs

Living in an RBLC seemed to help the fall and spring term and cumulative GPAs among **female, male, Asian, Black, Latinx, first-generation** students and those who received the **21st Century award**.



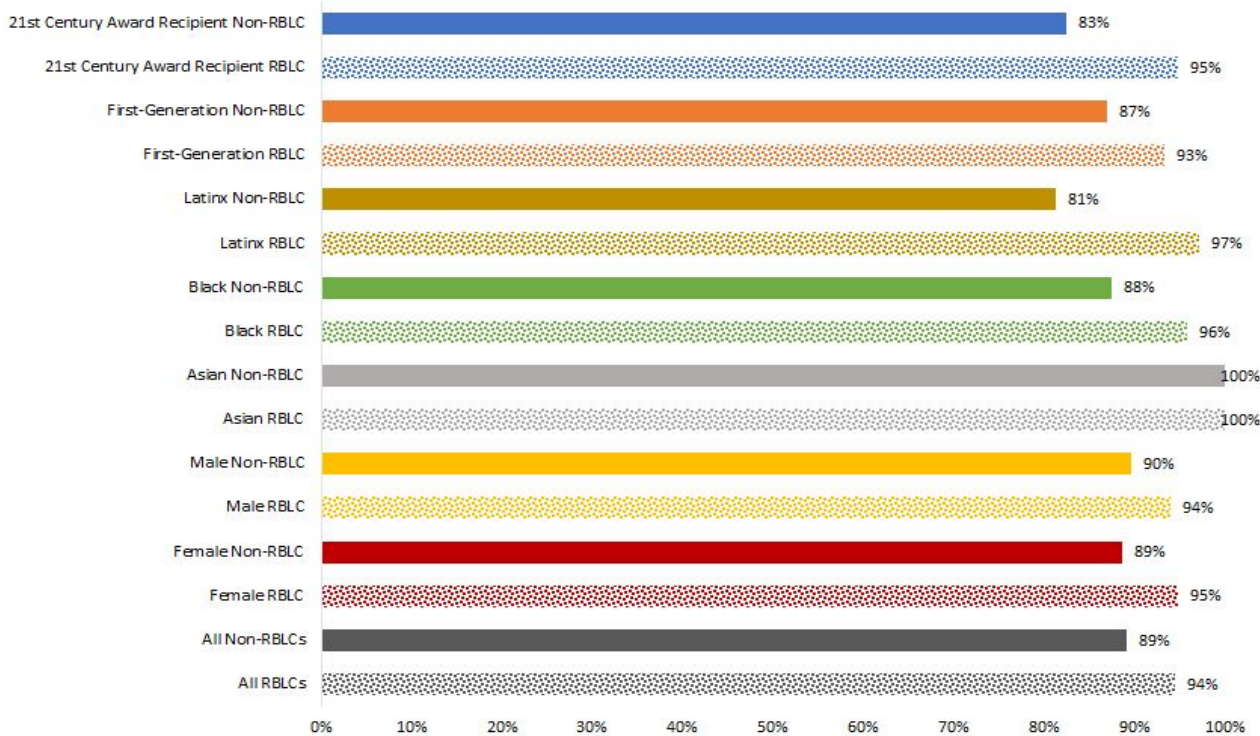
Results: Fall 2020 Cohort (Matched Data)

	A: Non-RBLC Students (n=269)	B: RBLC Students (n=272)	C: STEM LLCs (n=71)	D: Theme LLCs (n=31)	E: Academic LLCs (n=114)	F: Honors LLC (n=55)
Spring retention at IUPUI	89%	94% (A)	90%	94%	95%	100%
1-year retention at IUPUI	Not available yet	Not available yet	Not available yet	Not available yet	Not available yet	Not available yet
Fall term GPA	3.05	3.19	3.10	2.60	3.11	3.80 (A,C,D,E)
Fall cumulative GPA	3.08	3.19	3.12	2.62	3.11	3.79 (A,C,D,E)
Spring term GPA	2.63	2.82	2.48	2.15	2.88 (D)	3.50 (A,C,D,E)
Spring cumulative GPA	2.98	3.07	2.92	2.47	3.04 (D)	3.69 (A,C,D,E)

The mean scores/percentages in bold are statistically significantly higher than those of students with the letter(s) in parenthesis at the 0.05 level.



Spring 2021 Retention at IUPUI: Fall 2020 Cohort



Fall 2020 Cohort

Living in an RBLC seems to help the fall-to-spring retention rates among **female, male, Black, Latinx, first-generation** students and those who received the **21st Century award**.



Fall 2020 Cohort: Fall and Spring Term and Cumulative GPAs

Living in an RBLC seemed to help the fall and spring term and cumulative GPAs among **female, male, Asian, and first-generation** students.

Living in an RBLC seemed to help the fall and spring term GPAs among **Latinx** students. Living in an RBLC seemed to help the spring term GPA among students who received the **21st Century award**.



Results: ACREO

Strengths

1. Students in LLCs held more **discussions with diverse peers** as well as discussed socio-cultural issues more than students in traditional residential programs (TRPs)
2. LCC students perceived more **positive climates** for race, sexuality, nationality, and gender than their TRPs
3. LLCs also indicated **more involvement in residential and co-curricular programs** than those in TRPs
4. LLC students perceived a **stronger peer network** and more **supportive residential environment** than TRPs

Opportunities

1. Students in theme LLCs indicated a **weaker network** than students in either STEM or academic LLCs
2. Students in STEM LLCs reported a more **supportive residential environment** than students in theme LLCs



Results: ACREO

Strengths

1. Students in LLCs had more positive **career attitudes** than TRPs
2. LLC students had stronger **campus belonging** and more **bystander knowledge** than their TRP peers
3. LLC students also had higher **innovation intentions** and **campus engagement** than off-campus students
4. Campus **sense of belonging** was highest for LLC students than students in TRPs (who still had higher belonging than students living off campus)

Opportunities

1. Between LLCs: students in honors had higher **academic confidence** than theme LLCs; this difference was also present for **integrative learning**
2. Students in academic LLCs discussed **learning with peers** more frequently than those in theme-based communities
3. Students in STEM LLCs indicated that their residential environment had more **influence on their major** than students in academic LLCs or the honors houses



Results: Student Focus Groups

1. Six focus groups reached 27 students
 - Representative of 10/13 RBLCs
2. Types of questions included:
 - If someone asked you what your RBLC was, what would you say? What is the purpose of your RBLC?
 - What would you say are the goals and objectives of your RBLC?
 - Who runs your RBLC?
 - What does support look like in your community?



Results: Student Focus Groups

1. For each question, themes identified across focus groups

What have you gotten out of being part of your RBLC?

THEMES:

- Connect with other people in same major more
- Integrate better into college, especially with roommates
- Learning how to share with others
- Independence
- Connect to the professional/networking with others outside of the classroom
- Connections with advisor/pro staff
- Know people in classes
- Aware of more cultures



Results: Student Focus Groups

1. For each question, themes identified across focus groups

What would you say are the goals and objectives of your RBLC?

THEMES:

- Create sense of community
- Bring people together
- Community service
- Social values
- None or aren't aware of any specific goals



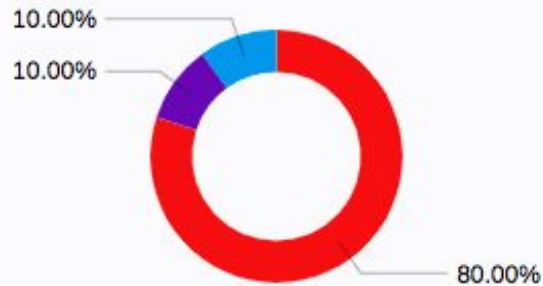
Results: Staff Survey

1. More effective and efficient to collect information at a busy time in a unique semester
2. 10 RBLC liaisons (professional staff) responded
3. Questions included:
 - What is the purpose of the RBLC? What are the specific goals and objectives for the RBLC?
 - Who do you think your students perceive to be "running" the RBLC?
 - What does the RBLC do to cultivate academic support?

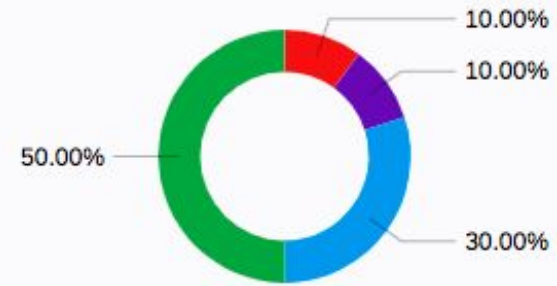


Results: Staff Survey

Adequate Resources



Courses for Credit



■ Currently A Functioning Part of the RBLC

■ A Reachable Goal To Improve Your RBLC Experience

■ Aspirational Goal That With Support and Time We Might Reach

■ Not Something That Aligns With My Units Perceived Purpose of the RBLC

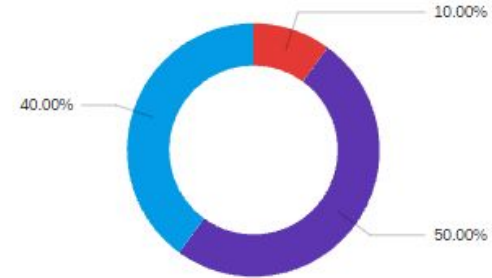


Results: Staff Survey

Intentional Integration between academic and cocurricular environment



Formal assessment plan for your RBLC



■ Currently A Functioning Part of the RBLC

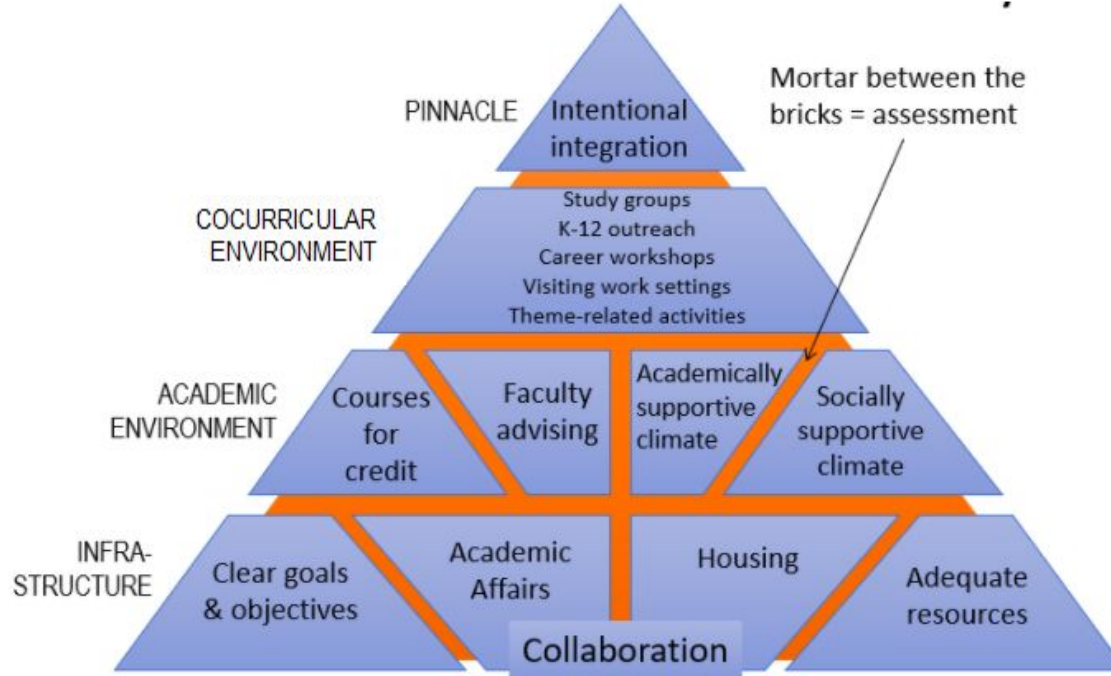
■ A Reachable Goal To Improve Your RBLC Experience

■ Aspirational Goal That With Support and Time We Might Reach

■ Not Something That Aligns With My Units Perceived Purpose of the RBLC



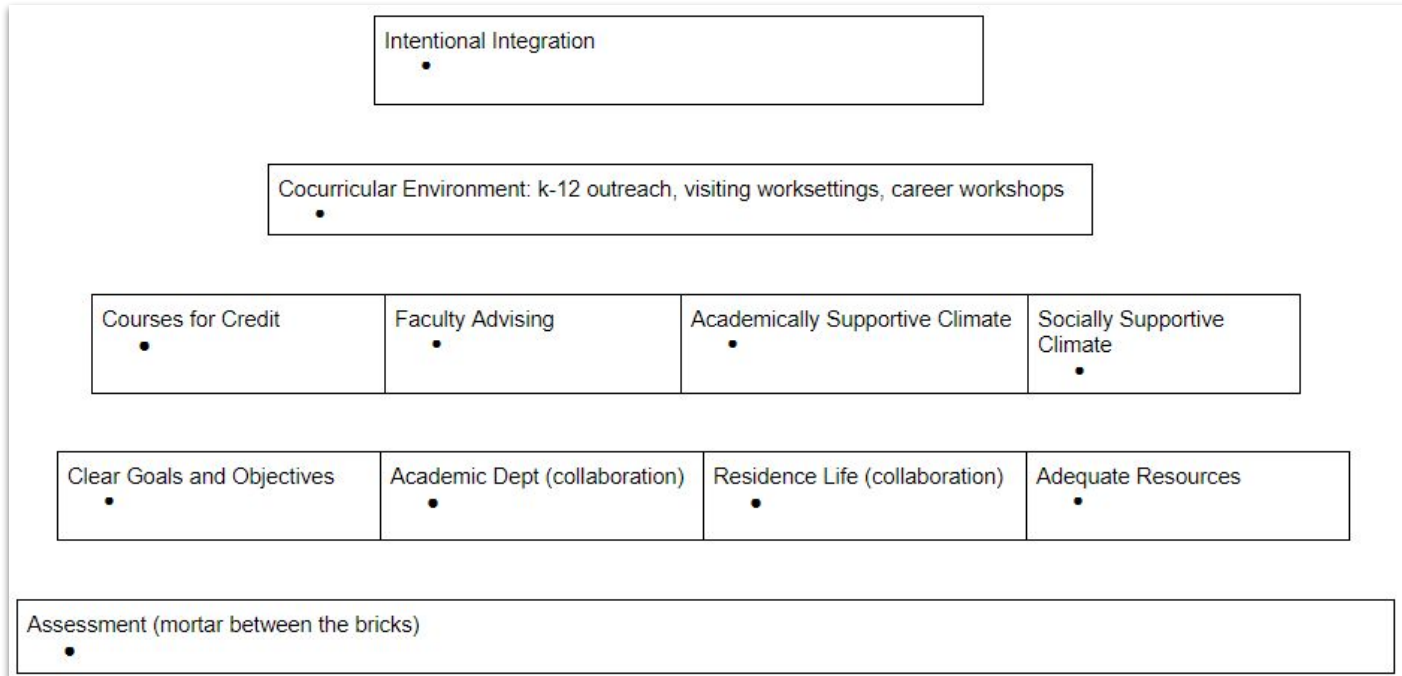
Triangulating Across Data Sources



(Inkelas, Jessup-Anger, Benjamin, & Wawrzynski, 2018).



Triangulating Across Data Sources - Local



Triangulating Across Data Sources - Local

Intentional Integration

- LF: Currently happening
- LF: Reach Goal (Academic to co-curricular connection)

Cocurricular Environment: k-12 outreach, visiting worksettings, career workshops

- FG: the ones have been to were very educational and informative, just learned stuff, wasn't there to interact

Courses for Credit <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LF: Aspirational Goal•	Faculty Advising <ul style="list-style-type: none">• FG: more opportunity to meet with faculty, faculty mentor for LibArts needed• FG: Recommendation: learning more about faculty and having them attend, build connections, can be hard, would enhance and be a perk to bypass awkward phase to build connection with someone	Academically Supportive Climate <ul style="list-style-type: none">• FG: Roommates do have same classes so can bounce ideas off each other• FG: Recommendation: learning more about faculty and having them attend, build connections, can be hard, would enhance and be a perk to bypass awkward phase to build connection with someone• FG: libarts meet with advisors in evening in building, scholarship manager was there, which was nice	Socially Supportive Climate <ul style="list-style-type: none">• FG: build friendships in major, networking opportunities• FG: was in Lib arts, along with summer bridge, also classmates in RBLC, were able to connect more and see them whenever wanted.• FG: can fall back that both same majors with similar interest with roommate stress
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Triangulating Across Data Sources - Local

Assessment (mortar between the bricks)

- LF: Currently happening
- AP20: According to 2018 End of First Semester Survey Report; 86% of respondents agreed that the IUPUI campus community has made them feel welcome - 80% of Liberal Arts RBLC students said they were able to make friends and connect with other students pursuing similar majors (End-of-year survey) - 47% of Liberal Art RBLC students reported attending 1-3 RBLC and 27% reported attending 4-6 RBLC events.

Narrative: Liberal Arts has clear and consistent objectives related to the goal of establishing connections, however the other two articulated objectives don't necessarily surface in student responses. The unit can consider how these outcomes appear integrated into the rest of their programming or whether these outcomes need to be refined. Collaboration exists between the academic and residence life departments, however, most articulate that the RA is perceived to be running the community. Students do recognize that unit staff are involved in the community, which is more than some other communities. That being said, the unit can consider if it is important for students to recognize a particular staff member as part of the role. As far as improvements, additional thought can be considered towards advancing cocurricular activities. Students were able to articulate many examples of faculty/staff advising, academic, and social events; however, little attention from the liaison and the students went to cocurricular connections. While intentional integration may exist between the faculty, academic, and social components, the intentional connection of these items to cocurricular activities that go beyond social or academic connections will take the community to the next level. Taking additional effort to explore retention indicates more forethought for assessment in comparison to other communities. While an annual assessment plan may be an aspirational goal for some communities, formulating consistent assessment is within reach of the Liberal Arts community. One reach goal that Liberal Arts can work towards is courses for credit - despite Liberal Arts spanning a variety of disciplines, students do indicate that they recognize other students from class, the opportunity may be within grasp!

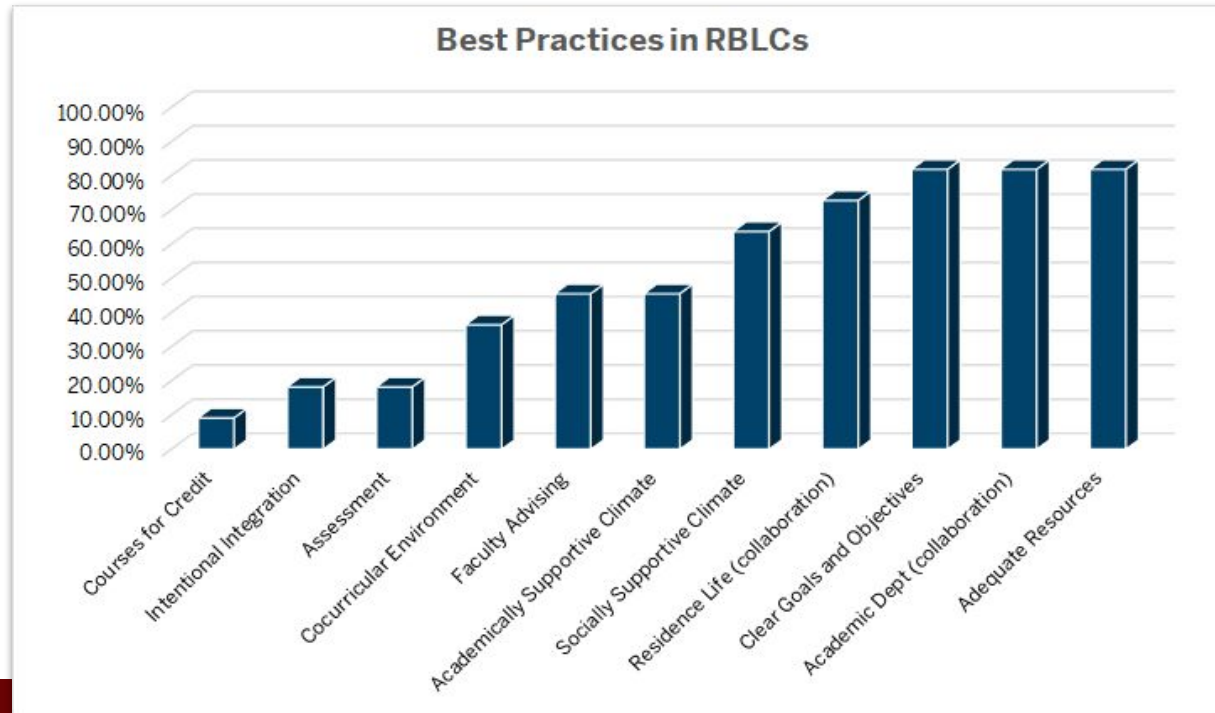


Triangulating Across Data Sources - Big Picture

	Clear Goals and Objectives	Academic Department (collaboration)	Residence Life (collaboration)	Adequate Resources	Courses for Credit	Faculty/Staff Advising	Academically Supportive Climate	Socially Supportive Climate	Cocurricular Environment	Intentional Integration	Assessment
PURDUE HOUSE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
STEM		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
WISH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
I HOUSE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
DEAP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
UNITY HALL*	Not enough information for full analysis										
HHSC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					
HCC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
HERRON HOUSE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
KELLEY		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
LIBERAL ARTS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
HONORS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			



Triangulating Across Data Sources - Big Picture



Deliverables

1. Ultimately, each component can be viewed as an individual piece or as part of the larger whole.
2. Liaisons will receive a customized individual triangle as well as access to the ACREO report and focus group themes.
3. Residence life staff working on the project will be able to use each component to inform next steps.



Closing the Loop: Action Steps

1. Closing the loop
2. Individual RBLC action steps
3. Program-level action steps
4. Department-level action steps



Questions?



Introductions



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Schuh, J.H., Biddix, J.P., Dean, L.A., & Kinzie, J. (2016). *Assessment in student affairs*. Jossey-Bass.

