Creating a Welcoming Campus:  
*Resources, Strategies, and Outcomes*

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Learning Outcomes

Upon conclusion of our time together, you should be able to:

1. Explain the importance of creating welcoming and inclusive campuses for a variety of stakeholders.

2. Identify strategies that facilitate institutional structures, processes, and environments to be more welcoming and user-friendly.

3. Examine one institution’s approach to creating a welcoming campus, including lessons learned and pitfalls to avoid.

4. Replicate, adapt, and implement various approaches to make your campus more welcoming and inclusive.
Outline

• Significance of creating a Welcoming Campus
• Our campus context and stakeholders we serve
• Description of IUPUI’s Welcoming Campus Initiative
• Welcoming Campus Innovation Fund
• Linking this work to other important initiatives
• Lessons learned and considerations for adaptation
• Action planning, Q&A, wrap-up, and adjournment
Significance of creating a Welcoming Campus

• Brief audience discussion / report-out:
  • What does a welcoming campus mean to you?
  • Why is it important for colleges and universities to be welcoming?
  • What is one example of how your campus is welcoming to its stakeholders?
Our campus context and interest in this topic

- IUPUI is a large urban-serving research university managed as a core campus of Indiana University that grants both IU and Purdue degrees
- 30,000 students, 8,000 employees, and $1.4B annual operating budget
- Recent national dialogue has brought issues of access, equity, and inclusion to the forefront on many campuses
- Strategic plan, trajectory for growth, and current and forthcoming milestones (for the campus, university, and city)
- IUPUI embraces its role as anchor institution serving a diverse array of stakeholders
Stakeholders we serve

- Current and prospective students, including parents and influencers
- Faculty and staff
- Alumni and retirees
- Community members, neighborhoods, and organizations
- Vendors/suppliers and institutional partners and collaborators
- Visitors, including those to clinics and other campus venues
- University administration, IU Board of Trustees, and other policymakers
Description of IUPUI’s Welcoming Campus Initiative

• New Chancellor made Welcoming Campus a key theme of installation address, leadership philosophy, and strategic priority

• Charged five task forces to examine what is meant by a Welcoming Campus as to offer specific recommendations in these areas:
  • Students
  • Faculty and Staff
  • Alumni and Community Members
  • Cultural Climate and Multicultural Competence
  • Physically Welcoming Campus
Description of IUPUI’s Welcoming Campus Initiative

• Each task force had ‘diagonal slice’ of institutional stakeholders and co-led by a member of the Chancellor’s Cabinet

• Task forces collected data, analyzed existing practices, and identified opportunities from peer and aspirant benchmark institutions and elsewhere for consideration

• Timeline/process, progress check-in opportunities, and emerging recommendations organized around a new thematic framework:
  • Creating a vibrant an inclusive student experience
  • Designing an accessible, inspiring urban campus
  • Investing in faculty and staff
  • Communicating who we are
  • Engaging and integrating with the community
Description of IUPUI’s Welcoming Campus Initiative

- Responsibility for implementation of Welcoming Campus Initiative recommendations
- Monitoring and reporting progress, including building in ways for academic and administrative units to identify their contributions
- Communicating to stakeholders (welcoming.iupui.edu as principal site)
- Scaling and sustaining recommendations
- Engaging campus stakeholders in developing innovative, grassroots-oriented, and collaborative solutions to recommendations
Example recommendations from task forces

• Implementation of service amenities (all gender restrooms; landscaping; wayfinding)

• Alignment of campus activities with community events, including working with local community organizations for cross-promotion

• Integration and communication of academic opportunities for students (e.g., high impact practices; Institute for Engaged Learning)

• Appointments of staff and development of programming to enhance multicultural competence, diversity, and inclusion on campus

• Identification of ways to enhance stakeholder input into decision making (e.g., innovative ways to capture of student voices more consistently)
Welcoming Campus Innovation Fund

- Chancellor announced a $1M Welcoming Campus Innovation Fund to support recommendations from Welcoming Campus Initiative
- Grants of up to $25K provided from central administration cash source
- Purpose and eligibility to submit a proposal
- Matching funds and collaboration requirements
- Evaluation criteria, including connection to IUPUI’s 50th Anniversary
- Proposal review process, prioritization, and funding award determination
Welcoming Campus Innovation Fund

- Orienting the grant awardees
- Awarding the funds and managing the fiscal stewardship
- Preparing awardees to manage the project, including communication elements
- Stressing the importance of project evaluation considerations
- Pursuing and leveraging philanthropic opportunities
- Linking Welcoming Campus and our 50th Anniversary
- Managing the relationships with non-funded proposers / colleagues
Examples/Outcomes

- Exploring history of the IUPUI campus and community through multiple interactive timelines and permanent exhibits

- Interactive experiences with wide-reaching collaborations to strengthen the commitment to diversity & inclusivity initiatives

- Sustainability development and planning for the future of our campus

- Increasing pride in the IUPUI community, school spirit, and individual sense of belonging

- Commitments to community and community service (community partners)

- New mindsets on instructional techniques and programs (math)

- Continued dedication to first and second-year programs with a focus on 4-year and post-graduate planning
Linking this work to other important initiatives

• Campus strategic plan
• Capital Campaign and other fundraising goals and efforts
• IUPUI’s 50th Anniversary (2018-2019)
• Indiana University’s Bicentennial Anniversary (2019-2020)
• City of Indianapolis’ Bicentennial Plan (2020)
• Creating and sustaining a more welcoming culture—beyond the initiative, the fund, and the various anniversaries
  • Fostering collaboration on a more intentional, ongoing, and meaningful manner
  • Developing and implementing competencies for a more unified, welcoming campus
Lessons learned and considerations for adaptation

- The importance of leadership commitment and the ‘tone at the top’
- Engaging stakeholders in analyzing the situation and developing recommendations for creating a welcoming campus context
- Walking the talk through allocating sufficient resources
- Not being overly restrictive in funding approaches
- Encouraging collaborations and how to foster cross-campus innovations
- Accelerated timeline can be both beneficial and challenging
- Some innovative approaches may stretch the limits, policies, and capabilities of the institution (use ‘fund contingent’ category more judiciously to vet proposal feasibility)
- Encouraging ongoing communication and awareness of Welcoming Campus initiative
Action Planning

• Questions to consider in replicating, adapting, and implementing Welcoming Campus Initiatives

  • What are some ways that an approach like the Welcoming Campus Initiative and Innovation Fund might work in your campus context?

  • What are the sources of strength and/or existing initiatives upon which to build?

  • What challenges would you anticipate?

  • Who would need to be involved and why?
Q&A / Wrap-up

• Questions / comments from audience

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• More information about IUPUI’s Welcoming Campus Initiative, including the Innovation Fund, is available here:
  • welcoming.iupui.edu
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