

Getting Involved: Education Beyond the Classroom

Higher Learning Commission

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June 8, 2007

Final Report

The University of Iowa (UI) is preparing for reaccreditation by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association by developing a focused self-study of undergraduate education at UI. One of the five categories of self-study is *Getting Involved: Education Beyond the Classroom*. The *Getting Involved* subcommittee chairs appointed 14 individuals (in seven interview teams; see Appendix A) to conduct interviews with faculty and staff from offices and departments across campus (see Appendix B). Focus group interviews were also conducted with the executive board members of four undergraduate student organizations and the members of an additional multicultural student organization (see Appendix C).

The purpose of this report is three-fold: (1) to examine faculty and staff perceptions of involvement opportunities for undergraduate students at Iowa; (2) to determine what services and opportunities departments and offices provide for student involvement; and (3) to examine undergraduate student perceptions of involvement at Iowa. This report describes the domain and scope of the *Getting Involved* subcommittee, describes and discusses emergent themes of the interviews and focus groups, provides identified areas of strength and areas for improvement, and concludes with recommendations and a list of questions for consideration.

Domain and Scope

We have long known that student involvement outside the class room is beneficial for students. Astin's (1985) extensive work with college students resulted in his "theory of involvement" in which he stated simply, "students learn by becoming involved" (p. 133, as cited in Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). A critical component of Astin's work is not only the role of the individual student, but the environment in which students function. Such an emphasis on the environment would suggest that an institution can be shaped and altered to encourage student

involvement, and indeed, this assumption is supported by research (Strange & Banning, 2001).

While we may not be able to change what Astin defined as inputs (the demographic characteristics, backgrounds, and experiences students bring with them), we can certainly attempt to create an environment that encourages and promotes involvement.

The *Getting Involved* subcommittee was charged with determining what educationally purposeful activities are available for students across campus to foster learning and development. Through interviews with faculty and staff from several campus offices and departments, as well as through student focus groups, the *Getting Involved* subcommittee was able to better understand the types of opportunities available, the objectives of such opportunities, and student perceptions regarding their involvement experiences. A wide variety of involvement experiences exist for students at UI. Such experiences range from student organization involvement to service-learning and volunteerism, to research and employment. As part of the interview process, each faculty or staff interviewee was asked to submit a checklist of involvement opportunities (see Appendix D) provided by their office or department. The results from the checklists are provided in Tables A and B.

Table A: Student Involvement Opportunities at Iowa

Involvement Opportunity	# of Offices/Departments Providing Opportunity (n = 24)
Advisory Board Membership	12
Campus-based service/volunteerism	17
Career/professional networking	15
Community-based service/volunteerism	18
Connecting co-curricular activities with academic course work	17
Connecting or facilitating networking opportunities with alumni	9

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Diversity training/education	14
Event/program/workshop planning and production by students	21
For-credit courses	13
Guest lecturer/speaker/panelist opportunities for students	19
Health and wellness activities/initiatives	6
Internships or practica (for-credit and non)	17
Internships (paid)	11
Leaderships training, education, and development	18
Non-credit topic-based workshops facilitated by non-students	15
Opportunities to interact with people from different cultures	14
Opportunities to represent UI off campus at regional/national meetings	10
Peer educators	16
Peer mentoring	12
Service learning	10
Spiritual exploration and understanding	5
Student employment	21
Student governance	7
Student involvement in presentations, research, and scholarly activity with faculty/staff	13
Student involvement in publication or media development	16
Student involvement on department-wide committees	11
Student involvement on University-wide committees	10
Student organization advising	14
Student organization office space	7
Student organizations	11
Student exhibitions and performances	11
Undergraduate research and/or teaching assistantships	8

Table B: Student Involvement Opportunities by Office/Department

Involvement Opportunity	IMU Marketing & Design	IMU Human Resources	IMU Food Service	Fraternity & Sorority Life Programs	Engineering	Women in Science and Engineering
Advisory board membership				X		X
Campus-based service/volunteerism	X			X		X
Career/professional networking	X				X	X
Community-based service/volunteerism			X	X		X
Connecting co-curricular activities with academic course work	X			X		X
Connecting or facilitating networking opportunities with alumni				X		
Diversity training/education						X
Event/program/workshop planning and production by students	X	X		X		X
For-credit courses				X		
Guest lecturer/speaker/panelist opportunities for students				X	X	X
Health and wellness activities/initiatives						X
Internships or practica (for-credit and non)	X			X		X
Internships (paid)		X	X		X	X
Leaderships training, education, and development		X		X	X	
Leadership opportunities with student organizations				X		X
Non-credit topic-based workshops facilitated by non-students				X		X
Opportunities to interact with people from different cultures				X		X
Opportunities to represent UI off campus at regional/national meetings						
Peer educators		X		X	X	X
Peer mentoring					X	X
Service learning						
Spiritual exploration and understanding						
Student employment	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student governance				X		
Student involvement in presentations, research, and scholarly activity with faculty/staff	X			X	X	
Student involvement in publication or media development	X			X		X
Student involvement on department-wide committees		X		X		
Student involvement on University-wide committees			X	X	X	
Student organization advising			X	X	X	X
Student organization office space				X		X
Student organizations				X		X
Student exhibitions and performances				X		
Undergraduate research and/or teaching assistantships						

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Involvement Opportunity	International Programs	Office of Student Life	Office of Study Abroad	International Students & Scholars	Rape Victim Advocacy Program	University Counseling Service
Advisory board membership	X	X		X	X	
Campus-based service/volunteerism	X	X	X	X	X	
Career/professional networking	X	X	X		X	
Community-based service/volunteerism	X	X		X	X	
Connecting co-curricular activities with academic course work	X	X		X	X	
Connecting or facilitating networking opportunities with alumni	X	X				
Diversity training/education	X	X	X	X	X	X
Event/program/workshop planning and production by students	X	X	X	X	X	
For-credit courses	X	X	X		X	
Guest lecturer/speaker/panelist opportunities for students	X	X	X	X	X	
Health and wellness activities/initiatives		X			X	
Internships or practica (for-credit and non)	X	X	X		X	X
Internships (paid)		X			X	X
Leaderships training, education, and development	X	X	X	X	X	X
Leadership opportunities w/i student organizations	X	X			X	
Non-credit topic-based workshops facilitated by non-students	X	X		X	X	X
Opportunities to interact with people from different cultures	X	X	X	X	X	
Opportunities to represent UI off campus at regional/national meetings		X				
Peer educators	X	X	X	X	X	
Peer mentoring	X		X	X	X	
Service learning			X			
Spiritual exploration and understanding		X			X	
Student employment	X	X	X		X	
Student governance		X		X		
Student involvement in presentations, research, and scholarly activity with faculty/staff	X	X			X	
Student involvement in publication or media development	X	X	X		X	
Student involvement on department-wide committees		X	X		X	
Student involvement on University-wide committees		X		X		
Student organization advising	X	X				
Student organization office space	X	X		X		
Student organizations	X	X		X		
Student exhibitions and performances	X	X	X		X	
Undergraduate research and/or teaching assistantships		X			X	

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Involvement Opportunity	Health Iowa	Student Disability Service	Civic Engagement Program	College of Nursing	Political Science	School of Journalism
Advisory board membership	X	X	X	X		X
Campus-based service/volunteerism		X	X	X		X
Career/professional networking		X		X	X	X
Community-based service/volunteerism	X	X	X	X	X	X
Connecting co-curricular activities with academic course work	X	X	X	X		X
Connecting or facilitating networking opportunities with alumni				X	X	
Diversity training/education		X		X	X	X
Event/program/workshop planning and production by students	X		X	X	X	X
For-credit courses	X			X	X	X
Guest lecturer/speaker/panelist opportunities for students		X	X	X	X	
Health and wellness activities/initiatives	X	X		X		X
Internships or practica (for-credit and non)	X	X		X	X	X
Internships (paid)				X	X	X
Leaderships training, education, and development			X	X	X	X
Leadership opportunities with student organizations		X	X	X	X	X
Non-credit topic-based workshops facilitated by non-students	X	X		X	X	X
Opportunities to interact with people from different cultures		X		X	X	
Opportunities to represent UI off campus at regional/national meetings	X			X		X
Peer educators	X	X		X	X	X
Peer mentoring		X		X	X	
Service learning		X	X	X	X	
Spiritual exploration and understanding				X		
Student employment	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student governance	X	X		X	X	
Student involvement in presentations, research, and scholarly activity with faculty/staff		X		X	X	X
Student involvement in publication or media development	X		X	X	X	X
Student involvement on department-wide committees	X			X	X	X
Student involvement on University-wide committees				X	X	X
Student organization advising	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student organization office space				X		X
Student organizations				X	X	X
Student exhibitions and performances				X	X	
Undergraduate research and/or teaching assistantships					X	X

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Involvement Opportunity	Theatre Arts	Opportunity at Iowa	Department of Leisure Studies	Center for Teaching and Learning	Student Support Services	Museum Studies
Advisory board membership					X	
Campus-based service/volunteerism	X	X	X	X		X
Career/professional networking	X	X	X	X		X
Community-based service/volunteerism	X	X	X	X		X
Connecting co-curricular activities with academic course work	X	X	X	X		X
Connecting or facilitating networking opportunities with alumni	X	X				X
Diversity training/education	X	X		X	X	X
Event/program/workshop planning and production by students	X	X	X	X		X
For-credit courses	X			X	X	X
Guest lecturer/speaker/panelist opportunities for students	X	X	X	X	X	X
Health and wellness activities/initiatives						
Internships or practica (for-credit and non)	X		X		X	X
Internships (paid)	X					
Leaderships training, education, and development		X	X	X	X	X
Leadership opportunities with student organizations		X	X			X
Non-credit topic-based workshops facilitated by non-students		X			X	X
Opportunities to interact with people from different cultures	X	X		X	X	X
Opportunities to represent UI off campus at regional/national meetings		X	X	X	X	X
Peer educators	X	X			X	X
Peer mentoring	X	X			X	
Service learning	X	X	X	X		X
Spiritual exploration and understanding	X	X				
Student employment	X	X			X	X
Student governance						
Student involvement in presentations, research, and scholarly activity with faculty/staff	X	X		X		X
Student involvement in publication or media development	X	X		X		X
Student involvement on department-wide committees	X	X				
Student involvement on University-wide committees		X			X	
Student organization advising		X			X	
Student organization office space		X				
Student organizations	X	X	X			
Student exhibitions and performances	X	X				X
Undergraduate research and/or teaching assistantships	X		X			X

Involvement at Iowa

Involvement opportunities at Iowa exist across the campus in a variety of forms. For some departments and offices (e.g., Office of Student Life, Recreational Services, Residence Life), providing involvement opportunities is the primary mission of the department or office. For other departments or offices, involvement opportunities are secondary, but regardless, involvement opportunities can usually be found. For example, of the 24 offices and departments that returned checklists, 21 provide students with the opportunity to plan programs or events, while another 21 offer opportunities for on-campus student employment. The following section provides an overview of the offices and departments included in the *Getting Involved* interviews and their major functions. In addition, a few student groups and programs have been highlighted in sidebars to provide more detailed examples of how students get involved at UI.

Office of Student Life

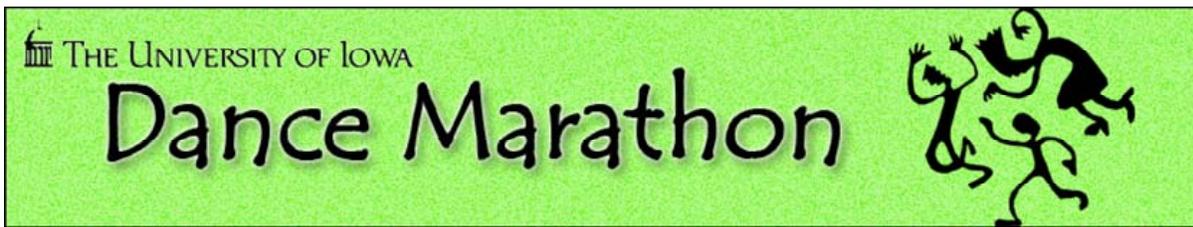
The mission of the Office of Student Life (OSL) is to provide educational, leadership, and social opportunities for the greater University community, with a primary focus on students. Staff work with, through, and for students and student organizations, and in conjunction with other University and community partners, to enhance the holistic development of students and their academic and co-curricular experiences (Criterion 1a, 1b, 1e, 4a). Under the OSL umbrella are varying opportunities.

The OSL is home to the University's comprehensive Student Leadership Development Program (SLDP), which provides institutes, conferences, recognition programs, roundtables, and credit-bearing courses for students. In addition to the SLDP, the OSL staff advises many of the major campus commissions and student organizations (see Table B). In addition to each of the aforementioned groups, the OSL also oversees Fraternity and Sorority Life Programs, Family

Weekend, Welcome Week, Martin Luther King Jr. Human Rights Week, Celebrating Cultural Diversity Festival, Global Retreat, the Student Organization Office Suite and Student Activities Center, and the four campus cultural and resources centers (Afro-American Cultural Center, Asian-Pacific American Cultural Center, Latino and Native American Cultural Center, and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Resource Center) (Criterion 3c, 4a, 4c, 5a, 5b, 5d).

Table B: Commissions and Organizations Advised by the Office of Student Life

Bijou Theatre	A non-profit, student-run cinema screening independent, art house, foreign, and classic films since 1972.
Campus Activities Board	A group that plans a variety of entertainment including comedians, coffeehouse performers, hypnotists, casino nights, etc.
Dance Marathon	A 24-hour student-run event which raises funds for the Children’s Miracle Network and The University of Iowa Children’s Hospital.
Fine Arts Council	A self-supporting, non-profit student organization whose members share an interest in promoting the arts at the University of Iowa
Homecoming	An annual, student-coordinated, week-long event for students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends of The University of Iowa.
KRUI Radio Station	The campus’ student-run radio station.
RiverFest	An annual, student-organized concert festival to conclude the school year.
RiverRun	An annual, student-organized race benefiting Uptown Bill’s Small Mall, a local non-profit.
Student Commission on Programming and Entertainment (SCOPE)	A student group in which the primary function is to bring musical talent to campus.
Student Video Productions	A student group that creates a variety of television programs for broadcast on UITV.
University of Iowa Student Government	The governing body for undergraduate students at Iowa.
University Lecture Committee	A student group that brings major speakers to campus.
10,000 Hours Show	A student organization that sponsors a free concert for every student who volunteers 10 hours or more during the school year.



The University of Iowa Dance Marathon is a student organization that provides year-round support to youth cancer victims and their families. “The Event” is a 24-hour Dance Marathon where students assemble to celebrate the children survivors and remember the children who have passed away throughout the year. Students plan and participate in Family Events, Mini-Dance Marathons, Miracle Games, car washes, silent auctions, and dinners. Additionally, they participate in other University of Iowa sponsored and affiliated activities and events, the majority of which are all philanthropic.

The primary goal of these activities is to raise additional money for children with cancer and to educate the community about the struggles and triumphs of these little warriors. The University of Iowa Dance Marathon has been providing emotional and financial support to children with cancer and their families since 1994. In 2007, Dance Marathon raised an all-time high of \$880,903.13. To date Dance Marathon has raised over **5.5 million dollars**.

Dancers are the backbone of Dance Marathon. Once registered they raise \$425 (or more!) so they can dance at the big event. Dancers are there for the entire marathon – 24 hours – with no sitting down! Each dancer is assigned a Morale Group, through which they meet fellow dancers and get all the information they need to ensure they know what’s going on. The Dance Marathon leadership team is made up of **over 300 individuals** who are each responsible for a specific element of Dance Marathon. Leadership includes all of the executive council, their chairs and committees, as well as Morale Captains and Morale Captain Assistants. In 2007, Dance Marathon also included **over 300 volunteers** and **over 1000 dancers**.

Cultural and Resource Centers

The three historical Cultural Centers and the new Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Resource Center are units of the Office of Student Life and provide a welcoming and permanent setting where students from various cultures can be nurtured and enhanced on the University of Iowa campus. The Centers have become a focal point of cultural enrichment and diversity, academic development, and personal growth. They also create an atmosphere that allows students, faculty, and staff to interact with the Iowa City community in order to establish cultural ties and exchange knowledge.

The major purpose of the Centers is to meet the needs of students through a variety of programs and services. In conjunction with the Office of Student Life, they offer students a wide array of diverse cultural, academic, and personal support services to facilitate their growth, success, and adjustment to the University. Programs and services at the Centers include:

- Liaison with community organizations and services
- Workshops, forums, and discussion groups
- Study and meeting spaces
- Computers
- Libraries and other resource materials
- Employment listings
- Film series, TV lounges, and games
- Party and social areas
- Fully-equipped kitchens
- Wheelchair accessible facilities

There are a variety of cultural celebrations and programs sponsored by the Centers. Staff also develop and implement new programs in response to student interests. Students have an opportunity to develop leadership skills through participation with program planning and evaluation committees. The Centers are staffed by a graduate student and several college work-study students. Each year, the four centers **serve over 700 students and community members.**



The 10,000 Hours Show was founded by University of Iowa students in the fall of 2002. These students and an ever-growing group of peers launched and developed the program as volunteers. 10K was originally incubated and managed through Iowa City community-building nonprofit The James Gang. The United Way of Johnson County was the project's first non-campus endorser and in later years helped develop 10K within the United Way system.

10K is a year-round effort to engage young people in volunteer service that culminates in a free concert for which the only admission is 10 or more volunteer hours to local nonprofits. The "Show" of The 10,000 Hours Show is 10K volunteer staff reaching out to their peers and making sure they are asked to get involved in their community through volunteering. In class presentations and one-on-one conversations, at residence halls and Greek houses, and out in the community, the Show recruits new volunteers and recognizes existing ones, showcasing tens of thousands of volunteer hours in the community.

Impacting the community and driven by young people, 10K is a powerful community building effort, and at the same time it is a vibrant learning experience. It is produced locally through a partnership between local campuses and United Ways to advise and support young 10K organizers.

The mission of The 10,000 Hours Shows nationally is to mobilize young people to meet immediate community needs and recognize those who do, helping develop the next generation of active community leaders. Since the inception of 10K in 2002, **over 82,739 hours** have been volunteered students.

Recreational Services

The University of Iowa Division of Recreational Services serves the recreation needs of the University Community. Several programs exist to help students incorporate exercise into their daily routine and to help students connect socially with their peers. Programs offered by Recreational Services are listed in Table C.

Table C: Recreational Services Programs

Fitness & Wellness	Three campus fitness centers which include tennis courts, racquetball courts, squash courts, basketball/volleyball courts, badminton courts, a climbing wall, multipurpose activity rooms, a 50-yard swimming pool, a jogging track, cardiovascular equipment, weight equipment, and group exercise programs
Intramurals	Men's, women's, and co-rec programs in 30 different sports
Lesson Programs	Non-credit course offerings including rowing, master swimming, tennis, and martial arts
Macbride Nature Recreation Area	A 485-acre recreation area that provides opportunities for camping, hiking, picnicking, cross-country skiing, canoeing, sailing, archery, and visits to the Raptor Center (a raptor education and rehabilitation center)
Sport Clubs	Sport clubs are formed so participants in each sport club can learn new skills, improve existing skills, potentially engage in competition, and enjoy recreational and social fellowship. Iowa currently recognizes 33 sport clubs
Touch the Earth	A variety of backpacking, canoeing, bicycling, kayaking, and cross-country skiing trips designed to give students a chance to participate and explore their interest in outdoor recreation

University Housing

University Housing complements the academic mission of The University of Iowa by providing clean, safe, and healthy housing and dining programs designed to meet the diverse developmental and educational needs of students living in a multicultural community (Criterion 1a, 1b, 1c). Within University Housing is the Office of Residence Life, which attends to the growth and well being of student residents through a combination of programs, direct staff interaction, and policy administration. Services provided by the Office of Residence Life are intentionally designed to foster the academic, social, cultural and personal growth of residents. The Office is dedicated to the preparation of leaders and involved citizens in a safe and inclusive residential community. Involvement opportunities offered by the Office of Residence Life are listed in Table D.

Table D: Office of Residence Life Programs

Associated Residence Halls (ARH) and Hall Governments	ARH is the overall governing body for the 10 residence halls on campus to which each of the 9 individual hall governments report
Earthwords	Student-run publication featuring student prose, poetry, and original artwork
Educational and Social Programming	A variety of programs for individual floors, halls, or the entire residence life community
Night Games	A monthly, late night recreational alternative held at the Fieldhouse
Welcome Week	Residence Life is a co-sponsor of the University's Welcome Week

University Housing also provides a number of opportunities for student employment. Each year, University Housing hires over 120 students to fill resident assistant positions. In addition, students fill positions as desk clerks, computer lab monitors, fitness center monitors, and food service workers.

In addition to the three aforementioned major hubs of student involvement, several other offices and academic departments on campus offer a variety of opportunities for students to engage in educationally purposeful activities. For the purposes of this self-study, the *Getting Involved* subcommittee also interviewed representatives from the following offices or departments (Table E):

Table E: Offices and Departments Interviewed by the *Getting Involved* Subcommittee

Alumni Association	Serves as the gateway for alumni to build strong relationships with one another, with the University, and with the Alumni Association. Is home to one of the largest student groups on campus, Students Today, Alumni Tomorrow (STAT)
Center for Teaching	Promotes and supports efforts to enhance instruction at The University of Iowa. In pursuit of this mission, the Center has established four overlapping goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports and promotes the development of teaching skills. • Strengthens the culture of teaching. • Serves as a symbol of the University's commitment to teaching. • Influences policy discussions in ways that support the development of an excellent teaching and learning environment
Civic Engagement Program	Strengthens students' learning opportunities by linking the University's teaching, research and service mission to meeting needs in Iowa's communities through community service. The Civic Engagement Program is a collaborative initiative between the Vice President for Student Services and the Provost. It is our intent that our work be mutually beneficial to the campus and larger community. We celebrate the commitment and strengths our students bring to the campus and community by enhancing and encouraging their life-long commitment to active citizenship. The Civic Engagement Program maintains an online "Volunteer Link" in which students can locate available volunteer opportunities in the community.
College of Education	Embracing the ideals of democracy, diversity, and an open society as its most fundamental principles, the College of Education seeks to provide Iowa, the nation, and the world with thoroughly informed scholarship and creative endeavors dedicated to the enrichment of education as both a profession and as a broad field of inquiry.

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College of Engineering	The College of Engineering serves the state, the nation, and the world by producing talented, broadly educated engineers, conducting high quality research, developing breakthrough technologies, and disseminating and preserving technical knowledge.
College of Nursing	The mission of the College of Nursing is to prepare the next generation of nursing leaders and to be a leader in the discovery, dissemination and application of nursing knowledge. As the only state supported higher degree program in nursing, the College has a mandate to supply the next generation of nurses for the state of Iowa. As one of eleven colleges in a Research Extensive university, the College of Nursing has a responsibility to support its research mission through national leadership in both innovative educational programs and generation of new knowledge.
Department of Health and Sports Studies	The Department of Health and Sport Studies offers leading-edge programs of study at the undergraduate and graduate level that focus on health, sport, and physical activity as they are influenced by cultural, psychological, and behavioral factors. Our graduates go on to careers in teaching, research, coaching, health promotion, and athletic administration.
Department of Political Science	The Department of Political Science at The University of Iowa is a leader in the discipline, in the state of Iowa and within the university community. Its faculty include distinguished scholars in all the main fields of Political Science, and its course offerings are correspondingly broad. Whether the topic is Iowa politics, the U.S. government, the governments of myriad foreign countries or the international system, Iowa students have access to acknowledged experts in their field. These scholars are frequently called upon to interpret political developments for the media, to address community groups and to advise government bodies.
Equal Opportunity and Diversity	Strives to foster a welcoming and collaborative university climate where individual ideas, contributions, and goals are acknowledged, respected, and valued. The Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity supports the University's aspiration to become one of the ten most distinguished public universities in the country by providing all members of the community with (1) expert advice, education, and services which ensure the University's compliance with all applicable federal, state, and University equal opportunity, affirmative action, nondiscrimination, and civil rights laws, regulations, and policies; and (2) leadership and resources that support the University's goal to increase the diversity of all University faculty, staff and students
Hancher Auditorium	Hancher is the performing arts center of the University and a leading presenter of performing arts in the upper Midwest region of the United States. The mission of the auditorium is to present the finest of the world's performing arts to the students, faculty and staff of the university and the people of Iowa. Commissioning of new and innovative works of art is central to Hancher's mission. Hancher provides educational programs to enhance aesthetic development for pre-school, K-12 students, University of Iowa students and community people through its arts education program.
Health Iowa	The educational branch of the Student Health Service which provides programs and services designed to assist students in developing and maintaining healthier lifestyles. Programs and services are designed to heighten awareness, increase knowledge, impact norms and attitudes, and educate students about appropriate resources.
Honors Program	The University Honors Program gives students and faculty opportunities to play with ideas and styles, testing them against each other and personal experiences. The UHP taps Iowa's special strengths in communication and invention to hone student skills. It helps students pursue further honors work in the advanced fields of study and practice that distinguish the University of Iowa as one of America's best public institutions for research and instruction. Then it helps gain recognition for student achievements in Iowa and beyond.
International Programs	Provides a rich array of international, academic and cultural opportunities for students and for citizens throughout the state with the purpose of internationalizing the undergraduate, graduate and professional curricula at the University; promoting international scholarship and educational exchange; enhancing the Iowa experience for international students and scholars; furthering international knowledge and activities across the state; and, helping create a community and society responsive to the increasingly international needs and obligations of citizenship.
Iowa Memorial Union Food Services	The main food service provider on campus and a major source of student employment.
Iowa Memorial Union Human Resources	Provide human resources support to IMU departments/organizations which includes recruitment, employment, payroll, compensation and classification, employee relations and training.
Iowa Memorial Union Marketing & Design	The IMU's internal department that produces promotional materials for IMU entities. Marketing & Design provides student internships and student employment for several students each year.

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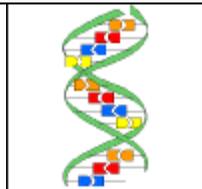
Leisure Studies Program	A program within the Division of Interdisciplinary Programs, the undergraduate program in Leisure Studies confers a degree with emphasis in Therapeutic Recreation. The graduate program in Leisure Studies confers a MA with emphasis in either Therapeutic Recreation or Leisure and Recreational Sport Management.
Museum Studies Program	Courses offered by the Museum Studies Program provide an introduction to fundamental museological subjects, including background in the history, organization, function, and management of museums as well as experience in exhibition planning and design, collection management, and education outreach development.
Office of Admissions Visitors Center	UI's gateway for incoming students and their families and home to Students To Assist Recruitment (STAR), a student group of current undergraduates who assist the admissions staff in the recruitment of prospective high school, transfer, and non-traditional students to the University.
Orientation Services	Provider of UI Orientation, a required program for all incoming students in which students register for the first semester of courses, meet their academic advisor, and learn about campus resources. Orientation Services hires over 30 students each year as orientation staff members.
Office of Student Financial Aid	The primary mission of the University of Iowa Office of Student Financial Aid (UI OSFA) is to provide access, to help enroll a quality and culturally diverse student body, to support continued enrollment, and to facilitate timely graduation rates.
Office of Study Abroad	A component of International Programs that coordinates and oversees the student study abroad experience.
Rape Victim Advocacy Program	The Rape Victim Advocacy Program (RVAP) is a sexual assault crisis center based in Iowa City, Iowa. RVAP provides crisis line support, counseling, advocacy, and education services to the citizens of several counties in Iowa.
School of Journalism and Mass Communication	The mission of our School is to educate journalism and mass communication professionals, scholars, and faculty. Through professional and creative research activities, they enhance a continually growing and evolving understanding of the social and cultural roles, responsibilities, and contexts for communicators in a democratic society, as well as in diverse global contexts.
Student Disability Services	Facilitates academic accommodations and services for students with disabilities so that these students have equal access to University programs and activities, and can participate fully in all aspects of University life.
Student Publications	Student produced paper serving all of the University of Iowa community.
Student Services	The Division of Student Services prepares students for their responsibilities as enlightened and engaged global citizens.
Support Service Programs	Promotes educational opportunities for underserved students from diverse backgrounds to increase their skills to achieve academic excellence at The University of Iowa and a life-long commitment to independent learning. Through the Educational Opportunity Programs, the Office serves as a resource to the University community, its various student populations, and their respective communities on interests, issues, and concerns related to their educational experiences.
University Counseling Service	A unit within Student Services that is the main mental health agent providing individual, group, and couples counseling for UI students.
University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics Volunteer Program	Each year, more than 1,200 very special people donate their time, efforts, and talents to help improve the experiences of our patients and their families. These dedicated people provide the foundation for the success of Volunteer Services at UI Hospitals and Clinics. The Volunteer Services mission is two-fold: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide service • To provide funding that benefits our patients, families, and visitors
Women in Science and Engineering	The mission of the Women in Science and Engineering Program is to expand and improve educational and professional opportunities for women in all fields of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) by facilitating individual, institutional and social change.



International Programs provides a rich array of international, academic and cultural opportunities for our students and for citizens throughout the state. Our faculty teaches over 250 courses that focus on international and global issues in all of the 11 colleges of the University. Each year **more than 800 UI students study abroad in over 40 countries**. Almost **2,300 international students and scholars representing more than 100 nations annually come to the University of Iowa to study**. The University of Iowa also has international research and training agreements with over 100 universities and research institutes worldwide.

The mission of International Programs is to internationalize the undergraduate, graduate and professional curricula at the University; promote international scholarship and educational exchange; enhance the Iowa experience for international students and scholars; further international knowledge and activities across the state; and, help create a community and society responsive to the increasingly international needs and obligations of citizenship.

The quality of American life in the twenty-first century will depend on the ability of U.S. citizens to compete in an international economy and the ability of the United States to address global issues. It is the responsibility of International Programs to ensure that the University of Iowa provides faculty, students, and citizens throughout the state with the tools needed to confront these challenges and actively participate in the global community. Whether one might wish to attend a lecture or workshop led by a world-famous author, learn a foreign language, study abroad, become friends with someone from another culture, enroll in an area studies program, or undertake research abroad, International Programs is the campus connection to the global community.



The University of Iowa Women in Science & Engineering

The mission of the Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) Program is to expand and improve educational and professional opportunities for women in all fields of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) by facilitating individual, institutional and social change. WISE offers several opportunities for student involvement including peer mentoring, the WISE Learning Community, and WISE Ambassadors.

First-year students can receive both academic and social support in the mentoring program by participating in various workshops and small-group meetings that take place the entire academic year. Each first-year student is matched with a junior or senior in a similar major. The mentors might help their proteges with choosing classes, preparing for finals, locating apartments, or even finding their way around Iowa City. The peer mentoring program is a fun and rewarding way for first-year students to make friends, get connected to resources, and become a part of the university and community.

The WISE Learning Community (LC), made up of first and second-year women with majors in a wide array of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) disciplines, assures a living space with a built in support system with a community of fun, active, and involved students who share interests in the sciences and the desire to excel. As part of the WISE Learning Community students have the opportunity to:

- Sign up for courses in common (WISE women may register for special discussion sections)
- Participate in study groups, peer tutoring, and advising sessions
- Attend presentations on research opportunities, career exploration, and much more

The WISE Ambassadors, a community of grad and undergrad women studying science, technology, engineering, and math, come together for fun, food, exploration, and service. As a group, students are provided with a budget (\$1,000) as well as with support from WISE office staff and equipment. Possible activities include:

- Serving as tutors for math, science, and reading at local public schools (K-8)
- Planning activities with the Girl Scouts of the Mississippi Valley.
- Overnight visits to regional science and engineering companies

Research Methods

Given the purpose of this study, the overall research approach was based on qualitative research methods that included structured interview protocols for faculty and staff, and semi-structured interview and focus group (Fontana & Frey, 1994) protocols for students. A checklist of student involvement opportunities was also used for each faculty or staff interview in which each interviewee selected all items their office or department offered as involvement opportunities. Space was available on the checklist for faculty or staff to write in opportunities not represented on the checklist.

Faculty and Staff Interviews

Seven teams of two members each attempted to conduct 40 structured interviews with faculty and staff representing various offices and departments on campus. Individuals were identified by the *Getting Involved* subcommittee and issued a letter of invitation to participate (see Appendix E). Each interview team received a set of structured questions (see Appendix F) developed by the *Getting Involved* subcommittee chairs, as well as a checklist of possible involvement opportunities. Thirty-four of the 40 scheduled interviews were conducted with interview notes submitted to the *Getting Involved* subcommittee chairs. Each interview team was also asked to submit a list of emergent themes from their interviews. Emergent themes were received from six of the seven interview teams. Twenty-three of the 40 checklists were returned.

One subcommittee chair read through all interview notes and emergent themes submitted by the interview teams. On the second and third times reading through, the subcommittee chair highlighted issues that were emphasized by several offices and departments. From the highlighted issues, the subcommittee chair developed a list of concise themes and returned to the data to find specific supporting examples to highlight the theme. Each theme and its supporting

examples were then read, discussed, and modified by the additional subcommittee chairs and the advanced practicum student. Checklist responses were tallied by the advanced practicum student and compiled onto one master checklist, which was then converted into the involvement matrix in Table B.

Student Focus Groups and Interviews

Students from five organized student groups were issued a letter of invitation to participate in the focus groups (see Appendix G). Three undergraduate focus groups were conducted by either a *Getting Involved* subcommittee chair or the advanced practicum student working with the subcommittee chairs. A focus group protocol was developed (see Appendix H), but facilitators also asked follow-up questions based on participant responses. Focus groups included the University of Iowa Student Government executive board, the Interfraternity and Panhellenic Council executive boards (one focus group), the National Pan-Hellenic Council, and the Associated Residence Hall executive board. Office of Student Life staff members generated a list of students of color who all received an invitation to attend a multicultural focus group, but no students attended. Therefore, the only voices from students of color represented in these findings are from members of the National Pan-Hellenic Council, one student from UISG, and one student from ARH. For the remainder of this report “students of color” will refer to the National Pan-Hellenic Council students who participated in the focus group, as the comments reported are only representative of this group, and not necessarily the two students from UISG and ARH.

Students who agreed to participate in the focus group interviews ranged from freshmen to seniors and included 15 males and 15 females. Six students of color participated in the NPHC focus group. These groups were selected for because of the range of ages and genders of

members, as well as for the perceived likelihood that they would participate. In addition, these groups are some of the most active groups on UI's campus, with members who are some of the most active on campus. Though these students were representing their "group" at the time of their focus group, the questions elicited information about general involvement at UI, and most of these students were involved in multiple groups or involvement opportunities. Selecting such involved students improved the likelihood that participants would be familiar with institutional opportunities, policies, and procedures, and could therefore respond best to the questions asked. Notes were taken at each focus group and analyzed by one of the *Getting Involved* subcommittee chairs and the advanced practicum student.

Two individual interviews were conducted with "uninvolved" students. Snowball sampling (Dobbert, 1982; Krathwohl, 1998) was used by asking involved students whom the advanced practicum student knew well to identify their uninvolved peers. The advanced practicum student received about a dozen names, and the identified students were then contacted via email and invited to participate in a 30 minute interview with the advanced practicum student. Two students, a female senior and a fifth-year male responded and participated in an interview. A third interview was scheduled with a female freshman, but she did not show up for the scheduled interview time. Due to time constraints, the interview was not rescheduled. An interview protocol was developed for the interviews (see Appendix I), but follow-up questions were also asked based on participant responses.

Once all focus groups and interviews were complete, the advanced practicum student read through all focus group and interview notes. On the second and third times reading through, the advanced practicum student highlighted issues that were emphasized by three or four of the four focus groups. From the highlighted issues, the advanced practicum student developed a list

of concise themes and returned to the data to find specific supporting examples to highlight the theme. Each theme and its supporting examples were then read, discussed, and modified by the subcommittee chairs.

Limitations of Student Focus Groups and Individual Interviews

Some limitations of the student focus groups and individual interviews should be noted. First, the number of participants was relatively small (n=30) and primarily represented students from large, active, well-funded student groups. The involvement experiences of students from small, inactive, or poorly-funded student groups may be different than those of the participants, and the experiences of 30 students may not be representative of the rest of the involved student population. In addition, only six students of color from one student organization were represented (not including the students from UISG and ARH), thus limiting the generalizability of the results to other students of color at UI. However, as mentioned earlier, several of the participants are also involved in campus organizations other than those organizations which they were representing, which may help address this concern. In addition, many of the comments made by students were supported by the data from the RISE Report, a study with more stringent sampling. The two individual interviews conducted were likely not representative of the entire uninvolved student population, and therefore generalizability is not possible. Though the interview sample was not nearly large enough to generalize results, the information provided was used to supplement existing data from faculty and staff interviews and focus groups.

Emergent Themes

Several themes emerged from both the interviews and the focus groups. The following is organized according to (1) emergent themes from faculty and staff interviews and (2) emergent themes from student focus groups. Individual responses have been included to highlight and illustrate the themes.

Faculty and Staff Emergent Themes

(1) STUDENT ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES AT UI PROVIDE PSYCHOLOGICAL, PRACTICAL, VOCATIONAL, AND FINANCIAL BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS.

Interviewees commented on several benefits students receive as participants in involvement activities. Many units stated that through engagement activities students increased their assertiveness, and developed skills in time management, team work, planning, and problem solving. Cary Covington in Political Science explained that internships, research opportunities with faculty, and off-campus study opportunities in Washington, D.C. “encourage a mindset of engagement rather than cynicism about politics.” In addition, such opportunities bring the academic experience to life in a practical setting. Representatives from International Education stated that Study Abroad experiences had the potential to profoundly alter an undergraduate’s view of the world and their place in it, thus creating a transformative or life-changing experience for students. A number of academic and service units (e.g., Recreation Services, IMU Food Services, and Sports Studies) stated that their student’s experiences have led directly to employment in their fields. Cindy Seyfer (Office of Student Financial Aid) summarized the benefits of student employment in this statement:

Student employment helps to bring reality to the classroom perspective and allows students to develop a network and professional work habits they will need in the future.

Student employment allows students to “try on” different careers to determine a best-fit for their future.

In addition, student employment serves the very practical purpose of helping students pay their bills. Students in the focus groups and individual interviews noted that they or their peers are not able to get involved because they must work to finance their education. Student employment, whether through internships or on-campus experiences, help both purposes – getting students involved and helping to pay for their education.

(2) WHILE EXTENSIVE OPPORTUNITIES EXIST FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT, MANY STUDENTS AT THE UI DO NOT PARTICIPATE. OTHER STUDENTS BECOME OVERINVOLVED, TO THE DETRIMENT OF THEIR STUDIES.

The RISE Report concluded that “engagement in educationally-purposeful activities and experiences is not widely distributed across the student body, nor evenly distributed across students’ time at UI.” Specific statistics from the RISE Report indicated that 88% of first-year students and 83% of seniors spend 0-5 hours per week on co-curricular activities (i.e., “student organizations or government, campus publications, art or music, etc.”) and almost all – 94% of first-year students and 91% of seniors – spend 0-5 hours per week in community service or volunteer activities not related to class. Though a number of opportunities are provided for students, some of which seem to have remarkable numbers of students participating (e.g., Dance Marathon, 10,000 Hours Show), most UI students do not seem to be taking advantage of these opportunities, at least on a regular and sustained basis. The RISE Report data, however, may also be misleading. The response choice of “0-5 hours per week” of involvement or service does not discriminate between those students who actually do not do anything and those who might be involved four or five hours each week.

Findings from the interviews, however, seemed to substantiate the conclusions of the RISE Report related to a less than involved student population. Interviewees reported that a small group of students are heavily involved in extra-curricular activities, often for great gain, but sometimes to their detriment. One example provided was students who have worked for the *Daily Iowan* and have become so involved that their academic work has suffered. The RISE Report also indicated that intense involvement of a relatively small group makes it difficult to estimate overall involvement of the student body in these activities. Some of the student activists involved in the Rise Study reported seeing the same people at meetings of leaders of various campus organizations, which may confirm the low levels of student involvement at UI.

In contrast to the faculty and staff interviews, some students in the focus groups commented that their involvement has helped them academically because they are better able to manage their time. Because their free time is limited, they learn to budget time to get their homework done. They do not have the luxury of procrastinating like their uninvolved peers.

(3) OFFICES AND DEPARTMENTS ARE LOOKING FOR MORE CREATIVE WAYS TO PUBLICIZE/MARKET THEIR ACTIVITIES AND WANT TO FIND “FRESH APPROACHES TO TAP INTO STUDENT ENERGY” BECAUSE KEY INFORMATION MAY NOT BE REACHING ALL STUDENTS.

Many of the activities described by interviewees to publicize their activities were major one-day events – very useful for those attending, but missing many students. There are a number of these significant major events (Dance Marathon, Explore Engineering Day, 10,000 Hours Show, MLK Events, Cultural Diversity Festival, Job Fair), some of which are fairly successful at drawing large numbers of participants. According to Cindy Seyfer (Office of Student Financial Aid), “About 2,000 students attend the Job Fair to see what is available to them; it is very useful for freshmen.” Toni Clow (College of Nursing) commenting on the impact

of the Dance Marathon on its participants, stated that (participation) “comes out of intense concern for children’s health needs and meaning may be beyond defining.”

Yet interviewees recognized that there are many students their programs do not reach and discussed the need to find more creative ways to market to and reach students. Some of the marketing tactics mentioned included Facebook, mass emails, websites, pizza box flyers, Cambus ads, and *Daily Iowan* ads. Findings from the focus groups supported staff and faculty concern that not all students receive information. For example, one student commented that students off-campus do not always get information about what is going on around campus. The lack of access to information may explain student claims in the RISE Report that “there is nothing to do here but drink.”

(4) SOME OFFICES AND DEPARTMENTS HELP POSITION STUDENTS SO THAT THEY CAN BECOME INVOLVED.

The Counseling Center, Disabilities Services, Office of Student Financial Aid, Student Services, and Health Iowa provide undergraduates with the help they need (physically, psychologically, financially, and medically) to fully engage in undergraduate academic and social activities. Sam Cochran, University Counseling Service, stated that one of his organization’s goals is to “try to help underserved students succeed here....” The Advantage Iowa Program in the Office of Student Financial Aid is another example of a program specifically designed to retain and graduate students – in this case, students of color. By providing students support in these areas of their life, it allows students to focus on other aspects of their college experience, such as getting involved.

(5) EFFORTS TO DESCRIBE DESIRED OUTCOMES OF SERVICES AND PROGRAMS AND EVALUATE THEIR IMPACT ARE UNEVEN ACROSS OFFICES AND DEPARTMENTS.

When asked to articulate learning outcomes of services and programs, many interviewees stated outcomes such as “making the student experience as positive as possible,” “providing social opportunities,” or “providing social support.” While important goals, none of these speak to how the student will be different as a result of participating in that office’s or department’s initiatives or programs. In essence, there was no articulation of what students are actually *learning* as a result of their involvement. In addition, many departments seemed to know how students benefit from their programs and services, yet many offices and departments do not engage in consistent assessment and inquiry to have the evidence that supports how they know students are benefiting. Without clear learning outcomes or ways to assess those outcomes, departments and offices cannot know how their services and programs are benefiting students.

Some evaluation efforts do exist to inform practice, particularly those that are components of academic course work. Many of the individuals interviewed said that they solely relied on anecdotal evidence to judge the effectiveness of their activities. Some units, like Orientation Services, reported extensive evaluation activities throughout each academic term, but many others expressed the need to develop evaluation methods – ways to “plot a student’s progress from the beginning of the term until the end.” A response from Mary Mathew Wilson from the Civic Engagement Program captured the flavor of several responses on the effectiveness of their current assessment efforts:

We need to devise methods for collecting concrete data; it is not a hit or miss undertaking due to lack of [a] plan for this aspect of our program and the inherent difficulty of tracking this kind of data.

(6) DIVERSITY EFFORTS SEEM TO BE UNEVEN, OR AT LEAST UNEVENLY EMPHASIZED. THEY ARE CLEARLY CENTRAL TO THE WORK OF MANY UNITS.

Theatre Arts, the Office of Student Financial Aid, Opportunity at Iowa, the Office of Admissions, Student Support Services, the University Counseling Center, and Nursing specifically explained their efforts to recruit and work with minority students. The Darwin Turner Action Theater, for example, “creates works focused on diversity issues of social justice” which they take on tour “to schools and communities all over the state.” Bill Casey’s (Student Publications) program in journalism specifically recruits minority students from Chicago. Cindy Seyfer (Office of Student Financial Aid) described the new Advantage Iowa program that “focuses on retention and graduation rates for students of color.” Patty Rossmann (Health and Sports Studies) states that diversity training is part of their mission. Diana Davies (International Programs) stated that study abroad experiences can create “global citizens – people who are able to appreciate cultural differences. . . and are better able to communicate with others.” Sam Cochran (University Counseling Service) stated that his programs respect differences, diversity and inclusion – his office tries to help underserved students succeed and tries to make UCS “an open door, [a] welcoming place for all students.” The Office of Admissions representatives stated that they work on all aspects of diversity within the UI strategic plan through student volunteers and student staff. A main goal of Opportunity at Iowa is to “build community among students of color at Iowa” to reach their objectives of social support and academic success. According to Sheila Vedder (Student Support Service Programs) “Our mission is to promote diversity of opinion [and] to promote diversity in life experiences.”

Though a number of offices and departments report focusing on issues of diversity in programming, services, and recruitment, students of color who participated in the focus group did not seem to feel the impact of these efforts. Students commented on feeling deceived by the institution, as the institution is promoted as a diverse place, but students do not see that diversity

when they arrive. Students in the focus group also commented that they became involved in order to create change on campus and create their own opportunities because they did not find the type of support and social interaction they needed or desired.

(7) IN GENERAL, ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES DO NOT SEEM TO BE WELL COORDINATED AMONG THE VARIOUS UNITS.

While many units are involved in providing engagement opportunities for students, there does not seem to be much sharing of experience. Jennifer Hemmingsen (School of Journalism) commented:

There needs to be more college- and university-level coordination, collaboration, and training to facilitate such opportunities. Right now, programs are working in silos – maybe a dozen departments and programs use peer mentoring, for example, but there is no efficient way for them to share ideas and help each other out. There’s no one place (e.g., Web page) for advisors or students who want to get involved with such programs to go and find out what’s available.

Such comments by the interviewees corroborate the RISE Report findings that

UI offers many opportunities for student engagement and success, but it is up to the individual student to find those opportunities, and create a positive experience, for herself. First-year students and seniors described as “challenging,” however, the processes of finding the opportunities and resources one needs to craft a successful and engaging college experience. (p. 46)

(8) VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES IN SOME DEPARTMENTS ARE DIRECTLY TIED TO THE ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

In Leisure Studies, for example, students are “saturated with opportunities for volunteer experiences; much of it is mandatory, or tied directly to class work, so there is no problem

promoting the opportunities and securing student involvement.” Another example was found in the College of Education where, before entering the Teacher Certification Program, students must volunteer for ten hours in schools.

Student Emergent Themes

(1) UNIVERSITY OF IOWA STUDENTS GET INVOLVED TO MAKE THE LARGE CAMPUS SMALL AND TO CONNECT WITH OTHER STUDENTS.

Above all else, students commented that they choose to get involved at Iowa to “make Iowa smaller.” Students view their involvement opportunities as ways to meet and connect with other individuals, often times individuals who are similar to themselves. One student commented, “If you don’t join, you don’t develop relationships with people. [Involvement] shrinks your community so you can get to know people.” Another student commented that getting involved is, “a great way to network and meet new people. I wasn’t good at branching out before.” The sheer size of UI seemed to make students feel lost and overwhelmed before they got involved, which created a more human-scale environment.

(2) UI STUDENTS GET INVOLVED TO RELIEVE BOREDOM

Many students also commented on the need to relieve boredom. Students described themselves as very busy high schoolers with a need to continue that involvement at Iowa in order to keep themselves from getting bored. One student said, “I was involved in high school and would be bored if I didn’t do anything in college.” Another said, “I was involved in high school and enjoyed it. Classes weren’t enough by the first day.” The students’ feelings of boredom may corroborate the RISE Report findings that indicate students expect to have more to do when they get here. The students who participated in the focus groups represent the students who actively seek out opportunities to fill the void and relieve the boredom.

(3) UI STUDENTS GET INVOLVED TO CREATE CHANGE ON CAMPUS.

Several students described a need to help create change on campus. While this was a theme across all focus groups, students of color who participated in the NPHC focus group felt a particularly strong urge to get involved for this reason, commenting that “there are not a lot of activities for students of color” and that they “didn’t see active opportunities for diversity” on campus. Students from other focus groups commented on the need to “change the way things have been done” and to “leave your mark” as reasons for choosing to get involved. Another student said he “wasn’t happy with the way some things were run and wanted to do a better job.”

(4) INVOLVEMENT PROVIDES STUDENTS WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENHANCE THEIR RESUME.

Students also recognized the need to build their resumes and see the ability to do so through campus involvement. One student commented, “Doing well in school isn’t good enough anymore. You won’t get scholarships or jobs without activities or some kind of internship – something outside of schoolwork.” Another student commented, “I’ve been told that I need to fill up my resume and I need to get involved. I need to meet new people and get my name out there.” A third student said she got involved to, “gain professional experiences and gain experience that will look very good on the resume.” Students were cognizant that employers seem to be looking for more than just a good grade point average.

(5) WORD-OF-MOUTH AND PEER INFLUENCE ARE CRITICAL FOR INFORMING STUDENTS ABOUT INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES AT IOWA.

Far beyond anything else mentioned, students commented that they got involved because they heard about an opportunity or were encouraged by a peer. Peers were described as friends, resident assistants, older students who saw potential in them as younger students, and students who made announcements in lectures. Role modeling (seeing someone be involved) was a powerful influence for many of these students (which is supported by Bandura’s work on social

learning theory). One student commented, “There is exposure to so many opportunities, students don’t know what to choose. You need a contact to point you in the right direction.” Another student commented, “There aren’t that many individuals at Iowa,” meaning that students rarely do their “own” thing.

A few students also mentioned opportunities like Welcome Week, the Student Organization Fair, the OSL website, and Orientation as other ways of learning about involvement at Iowa, but these forums were mentioned far less than word-of-mouth and peer influence.

(6) STUDENT INVOLVEMENT AT IOWA IS HINDERED BY LITTLE SENSE OF COMMUNITY, LACK OF ADEQUATE RESOURCES FOR STUDENT GROUPS, INSTITUTIONAL “RED TAPE,” AND EMAIL.

Several students referenced not feeling a sense of community at Iowa. One student commented, “Iowa lacks a sense of community outside of football and basketball.” Another student commented that the biggest problem Iowa has is that there are no traditions to bring students together and create that shared purpose. Several students felt that their organizations or initiatives sponsored by their organizations were not supported by other students or other student organizations. A lack of community was particularly salient for students of color who felt very little support from the University or the Iowa City community because of the small diverse population. In particular, students of color were frustrated with the lack of non-bar, cost-free venues for late night social events. The students referenced earlier days when the Afro House (one of four campus cultural centers) was a hub of activity that hosted events into all hours of the night, but that the Afro House no longer serves as that sort of social venue.

Several groups also commented on the lack of resources available to student organizations, particularly smaller groups. The members of one of the smaller groups

represented felt like they were being overlooked for funding, while larger groups recognized this disparity but did not know how to remedy the problem.

Students described the “red tape” at the University that made it difficult to accomplish goals of their student organizations. One student commented, “The University puts plenty of red tape around student organizations. University policy obstructs many student organization goals. Some University policies are meant for the worst case; however, they are applied to all organizations all the time. The process of going through the process is difficult.” Another student said, “There are rules you don’t know about, especially with fundraising. We need something in place so all the student organizations know how to do it. Your experience is more positive and less stressful when you know how to do stuff out of the gate, and you’re more likely to continue if you have a positive experience.”

Three of the four groups also mentioned email as a hindrance. While some found mass email helpful at times, many students described the one email per semester policy as limiting. Ironically, students also described how too many mass emails become overwhelming and students just delete them without reading.

(7) CO-CURRICULAR EXPERIENCES HELP STUDENTS LEARN A NUMBER OF PRACTICAL SKILLS. STUDENTS OF COLOR ALSO LEARN “SURVIVAL” SKILLS.

Students were very aware of what they had learned and gained from their involvement opportunities. Students mentioned a number of different practical skills, but those that were mentioned most often included confronting peers or managing conflict, learning to communicate better, learning to manage their time, understanding their personal limits and when to say no, and navigating between different roles in different settings.

Several students talked about the difficulty of some of these skills, especially confronting peers and managing different roles. Although likely more experienced than their non-involved

peers, these students still had a difficult time balancing friendships with organizational responsibility. Some students even commented that friendships had changed or faded due to organizational responsibilities.

Students of color expressed a fairly different set of skills that revolved around the theme of social survival. While some of the skills mentioned by majority students resonated with students of color (like learning their limits), the skills mentioned by students of color also included learning to be patient with others, maintaining self-control (learning when to walk away and not burst out), managing adversity (dealing with ignorance, lack of understanding from others, and stereotypes), and making better decisions (related to self-control and outbursts). These students seemed to feel that in order to survive as a student of color at Iowa, one had to learn how to cope with the constant adversity they faced. The “chilly” environment for students of color may be related to the RISE results that over 40% of Iowa students had “rarely” or “never” been encouraged to make contact with students different from themselves, and just less than 40% had “rarely” or “never” had a serious conversation with students different from themselves.

Focus Group Findings Summary

Not surprisingly, students who are involved seemed to take great satisfaction in their involvement and clearly understood the developmental contributions involvement made to their own growth. This is supported by Astin’s work on college impact and results from the RISE Report. Peers are critically important to the choices students make and how they decide to spend their time.

Yet, there are also very clear hindrances to student involvement at Iowa, even for those who are already involved. The lack of community at Iowa is glaring issue for all students, but is particularly germane to students of color. At the conclusion of the focus group, students of color were asked if there was anything else we should know about their experiences at Iowa. Students responded with, “The institution needs to stop lying to minorities.” These students felt deceived by the University and recruited under false pretenses about the extent of the diverse population on campus. They commented that students of color are “tricked” into coming here because, for example, they see two students of color on a panel of five at a presentation, which gives the impression that there is a large diverse population. But, when students of color arrive on campus, they find very few students of color to connect with.

Students of color also commented on their frustration with the University’s admission policies. Their perception was that Iowa does not always recruit quality students, but rather students who use Iowa as their default because “Iowa lets anyone in.”

Conclusion

There are extensive opportunities for productive engagement on this campus and while they are not well coordinated among units and are not always carefully evaluated, they do seem to provide tangible positive, educational, personal, and vocational benefits for the participants, as indicated by both faculty and staff, and students. We also found that many students remain isolated from these kinds of activities, sometimes by choice, other times by lack of infrastructure. While many campus groups are seeking for better ways to publicize their activities, role modeling behaviors (peer influence) and the establishment of small communities seem to be the most powerful ways of initiating students into these endeavors. If students do not become engaged early in their college careers through involvement in smaller communities, the

gravitational pull of the bar scene (“the engagement activity of least resistance”) can be very powerful.

Strengths

(1) THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA PROVIDES NUMEROUS EDUCATIONALLY PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITIES THAT CAN BE FOUND ACROSS THE CAMPUS.

This study revealed that campus offices and departments provide a large assortment of educationally purposeful activities in which students can and do engage. For example, organizations such as fraternities and sororities and some academic units like Engineering provide multiple launch points for students to become involved in such activities as peer tutoring and mentoring. In many ways, something for everyone exists, as opportunities range from volunteerism and service learning to student organizations to employment opportunities, among many others. Furthermore, many of these activities have proven to contribute to student learning. For example, students who engage in part-time work or internships (opportunities offered by most of the offices and departments interviewed) while in college experience enhanced job-related skills and competence (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Other research findings suggest that participation in community service, and more specifically service-learning, has positive effects on students’ sociopolitical attitudes and beliefs (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Similar findings regarding the positive effects of involvement for a variety of activities offered by UI also exist, suggesting that the UI involvement activities contribute to student learning in many ways.

(2) THOSE STUDENTS WHO ARE INVOLVED AT UI FIND THEIR EXPERIENCES ENRICHING AND BENEFICIAL

Though it seems there are many students who are not engaged at UI, those students who are have found their experiences to be enriching and personally beneficial. Students in the focus

groups were able to clearly cite many examples of how they have acquired new skills, made new friends, and found their place at UI through their various involvement experiences on campus. The RISE Report participants have said their involvement is the reason they have stayed at UI. What is particularly promising is that the focus group students, as well as the non-involved students who were interviewed, talked about the power of peer influence. The ability to influence and be influenced by peers might suggest that there is an unleashed power among the involved students to influence other students to get involved. The key for UI will be to determine how to best exploit that potential to create a culture where involvement becomes the norm.

Areas for Improvement

(1) THOUGH MANY OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE, ONLY A SMALL PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ARE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THEM. UI NEEDS TO IMPROVE OUTREACH TO STUDENTS AND ENCOURAGE INVOLVEMENT.

As stated previously, a number of opportunities exist on campus for students to be involved, yet findings from both the interviews for this study and the RISE Report indicate that a large percentage of the student body does not engage in educationally purposeful activities on campus. There are many possible explanations for this: (a) students may not know about opportunities or know how to get involved; (b) students may not want to get involved or may not understand the importance of getting involved; (c) available opportunities may not meet student interests; or (d) students may have family or financial obligations that prevent their involvement. Evidence from this study and from the RISE Report suggest a number of things related to involvement that would support these possibilities, including (a) students do not always know about opportunities, especially if they live off-campus, (b) students expect to be busier than they

are when they arrive at UI, and (c) students are inundated by a culture of drinking, which may become the “the engagement activity of least resistance.”

It appears from the RISE Report that a segment of the undergraduate population comes to Iowa because of its reputation as a “party school,” and have little inclination to engage with faculty outside the classroom or to become involved in educationally-purposeful activities. There seems to be a difference between the “academic tourists” whose centers of gravity are still tied to their home town and the students with a greater sense of loyalty to the University of Iowa. Although mentioned in interviews and focus groups, access to information about student activities and/or volunteer activities may not always be the real issue here -- attitude and motivation may be far more important. There are some students who seem to have a cruise ship mentality – they dock in Iowa City briefly to get what they want and need (fun, degrees) – but they do not put down roots here. Yet, one must also question if the failure to “put down roots” is a result of the lacking sense of community mentioned by students in the focus groups.

There are several options to consider when addressing the lack of involvement by many students, but we would maintain that high expectations, clear messages, and cross-campus support are the places to start. Strong-performing colleges, as identified in the Documenting Effective Educational Practices (DEEP) study, have been successful in engaging students by setting high expectations for students, by sending clear messages to students about how to reach those expectations, and then by supporting students as they attempt to meet those expectations (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2005). This is done through pre-entry communication, purposeful orientation and socialization activities, and sustained supportive efforts, both inside and outside the classroom, throughout the first semester or year of the students’ experience.

UI might consider evaluating what current expectations exist for student involvement, how those messages are communicated, and how those expectations are supported in policy and practice. Students in the focus groups, for example, frequently commented on being bored when they arrived and evidence from the RISE Report suggested students expected to be busier. If students have high expectations coming in, but those expectations are met, we might reasonably conclude that students will either actively seek out ways to have those expectations met, or change their expectations. Based on the prevalence of drinking at UI (“the activity of least resistance”), it would seem that the latter occurs more often.

Students not only bring with them high expectations, but research suggests that students will rise to high expectations set by the institution (Blimling, Whitt, & Associates, 1999; Kuh, et al., 2005). However, students must first know what those expectations are and know how to achieve them. Communication to students should focus on helping them understand why involvement is so important and what tangible benefits they will experience as a result of being involved. If expectations can be clarified and communicated to students before they even arrive on campus, the “activity of least resistance” (the bars) may shift to more desirable and educationally purposeful activities. With the number of opportunities available at UI, the student who leaves here without engaging in any educationally purposeful activities should be the exception, not the rule.

Many students and faculty/staff in the focus groups and interviews also commented on the lack of a systematic way to promote involvement opportunities across campus. One way to begin supporting and encouraging student involvement would be to explore different options for a centralized method for communicating opportunities and promoting this to students, as well as to offices and departments.

(2) UI SHOULD FOCUS ON BUILDING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY, BOTH WITHIN THE CONFINES OF THE INSTITUTION AND WITH THE GREATER IOWA CITY COMMUNITY.

Although students in the focus groups often reported joining organizations or getting involved to make the large campus seem smaller, even those students who are involved commented on the lacking sense of community at UI. For students of color, the lack of a supportive community is of particular concern. Research suggests that creating supportive and inclusive communities contributes to student performance, satisfaction, retention, and persistence to graduation (Blimling, Whitt, & Associates, 1999; Kuh, et al., 2005).

Campuses with supportive and inclusive communities exhibit several characteristics including: (a) planned ways to welcome, orient, and invite involvement; (b) a climate of pride, excitement, and enjoyment; (c) a variety of available activities with good attendance; (d) easy access for students to find groups where they can feel comfortable; (e) visible diversity; (f) respect for individual differences and commitment to equality; (g) open discussion of controversial issues; (h) socially responsible behavior that is modeled, promoted, and reinforced; (i) publicly honored accomplishments; (j) an explicitly valued and promoted sense of community; and (k) high morale and self-esteem (Blimling, Whitt, & Associates, 1999). Based on the findings from this study and from the RISE Report, the UI is lacking along several variables.

For example, as mentioned previously, students and faculty/staff mentioned the difficulty of finding out what is available on campus, as many offices and departments are working “in silos.” The inability to know what is available on campus makes it difficult for students to find and access groups where they can feel comfortable. Students of color also commented on the lack of visible diversity (another characteristic of a supportive and inclusive community), which

may make it especially difficult for students of color to easily find places where they feel they fit and can be comfortable. In terms of a “climate of pride, excitement, and enjoyment,” students in focus groups commented that there was nothing at UI to rally around other than football and basketball. While these athletic traditions may foster a sense of pride in some for being a Hawkeye, the institution might explore the development of other campus traditions that can help foster a sense of community.

In addition to the criteria mentioned above, existing research seems to suggest that relationships among students, staff, administrators, faculty, and community members seem to be key to fostering a sense of community. In creating a supportive campus environment, DEEP schools “intrusively make it plain to students what they need to do to succeed. But at the same time, these efforts are motivated by a deep, abiding concern for students and their success, and students know and appreciate it” (Kuh, et al., 2005, p. 260). In addition, these institutions “not only make available resources that students can use to enhance academic skills or enrich the quality of their social life, but they also find ways to induce students to actually use these resources” (Kuh, et al., 2005, p. 260). These findings tie back to the previous discussion about setting clear expectations for students and guiding students in the direction of success.

The policies, practices, and conditions that exist at DEEP schools to promote community include: (a) transition programs that welcome and affirm newcomers; (b) redundant early-warning systems that identify and respond to students who are struggling; (c) responsive advising networks; (d) mentoring and other initiatives that help students understand and successfully navigate institutional policies and comply with procedures; (e) learning support resources that are available and used by students when they need them; (f) peers who provide academic and social support in formal and informal ways; (g) residential living environments

that provide academic and social support; (h) faculty and staff members who are perceived by students as accessible and helpful; and (i) campus administrators who are responsive and supportive (Kuh, et al., 2005, p. 260-261).

Implementing or revising some of these practices may help the UI create a more inclusive and supportive community that allows students to feel more connected to campus and to one another. For example, several students in the focus groups commented on their struggle with institutional “red tape” and “rules you don’t know about,” which may indicate that UI needs to examine the current systems (or lack of) in place that help students navigate these policies and procedures more successfully. Another example might be improving redundant early warning systems, particularly for students of color. While our discussions with interviewees indicated that promotion of diversity is an integral part of several offices and departments, we also learned that these offices and departments often do not communicate or collaborate with one another, but rather work “in silos.” By enhancing such communication and collaboration, students of color may feel an increased sense of support because each department they interacted with would understand the struggles students were facing.

(3) APPROPRIATE LEARNING OUTCOMES AND SYSTEMATIC ASSESSMENT METHODS NEED TO BE CREATED TO BETTER UNDERSTAND HOW STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES THAT ARE OFFERED AND TO HELP UI DEVELOP A “TRACK RECORD” OF SUCCESS FOR ITS INITIATIVES.

Several offices and departments at UI reported on their “learning” objectives or outcomes, but in many cases, what was reported had little to do with student learning. More so, objectives were related to student satisfaction, or were perhaps remnants of larger goals. Rarely did the stated objectives describe how students would be different after engaging in the office’s or department’s involvement opportunities. There seems to be some confusion among offices and departments about what constitutes a true learning objective or outcome.

In addition, several offices and departments do little to evaluate or assess the effectiveness of their programming in formal, systematic ways. The lack of evaluation and assessment seems to stem from one of two things: lack of knowledge or skill about how to conduct assessment, or no perceived need or desire to conduct assessment. What is particularly interesting is that even though there are no clear learning objectives or assessment methods in many cases, offices and departments claim to know how students benefit from their programming and services in light of the sparse evidence that proves it so.

Principles of good practice in student affairs dictate that systematic inquiry is both desirable and necessary to assess student learning and improve performance (Blimling, Whitt, & Associates, 1999). Systematic inquiry can range from simple to complex practices and can occur anywhere on campus, but it is essential for the institution to be able to measure effectiveness. In doing so, the institution will be more accountable to its publics, as well as be better informed about where and how to allocate resources.

DEEP schools both collect a variety of information related to students and disseminate it widely to be used in decision-making and policy formation (Kuh, et al., 2005). The value of data-driven decision-making and policy formation for these institutions is the ability to constantly improve and become more effective. As a Research I institution that encourages and rewards a culture of evidence in its academic side of the house, it seems slightly ironic that UI does not have an institutional research officer of its own to help staff create objectives and measure outcomes for UI students on a regular basis. The establishment of the Center for Research on Undergraduate Education is certainly a step in the right direction, but UI might consider finding ways to prepare and train staff to conduct assessment for their own offices and departments in order to ensure effectiveness of their programs and initiatives.

(4) EFFORTS NEED TO BE FOCUSED ON EXPOSING FRESHMEN TO POSITIVE ROLE MODELS FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT EARLY IN THEIR CAREERS AT UI.

The RISE Report indicated that the first year of college is a significant time for UI students to learn “college behaviors” from their peers, and therefore the institution has an opportunity to help shape what messages students are sending to other students. Some departments are actively trying to encourage this culture. For example, Mary Schneider briefly described a program in the Engineering School in which upperclass students mentor underclassmen. Jennifer Hemmingsen (School of Journalism) also recognized the importance of early involvement when she stated, “We have to get students involved early, or they will go to the ‘community of least resistance’ i.e., bars.” Christine Brus (Women in Science and Engineering) also noted the importance of helping students find a positive community: “One thing that we know is that students will find a community, and if we don’t facilitate good communities, we know retention will be lower. That’s the way it is.”

Student comments from the focus groups support the importance of both peer influence and building community. More than any other form of marketing or publicizing, students said they got involved because a fellow student encouraged them. Furthermore, even students who are involved on campus sense a lack of community. Building positive campus communities where students can connect with others students would likely increase the number of students who become involved in educationally purposeful activities on campus.

Questions for Consideration

- How can offices and departments use students to influence their peers to get involved?
- Is it also possible that those who come to Iowa because of its reputation as a “party school” is related in any way to the student perception that Iowa “let’s anyone in?”

- Is there a way the institution can improve the quality of students it admits and admit students who want to be here for the “right” reasons?
- Does the “cruise ship mentality” relate to the lack of community that students mentioned in the focus groups...do students not plant their roots because they don't feel connected here?
- Do some students never shift from their high school anti-engagement attitudes (that is, serious intellectual engagement and enthusiasm for volunteer work are not “cool”) and therefore never consider taking advantage of “educationally purposeful” activities in their new university setting?
- What types of training can UI provide to offices and departments on campus related to designing and assessing learning outcomes?
- Are we recruiting students of color without then providing the support they need to feel connected and be successful here?
- How can we make sure both students of color and white students are exposed to the services and programming related to diversity?

Appendix A: *Getting Involved* Subcommittee Members and Interview Teams

**The Higher Learning Commission
The University of Iowa Self-Study Subcommittee
*Getting Involved: Education Beyond the Classroom***

University Official (Non-Student) Interview Teams

Team/Name	Department/Student	Email Address
Team One: Kelley Ashby Kenny Layton	Office of Student Life Student	kelley-ashby@uiowa.edu kenneth-layton@uiowa.edu
Team Two: Wayne Fett Amy Rohlfig	Recreational Services Student	wayne-fett@uiowa.edu amy-rohlfing@uiowa.edu
Team Three: Michelle Stricker Jennifer Hemmingsen	Pomerantz Career Center Journalism	michelle-stricker@uiowa.edu jennifer-hemmingsen@uiowa.edu
Team Four: Todd Ingram Mary Mathew Wilson	Nursing Civic Engagement Program	todd-ingram@uiowa.edu mary-mathew-wilson@uiowa.edu
Team Five: Bob Kirby Kim Marra	Honors Program Theatre Arts	robert-kirby@uiowa.edu kim-marra@uiowa.edu
Team Six: Von Stange Jacqueline Leonard	University Housing Student	von-stange@uiowa.edu jacqueline-leonard@uiowa.edu
Team Seven: Pam Trimpe Dave Merry	Natural History M./Old Cap. Graduate Student	pamela-trimpe@uiowa.edu david-merry@uiowa.edu

Appendix B: Offices and Departments Interviewed

**The Higher Learning Commission
The University of Iowa Self-Study Subcommittee
*Getting Involved: Education Beyond the Classroom***

Interview Pairings

Department/Unit	Interviewees	Interviewers
OSL (OSL General)	Bill Nelson Director	Kelley Ashby and Kenny Layton
Fraternity and Sorority Life (OSL)	Jason Pierce Assistant Director	Kelley Ashby and Kenny Layton
Leadership Development (OSL)	Kelley Ashby Associate Director	Kelley Ashby and Kenny Layton
Student Services	Phillip Jones Vice President David Grady Associate Vice Pres	Von Stange and Jacqueline Leonard
University Housing	Von Stange Director	Von Stange and Jacqueline Leonard
Residence Life	Kate Fitzgerald Assistant Director	Von Stange and Jacqueline Leonard
Recreational Services	Wayne Fett Sr. Assoc. Director	Wayne Fett and Amy Rohlfling
Hancher Auditorium	Charles Swanson Executive Director	Wayne Fett and Amy Rohlfling
Women's Resource and Action Center	Monique DiCarlo Director	Michelle Stricker and Jennifer Hemmingsen
University Counseling Service	Sam Cochran Director	Mary Mathew Wilson and Todd Ingram
Disability Student Services	Dau-shen Ju Director	Mary Mathew Wilson and Todd Ingram
Health Iowa	Sarah Hansen Coordinator	Mary Mathew Wilson and Todd Ingram
CLAS	Helena Dettmer Associate Dean	Bob Kirby and Kim Marra
Business	Shari Piekarski Director	Bob Kirby and Kim Marra
Engineering	Nancy Schneider Director	Kelley Ashby and Kenny Layton
Education	David Bills Associate Dean for Academic Affairs	Bob Kirby and Kim Marra
Nursing	Toni Clow Director	Mary Mathew Wilson and Todd Ingram
Study Abroad	Janis Perkins Director	Michelle Stricker and Jennifer Hemmingsen

International Programs	Diana Davies Director	Michelle Stricker and Jennifer Hemmingsen
Civic Engagement Program	Mary M. Wilson Coordinator	Mary Mathew Wilson and Todd Ingram
UI Healthcare Volunteer Program	Mary Ameche Director Jean Reed Associate Director	Mary Mathew Wilson and Todd Ingram
Equal Opportunity and Diversity	Nancy Humbles	Pam Trimpe and Dave Merry
Support Service Programs	Sheila Vedder Director	Pam Trimpe and Dave Merry
International Students and Scholars	Scott King Director Helen Jameson Assistant Director	Michelle Stricker and Jennifer Hemmingsen
Women in Science and Engineering	Christine Brus Director	Michelle Stricker and Jennifer Hemmingsen
Center for Teaching/Service Learning	Norb Pienta Director Jean Florman Associate Director	Pam Trimpe and Dave Merry
Honors Program/USA	John Nelson Director Bob Kirby Associate Director	Bob Kirby and Kim Marra
RVAP	Karla Miller Director	Mary Mathew Wilson and Todd Ingram
Financial Aid	Cindy Seyfer Program Associate	Wayne Fett and Amy Rohlfig
Alumni Association/ Students Today Alumni Tomorrow	Vince Nelson Director Emily Cornish Program Associate	Wayne Fett and Amy Rohlfig
Orientation Services	Andy Cinamon Director	Wayne Fett and Amy Rohlfig
Admissions/ Students To Assist with Recruitment	John Laverty Associate Director Michelle Danielson Program Assistant	Von Stange and Jacqueline Leonard
IMU Marketing & Design	Nancy Abram Manager Bret Gothe Creative Manager	Kelley Ashby and Kenny Layton
IMU Food Services	Barry Greenberg Director	Kelley Ashby and Kenny Layton
IMU Human Resources	Lori Berger Human Resources Generalist II	Kelley Ashby and Kenny Layton
University Housing Human Resources	Shannon Bartlett Human Resources	Von Stange and Jacqueline Leonard

	Generalist II	
Rec. Services Human Resources	Dennis Miller Business Manager I	Wayne Fett and Amy Rohlfling
Museum Studies		Pam Trimpe and Dave Merry
Pomerantz Career Center		Michelle Stricker and Jennifer Hemmingsen
Leisure Studies		Pam Trimpe and Dave Merry
Journalism		Bob Kirby and Kim Marra
Political Science		Bob Kirby and Kim Marra
Communication Studies		Michelle Stricker and Jennifer Hemmingsen
Biological Sciences and Chemistry		Michelle Stricker and Jennifer Hemmingsen
Sports Studies		Wayne Fett and Amy Rohlfling
Student Media/DI/TV		Von Stange and Jacqueline Leonard
Theatre and Dance		Bob Kirby and Kim Marra
Music Rep.		Pam Trimpe and Dave Merry
Old Capital/Natural History Museum		Pam Trimpe and Dave Merry

Appendix C: Student Focus Groups

Associated Residence Halls Executive Board

Interfraternity Council Executive Board

National Pan-Hellenic Council

Panhellenic Council Executive Board

University of Iowa Student Government Executives

Appendix D: Office and Department Checklist of Involvement Opportunities

The Higher Learning Commission
The University of Iowa Self-Study Subcommittee
Getting Involved: Education Beyond the Classroom

Checklist of Student Involvement Opportunities

- (1) Does your department/program provide or facilitate any of the following student involvement opportunities?
(2) Does your department/program *anticipate* providing or facilitating any of the following student involvement opportunities *in the near future*?

- Advisory board membership (i.e., boards with designated student positions)
- Campus-based service/volunteerism
- Career/professional networking
- Community-based service/volunteerism
- Connecting cocurricular activities with academic course work
- Connecting or facilitating networking opportunities with alumni
- Diversity training/education
- Event/program/workshop planning and production by students (e.g., arts, educational, entertainment, leadership, major annual, multicultural, recreational, social); identify subject matter New student orientation program
- For-credit courses
- Guest lecturer/speaker/panelist opportunities for students
- Health and wellness activities/initiatives
- Internships or practica (for credit and/or non-credit); indicate which _____
- Internships (paid)
- Leadership training, education, and development
- Leadership opportunities within student organizations
- Non-credit topic-based workshops facilitated by non-students
- Opportunities to interact with people from different cultures
- Opportunities to represent UI off campus at national/regional meetings
- Peer educators (students educating students); identify subject matter _____
- Peer mentoring (1:1 interaction between mentor and mentee)
- Service learning
- Spiritual exploration and understanding
- Student employment
- Student governance (e.g., ARH, IFC, NPHC, PHC, UISG, hall government, presidential charter committees); identify subject matter _____
- Student involvement in presentations, research, and scholarly activity with faculty/staff
- Student involvement in publication or media development
- Student involvement on department-wide committees
- Student involvement on University-wide committees
- Student organization advising
- Student organization office space
- Student organizations
- Student exhibitions and performances
- Undergraduate research and/or teaching assistantships; please identify which _____
- Undergraduate teaching assistantships November 16, 2006

Appendix E: Letter of Invitation to Offices and Departments

Dear Colleague:

In spring 2008, The University of Iowa will be undergoing a reaccreditation review by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Sponsored by Provost Michael Hogan and chaired by Associate Provost Tom Rocklin, the Office of the Provost is currently conducting a self-study in preparation for the reaccreditation visit. Five sub-committees have been organized to gather information regarding the special emphasis for the self-study, which will focus on undergraduate education: 1) Entry and Transition: Becoming a University of Iowa Student; 2) Common Academic Experiences: The General Education Curriculum; 3) Education Within the Major; 4) Getting Involved: Education Beyond the Classroom; and 5) Cultivating Student Potential: Support for Teaching and Learning.

We are the co-chairs of the “Getting Involved” subcommittee, and it is in that capacity that we are writing you this letter. You have been identified as one of the key individuals who we need to interview as part of the reaccreditation self-study. One of the members of our subcommittee (see enclosure) will be contacting you within the next two weeks to schedule an interview to help us learn how your department or program enhances student involvement outside of the classroom. The interview questions are enclosed for your review in advance of the interview. The following is the entire list of enclosures:

- University Official (Non-Student) Interview Questions
- University Official (Non-Student) Interview Teams
- Getting Involved Subcommittee Membership List
- Interview Pairings
- Checklist of Student Involvement Opportunities
- A flyer re: The University of Iowa Self-Study Process for Reaccreditation by the Higher Learning Commission
- The University of Iowa 2005-2010 Strategic Plan – *The Iowa Promise*

We want to express our appreciation in advance for your participation in the self-study process. We need to learn about your programs – and your student “success stories” – so that we can accurately document student involvement beyond the classroom at Iowa. If you have any questions, please contact any one of us. Again, we appreciate your time.

Sincerely,

William Nelson, Ph.D.
Associate Director, University Life Centers
and Director, Office of Student Life

David Grady, Ph.D.
Associate Vice President for Student Services
and Director, University Life Centers

Scott McNabb, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Educational Policy and Leadership Studies

Appendix F: Office and Department Interview Protocol

The Higher Learning Commission
The University of Iowa Self-Study Subcommittee
Getting Involved: Education Beyond the Classroom

University Official (Non-Student) Interview Questions

1. When looking at the checklist (please refer to the *Checklist* document):
 - a. What areas of student involvement does your department/program specialize in or focus on?
 - b. What areas of student involvement need to be developed further or are in the planning stages of being developed?
 - c. Are there student involvement opportunities provided by your department/program that are **not** represented on the checklist?
 - i. If not, what are they?
2. How do students learn about your department's/program's involvement opportunities for students? How are you intentional about securing student involvement in the opportunities provided by your department/program?
3. How does your department/program determine which involvement opportunities it provides? What are the philosophies and policies that inform the development of these opportunities?
 - a. What are the desired learning outcomes of these opportunities?
 - b. How are the outcomes measured?
4. How does your department/program assess or evaluate the effectiveness of the student involvement opportunities you provide?
 - a. Do you believe that your assessment or evaluation efforts are effective?
 - i. Why or why not?
 - b. How does your department/program utilize the data/information you collect during the assessment or evaluation effort?
 - c. What plans do you have for assessment or evaluation in the future?

5. How do your student involvement opportunities align with your department's/ program's mission and strategic plan, as well as the University's mission and the Iowa Promise? Cite specific examples of alignment (or non-alignment).
6. When students get involved through your department/program:
 - a. How does it benefit them in their personal lives?
 - b. How does it benefit them in their academic pursuits?
 - c. What philosophies, policies, programs, and practices employed by your department/program promote student involvement?
 - d. What philosophies, policies, programs, and practices employed by your department/program hinder student involvement?
7. How do you help students make meaning and learn from their involvement experiences (e.g., reflection activities, opportunities to tie the experience into other learning)?
 - a. What do you find effective about these approaches?
 - b. How do you believe you could improve these approaches?
8. How are you intentional in your outreach efforts to students who are **not** involved?
 - a. Describe your efforts.
 - b. What have you found to be most effective ways to secure involvement from student who are **not** involved?
9. Please share a story about a student who gained a lot and who demonstrated significant growth/development from being involved through your department/program.

Appendix G: Letter of Invitation to Student Groups

January 22, 2007

Dear Anne,

In Spring 2008, The University of Iowa will be undergoing a reaccreditation review by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Sponsored by Provost Michael Hogan and chaired by Associate Provost Tom Rocklin, the Office of the Provost is currently conducting a self-study in preparation for the reaccreditation visit. Five sub-committees have been organized to gather information regarding the special emphasis for the self-study, which will focus on undergraduate education: 1) Entry and Transition: Becoming a University of Iowa Student; 2) Common Academic Experiences: The General Education Curriculum; 3) Education Within the Major; 4) Getting Involved: Education Beyond the Classroom; and 5) Cultivating Student Potential: Support for Teaching and Learning.

As members for the “Getting Involved” sub-committee, we are writing to request your participation in a focus group of Panhellenic Council members. Your positions as council members make your group a key constituent in the data collection for the reaccreditation process. We would like to schedule a focus group during your executive council meeting time within the next few weeks. The focus group will last approximately 45 minutes.

Your opinions and experiences as a University of Iowa students are important and valued, and we would like to express our appreciation in advance for your participation in the self-study process. Please notify us of your willingness to participate and available days and times by Friday, January 26, and be sure to let us know if you have any questions. We may be reached via email at william-nelson@uiowa.edu or angela-bong@uiowa.edu, or may be reached by phone at 335-3059.

Sincerely,

William Nelson, Ph.D.
Associate Director, University Life Centers
and Director, Office of Student Life

Angie Bong
Advanced Practicum Student
Office of Student Life

cc: Jason Pierce, Assistant Director, Office of Student Life

Appendix H: Focus Group Protocol

The Higher Learning Commission
The University of Iowa Self-Study Subcommittee
Getting Involved: Education Beyond the Classroom

Semi-Structured Interview for Students

1. In what ways have you been involved outside the classroom at Iowa?
 - a. How did you learn about involvement opportunities at Iowa?
 - b. How did you decide what you wanted to become involved in?
 - c. What did the University do that helped you get involved initially?
 - d. What could the University have done differently that would have better facilitated your involvement initially?
2. Think about your student involvement experiences outside the classroom at Iowa:
 - a. How has your involvement benefited you in your personal life?
 - b. How has your involvement benefited you in your academic pursuits?
 - c. Are there philosophies, policies, programs, and practices that relate to student involvement that seem to help students get involved at Iowa? Talk about them.
 - d. Are there philosophies, policies, programs, and practices that relate to student involvement that seem to get in the way of students getting involved at Iowa? Talk about them.
3. What's missing here at Iowa?
4. How have your student involvement experiences been helped or hindered by the staff and resources at Iowa?
5. Share one story that best describes how being involved at Iowa has contributed to your learning and success as a student.
 - a. What have you learned about yourself from your involvement?
 - b. What skills have you gained from your involvement?
 - c. What impact have you had on others because of your involvement?
6. What is the one best piece of advice you could give incoming students about getting involved at Iowa?

Appendix I: Individual Interview Protocol

HLC *Getting Involved* Subcommittee: Individual Interview Protocol

Please introduce yourself.

Why did you choose to enroll at The University of Iowa? Why have you stayed?

Describe your typical day. How do you spend your time here?

What have been some of the highlights of your experience? What have been some of the disappointments?

How would you describe your level of involvement with University activities outside of academic courses? Are there non-University related activities you participate in regularly?

If not involved – why have you chosen or what has prevented you from getting involved?

What do you perceive as the benefits and drawbacks to being involved?

What are the barriers at Iowa that make it difficult to be involved? What helps?

What's important at this institution? What does UI value? Why do you think so?

Would you describe yourself as a typical UI student? Why or why not?

What else should we know about your experiences that will help us understand undergraduate life at Iowa?

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