



Updates

IUPUI and School of Liberal Arts

The last six months have been filled with adaptations to support the IUPUI mission during the COVID-19 pandemic and in the midst of protests around racial injustices. The purpose of this short document is to provide a brief update about what has happened at IUPUI and in the School of Liberal Arts since February of 2020 and how we have responded to the global health and racial injustice pandemics.

Spring 2020

IUPUI completed its last seven weeks of spring semester 2020 instruction in remote formats. Administration collaborated with the Indianapolis Faculty Council (IFC) to put in place temporary policies for the benefit of students. Students were allowed expanded use of “P” and “S” grades to offset any potential decreases in grades to the pandemic. Additionally, no IUPUI students were dismissed or placed on probation as a result of their spring semester performance. Both of these policies were for the spring semester of 2020 only. Both summer sessions of 2020 were also delivered in completely remote formats.

Fall 2020

As the spring semester concluded, Chancellor Paydar convened a large working group to examine a variety of options for instruction in fall 2020. The work involved faculty, staff, and students from the IUPUI community and quickly landed on planning for a hybrid experience in the fall. Guidance was provided to faculty that selected the delivery mode (in-person, hybrid, fully remote) that best suited the size of the class and intended learning outcomes.

In response to the IUPUI call for hybrid instruction in fall 2020, the School of Liberal Arts offered 30% of undergraduate course sections completely online with asynchronous instruction, about 34% of course sections mostly synchronously via video instruction, and about 31% course sections with various degrees of physical presence in the classroom. Graduate education was also delivered in a variety of instruction modes with a predominance of synchronous video instruction (36%), followed by instruction on campus (20%), and asynchronously online (15%). Graduate independent studies, practica, and internships accounted for 29% of instruction this fall. Instruction plans for spring 2021 in the School of Liberal Arts display similar patterns.

IU, in partnership with IU Health, has undertaken an extensive testing regimen that began with mandatory testing for all students living in residence halls. This has been complemented by weekly mitigation testing of thousands of faculty, staff, and students to maintain a regular view of the prevalence of COVID-19 on the IUPUI campus. To date, very few cases have been reported among the campus community.

COVID-19 Impact - Enrollment

IUPUI enrollment in the fall of 2020, which includes enrollment from both the Indiana University-Purdue University Columbus (IUPUC) and IU Fort Wayne campuses, decreased 0.5% from Fall of 2019. In Indianapolis, enrollment decreased 0.9%. Much of this decrease was due to a decrease in first-time full-time students of over 11%. IUPUI continued to grow its proportion of students of color, increasing the percentage of students of color by almost 5% compared to the fall of 2019. Retention of students continued a two-year trend of improvement as retention of the fall 2019 first-time, full-time cohort increased 1.4% over the previous year.

Student enrollments in the School of Liberal Arts, although lower than the previous year, were higher than the projected enrollments due to COVID 19. At census the credit hour enrollment was 50,800, a 1.4% decrease over the previous year. Census headcount was 2,022, a decrease of 4.9% compared to the year before. However, the duplicate headcount (when double majors and dual degree students are added) was 2,171 (1.9% decrease in comparison with the previous year). There was a 1.1% increase in the number of minors (now 1,009). There is also an upward trend in the number of dual degree majors since the Dual Degree Advantage program was launched in Fall 2019. There are currently 104 dual degree majors.

Overall, the School has been losing credit hours for the last five years. In the academic year 2019–2020 the total number of credit hours was 107,117, a 1.8% decrease over the previous year, but it was the lowest rate in the loss of credit hours in the last three years.

Spring 2021

Planning for the spring semester is well underway. All classes will begin with remote instruction on January 19 (one week later than normal) and in-person instruction (where the mode uses it) is scheduled to begin on February 8. There will be no Spring Break this year, and commencement remains scheduled for early May.

COVID-19 Impact – Budget

As a result of a wide variety of increased costs and lower revenue during the spring semester, all units on the IUPUI campus were asked to plan for budget reductions of 5% and 10%. Subsequently, reductions of 5% were implemented broadly across campus. Depending on the enrollment and budget situation of the school, some areas have implemented a little bit deeper cuts. To this point, the State of Indiana has only implemented one cut, which amounted to \$7M for all of IUPUI. In addition to budget cuts, hiring freezes and salary freezes were enacted to contain costs.

The budget cuts continued a trend in the School of Liberal Arts, which has been reducing expenses every year by about \$1M per year. For 2020–2021 there has been a reduction of 5% in the operating budget. The negative difference between income and expenses in 2019–2020 was \$2M. The school continues to take steps to reduce expenses, which are currently around \$29M. There is a hiring freeze on staff positions and a highly selective process for hiring faculty positions.

Forward Progress in Liberal Arts

A number of curricular initiatives hold promise for attracting students to the study of Liberal Arts disciplines. The Pathway Minors in Liberal Arts is a 15-credit program of study intended to add depth to the learning experience within the general education core by integrating knowledge and praxis around themes of relevance to the students' college and professional experiences from the perspectives of the humanities and the social sciences. Pathway Minors are grounded in existing Liberal Arts general education courses, grouped together in meaningful categories. They encourage students to deepen their knowledge with upper-level course work, beyond general education. The program includes at least one course with a high impact practice experience. Three Pathway Minors in Liberal Arts have been approved (so far) and will start enrolling students the Fall semester of 2020: Liberal Arts Perspectives on Diversity and Inclusion, on Culture and Health, and on Storytelling. Two more Pathway minors, one in Social Justice and Civic Engagement and the second one in Ethics and Science, are being developed.

Other new curricular initiatives include a new B.A. in Theater, Film, and Television. This major brings together three related humanities-based arts disciplines which are currently distributed across several departments in the school. It provides a disciplinary home for theatre in both theory and practice, and leverages the strengths of SLA's film and media studies curriculum, its production courses, along with relevant media and theatre-related work being done in the Herron School of Art and Design, the School of Informatics and Computing, and the School of Engineering and Technology. The major features three distinct concentrations, the first in theatre, the second in film and television studies, and the third, an integrated concentration in film and television production and studies.

The School of Liberal Arts has also been a key participant in IU Online collaborative programs. In addition to existing graduate online collaborative programs in English, communication studies, and history, several graduate and undergraduate online programs are now being implemented or in process of approval in history, Spanish, and digital media storytelling (an interdisciplinary program involving communication studies, journalism, and English). The faculty in Liberal Arts work closely with the IU Office of Online Collaborative Programs and with colleagues at other IU campuses to ensure the quality of curriculum and instruction in online programs.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Racial Healing

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are core values of IUPUI. The events of this summer have provided very visible reminders around how much work is still needed to eliminate racism.

IUPUI already had a number of initiatives in place and has further increased its commitment to creating the most inclusive community. A number of initiatives are underway, including:

- The formation of an IUPUI Action Committee, which has developed a list of multi-pronged and multi-year initiatives
- 340 IUPUI faculty, staff, and administrators are participating in one of 21 year-long reading groups around the book “How to be an Antiracist” by Ibram X. Kendi
- Monthly webinars with Kathy Obear around creating racially inclusive classrooms
- Anti-racist communication campaign including anti-discrimination and Black Lives Matter signs on campus tunnels

The School of Liberal Arts has also made important strides in the past couple of years in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion—from its vote to institute a standing Diversity and Inclusion Committee that holds the school accountable for its diversity goals. This includes the development of a new Pathways Minor that addresses issues on diversity, inclusion, and social justice.

At times like this, it is important to stand together in unity and show that it is not just abstract principles like justice and fairness for all that we support. The IU School of Liberal Arts is committed to this critical work and is excited to announce the proposal of a new Center for Africana Studies and Culture. While the school recognizes there are areas needing improvement, it remains firmly grounded in the mission and vision of the School of Liberal Arts Diversity Statement below:

Mission

In our school, we believe that educational excellence is directly tied to our ability to create a diverse, inclusive, and equitable community. We promote inclusive values through scholarship, teaching, service, and community engagement. We are committed to an ongoing inclusive climate based on mutual respect, appreciation of others, open-mindedness, and free inquiry.

The [mission and vision](#) of the School of Liberal Arts are explicitly based on values which include diversity, community, international and multicultural approaches, collegiality, and accessibility. In this, we are aligned with [IUPUI’s overall vision on diversity, inclusion, and equity](#).

Vision

Our vision is to create and uphold models of diversity, inclusion, and equity on our campus and beyond. We are committed to the principles of diversity, inclusion, and equity for all.

Goals

- Identify and eliminate the obstacles that lead to the marginalization, minoritization, exclusion, or discrimination of individuals or groups
- Recruit, retain, advance, and promote diverse faculty, staff, and students

- Acknowledge and reward those who build and promote a culture of inclusion
- Create an inclusive curriculum, co-curriculum, physical spaces, processes, research agendas, and an overall cultural climate which embrace differences for the benefit of all
- Assess progress towards the above-mentioned goals periodically

For more information about the School's focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion, please visit the [School of Liberal Arts website](#). You'll discover a motivational video from one of our recent 2020 graduates, Ahmed Abbas, as well as IUPUI community resources for alumni, faculty, staff, students, and community members.