GFC Committee Report, 2021-22

Committee: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

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Our main question: Is the population of IU graduate school enrollees as diverse as we want?

Summary: The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee is responsible for reviewing the current state of diversity within the graduate programs across Indiana University's 9 campuses. This year, the committee focused its efforts on describing the diversity of students applying to and enrolling in IU graduate programs using graduate enrollment data that we acquired from the central Student Information System (SIS). These de-identified data (e.g., absent of student identifiers), included information from 2018-2022 regarding specific program and campus enrollment, as well as several diversity indicators including students' gender, race and ethnicity, and first generation status. While the data are still being analyzed, our preliminary results have begun to generate a snapshot of graduate enrollment over the last five years and highlight potentially concerning stalls in the growth of racial and first generational diversity. Regardless, this initial work implies that the data collected are sufficient to establish a reference point of graduate student applications and enrollment and that more work by the committee is warranted to make stronger conclusions about the state of graduate student diversity recruitment and retention in Indiana University.

Fig 1: Gender in Enrollment at IU

The 2021-22 DEI committee followed up a previous effort by last year's committee to analyze SIS data of graduate student applications and enrollment. This prior data set lacked key categories (e.g. gender) critical to DEI-related inquiry. Thus, the current committee requested a new dataset from SIS. Many graduate schools first process applications in a local system tailored to their needs. The applications are then uploaded into SIS and maintained, except for the IU School of Medicine. SIS data were formally requested and provided by Ms. Cheryl Stine and her group. This new dataset represented over 122,276 students, with information about programs applied, gender, race/ethnicity, first generation college student, military status, and others.

Fig 2: First Generation Enrollment at IU

A central objective of the committee is to determine the diversity of IU graduate student recruitment over time and observe whether this population matches the diversity of individual programs, between IU campuses, the state of Indiana, and the nation. These analyses are ongoing. We have approached the data in several ways, such as breaking down all diversity components by schools and grouping campuses to measure specific regional trends. Here, we highlight a few key trends revealed from our preliminary analyses:

1. Overall enrollment from 2018-2022 by gender (**Fig 1**)

2. Overall enrollment from 2018-2022 by first generation college graduate status (**Fig 2**)

3. Overall enrollment from 2018-2022 for six distinct racial and ethnic groups (**Fig 3**)

4. 2021 enrollment overall and within 10 key programs for

Fig 3: Enrollment for Underrepresented Populations at IU
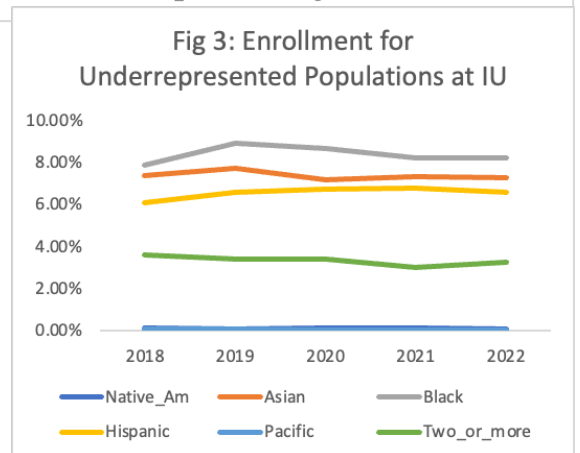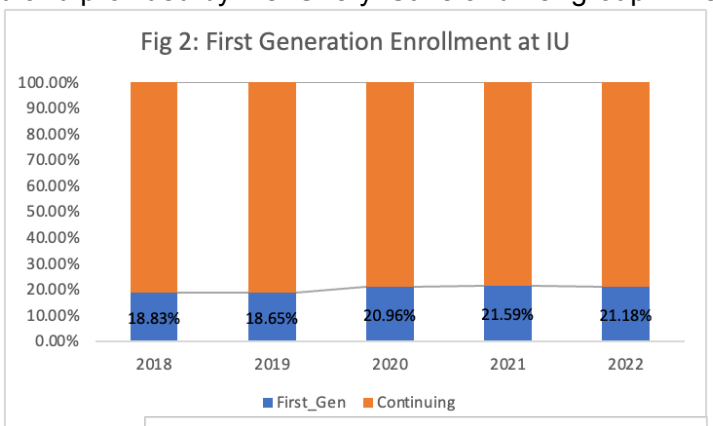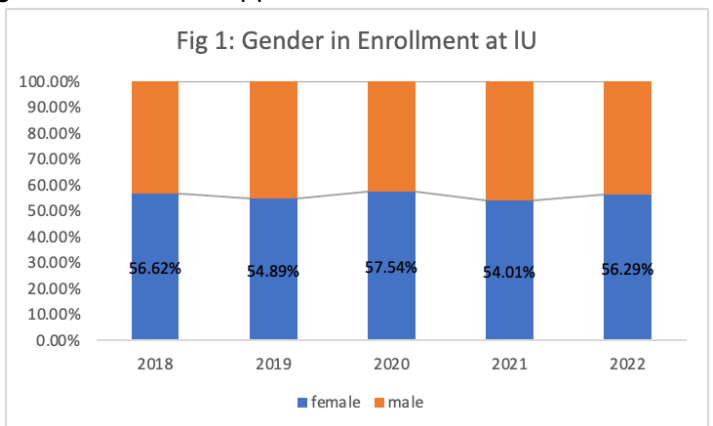
six distinct racial and ethnic groups (Fig **4**)

These figures also present "benchmark" estimates, which we derived from the 2020 US Census. We are exploring various definitions of benchmarks for future comparisons.

For example, Figure 1 shows that in 2020, the US Census reported 49.1% female and 50.9% male in the 18-34 age group across the US. IU graduate student enrollment has maintained an approximate 50/50 male/female population for the last five years (**Fig 1**). A significant limitation to our analysis is that Census data are binary (male or female); a next step would be to analyze each program individually and to include non-binary categories in this investigation.

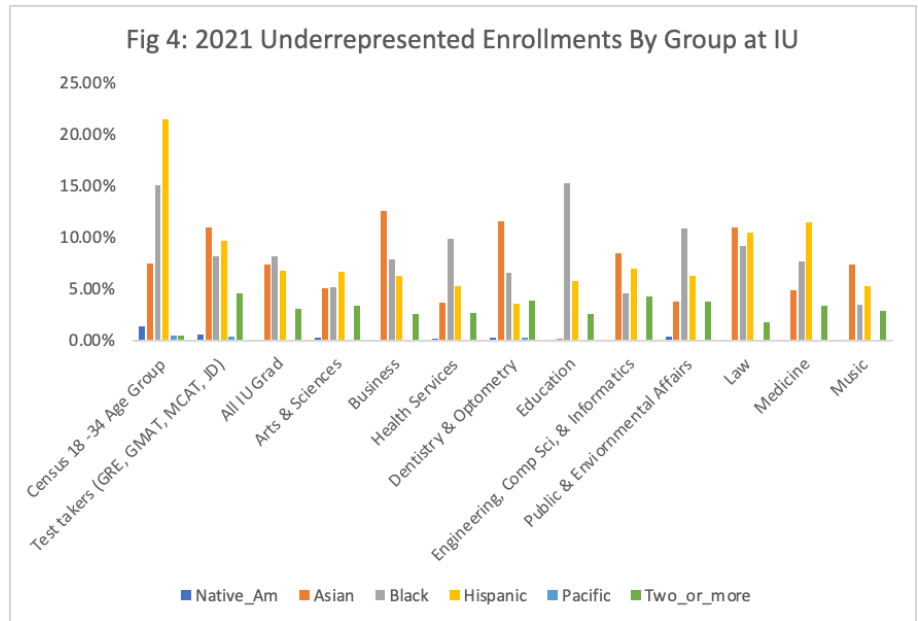Fig 4: 2021 Underrepresented Enrollments By Group at IU

Figure 2 shows that the percent of first generation college students enrolled in graduate programs across IU's campuses has also remained relatively stable over the past 5 years, at approximately 20% (**Fig 2**). The Center for First-Generation Student Success reports that 42% of bachelor's degrees in 2015 – 2016 were awarded to first-generation college students. This value is much higher than IU's current enrollment, although we only consider graduate programs in this analysis.

Perhaps the most concerning preliminary result is IU's static enrollment of minoritized racial populations. As displayed in Figure 3, each of 6 distinct racial and ethnic groups have essentially maintained their enrollments for the last five years. Nationally, the Census "18 – 34 age group" reports proportions of 1.39% Native American, 7.44% Asian, 15.07% Black, 21.44% Hispanic, 0.44% Pacific Islander, 0.42% Two or more races, and 53.80% White. These values point to a comparatively low number of graduate students identifying as Hispanic or Black enrolled at IU, highlighting the need for more diversity initiatives as outlined by IU leadership. Figure 4 analyses the racial diversity of underrepresented populations in different programs. It demonstrates that the SIS data allows one to investigate further into diversity questions by schools, campuses, and other categories. Thus, the data acquired has potential to probe many questions about the diversity of students applying and enrolling in IU graduate programs.

Shortcomings of our data and missing overall questions The committee also found ways in which IU's data collection efforts could be improved. For example, the names of departments and programs occasionally changes, and this makes some of the analysis harder. But even more, we note that the GFC and IU do not really have clear diversity goals or criteria.

Plan of action: Over the next four months, the committee will continue to analyze the SIS data to make stronger conclusions about the diversity of graduate student applications and enrollment. The committee encourages specific questions from the GFC and leadership.

Tools developed: The committee also offers tools to visualize and analyze the SIS data. These tools are documented and may be used by anyone in the future.

Acknowledgments: The committee thanks Ms. Cheryl Stine and her team for providing the SIS information. DEI Committee members Marcy Shepardson and Louis van der Elst performed a considerable amount of data analyses, visualizations, and tool development. Their contribution constituted the bulk of our work, and they should be commended for their dedication to graduate student diversity and to our work in particular.