



SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

**Conducting admissions interviews at regional
campuses influences applicants' preferred campus
assignment in a statewide system of distributed
medical education**

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Background

- Indiana University School of Medicine established a statewide system in the late 1960s.
- Comprised of 9 campuses:
 - Main campus at Indianapolis
 - 8 regional campuses located around the state
 - 3rd and 4th year rotations available at all campuses
- Currently over 1,400 students statewide:
 - Class size expanding to 364 by 2016
 - Expansion restricted to regional campuses
 - Indianapolis campus: 138 entering students
 - Regional campuses: 24 to 36 entering students
 - 62% of entering class outside Indianapolis





Background

- The initial assignment of a student to Indianapolis or one of the 8 regional campuses is based on two factors:
 - ✓ Student preference
 - ✓ Availability of space
- After accepted, students rank-order their preferred campus assignment.
- For fairness, a computerized “lottery” system is used to assign students based on their campus preferences and the availability of campus openings.
- For most of the regional campuses, a first- or second-choice ranking would probably assure placement.
- Alternates are excluded from the ranking process and are simply assigned to the remaining positions at the end of the lottery.



Background

- Most applicants rank Indianapolis as their first-choice of campus assignment, but not all can be accommodated due to space limitations.
- Student dissatisfaction with their campus assignment was a recurring complaint.
- All admissions interviews were conducted at Indianapolis. There was no opportunity for the regional campuses to showcase their strengths to prospective students.
- Our interview process was too Indianapolis-focused did not reflect the reality of our statewide system.
- **Study Question: Can interviewing at a regional campus positively influence an applicant's likelihood of ultimately matriculating at that campus?**



Methods

Beginning with the 2012-2013 admissions cycle, the interview locations were expanded to include 3 campuses:

- Indianapolis
- Northwest (Gary)
- Muncie

Interviewing at a regional campus was optional. Applicants were informed that choosing to interview at a regional campus would have no impact on the likelihood of admittance nor on the campus assignment if accepted.

Data Collected

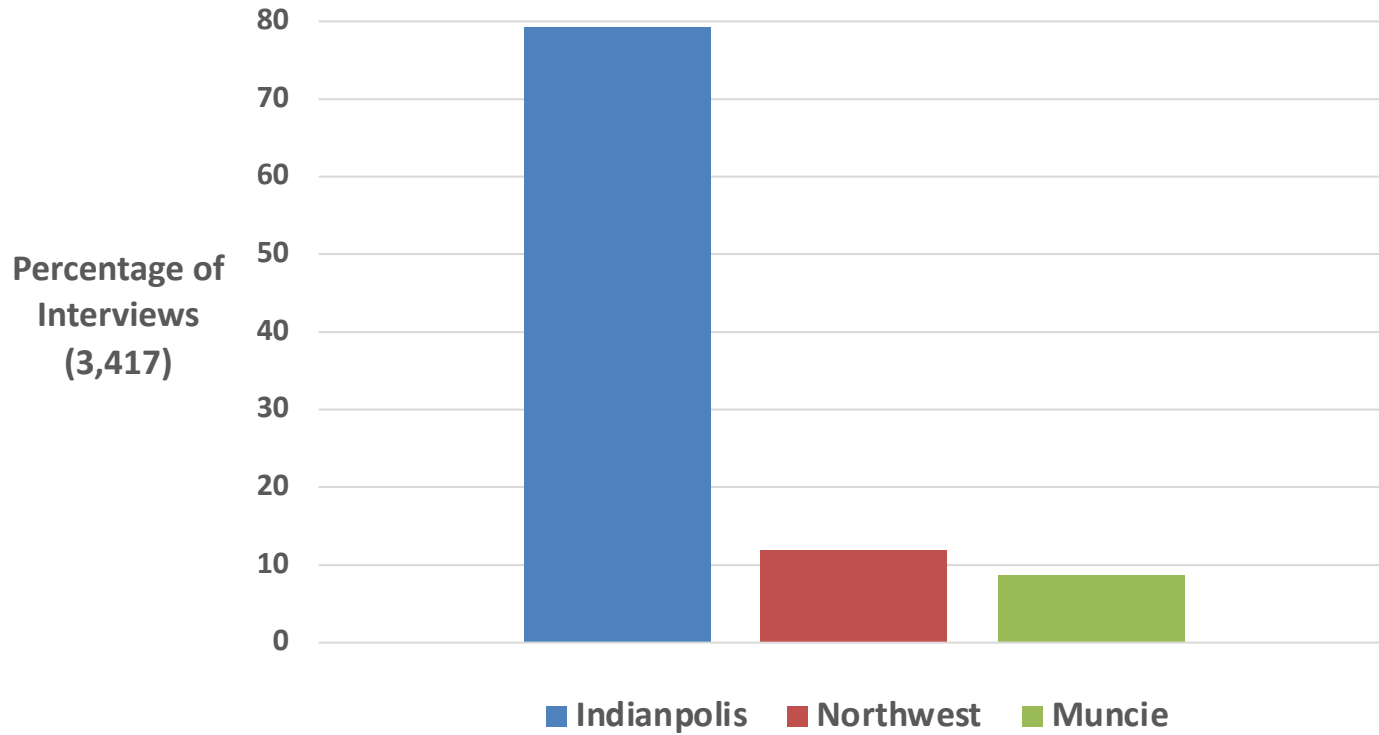
- **Campus preference data** for the 3 years prior to 2012 and for the 3 years after implementing regional campus interviews
- **Interview locations and campus assignments** of all matriculating students from 2013 to 2015

Performed chi-square analysis of the association between interviewing at a given campus and matriculating at that campus.



Results

Interviews by Campus, 2013-2015





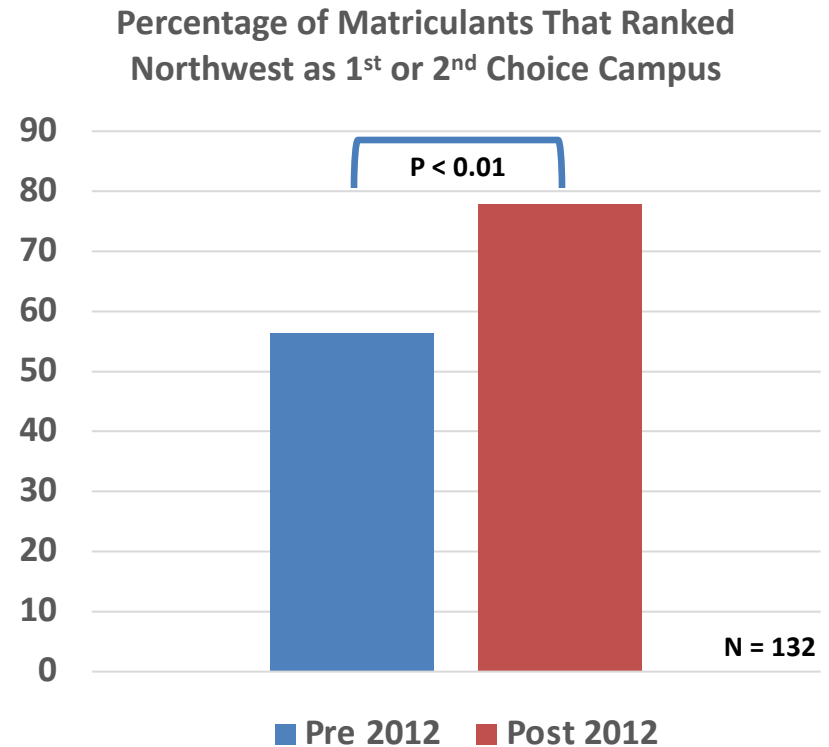
Results – Northwest Campus

	Matriculated at Northwest	Matriculated Elsewhere	
Interviewed at Northwest	45	57	102
Interviewed Elsewhere	37	912	949
	82	969	1051

Of the 102 successful applicants who interviewed at Northwest, 44% returned to matriculate.

OR = 19.5

$X^2 = 207.1$ ($p < 0.001$)





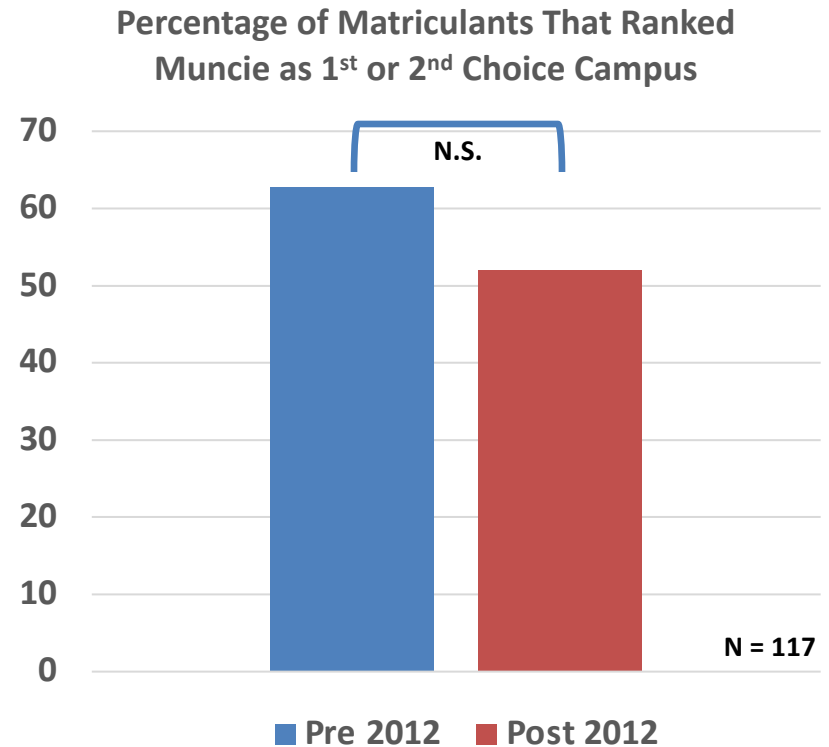
Results – Muncie Campus

	Matriculated at Muncie	Matriculated Elsewhere	
Interviewed at Muncie	18	76	94
Interviewed Elsewhere	50	907	957
	68	983	1051

Of the 94 successful applicants who interviewed at Muncie, 19% returned to matriculate.

OR = 4.3

$X^2 = 27.4$ ($p < 0.001$)





Possible explanations for the Muncie findings

- ✓ Alternates (who don't rank) that interviewed at Muncie just happened to be assigned to Muncie, thereby confounding the relationship.
- ✓ Applicants that interviewed at Muncie were only modestly impressed with the campus and ranked it accordingly. Even a rank of 3rd choice or lower would probably be sufficient to guarantee assignment.
- ✓ Other factors related to the way the interviews were conducted at Muncie, or to the particular mix of applicants who chose to interview at Muncie (e.g., in-state versus out-of-state) and their prior opinions about the IUSM system.



Conclusions

- There was a strong statistical association between interviewing at the Northwest campus and matriculating at the Northwest campus.
- This was accompanied by a 22% increase in the number of matriculants who ranked the Northwest campus as their 1st or 2nd choice, as compared to previous years when everyone interviewed at the Indianapolis campus.
- This suggests that interviewing onsite may have fostered positive attitudes about the Northwest campus.
- The evidence for Muncie is less compelling. Although there was a statistical association between interviewing and matriculating at the Muncie campus, the percentage of matriculants who highly-ranked the Muncie campus actually dropped by 11% compared to previous years (not statistically significant).



Study Limitations

- Correlation does not equal causation.
- Selection bias—interview locations were not randomly assigned, but were self-selected by the applicants:
 - ✓ Applicants may have picked Northwest or Muncie because they were already interested in attending that campus.
 - ✓ The chance to interview onsite offers the opportunity to confirm (or dampen?) their interest.
- Individual-level rank data was not available (only aggregate data), so don't know how an individual ranked a particular campus after the interview.
- Other potential confounding factors not accounted for in the simple chi-square analysis:
 - Structure of the interview day (e.g., how much of a “sell” for campus?)
 - Unique characteristics of campuses or applicants