But What Do *They* Call It?

Communicating the Value of Engaged Learning to Students

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INSTITUTE FOR ENGAGED LEARNING
INDIANAPOLIS

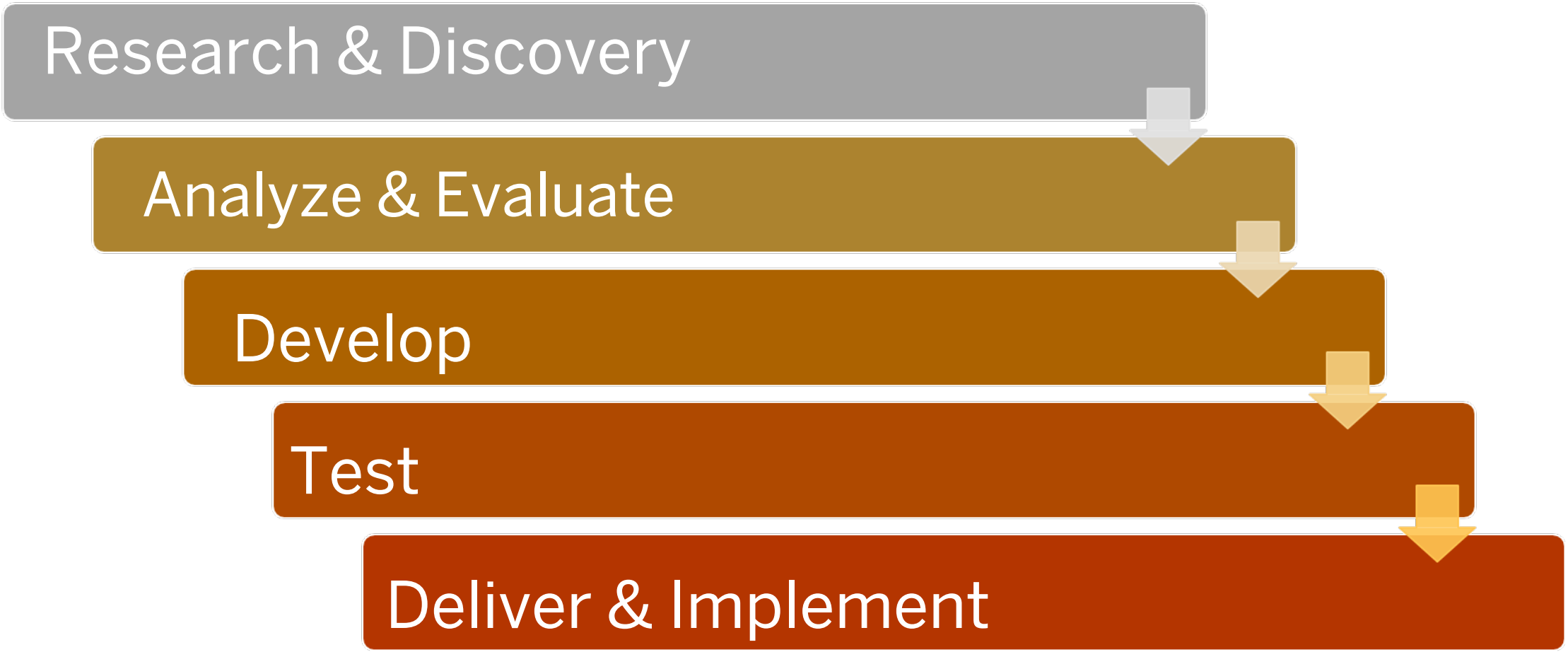
Presentation Overview

- Introduction and background
- Research results
- Communications strategy
- Deliverables
- Discussion and Questions

Background

- Urban Campus
- Primarily commuter
- Students work more than peer institutions
- Demographically diverse, but mostly Indiana residents
- Competing priorities

Process


Research & Discovery
Analyze & Evaluate
Develop
Test
Deliver & Implement

Develop an evidence-informed strategy for effectively communicating IUPUI engaged learning opportunities and their value to students and other stakeholders.

CORE STEERING GROUP CHARGE

The Research

Data-gathering methods

- Scan of external messaging at 26 institutions
  - IUPUI competitors
  - IUPUI peer institutions
  - Exemplars in engaged learning
- Review of internal documents
- IRDS summaries
  - IEL assessments and evaluations
  - IUPUI marketing materials

- Gathering of new data
  - Focus groups
  - Individual stakeholder interviews
  - Surveys

The Research

- 7 focus groups
- 10 interviews
- 6 surveys
- Environmental scan
- Review of thought leadership on high-impact practices
- Review of existing IUPUI reports, dashboards, reflections, etc.

- **2,632** students
- **78** faculty and staff
- **21** community organizations
- **15** family members of current students
- **28** other institutions of higher education

The Results

Themes from the research

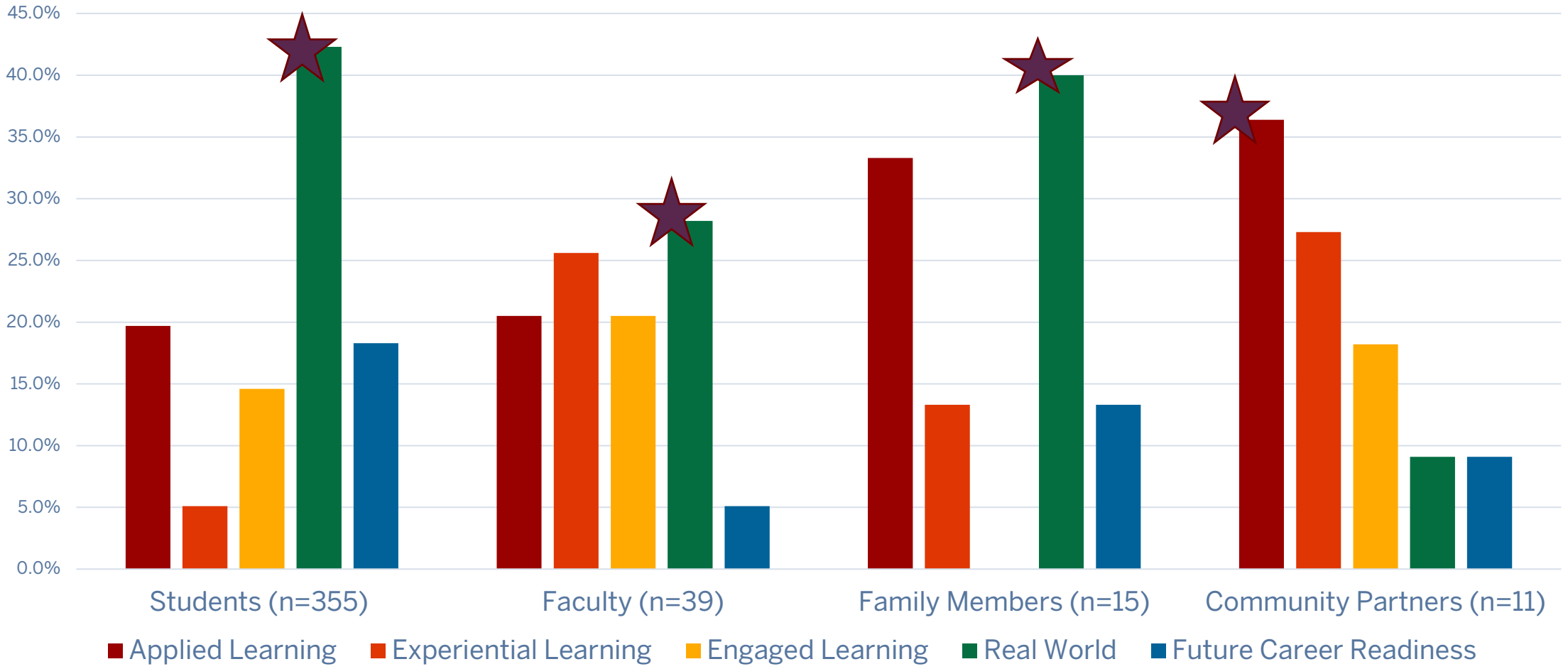
01 Terminology

02 Barriers to Involvement

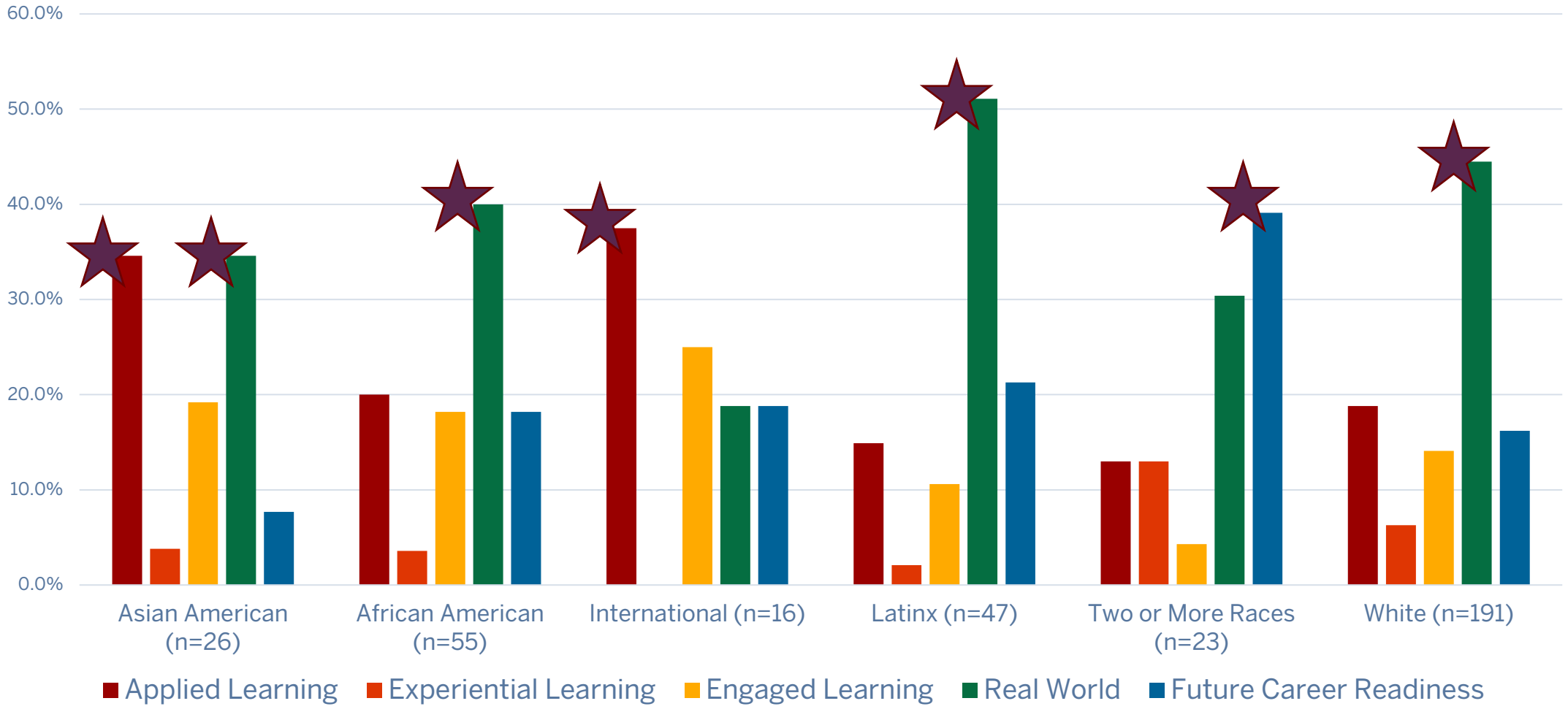
03 Awareness & Perceptions

04 Communication

Terminology varies by and within audiences



Variance among students by race/ethnicity



Select Research Highlights

- Barriers:
  - Advanced planning, awareness
  - Time, money
  - Confidence
- Preferences:
  - Email
  - Advisors, faculty

If I got an internship, I would have to drop something.

-Student Interviewee

It can be difficult for students to find programs without knowing the name of what they're looking for.

-Advisor Interviewee

Students often have no set idea of what they are going to do.

-Advisor Interviewee

Time

- Most frequently listed across audiences
- Felt especially by those who have work, care for dependents, commute
- Consider opportunities too late, lack of planning
- Intersection with affordability

If I got an internship, I would have to drop something.

--Student Interviewee

Confidence

- Staff report lack of confidence in skills or experience
- Lack of self-efficacy in students leads to a late start on these activities in college career
- Students sometimes don't see themselves or people like them in these activities

Students often have no set idea of what they are going to do.

--Advisor interviewee

Awareness

- Students don't know where to go
- Students are overwhelmed by opportunities

It can be difficult for students to find programs without knowing the name of what they're looking for.

--Advisor interviewee

Affordability

- Inability to forego income from part-time jobs for unpaid opportunities
- Students more likely to work off campus than on campus
- Intersection with time

Slightly more than half (53%) of students plan to work for pay off-campus during their first year while 46% plan to work for pay on-campus.

IUPUI Entering Student Survey 2022

(Some) Solutions to Barriers

- Many solutions to the barriers are already in place.
- We may not need *more* opportunities, but we need more awareness.
- Emphasize paid, for-credit opportunities to alleviate financial and time concerns.
- Feature a wide variety of students who participate and not just the outstanding examples.

Awareness & Perceptions

- The 27% of students who indicated they did know where to find information had a wide variety of answers.
- Top answers included professors, advisors, and Handshake
- Students come to IUPUI for engaged learning without realizing what exactly it is.
- Interest, awareness and opportunities vary across disciplines

Perceived Importance

- Broad consensus that engaged learning opportunities are important. All groups from the questionnaires agreed that completing at least one engaged learning experience prior to graduation was important: parents and families (93%), faculty (97%), students (99%).

The Strategy

Students will believe in the value of engaged learning and be motivated to participate in experiential learning opportunities.

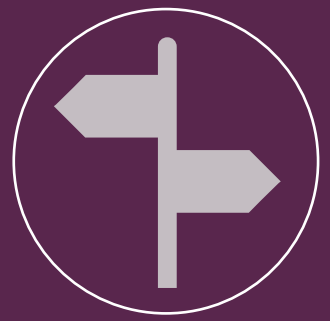
The Goal

All campus stakeholders will more consistently and intentionally communicate about engaged learning.

How?

What Students Find Valuable

Intersection of Career and Personal Benefits



Choice and Agency

Accessibility

Unifying Themes: *"The IU Indy Way"* and *Connection to the City*

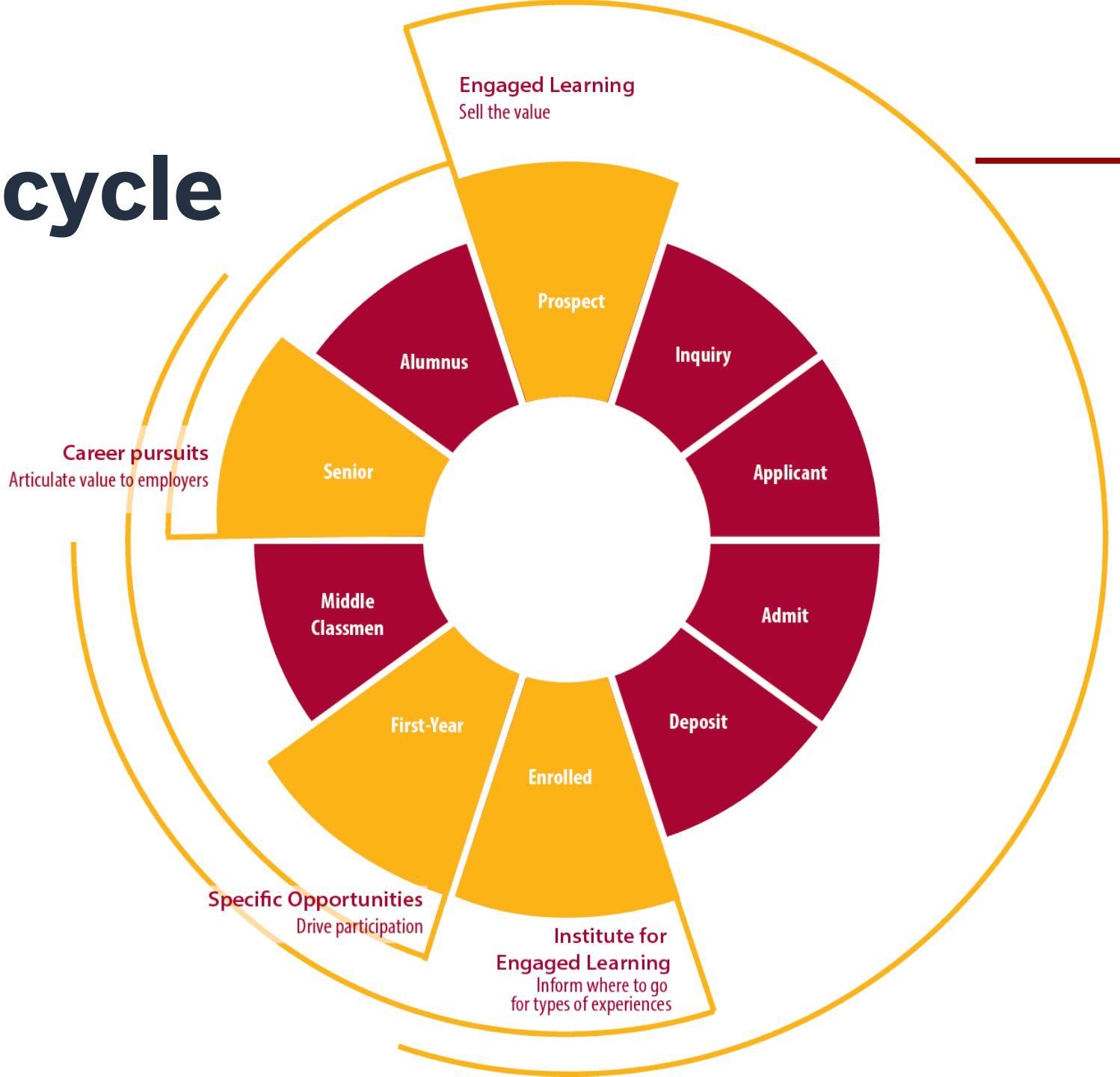
What we say matters

First-Level, Plain Language	
Jargon-free, general terms to introduce the idea.	Real-world experiences, hands-on learning, learn by doing.

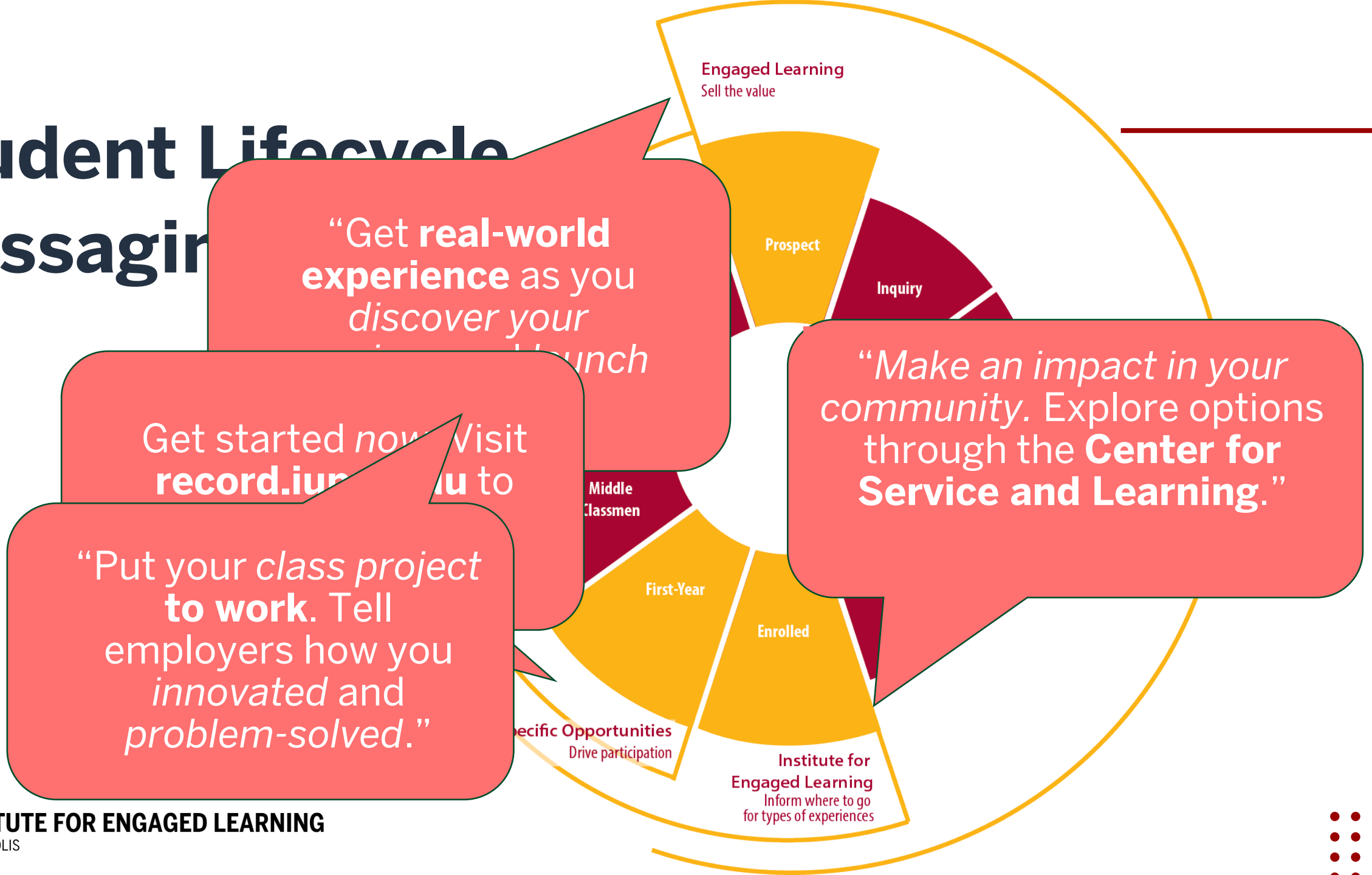
Second-Level, IUPUI Language	
More complex terms, characteristics of high-impact practices.	Applied learning, experiential learning, career preparation.

Final-Level, Employer Language	
Translate academic verbiage to terms employers seek.	Problem-solving, communicating, collaborating, innovating.

Student Lifecycle Messaging



Student Lifecycle Messagir



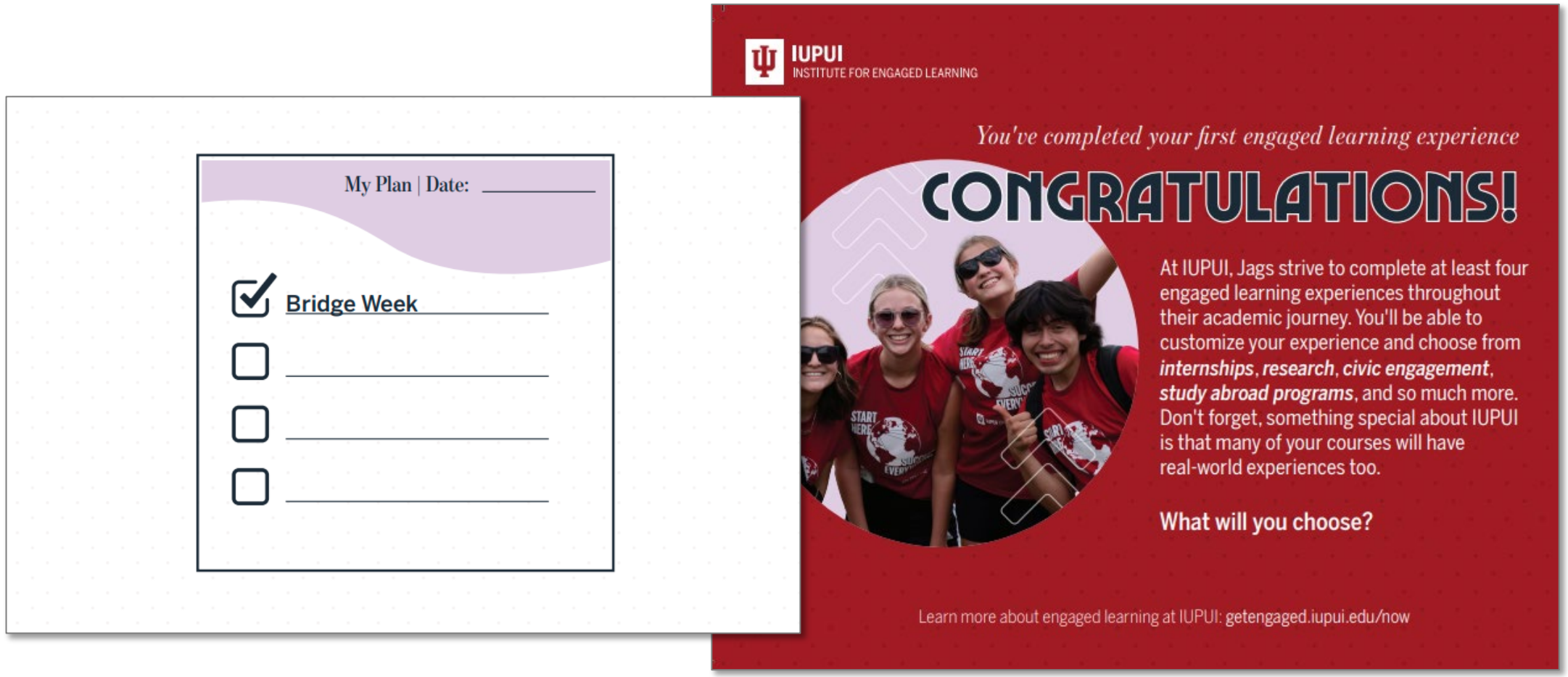
"Get **real-world experience** as you *discover your unch*

Get started *now*. Visit **record.iu u** to

"Put your *class project* **to work**. Tell employers how you *innovated* and *problem-solved*."

"*Make an impact in your community*. Explore options through the **Center for Service and Learning**."

Examples of Implementation



Examples of Implementation

IU-Indianapolis 2030

Objective: Career readiness. Ensure all degree programs include integrated experiential learning experiences to help students become more career-ready and competitive in the job market.

> ***Metric:*** *Embed experiential learning opportunities (e.g., internships, service learning, research) into 100% of undergraduate degree programs.*

Source: IUPUI Strategic plan, https://strategicplan.iupui.edu/Pillars-Goals-Champions/student-success-opportunity

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Thanks!