

# NSSE/ACUHO-I Housing Study: Reflections on Three Years of Research



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# Research Project Overview & Timeline

## ACUHO-I's Research Grant Prompt:

*What is the impact of living on campus on a college student's broadly identified experience and success?*

## Our Research Timeline

**February 2017** – Submitted proposal: *Campus Housing, Student Engagement and Persistence: A Multi-Institutional Study*

Data sources: National Survey of Student Engagement, National Student Clearinghouse, Campus Housing Index

**Spring 2017** – Awarded grant

**Summer & Fall 2017** – Question set development and testing, school recruitment

**Spring 2018** – Data collection

**Summer 2018** – First-look at the results

**Fall 2018** – Start primary investigation

**Winter 2019** – Received persistence data

**Summer 2021** – Formal study close

Study Archive: <https://go.iu.edu/2dLT>

# Study Background

Has the impact of living on campus changed?

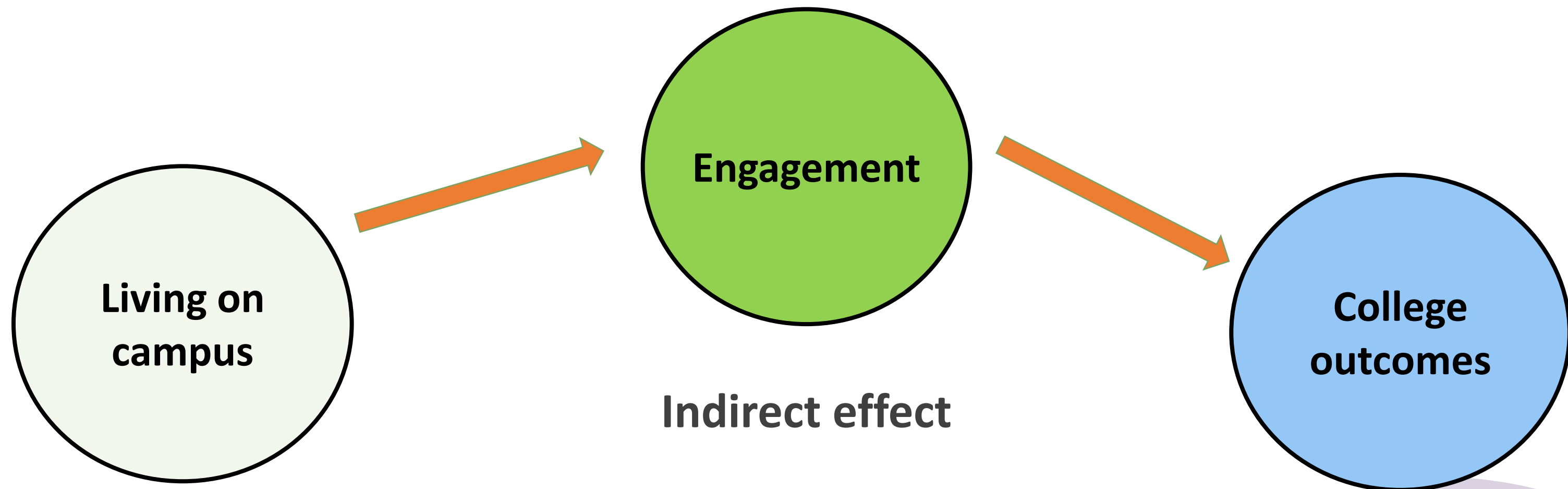


Living on-campus was “the single most consistent within-college determinant of the impact of college.”

*-Pascarella and Terenzini (1991)*

# Study Background

Has the impact of living on campus changed?



**Current research suggests the efficacy of residence life is conditional on increasing student engagement.**

Data Source:  
The National Study  
of Student  
Engagement

**WHO:** First-year and senior students seeking bachelor's degrees; Sophomores were included for this study

**WHAT:** Student and institutional time and effort toward educational purposeful activities

# Supplemental questions about student living arrangements

Visit:

[nsse.indiana.edu/research/special-projects/housing-study/index.html](https://nsse.indiana.edu/research/special-projects/housing-study/index.html)

# Data Source: National Student Clearinghouse

Data exchange demands  
across K-20 education

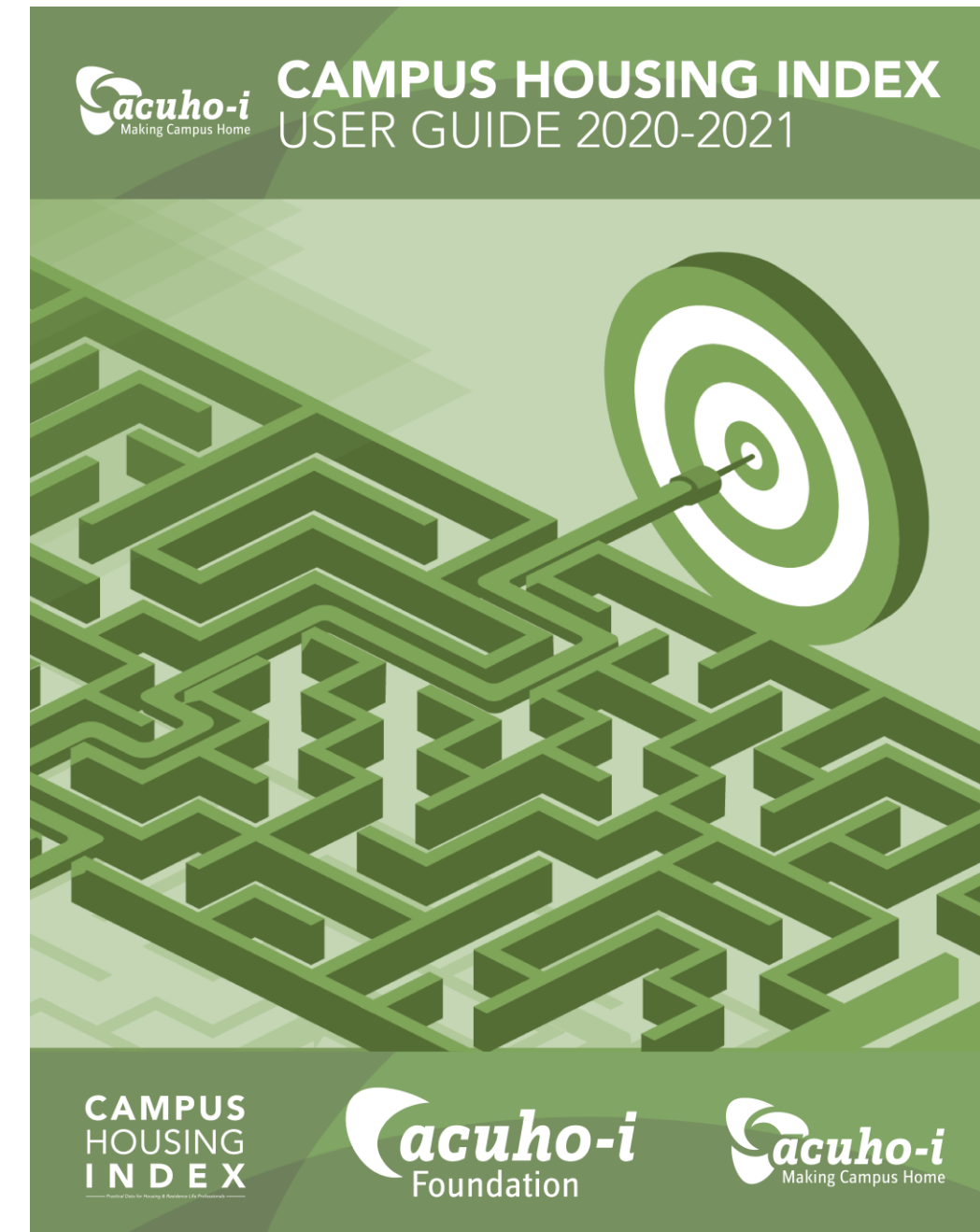
- ✓ Reporting
- ✓ Research
- ✓ Verification
- ✓ Transcript

# Spring-to-fall persistence



# Data Source: Campus Housing Index

ACUHO-I campus  
operations survey



# NSSE Sample

76 institutions

~26,000 First-Year Students

~18,000 Sophomores

~30,000 Seniors



# SELECTED FINDINGS

# Living Arrangement Classifications



Living on campus (reference group)



Living off campus – not with family



Living off campus – with family

Living On  
Campus  
Benefits  
Persistence

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## **On-campus first-year students:**

2% pts. higher than off-campus peers

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## **On-campus sophomores:**

2.2% pts. higher than off-campus peers

# Living on Campus Benefits Persistence

## **Prioritize engaging and supportive environments for first-year student success**

- on-campus integrated, holistic housing
- social programs
- activities involving faculty
- advising
- academic support services
- diversity programs
- class meetings
- collaborative study
- health and wellness programs

## **Attend to sophomore-specific concerns**

- apartment-style living areas or public-private partnerships (P3s)?
- exploring major and career pathways
- leadership opportunities
- academic support services
- civic engagement

# Living- Learning Communities

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**Overall:** 2.2% pts. increase  
in persistence

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**Male participants:** 4.7%  
pts. increase in  
persistence in comparison  
to non-male counterparts

Notes: First-year only; in comparison to on-campus  
peers; other characteristics held constant

# LLCs Have Broad Positive Influences on Engagement

LLC residents...

- participated in educationally purposeful activities in their place of residence at higher levels than their non-LLC peers
- were more engaged in academically beneficial activities than their non-LLC peers
- viewed their environments as more supportive than their non-LLC peers



# LLC as a High-Impact Practice

*LLCs appear to be the best practice for residence life during the first college year.*

- ✓ Prioritize making LLCs available to as many first-year students as possible
- ✓ Design LLCs to encourage male participation
- ✓ Design LLCs to be a holistic collaboration between student affairs and academic affairs

# Students of Color Benefit From Selecting Their Roommates

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**Asian, Black, and multiracial students** who chose their roommates perceived a substantially more welcoming campus environment than their same-race peers for whom the institution assigned a roommate.

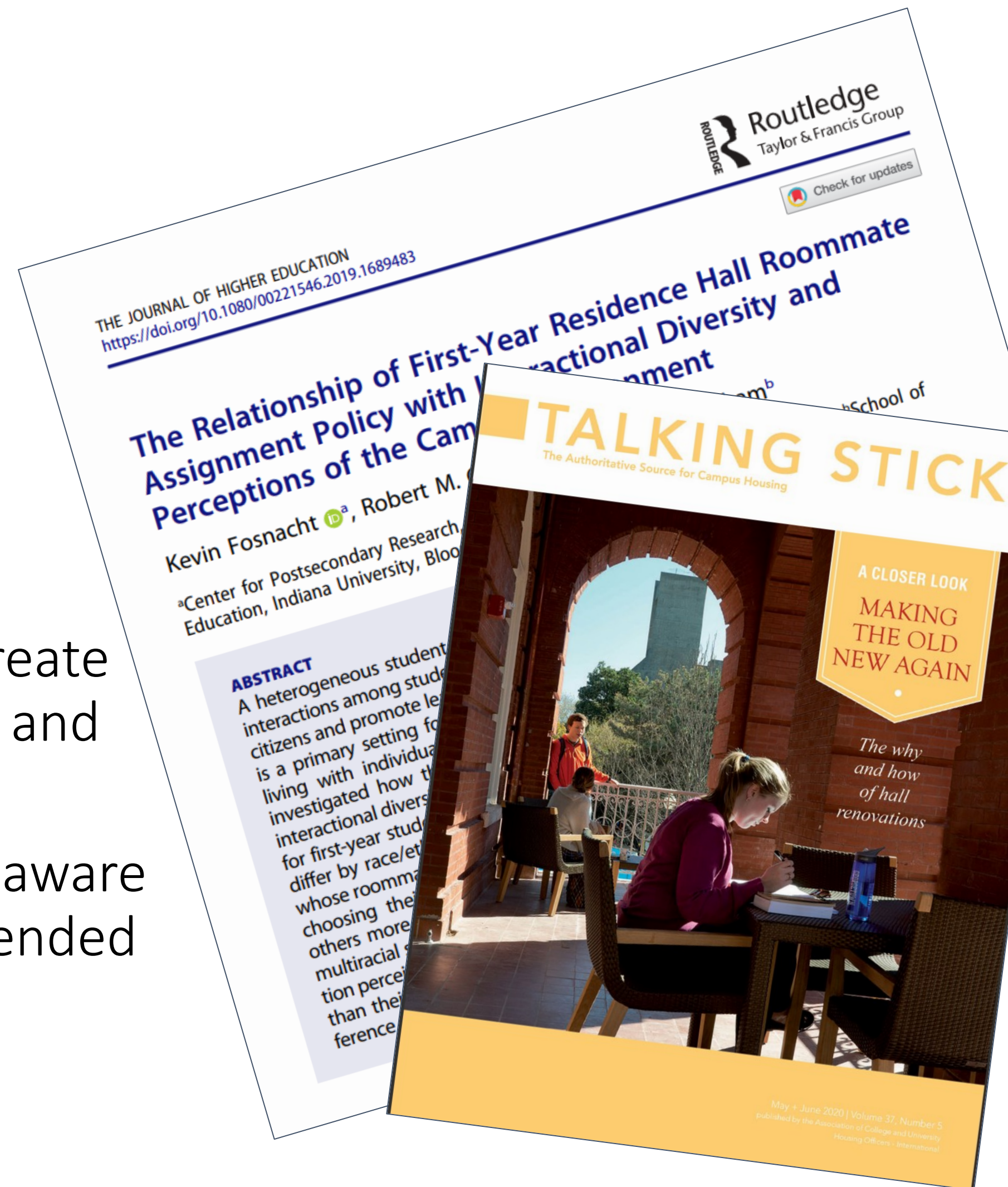
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While **40% of White** first-year students chose their roommates, only **about a quarter of Asian, Black, and Latino** students and 30% of multiracial students did the same.



# Students of Color Benefit From Selecting Their Roommates

- ✓ Allow students to choose their roommates and make this process more accessible for students of color
- ✓ Cultivate and enhance programs for students of color to help them make social connections early, particularly before enrollment
- ✓ Help students of color discover and create safe spaces within the residence halls and on campus in general
- ✓ When considering policy changes, be aware of and take precautions against unintended consequences for students of color



## A cautionary tale...

*“We just thought that [randomly selected roommates] would be a better approach”*

*-a VPSA*

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Need to assess program/policy changes prior to implementation

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Examine if change has adverse impacts on important subpopulations

# Living On Campus Differs by Background

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**Lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, and questioning or unsure** students were more likely to live on campus than straight students

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Students with **mental health** disorders were more likely to live on campus compared to peers

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**White & Black** students live on campus more often than Latinx or Asian peers

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In many instances, the combination of underrepresented backgrounds, particularly, **Asian and Pacific Islander**, and living on campus contributed to more positive outcomes (e.g., belonging)

# Living On Campus Differs by Background

- ✓ Assess why students choose to live on or off campus to improve residence life programming and staff training
- ✓ Evaluate the unique intersections of student identities and their housing location
- ✓ Ensure programming and staff training are catered to the needs of specific residents (i.e., RAs may need different or additional training to meet residents' needs)
- ✓ Residential units may wish to develop additional resources or adopt policies to improve experiences of underserved groups

# CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

# Questions to Consider for Your Campus

1. Why do first-year students leave your institution? What can be done within your residential communities to reduce that number?
2. What opportunities do your sophomores have to live on campus? How can your housing programs better market the benefits of the experience to them? What are the possibilities to create housing tailored for sophomores?
3. How can you strengthen academic and student-affairs collaborations to recruit students, promote core activities, and bolster the effects of your living-learning communities?
4. How can your housing programs develop and strengthen living learning communities to serve more students, to recruit males in particular, and to bolster their positive effects?
5. When implementing new policies, what steps do you take to ensure the policies do not have adverse impacts on historically marginalized students?

# Moving the Research Forward

1. How can we identify specific microclimates that promote student success (e.g., floor communities, room assignments, amenities)?
2. We have witnessed a change in how living arrangements influence students. Will it change again?
3. How can we tailor the living experience to students' diverse needs?
4. How do newer forms of housing (e.g., P3s, building styles) influence college outcomes?
5. How else does class year influence the housing needs of students?

# Discover More

Study Archive

<https://go.iu.edu/2dLT>

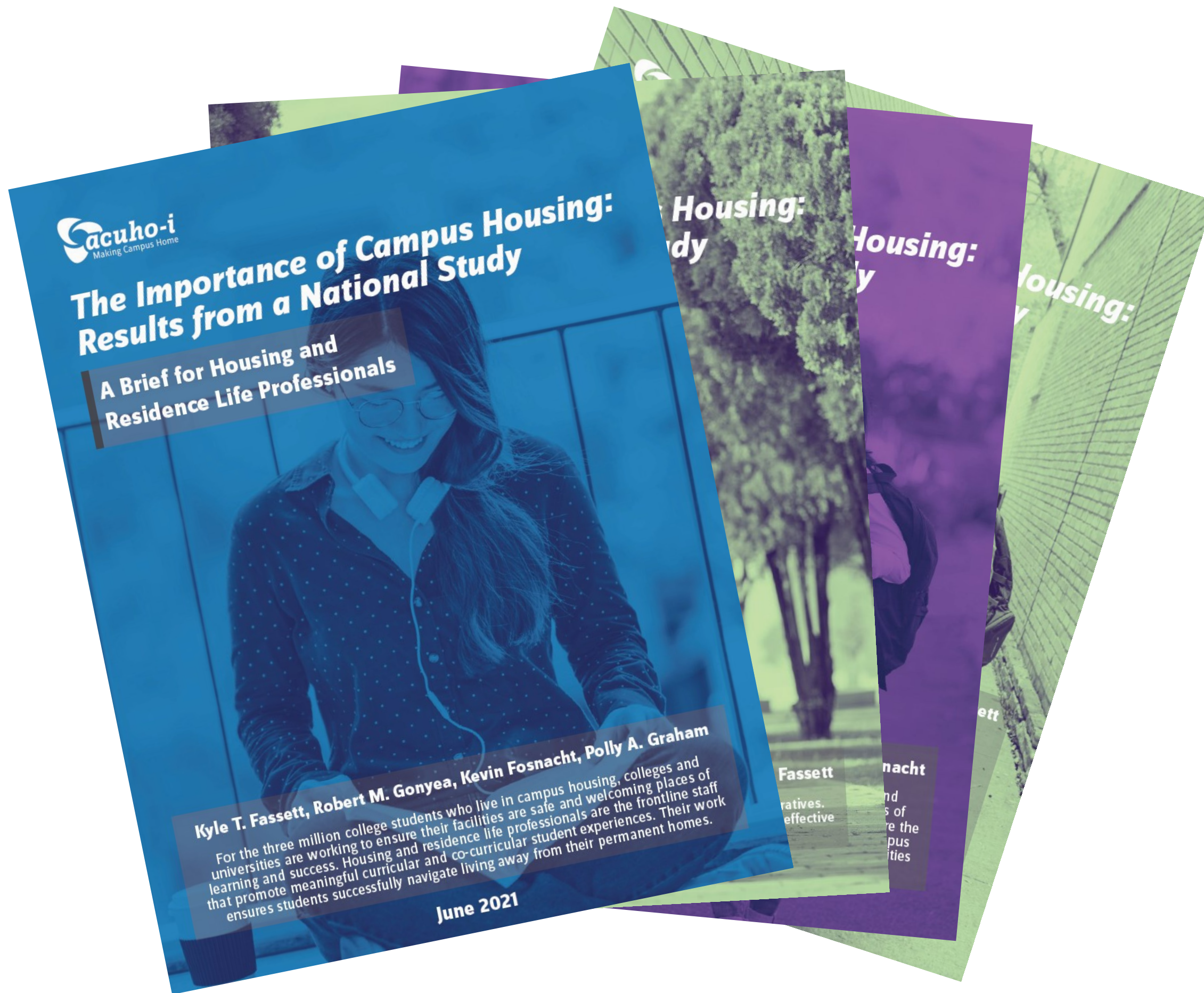
Interactive Data Display

<https://go.iu.edu/3T33>

Check out all our work!  
Past presentations and papers  
More to come







# Coming Soon!



CONFERENCE & EXPO  
June 22-24, 2021  
Virtual



# THANK YOU!



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