UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE: 
A STUDENT AFFAIRS CASE STUDY 

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this case study is to describe the process of organizational restructuring and redesign within the division of student affairs at an institution of higher education. The literature review I conducted includes a review of structural organizational theory, a breakdown of the various types of organizational structures, and an outline of the strengths and weaknesses of the current organizational forms currently used in higher education. I used a qualitative within-site case study approach of the organizational change that occurred in the summer of 2011 with the arrival of a new Vice Chancellor for Student Life at Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis. This study includes a detailed description of the chronology of the change process and a thematic analysis of the change that occurred.

The primary implication garnered from this case study is that student demographics and needs should determine how a student affairs organization is designed. The secondary implication is the balance between input and decision-making when it comes to organizational change. CSAOs should be cognizant of the division and campus culture before taking the executive decision approach.