Imagine ways to address the needs of students who conclude they cannot afford to stay.

The following are the main reasons why students have considered transferring or why fellow students have transferred:

1) The cost of housing is too high. Many who have stayed have decided to live off-campus in order to save money as a means to stay enrolled.
   - Consideration: If NIU requires students to stay in campus housing for 1 or 2 years, will this deter future students from attending NIU?

2) There are too many fees.
   Comments:
   o Fees I have to pay do not apply to activities or services I use.
   o Reduce fees without reducing programs.
   o Eliminate unnecessary additional program requirements and the positions for the additional programs. Saves students and NIU money.
   o Pay for parking permit and still cannot find a place to park.

To help those with financial concerns, some students offered the following suggestions:

- Offer a financial incentive for referring new students to NIU
- Provide more on-campus employment opportunities and keep the web site current
- Offer more Graduate Assistantships
- Find ways to cut expenses instead of finding new ways to get money from students

Table 7 Observations:

- Living in the Residence Halls was the most frequent issue mentioned by students. Making Room & Board more affordable may be a means to attract and retain more students.
  - Offer some sort of discount to students upon their return each semester
  - Offer discounted rates to students who commute from distances of more than 1 hour to attract students to NIU Housing
  - Offer, pet-friendly housing on campus.

- Many students went to community colleges first and transferred to NIU. Recruiting more from community colleges and making transfer as seamless as possible could help attract more transfer students. Build/Enhance partnerships with community colleges to ensure most credits will transfer.

- Offer 4-year financial plan counseling to students and parents. Require a session if there are financial “red flags”. Possible alumni volunteer opportunity.

- More Undergrad-Grad combined program offerings (like Political Science - Law)

- Help reduce fees and increase participation in NIU activities.
  - Students using the rec center x number of times, get x% reduction in the facility fee
  - Students attending x number of athletic events, get x% reduction in their athletic fee
  - Students attending x number of SA events, get x% reduction in their activity fee

- Provide international students with a variety of support resources in a Welcome to NIU toolkit or team with Student Ambassadors. Greater effort to help them acclimate to DeKalb-NIU culture, to assist with English language issues, to familiarize with technology, to learn of resources available on campus, etc.