

Institutional Research Committee Report  
May 2018

**Committee Members:**

Claudia Youakim, SCAS (Chair)  
Fred De Yampert, VP of Academic Affairs  
Erin Barnett, Dean of Students  
Collin Saint-Onge, Director of Admissions  
Kelly Dostaler, Coordinator of Admissions Operations  
Hanuu Leppanen, Institutional Research Member  
Scott Blake, Information Technology

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**General Purpose:** To aid in the timely collection, analysis, and dissemination of institutional related information.

**Primary functions:**

1. Build Institutional Research (IR) for improved student-related data collection and use in decision-making;
  2. Collaboration with assessment committee on data collection and analysis;
  3. Collaboration with departments to identify and plan data collection needs.
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**2017-2018 Goals** (in no particular order):

- Hannu to Scott transition in the collection and analysis of data;
- Meet with Chair of Assessment Committee to collaborate;
- Identify the data collection across campus;
- Streamlining the data retrieval process by adding/purchasing a “primary sport code.”
- Adding a member from the registrar’s office to the committee.

**Accomplishments:**

- Met with Chair of Assessment Committee (Denise) to collaborate as expected in our primary committee functions (team);
- Made a case for the “primary sport code” to be added to Empower (team);
- Met with the management team to push for the primary sport code (Fred);
- Created a form and corresponded with department chairs and directors, university-wide, to identify specific data collection processes (Claudia);
- Identified university-wide strategies on data collection efforts (Claudia);
- Provided Hannu and Scott with a list of the descriptive statistics necessary to measure student academic performance (Claudia);
- Initiating/reviving an IR committee on campus (Claudia)
- Scott Blake is taking over for Hannu Leppanen

**Shortcomings:**

- Unable to streamline the data retrieval process by adding/purchasing a “primary sport code.”
  - Although Fred met with the management team to discuss the importance to include a primary sport code in Empower, the

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\$1200 that it would cost is not a feasible expense. The feedback included, “it is not a priority,” and the cost is too high. This request is not new to persons who work to retrieve data from Empower, including the Dean of Students (Erin Barnett), the Registrar (Jason Sullivan), IT (Hannu and Scott Blake), which have previously mentioned their failed request to include this code in previous years (and how it’s been a great setback for data retrieving and analysis purposes). This is a major setback for IR (see General Purpose, and Primary Functions). To be clear, without the primary sport code, as it stands, the following list of problems are at hand:

- Unable to identify students who perform in primary sports;
  - Unable to identify students who perform in more than one sport;
  - Unable to identify students who are active or inactive athletes;
  - Unable to retrieve basic descriptive statistics due to time-consumption of staff;
  - Uneconomical use of staff members due to unnecessary manual labor;
  - Introducing human error in manual labor (tallying students who participate in sport by hand); etc.
  - In sum, the requests for data were unable to be satisfied due to the non-existent primary sport code. We cannot assess student academic outcomes in a meaningful way without the code.
- Adding a member from the registrar’s office to the committee.
    - Jason Sullivan had too many committee obligations and Tracy Henderson was transitioning into her new position as Asst. Registrar.
  - Hannu to Scott transition was unproductive for the data retrieval processes/IR in general; Scott will need assistance moving forward, as it is impossible for one-person to handle IR needs (see recommendations below).

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**Recommendations for 2018-2019:**

The purpose of the committee, “to aid in the timely collection, analysis, and dissemination of institutional related information,” will continue to be a challenging task without the following necessary changes:

- (1) IR Committee needs to include persons who have expertise in quantitative and/or qualitative methods / analysis, and persons working directly with institutional data. These should include:

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- a. A social scientist (recommended: Richard Gee has previously shown interest in working on IR, and he would be a good liaison between the Assessment Committee and IR);
  - b. Registrar's Office Staff Member (recommendation: Jason Sullivan)
  - c. Dean of Students (preference: Erin Barnett to stay on committee)
  - d. The committee needs a statistician (Jason Oyadomari has shown interest)
- (2) Include a primary sport code into Empower;
- (3) Hire a part-time quantitative data analyst, if at all possible, in the future; It is necessary to have a full-time person or persons to handle Institutional Research for data collection, retrieval, and assessment. Although there was a transition from Hannu to Scott this academic year, the data retrieval process, was non-existent – although each party appeared confident in completing the task, individually (Hannu was given the task in October; Scott in January). With the sport code in place, it would be available at the click of a button to persons who had Empower data access. The Chair of the committee should have these Empower privileges.
- (4) Highlight department-specific successes, e.g. Art and Design has a high retention rate... showcase that on institutional website.