



FINLANDIA
UNIVERSITY

DATA GOVERNANCE GUIDE

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS &
INNOVATION

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INTRODUCTION WHY DATA IS IMPORTANT

Facing an ever-changing landscape in higher education, it is vital to inform institutional decision making and strategic planning through data; providing transparency to campus and community constituents.

The data and its secured architecture, drive decision making processes extending across the University, encompassing the student's entire experience to help support and contribute to their success at Finlandia.

Data originates and funnels through Finlandia offices and departments including but not limited to: Admissions, Financial Aid, Registrars, Academics and Advising, Student Support, Career and Vocation services, Athletics, etc. The *Institutional Planning Council* (IPC) will act as the *Data Governance Council* whose key members are designated as *Data Stewards*.

To achieve data-guided success, *all* underlying data in this architecture must be reliable, timely, accurate, and available.

The DAMA Dictionary of Data Management defines *Data Governance* as:

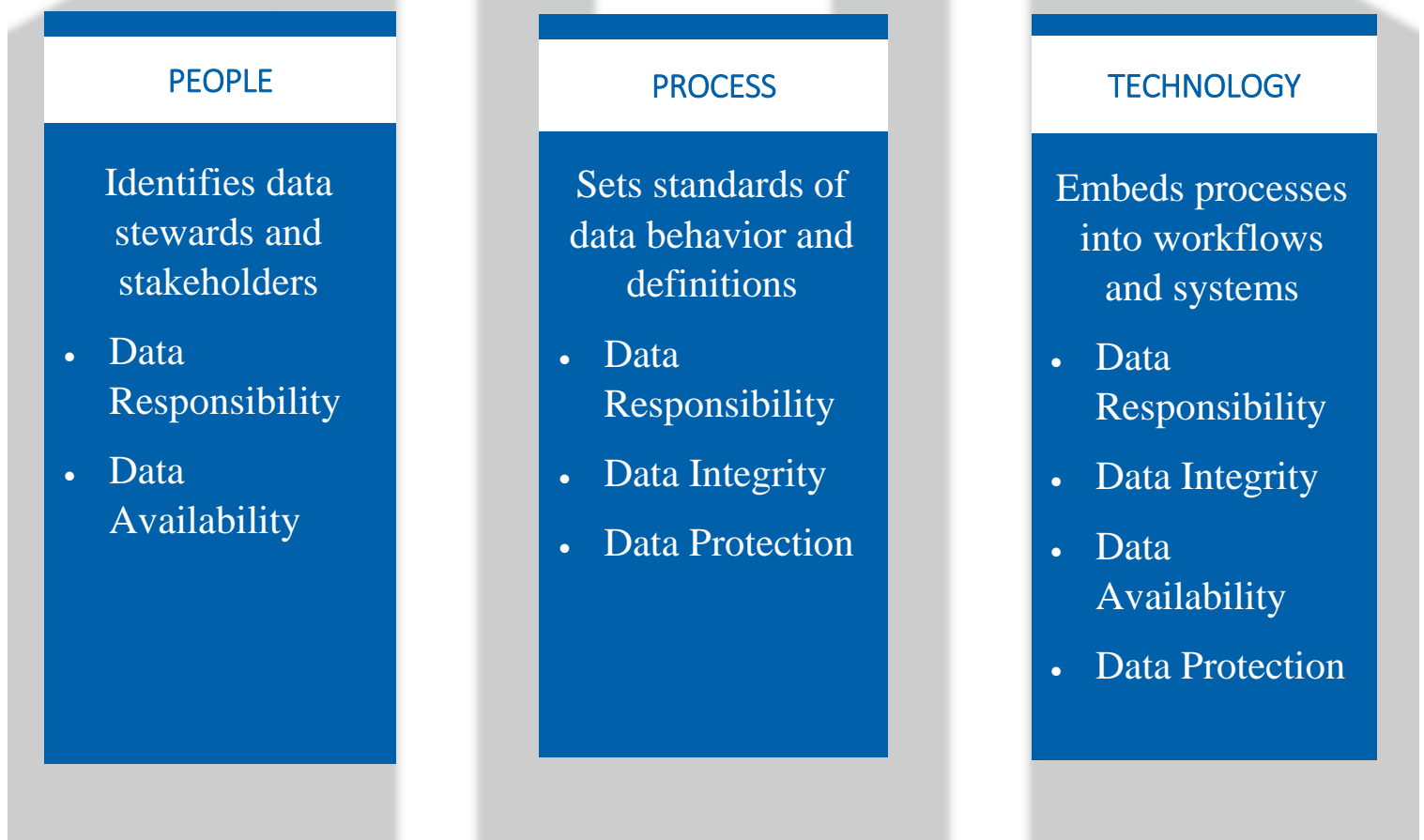
The exercise of authority, control, and shared decision making (planning, monitoring and enforcement) over the management of data assets.

Fundamental Outcomes of Data Governance

- **Data Responsibility** – To ensure clear understanding of who is responsible for what data
- **Data Integrity** – To ensure data is reliable and used consistently across University
- **Data Availability** – To ensure only qualified people are accessing the proper data
- **Data Protection** – To ensure data is secure and individual privacy is protected

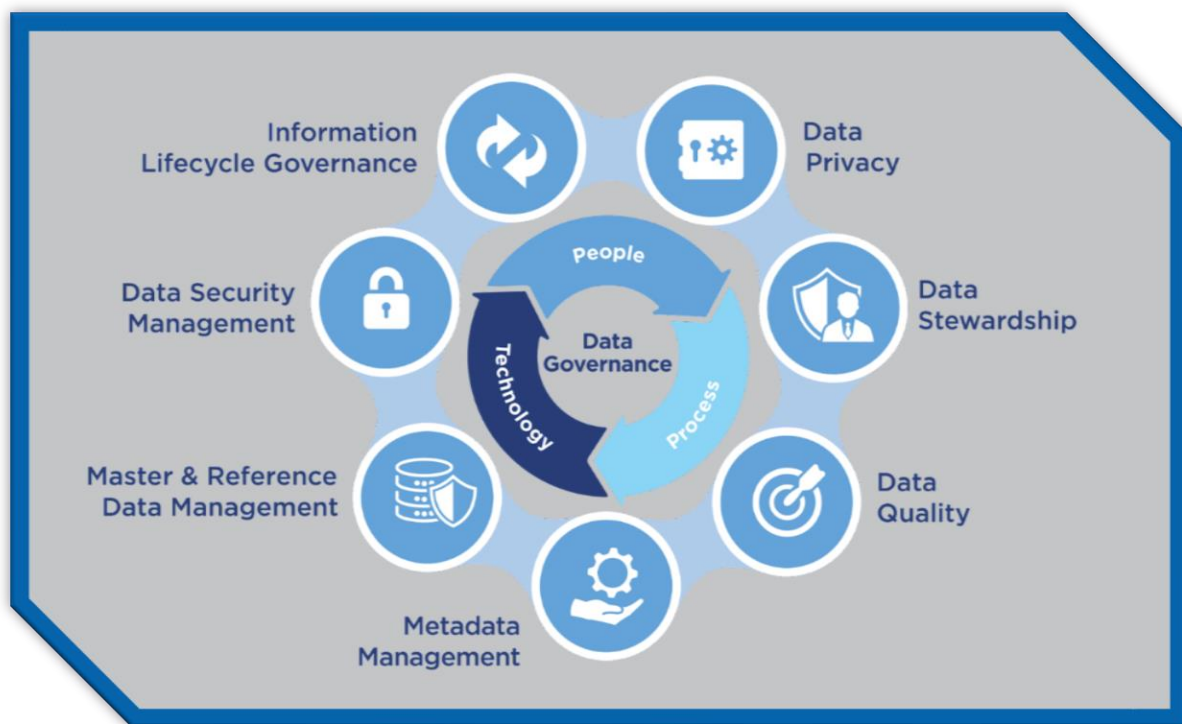
*[See Section 4 - Assessment](#) for more detailed information on outcomes and their measurement.

The guide is built on three foundational pillars that encompass one or more of the Fundamental Outcomes of Data Governance:



DATA MANAGEMENT

- This Guide directly applies to all employees (or Finlandia Community Members) and their supervisors who are inputting, safeguarding or consuming Finlandia Data.
- This Guide applies to all sources of data regardless of format (hard copy, digital, etc.) and regardless of source location.
- In order for Finlandia to effectively manage data and ensure the safety of data, it is vital all employees (or Finlandia Community Members) interacting with said data receive training and information regarding the use, distribution and security.



<https://edge.siriuscom.com/data/8-ways-to-ensure-a-strong-data-governance-framework>

SECTION ONE PEOPLE

Representing program or department stakeholders warehousing data throughout the University, IPC members designated as *data stewards* operate as the data key-holders for their given area.

Data stewards will serve as their department's data subject matter expert. They will be trained and empowered to execute data quality checks and remediations where necessary. They will also assist in the collection and distribution of critical data across campus.

Data stewards and areas they represent bring additional technical, functional, policy, and data content knowledge to the University. Each data steward is essentially the owner over their specific area's data. This ownership brings responsibility to the individual. The responsibility includes safeguarding initiatives, data accuracy and quality checks, defining data definitions, and managing data sources. It is vital that all data stewards understand the importance of their task and will complete training modules in Canvas to ensure consistency.

Examples of identified key stakeholders who understand the data from all perspectives include: Registrar, Financial Aid or other Student Support Services, Deans or other Department Heads, and IT. All of these stakeholders are key resources for bringing the data together within the Data Governance structure. This group may include other subject matter experts to expedite and bolster the process.



DATA ADMINISTRATION

Ownership

- All data internal, collected, and compiled through Finlandia services, tools, faculty, and staff is the property of Finlandia University.
- All Finlandia community members are charged with appropriate use and safety of University data.
- The statements listed above apply to all formats and all source locations.

Stewardship

- The Institutional Effectiveness & Innovation (IEI) office and IPC Data Stewards are responsible for developing common data dictionaries and creation of data governance/management *policies*.
- IEI will be the primary point for ensuring data integrity and implementing resolution to data discrepancies as needed. Resolution will occur through the use of Data Stewards who are responsible for input, submission, and/or capture of data.
- See [Appendix A: Finlandia Data Stewards chart](#) for a list of personnel and departments.

Training

All data stewards and Finlandia community members will receive necessary training for their level of access and scope of work. IEI and the IPC Data Stewards will maintain oversight in the training process.

Why Training is Important



Without effective training, data inconsistencies can occur. For example, free form fields can be used differently across departments, having a negative impact on the value of that field and how we use it. Then the accuracy of the data is affected with regards to reporting and analytics.

Additionally, if proper training is not implemented, data errors might go unnoticed and not corrected, further impacting our data accuracy and integrity.

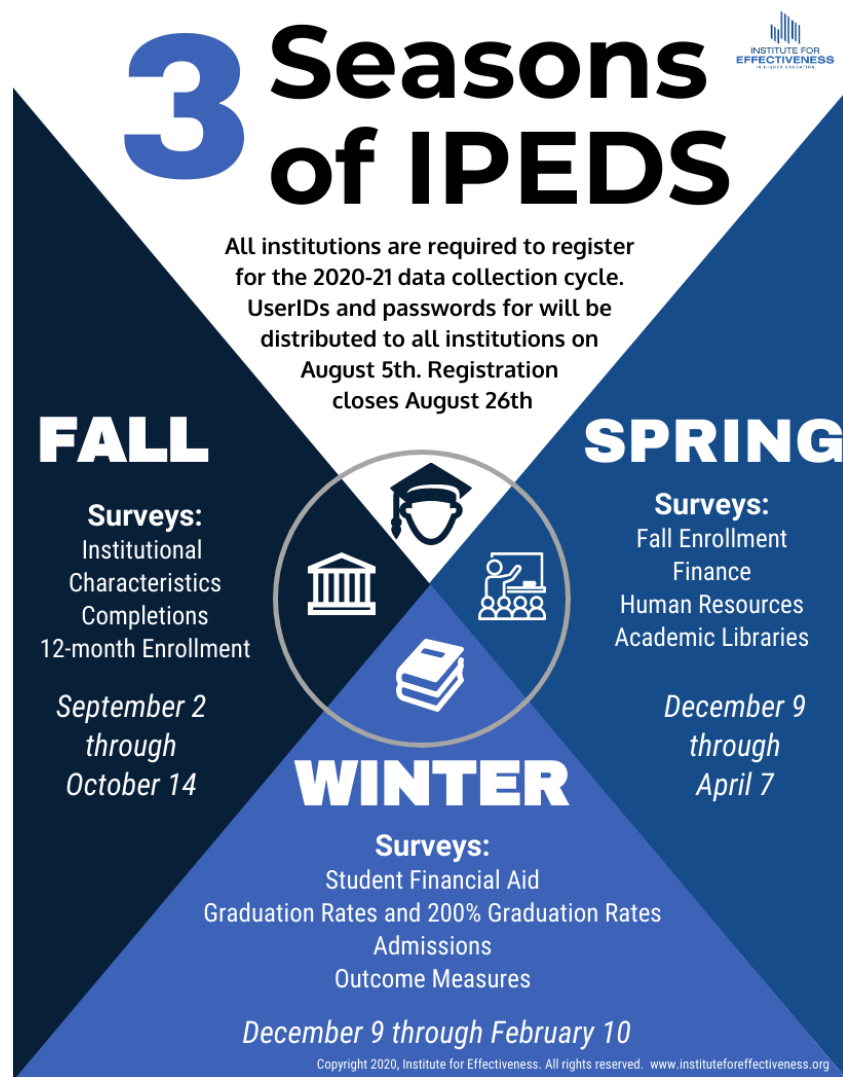
Investment in our training and education in data governance is crucial. The training is what will ensure that the **people** component of data governance provides the maximum value, and contributes to the overall success of Finlandia.

EMPOWER Training:

- EMPOWER operates on core modules: AT (Admissions), SR (Student Records), FA (Financial Aid), SB (Student Billing), and 5 Ancillary Modules.
- EMPOWER prefers that at least two individuals are trained within each module. This training is provided from EMPOWER as needed, and these two individuals are key data stewards for their perspective areas.
- Once the stewards are trained they will receive a login for the EMPOWER Concern System that allows them to submit problem tickets as necessary.

- This ticketing system is for low-level and low-risk problems. If our internal system is unable to resolve the issue, the ticket will be escalated by REMC-1. This process leads to an improved experience with Empower and an overall healthier data-driven culture.

[*IPEDS Training*](#) is essential to overall Finlandia financial security as it relates directly to federal financial aid reporting. Click on the image below for a link to the IPEDS Handbook:



For additional information please see:

[*IPEDS–Purposes and Uses of Survey Data.*](#)

SECTION TWO PROCESS



Process drives and sets standards of data behavior by formulating a consistent usage and interpretation of the data with data definitions. These data definitions are used in the creation of policies and bring consistency in data usage across the University.

Policy guidance will at minimum cover the following: **Data Standards**, **Error Correction**, and **Data Handling** of all processes that protect individual privacy and ensure data security.

The policies developed and implemented by IEI and the Data Governance Council (IPC) will define how data is appropriately stored, advanced, transformed/alterd, retrieved/accessed, and secured. To ensure effective control and positive outcomes an audit schedule and monitoring process will be implemented.

Incorrect or poorly developed processes lead to inconsistent data quality and accuracy loss. The processes, while following necessary guidelines, must reflect the overall needs, goals, and/or desired outcomes of Finlandia University.

DATA STANDARDS

Data Definition Requirements:

Descriptive: A data definition should be well written, describing in detail the meaning of the term or data point. This definition will provide the context for how the data is being used and viewed.

Contextual: Understanding how the data is used across the University in any specific context is vital to defining the data and connecting data groups.

Quality Statement for Data Definitions:

- A definition is **unique**, separated from all other data definitions
- A definition is **clear**, allowing for only one interpretation
- A definition is **stated as what it is** more than what it is not
- A definition is *defined with* an understood “**common use**” **abbreviations**, only when needed
- A definition is the **primary definition**, free of any underlying definitions

*See [Appendix B for Data Definitions](#)

Data Classification

Data classifications fall into three categories:

1. **External Use Permitted**: *Available to share with Community and other outside sources.*
2. **Internal Use Only**: All Faculty and Staff with *no external distribution*.
3. **Internal Use Restricted**: *Leadership only* (Management Team & Board of Trustees).

Access and Confidentiality

Access to Finlandia data will be granted based on the needs of the user. All Finlandia data should be used to bolster operations, improve strategic planning, and improve student success. Employees will be granted access to data under these conditions only. Preventing unauthorized use and misuse is a team effort and all members of the Finlandia community are responsible.

Error Correction

Data Validation

The Institutional Effectiveness & Innovation (IEI) office will assist Data Stewards in the validation and correction of data inconsistencies as found through data audits. IEI will use a yearly data auditing cycle to uncover potential areas of concern.



Data Handling

Reporting and Distribution

IEI will be the primary owner responsible for Reports and Distribution of data. An exception may be made for Data Stewards dispensing information to their internal teams, departments. All other data requests and reports should come through the IEI. Each request will be evaluated based on the guidelines delineated in this document.

Data Management Roles

[The Institutional Effectiveness & Innovation \(IEI\) office](#) operates as a centralized data-hub to provide and promote a more intuitive, analytical presentation and strategic use of data across the University for *quality assessment* and operates as data architect expert to assist in understanding data formatting and structure.

[Data Stewards](#) – Key resources identified by leadership who have insight and knowledge into how the data should be consumed and interpreted (Deans, Other Department Heads, Registrars, Student Support Services, etc.).

SECTION THREE TECHNOLOGY

Technology will be used to assist with data governance, but is not capable of performing data governance. Data governance has more to do with people and their behavior than it does data. Data governance cannot be solved with technology alone.

Technology *supports* data governance in the following ways:

- Data transparency, a shared knowledge-base, and dictionary management
- Data integrity and quality analysis
- Data processing and system-training management

Technology will not:

- Repair broken processes
- Implement organizational or cultural change

Choosing the right technology is crucial for managing risk and obtaining maximum [*return on investment \(ROI\)*](#) from data governance across all University departments. The objective to consider with technology solutions is procuring and supplying the campus community with a sustainable infrastructure that utilizes and aggregates strategic data for reporting and research while supporting the University's mission.

Another key consideration is to think of the needed components to design/adopt a strong data architecture with technology that at once supports compliance in alignment with University goals/requirements and is also capable of accommodating future changes. A strong data governance framework will assist with risk assessments and ongoing monitoring. Results of assessment activities should in turn both inform and drive proactive data governance management.

When strategic data and technology solutions are implemented along with established and defined people and policies, the quality of data will increase by providing clarity with definitions in addition to supplying effective tools for conducting meaningful assessments.

Strategic data and technology solutions can also increase efficiency by freeing staff from manual data entry and other inefficient processes or steps to shift the focus onto the data. This will be achieved through automation technology and partnering with [REMC-1](#) for more data technology solutions.



SECTION FOUR ASSESSMENT

The *Plan* for data governance assessment begins with identifying and modeling the *who, what, when, why, and how* of all University data systems. Finlandia will accomplish this through the use of surveys, a data governance maturity rubric, checklists, timelines, workshops, ticketing systems, and other forms of communication. IEI and University departments will measure their area’s “data governance maturity” against benchmarked outcome levels and corresponding expectations.

[The Data Governance Survey \(Appendix C\)](#) is part of the initial and ongoing assessment being used to define, establish, and annually assess the people, processes, and technology for Finlandia data systems. Results from this survey will help to continually develop and shape a set of timelines and checklists to assist data stewards with the governance and advancement of their department’s data system(s) within the *Rubric*.

[The Data Governance Assessment Rubric \(Appendix D\)](#) describes developmental maturity *Levels (1 - 5)* to help define and benchmark University department’s governance of their data systems. Using the maturity model below, Data Stewards will rate the *overall* maturity of data governance in their departments *in addition to* relating to the Introduction’s [Four Fundamental Outcomes](#).

When rating your department in [the Rubric](#) or answering [the Survey](#), remember that **Level 1** or “N/A” is an acceptable and important response to understand where we are and how we can grow together in data governance. Additionally, consider the implications when data in one department is not assessed or accurate and how this may impact or impair one or several of the data governance outcomes in other departments across campus.

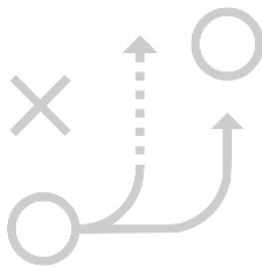
CONCLUSION

This Guide and its assessment plan look to gain greater traction on data governance and reporting within Finlandia by addressing the following seven steps:

1. Define data governance and its steps for each department across Finlandia to lay the foundation for a sound data governance plan. This includes definitions of data governance that all speak to policy, processes, and procedures around standard data definitions as they relate to your department or around state and federal guideline definitions. The agreed upon data definitions will determine the *how*, *why*, and *when* of data collection that is unique to each department.



2. Establish Management Team and Board of Trustee sponsorship to enable the *formal* establishment of a data governance plan. These executive sponsors can clear the path for any political, organizational, and technical challenges.



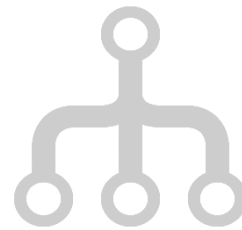
3. Translate institutional strategy into guiding principles, which should be tied directly to Finlandia's overall mission, vision, and commitments.

4. Identify and prioritize the primary needs so that those needs can be prioritized. Identify anything that may hinder the successful implementation of the data governance plan.



5. Build a data governance authority framework to outline the policies and procedures that will facilitate the separation of duties among the various data governance roles established within departments and across campus.

6. Assess technology options to determine whether current data structures and technologies can meet any new data governance needs.



7. Develop a change management plan to ensure we can communicate effectively with stakeholders and achieve buy-in from faculty, staff, and leadership across campus—anyone who will need to share data and use new mechanisms for the process.

APPENDIX A: FINLANDIA DATA STEWARDS

Data Designation	Steward	Data System – Data Type
General Academic Data	Registrar	Empower
Academic Program Data	Deans ISB, ISAD, CHS, SCAS	Empower, Canvas
Financial Aid Data	Director of Student Financial Services	Empower
Admissions Data	Dean of Enrollment	Liaison EMP CRM
Student Conduct Data	Dean of Students	Maxient
Athletic Data	Director of Athletics	Athletics Website Excel
Student Support Services Data	Director Tutoring and Learning Center	Maxient

Data Designation	Steward	Data System – Data Type
Employee Data	Director of Human Resources	ADP
Alumni and Advancement Data	Advancement Leadership	Excel: Power BI
Marketing Data	Director of Marketing and Communication	WordPress – <i>FinnU Website</i> , Paperform, (others...)
Facilities Data	Director of Plant and Facilities	Excel: Power BI
Financial Data	Chief Financial Officer	Sage, IntAcct; TeamPay
Information Technology Data	Institutional Research Manager	Empower, Microsoft, (others...)
Online Academic Data	Director of Online Education	Canvas

Data Designation	Steward	Data System – Data Type
Career Attainment Data	Director of Career Services	Handshake
Library	Head Librarian	Multiple Data Bases
TRiO	TRiO Director; TRiO Data Analyst	Empower
HLC materials for comprehensive evaluations and Assurance Reviews	VPAA; Assessment & Assurance System Coordinator	HLC Assurance System Dashboard

APPENDIX B: DATA DEFINITIONS

[IEI Data Terms Concordance](#) | [Working Definitions List {LINKED}](#)



DATA DEFINITIONS

[Institutional Effectiveness & Innovation](#)

[Institutional Data Reports](#)

IEI has compiled a data terms concordance to provide definitions of terms used in higher education and for your convenience. Current source of terms is IPEDS, but our list will continued to be updated from other sources.

Search By Term

Search By Keyword

Term	Definition	Additional
Term	"Definition"	Related It
Federal Supplementary Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG)	(Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, Title IV, Part A, Subpart 2, Public Laws 89-329, 92-318, 94-482, et al; 20 USC 1070b-1070b-3.) Provides eligible undergraduate postsecondary students with demonstrated financial need with grant assistance to help meet educational expenses. The Supplementary Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG) are made directly to institutions of higher education, which select students for the awards.	
Pell Grant program	(Higher Education Act of 1965, Title IV, Part A, Subpart 1, as amended.) Provides grant assistance to eligible undergraduate postsecondary students with demonstrated financial need to help meet education expenses.	
Perkins Loan program	(Higher Education Act of 1965, Title IV, Part E, as amended, Public Laws 89-329, 92-318, et al; 20 USC 1087aa-1087nh.) Formerly known as National Direct Student Loans (NDSL), the Perkins Loan program provides low interest loans to eligible postsecondary students (undergraduate, graduate, or professional students) with demonstrated financial need to help meet educational expenses.	

APPENDIX C: DATA GOVERNANCE SURVEY –

<https://ygab260m.paperform.co>

The survey assesses the four desired outcomes associated with data governance at Finlandia University. It will be given to all employees annually on or near September 1. The survey will be anonymous and proctored digitally. Resulting data will be shared in the October IPC meeting for continuous quality improvement.

All responses will be structured as: *Agree*, *Disagree*, and *N/A*

1. Data Responsibility

– To ensure clear understanding of who is responsible for what data

Questions:

- a. I understand where to go on campus to find specific data-based information related to academics
- b. I understand where to go on campus to find specific data-based information related to student life
- c. I understand where to go on campus to find specific data-based information related to athletics
- d. I understand where to go on campus to find specific data-based information related to student enrollment
- e. I understand who I should report to regarding any data that I think is incorrect
- f. I understand that every person on campus is responsible for data governance, not just campus leadership
- g. If I want to suggest a change to data policies or procedures, I know who to talk to.

2. Data Integrity

– To ensure data is reliable and used consistently across University

Questions:

- a. I have a general understanding of the shared data definitions used across campus
- b. I have a general understanding of the data definition policy and the steps to change and/or modify any data definition
- c. I understand the process for correcting any questionable data
- d. As a Data Steward, I train the members of my team to use data consistently (if not a designated Data Steward, put N/A)

3. Data Availability

– To ensure only qualified people are accessing the proper data

Questions:

- a. I have a general understanding of the 3 stages of data classification for Finlandia University: External, Internal, Internal Restricted
- b. I understand the term Data Steward and can identify who are the data stewards on campus
- c. As a Data Steward, I have a clear understanding of the levels of Finlandia Data Governance and can direct my team accordingly (if not a designated Data Steward, put N/A)
- d. As a Data Steward, I conduct quality checks on the data I that is under my responsibility (if not a designated Data Steward, put N/A)
- e. I understand that all Finlandia Data will be granted based on the needs of the user

4. Data Protection

– To ensure data is secure and individual privacy is protected

Questions:

- a. I have a general understanding of privacy policies related to student data ([FERPA](#))
- b. I understand that all data, digital and hard copy, falls under data governance guidelines
- c. I understand my responsibilities, including timelines and data processes for [IPEDs submissions](#)

5. General Questions

– To ensure proper education in Data Governance

Questions:

- a. I received and read the Finlandia Data Governance Guide and understand its contents
 - b. I have received adequate training to fully understand my role pertaining to data governance at Finlandia University
 - c. I believe that we need more training in data management at Finlandia.
-

APPENDIX D: DATA GOVERNANCE ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
	Informal	Developing	Adopted and Implemented	Managed and Repeatable	Integrated and Optimized
Data Governance and Strategic Planning	Attention to data governance relating to strategic planning is informal and incomplete. There is no formal governance or planning process.	Data governance relating to strategic planning is forming with a framework for purpose, principles, structures, and roles.	Data governance structures, roles and processes are implemented and fully operational; starting to integrate with strategic planning.	Data governance structures, roles and processes are managed and empowered to resolve data issues; fully integrated with strategic planning.	Data governance program functions alongside strategic planning with proven effectiveness.
Data Responsibility	Roles and responsibilities for data management are informal and loosely defined.	Roles and responsibilities for data management are forming. Focus is on areas where data issues are apparent.	Roles and responsibilities are well-defined and a chain of command exists for questions regarding data and processes.	Expectations of data ownership and valuation of data are clearly defined.	Roles, responsibilities for data governance are well established and the lines of accountability are clearly understood.
Data Integrity	Limited awareness that data integrity problems affect decision-making. Data clean-up is ad hoc.	General awareness of data integrity importance. Data integrity procedures are being developed.	Data issues are captured proactively through standard data validation methods. Data assets are identified and valued.	Expectations for data integrity are actively monitored and remediation is automated.	Data integrity efforts are regular, coordinated and audited. Data are validated prior to entry into the source system wherever possible.
Data Availability	Limited awareness about the value of dependable data.	General awareness of the data issues and needs for strategic decisions.	There is active participation and acceptance of the principles, structures and roles required to implement a formal data availability.	Data is viewed as a critical, shared asset. There is widespread support, participation and endorsement of data availability.	Data availability structures and participants are integral to the organization and critical across all functions.
Data Protection	Information regarding data is limited through informal documentation or verbal means.	Written policies, procedures, data standards and data dictionaries may exist but communication and knowledge of it is limited.	Data standards and policies are communicated through written policies, procedures and data dictionaries.	Data standards and policies are completely documented, widely communicated and enforced.	All employees are trained and knowledgeable about data policies and standards and where to find this information.

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