



The Pathway To Success



We're For Strategic Planning

Goal One:

Increase Enrollment and Student Success

Initiative: 9 Initiative Name: Enhance the gathering and Use of Information

Introduction

Historically, a multitude of data has been available to ISU but it has been difficult to consolidate this data and then turn it into meaningful, usable information. More specifically, the university has not traditionally fully leveraged the power of the data that it collects to gain a better understanding of operational dynamics (for example, student success), to inform decision-making or to monitor progress toward goal achievement at the institutional level. The strategic plan has caused a shift in the way the university sets goals and measures progress against those goals. But in order to achieve its goals, the university must have a means to accurately set a baseline, evaluate work performed, and then adjust its efforts. This requires good information, and good information requires complete, accurate, and accessible data.

Purpose

The products of this initiative allow the university to make better use of the vast array of data in its possession. Staff and faculty can monitor progress toward the achievement of stated goals and initiatives, learn more about the effectiveness and utilization of programs, events and activities, and more easily disseminate information out to students and stakeholders.

As part of the Co-Curricular, Data Warehouse, and Customer Relationship Management projects, data will be gathered, information will be made available, and actions taken to benefit to any and all areas in need. In particular, the data will be used to better tell the university's story in the areas of student success, experiential learning and community engagement by capturing and reporting information that has not been historically found in traditional academic records.

Methods

- Capturing and consolidating key data describing students (often termed co-curricular data)
- Developing a better understanding of student behavior with particular emphasis on co-curricular activities, community engagement, experiential learning activities, etc.
- Selecting and implementing appropriate data warehousing tools that will afford senior administration direct and immediate access to information housed in the data repositories
- Developing information based models (factor analysis) predictive of student success to support the tailoring of services and to support the selection, development and implementation of early intervention strategies
- Disseminating useful and needed information to faculty and staff pro-actively via reporting and targeted communications.
- Initiating data driven action through the use of the Talisma CRM application.



Discussion

Significant progress has been made in the consolidation, transformation, and availability of data and information. Several projects are complete, many are in progress, and there are efforts still to come.

The Co-Curricular Data project is focused on collecting student data to allow an understanding of what our students are doing outside the classroom, allowing modeling of successful students to determine the success of our programs, and facilitating the benchmarking of data for operational purposes. To date, we are tracking data from 21 data collection areas, with three more scheduled to come online in the spring of 2014. This data is currently available to the campus via Argos reports and has now been incorporated into the University data warehouse with dashboards and online reporting to be available early in 2014. The D2K Data Warehouse project will consolidate university data in the data warehouse allowing online analytical processing (OLAP), and includes the aforementioned dashboards and scorecards. Currently, there are 30 student analytic dashboard pages available including data in the areas of retention, graduation, and grades. All are accessible via the D2K portal site. New developments will move attendance and at risk data to the warehouse over the coming year.

Concerning use of the data, a new major project area focuses on expanding the use of the university CRM. Previously used almost exclusively as an Admissions office application, CRM is being taken enterprise wide. Early efforts are focused on laying a cradle to grave framework in which student data is available and actionable for areas to use - from recruitment, during the time a student is enrolled, and continuing into alumni activities and fund raising. Completed projects have the application aiding in the Office of Student Success' retention efforts, the Registrar's Graduation Guarantee communications, and Athletics grade reporting while continuing projects include customers such as Alumni, Nursing, and the College of Technology.

Summary

Much work has been done, and these efforts should be celebrated. Baselines can now be set for many areas and new data can be mined. Various staff members, understanding the importance of the strategic plan and capturing this data, have stepped up to help the initiative, as well as help their departments. However, much work remains. More areas of data must be brought into the fold, more complete data sets must be captured for areas already in the mix. And most importantly, now that the technical capabilities are coming online, staff, faculty, and the key elements of university leadership must shift the culture and thought process towards a data driven methodology to harness the full power of the information at our fingertips. These shifts will include additional resources to serve an increased demand, as well as decisions on how systems will be architected to best serve the university while keeping costs reasonable.

Initiative Chair(s) and Contact Information

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