

Institutional Research and Decision Support News

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IR&DS Staff Update

Missy Damon has left Stanford to take on the challenge of being a full-time mom. Her replacement, Kathryn Potts, will start on September 1.

Therefore we ask for your patience this summer while we are short-staffed. Many of our usual summer-time reports will be delayed until the fall. If you have a need for one of those reports, please contact Rana for a work-around.

Strategic Reporting Initiative Project Update

As discussed in this space last quarter, a project to understand and address the issues related to multiple reporting tools on campus was started in October 2008. The Strategic Reporting Initiative team consists of: Mario Acquesta (HR Information Systems), Pat Deasy (School of Medicine), Tim Flood (Registrar's Office), Andrew Harker (University Budget Office), Vijay Gandra (Administrative Systems), Rana Glasgal (IR&DS), Tana Hutchison (Controller's Office), and Minh Nguyen (Administrative Systems).

The data gathering phase, started in the late fall and completed this spring, consisted of several elements, chief among them a survey of Stanford's peer institutions' use of reporting tools, and an opinion survey of multiple reporting tool users at Stanford.

Learning Assessment– Introduction and Resources

As part of the University's decennial accreditation reaffirmation process carried out through the Western Association of Colleges and Schools (WASC), Stanford faculty, assisted by Jenny Bergeron of IR&DS, are working to create learning outcomes for their academic programs.

Creating learning outcomes is the first step in developing an assessment plan. Learning outcomes are statements of the knowledge, skills and abilities individual students should possess and can demonstrate upon completion of their learning experience. They describe observable be-

The peer survey was sent to all AAU members (Association of American Universities). Sixteen universities responded. We found that many universities are in the same position as Stanford, with multiple reporting tools and environments. The results showed that only 5 schools have a single reporting tool, while 5 others have 2 tools, 3 have 3 tools, and 3 schools have 5 or more tools. The most commonly used reporting tools are Cognos, Hyperion and Business Objects (used by 4, 4, and 3 schools respectively). No particular reporting tool dominated the results.

The other significant piece of data gathering was a survey of users of multiple reporting tools on campus. Conducted in February, the survey was sent to staff who use more than 1 reporting environ-

"We found that many universities are in the same position as Stanford, with multiple reporting tools and environments."

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haviors that allow faculty to know if students have mastered the program's goals.

Learning outcomes can be helpful to both faculty and students in that they guide course and curriculum planning, serve as reference points for program review, and describe general expectations for students so that learning may become more intentional. Just like mission statements, it is important that faculty take ownership in their development as well as in their maintenance. This includes taking time to revisit the program's learning outcomes dur-

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Class of 1998 Alumni Survey

In conjunction with the 30 COFHE colleges and universities (see Fall 2007 newsletter on the IR&DS website for details about COFHE), Stanford recently conducted an Alumni survey. The survey went to members of the Class of 1998 via the Web. 43% of those surveyed sent back a response.

The survey asks alumni about:

- Further education after Stanford
- Current career
- Satisfaction with Stanford education
- Connectedness with Stanford
- Community involvement
- Family
- Participation in Stanford activities
- Satisfaction with preparation for career/graduate education
- Importance Stanford should place on various aspects of education



Currently, IR&DS is analyzing the results, looking at both Stanford compared to its peers as well as comparing the Class of 1998 with the Class of 1994 (surveyed in 2005). In addition, the Class of 1998 was surveyed at the end of their senior year, so we will be looking for longitudinal comparisons. IR&DS hopes that these analyses will provide decision-making context for university administrators.

NRC Assessment of Doctoral Programs

Throughout much of 2007, the NRC collected extensive data about research doctoral programs at universities throughout the United States. Many delays have ensued, but we expect that the NRC will publish a report on their methodology this summer, perhaps even in July (though that is just speculation). Following that, the NRC will publish data and findings, perhaps in September (again, that's just speculation).

As more information becomes available regarding the NRC's timetable, I will let our NRC School Coordinators know. If you don't know who your School Coordinator is, please ask Rana.

In the meantime, here's a limerick written by an IR colleague at another University that sums up what's been going on these last 3 years:

*Doc rankings, we all love to tout
Though their value we're starting to doubt.
We all paid to play
But we can't name the day
That the NRC ratings come out!*

Hope you enjoyed that one as much as I did!

Strategic Reporting, continued

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ment (two or more of Hyperion Planning, ReportMart1, ReportMart3, or DSS). This was about 1800 people. The survey was delivered via the Opinio web survey tool, hosted by Administrative Systems. As an incentive, 5 Jamba Juice gift cards were raffled off to those who completed the survey. The lucky winners were Katrin Wheeler, Margaret M. Mahoney, Dana Shelley, and Lorrie Papadakis, and Tom Goodrich. And we thank all of you reading this newsletter who participated in the survey. It was very helpful information.

The survey asked various questions about users' frequency of interaction with the 4 tools, how easy or difficult they found it to get data, and their priorities for changes or enhancements.

The survey results showed that a majority of reporting tool users prefer to enhance the reports we currently have and improve response time rather than spending time consolidating reporting tools. The highest-priority item on a list of potential projects was improving response time (also known as "performance"). The second-highest priority item was building new reports, followed

by enhancing existing reports, and enabling more ad hoc reporting. Building dashboards, consolidating tools, and creating more inquiry/lookup capabilities within the transaction systems themselves were deemed the least important. In many cases, people commented that they didn't know what a dashboard was, or what an inquiry/lookup tool was, so that might, in part, account for their relative lack of popularity.

When asked to rate the tradeoffs inherent in using resources (people and money) to consolidate reporting tools, 45% said it should be done, but not until other critical needs were met. 36% said it was not worth the cost to consolidate reporting tools. Only 19% said it was "vital" to consolidate reporting tools. This information sent a clear message to the team that users feel there is value to consolidating reporting tools, but for now, there are bigger fish to fry in the reporting realm.

In addition, many respondents entered comments in

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Faculty Data Mart Update

As written about in this newsletter last summer, Rana Glasgal made a presentation to the Systems Governance Group at their 2008 annual meeting, proposing a project to add faculty information to the Enterprise Data Warehouse (EDW) during FY09. In September 2008, SGG announced that the project had been approved for funding. Since then, the project has been going full speed, and is almost ready to go live.

Faculty data is the lynchpin for much of Stanford's information, including advising, teaching, and research. To achieve the ultimate goal of integrating Stanford's administrative data, faculty data is a good place to start! This is the next step on the way to a fully integrated data warehouse and better reporting.

Rana presented the proposal in cooperation with Vijay Gandra, the Director of Data Management and Reporting (DM&R). Vijay's DM&R group has been responsible for the implementation of this project. The project manager is Dilip Kondiparti, and Smitha Rao is the business analyst.

The project began by forming a Focus Group composed of faculty affairs officers around the University. The Focus Group, and others who use faculty data, were asked to meet with the project team to discuss business requirements. From these meetings, the project team came to understand the needs of users of faculty data.

The next step was for the technical team to build a data model. The data model integrates FAAS, PeopleSoft, and Oracle Financials data, so that all three sources of administrative data can be available in a single portal, and a single report.

Concurrently, the project team came up with nine faculty data reports to be released when the project goes live at the end of July. These reports will be available to authorized users via ReportMart3. The reports are:

- Emeriti

- Endowed Chairs
- Non-Employee Affiliates
- Faculty Profile
- Honors and Awards
- Appointment Detail
- Salaries
- Leave Information
- Gains and Losses

These reports are currently being tested and refined by Focus Group members.

Soon, the Campus Readiness effort will begin. On July 9 at 1:30 (Clark Center S361) and July 17th at 9:30 (Encina Commons Room 124), Orientation Road Shows will be held to introduce people who have not been directly involved with the project to the purpose of the Faculty Data Mart, the available reports, and how to get authority to use the reports. Anyone who thinks they might find these reports useful in their work should plan to attend a Road Show to find out more.

Also, 3 training sessions will be held for those who will be using the new reports. These sessions will be held in the Arguello labs on July 16, July 24, and Aug 5. These sessions will be particularly useful for those who have not used ReportMart3 before.

The FDM will use Authority Manager to determine access to reports. One person in each school (typically the faculty affairs director) will be responsible for granting authority to those in their school that need access. Also, requests can be made to Megan Pierson or Lynn Dixon in Faculty Affairs. Contact Rana if you have any questions about this project.

Re-organizing Learning Assessment and Program Evaluation

Lisa Kramer left IR&DS on June 19 to work for Golden Gate University as their new Director of Assessment and Evaluation. She will be designing the architecture through which GGU will assess and evaluate all academic and non-academic programs. She will also be heavily involved in preparing GGU for their WASC Educational Effectiveness review.

IR&DS has decided to transfer Lisa's job duties to Jenny Bergeron, so Jenny will now have responsibility for pro-

gram evaluation as well as her current duties with learning assessment and accreditation. Obviously this will be a very big workload for one person, so Jenny will be hiring an analyst to assist her with survey research and learning assessment. We are looking for someone with an advanced degree (Master's or PhD) and skills in survey research (both qualitative and quantitative). Data mining skills are a plus. A new job description will be posted in July.



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Learning Assessment (Continued from page 1)

ing the program review process.

Creating clearly stated learning outcomes is critical to the assessment process and if overlooked can lead to meaningless assessment and lack of program improvement. Here are some helpful tips in creating learning outcomes. Make sure that learning outcomes are:

- Specific and well defined
- Realistic
- Active and observable
- Framed in terms of the program instead of specific classes that the program offers
- In alignment with the program's curriculum
- Simple and not compound
- Focused on learning products and not the learning process

For example, a learning outcome of "Students completing the BS in Chemistry should be well practiced in the relevant skills of the field" would violate the first bullet point in the list above because it is too vague. In this example, we do not know what the relevant skills of the field of chemistry include. This will create problems in measuring the behavior of interest and drawing valid conclusions about the program's success.

For more helpful tips about creating learning outcomes, please visit the new assessment section of the IR&DS website at <http://assessment.stanford.edu>, or just type "assessment" into your browser. This site includes educational materials on the development of program mission statements, learning outcomes, rubrics, data gathering, analysis, and report writing. Each lesson contains useful templates, examples and practice exercises. The website also includes some helpful links on the University's reaccreditation process.

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free-form text fields. In total, 923 comments were analyzed and categorized. "Reliable reports" and "faster reports" were the two most common phrases within the comments. "Consolidation" was only mentioned in 16% of the comments.

Those interested in the complete results are welcome to contact any member of the Strategic Reporting team.

