



IRC Minutes
Friday, April 29, 2016

1. Announcements

- SES Survey is currently at an 11.4% response rate (aiming for 12%). Last reminder will go out on May 2, and the survey will close on May 6 to have time to select the winners and distribute the metro cards. Students selected were all degree-seeking undergraduates who were at least 18 at the time of the draw. We should get the data file in June.
- This is the first time OIRA is doing a raffle in-house. There will be 10 winners on each campus. Each campus's bursar's office will be receiving the metro cards early next week. CUNY Central OIRA will email the winning students with instructions. IR directors will be copied. Each IR office need to supply OIRA with instructions to give students to retrieve their prizes.
- There is some confusion with the campus climate survey, which is now closed, and is also distributing metro cards through the student affairs area.
- There is an upcoming tobacco survey from CUNY. People will be coming to campuses from May through August. This was not organized by OIRA.

2. IR & Assessment Council Retreat (Heidi Baez, SPS)

- Proposals are needed for the upcoming retreat. The theme is collaboration.
- Cheryl Littman will send out an infographic on 10 key analyses that every IR department needs – as a departure point for discussion.

3. IR Director Planning Meeting for AY16-17 (Colin Chellman & Zun Tang, OIRA)

- Annual IR Director Planning for IR meeting is scheduled for July 28 (Thursday from 10-noon)

4. EAB Advisement and Analytics Platform (Cheryl Littman, CUNY OAA)

- Senior Colleges will now be subscribing to EAB (Educational Advisory Board) for the Student Success Collaborative. There are three components.
 - Technology (Platform). Develops a risk profile for each student based on historic data. Uses background characteristics and course performance data. The data is particular to the major and its requirements. The data are intended to be used by Advisement.
 - Access to research, policy and other information (see infographic from Cheryl). This is an online forum that should be open CUNY-wide.
 - Network – Collaborative of all the institutions working together.
- Some notes on the platform:

- There are dashboard features.
- Relies on data from CUNYFirst, but does not integrate with CUNYFirst.
- The model uses a longer-term model than was wanted for the community colleges. For community colleges, the recommendation is Starfish, which is part of Hobsons.
- For Senior Colleges, IR is expected to be part of the implementation of this system.
- There is likely to be some redundancy among systems, and some flexibility about what system is used for what.
- CUNY is looking for a fall implementation. Cheryl discussed the uses for different systems.
 - EAB relies on lots of historical records. It is not a reporting tool. Each campus will feed the data into the system. It serves as an advisement system with scheduling, for example, and to help advisement.
 - Can Hobsons communicate with EAB? Hobsons doesn't model predictions. We should probably schedule presentations from Starfish and EAB for community colleges.
 - ASAP is using a custom database for decision making data for advisement.
 - EAB does not integrate with Degree Works. It is complementary to Degree Works. Degree Works is the "map" to get to graduation and EAB is the dashboards in the car. Degree Works is also used for degree audit for graduation. So Degree Works isn't going away.
- CUNY Central is paying for upfront costs and sharing on a five-year contract.

5. College Portrait (Sam Michalowski, CSI)

- With the CLA decommissioned, the question is being raised about what assessment approach CUNY is using. CSI is doing a senior survey, for example.
- CUNY OIRA needs to cut their budget, so is looking for possible cuts.
- Should we continue with VSA/VFA? Those attending said generally no. It's a lot of work and not being used.
- Should we continue Noel Levitz? Some schools are using Noel Levitz information, and for City Tech it's particularly part of their strategic planning. Guttman and BMCC are using it. The group advised looking into the shorter version to find cost savings, and CUNY Central OIRA will try to move the cost out of the OIRA budget and into another budget.
- What about NCSSE/CCSSE (which would be required for VSA/VFA)? Some schools reported that it is problematic to get responses back from the company; some schools will be doing it anyway.

6. Early Alert and Prediction Analytics (Elisabeth Lackner & Patrick Wynne, QCC)

- Queensborough uses Starfish. It's driven by faculty participation to raise flags or give kudos. Reporting on all activities is possible. Starfish is not great on predictive analytics, but they recently acquired PAR. Usually weaker students are being flagged, and many students don't respond, even as the advisors reach out to them. Right now only 46% of the faculty are using the system.

- Even when students are flagged multiple times, they are not necessarily referred. Typically the issue is that the student doesn't take action. In remedial courses where faculty use Starfish, there is a minimal but consistently higher rate of success.
- The system gives a lot of new data points, including lateness and attendance in class.
- How do you close the ticket, so to speak? Queensborough uses a narrow version for "addressing" the issue such as an outreach from the advisor.
- The Queensborough approach is to use data from historic 805 extracts which are being kept there. The predictive modeling is done using XGBoost package (Chen et al, 2015) with decision tree analysis. The Starfish user interface provides a profile for each student. The XGBoost is "trained" on 70% of the data. The results show different levels of confidence with the % correctly predicted, the false positives, and the % of the target population that is found. Queensborough started working on predictive analytics using logistic regression with frozen data; this is important for understanding the model and the impact of variables.
- Starfish also has a component that has you enter what interventions are available on campus and what each intervention is supposed to do.

Next Council Meeting

May 27, 2016