

IRC Minutes
Friday, September 30, 2016

1. Announcements

- NY State Department of Ed is producing a brand new database. They are hoping to get this all up and running by the end of December. User IDs will be created for all institutions. This is not in keeping with CUNY Central reporting for all CUNY College. Each college will be given 2 IDS: one for the president and one for the IR Director. CUNY will propose a response with recommendations for CUNY.
- Colleges will be contacted with College IDs and the people with update access will be able to create IDs for others to delegate the tasks. Enrollment data is central, but other offices may need to input directly, such as the director of accessibility.
- Question arose about securing access for specific sections, to maintain control of the reporting.

2. IPEDS Cost of Attendance (Zun Tang, OIRA)

- More information on the three colleges that are seen as having overly large increases in the cost of attendance, largely due to costs of room and board. For CSI and Brooklyn, the college does not control the cost of housing. At CSI, the dormitory is a different situation. Room and board costs that are owned or controlled by CUNY should be reported as on-campus housing. OIRA central will provide more information on how to calculate off-campus housing costs.

3. VSA/NSSE (Biana Perelshteyn, OIRA)

- The VSA will be pulling data from multiple other reports: IPEDS surveys, College Board, etc. to aid with benchmarking. This will start in spring 2017. Another part of the plan is to develop specific communities among VSA members starting in 2018.
- College Portrait will be frozen at the end of the 2015-16 collection year. Biana will share the information from the webinar to the colleges. If this isn't updated there will be no data.
- SAM – Is SAM useful for the colleges? Is this the best use of our time? SAM is the only part that also includes the community colleges. SAM is still done by Biana at Central.
- VSA needs to be paid by March 2017. Should CUNY pay for this? The chancellor is still very interested in the VSA. The college portrait is not required, and Central will not pay for NSSE, but is committed to pay for VSA.

4. Reporting Tools (Betsy Hansel, BMCC)

- Steps in reporting process (Ex: IRDB → txt file → Access → SPSS → Tableau)

- Ex 1: Course Efficiency: CUNYFirst Query → SPSS → Tableau; difficult to perform some computations in Tableau (better in SPSS)
- CUNY Smart/OBIEE/IRA dataset
- Suggestion: should name variables consistently within datasets (ex: different variables names in History Facts vs CBIL)
- Note: attempts to maximize use in one system (namely, IRDB and CBIL) creates problems because not fully automated; issue is that automating is time-consuming due to various databases as well as frequent changes to variables/variable names; maximizing use within one tool would be ideal
- Note: automation effective, yet initially time consuming
- Recommendation: calculations first in software and doing fewer calculations in Tableau
- Suggestion: since all using same source data, perhaps can share best practices (and syntax) for similar reports to increase effectiveness; create a Wiki or something similarly standardized to share various forms of syntax (SPSS, SAS, R, etc)
- Suggestion: focus on methods when giving presentations

5. MSCHE Updated Institutional Profile Reports (Elisabeth Lackner, QCC)

- National push on accreditation commissions to focus on graduation rates, loan default and loan repayments. Schools should be able to report additional information such as transfer rates, or other factors that provide context.
- Not clear what standards definitions are being used. Colleges will vote on metrics for student achievement in November.
- Some general indicators were shared and discussed. Questions are still open about how much of a delay is counted for someone to be a transfer student.
- Post-institutional measures: much is dependent on surveys.
- Life alumni – a service to find alumni.

Next Council Meeting

October 28, 2016