Empowering Your Institution through Data Governance: Navigating Challenges and Driving Value

APLU CIMA | Summer Meeting 2023

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Presentation Outcomes

• Two Institutions at different points in their Data trajectories
  • James Madison University & Florida State University
• Why data governance is important
• Key principles guiding efforts
• Lessons learned
• Next steps for mature models
University Profile
James Madison University

- 90% Freshman Retention Rate
- 82% Six-Year Graduation Rate
- 96% Satisfaction Rate

Harrisonburg, Virginia
- 20,346 undergraduate students
- 1,878 graduate students
- 139 programs of study
- Public R2 Doctoral University
- NCAA D-I Sun Belt Conference
Why Data Governance
James Madison University

• Digital Transformation – Reengineering Madison
  • Focus on Student Success
  • Unlocking the true value of the CRM

• Technology is great, but humans make it work
  • Willingness to use and cooperate

• Siloed Data – Presidential Request for Data
  • Admission's version vs. Registrar's version, may not match
Future of Data Governance (Video)
James Madison University
Your Campus, Your Scenario

Think about the following:

What’s an example of a data related challenge at your campus that you think Data Governance could help with at your institution?
Crawl Before You Walk
James Madison University

Data Definitions

- People Centered Approach – Data Governance Council
- Starts with Disagreement – Leads to Consensus
  - Data Lifecycle; Where does my area fall? Where does yours? How does that impact our view of the data?
  - Deep Listening
  - Conflict Resolution
- Four Step Process
  - Draft Definition; gain approval
  - System Changes
  - Business Process Changes
  - Socialization
First Generation Student
James Madison University

Priority Driven by JMU's Strategic Focus

- Valley Scholars; The Reddix Center for First Generation Students
- Four Step Process
  - Draft Definition; gain approval – Year long process in this case!
  - System Changes – Templated Queries, Scholarship Hub Changes, OIR SQRs
    - Discovered data issues; needed to isolate the data
  - Business Process Changes – No longer needed stop gap or home-grown tracking solutions
- Socialization
  - A first generation student is one whose parent(s) or guardian(s), with whom they primarily reside, never completed a bachelor's degree.
  - Published to Data Dictionary (expected, July '23)
Your Campus, Your Scenario

Let's Discuss:

What’s an example of a data related challenge at your campus that you think Data Governance could help with at your institution?
University Profile

~45k total students  
~33k undergraduates

94% retention rate  
74% four-year grad rate  
85% six-year grad rate  
83% Pell six-year grad rate

~2,200 faculty  
~1,200 T/TT faculty

~$400M research expenditures
History of the Data, Part I

- On-premises data warehouse in 1997 and enterprise BI in 2000
- Systems access and data security roles
- Data democratization part of the culture
Technologically Fancy Poll

Raise your hand if the primary (or only) functions of the institutional research office on your campus are compliance reporting and Fact Books/official data.
Institutional Research, Evolved

- Changing the focus of IR
- Who is IR’s primary audience?
- Using compliance reporting expertise to drive decision support
Snowflake / Data Lake

• Convenience layer on cloud data
• Scalable compute—pay as you go
• Load data from multiple sources
• Share data without copying
• Join disparate data sources to substantiate views
• Ingest data from any analytics tool
So...what??

- Data discovery tool → primary structured data environment
- Auto-refreshing
- No longer concerned about exceedingly large datasets
- Complex joins of disparate data
So…what??

• Examples of projects:
  – Major Flow-thru Model
  – Course Requirements
  – Textbook/Materials Dashboard
  – Enrollment/Retention Tracking
Data Empowerment

• Provide campus users with…
  – Auto-refreshing, interactive, filterable dashboards
  – Analytics of complex issues in (close to) real time
• Empowering people with data in a form they can consume
• Data in decision making
“I don’t know how we ever did IR without Snowflake”
~James Hunt, probably
What’s Next?

• Full circle: Implementing a data cataloging and lineage tool
• Shared Analytics Services model
• Continued push for increased decision intelligence
Q&A

The half of knowledge is to know where to find knowledge.