Guidelines for
Institutional Research and Planning

Office of Institutional Research and Planning
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Lewis University

Guidelines for Institutional Research and Planning

The Office of Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) at Lewis University directs and coordinates activities of data collection, analysis, and dissemination related to institutional research, analysis, and planning that support the Mission and Goals of Lewis University. The Office of IRP assumes the role in assuring data integrity for the decision making and planning process at the University.

I. Vision, Mission, Goals, Priorities, and Objectives:

Vision:

Consistent, accurate, and timely institutional data of high quality generated and provided by the Office of IRP is effectively used across the entire university to support decision making, planning, and policy formation at Lewis University.

Mission:

Committed to advancing Lewis’s Mission and Goals for excellence in teaching, learning, and scholarship for student success, the Office of IRP provides consistent, accurate, and timely institutional data to inform the University leadership and all campus constituencies in the decision-making and planning process and support the University in the accomplishment of its Mission, Goals, and Strategic Priorities.

As institutional data is evidence of institutional effectiveness of Lewis University, the Office of IRP is dedicated to the assurance of the accuracy and consistency of the institutional data it provides and makes every effort to provide data as needed in a timely manner.
OIRP Goals:

1. Effectively support informed decision making and planning at Lewis University by providing accurate, consistent, and timely information about students, faculty, and administration, and responding to various data requests, internal and/or external, in a timely manner.

2. Effectively support the data needs of Lewis University and its colleges and educational programs for accreditation, program review, outcomes assessment, and other institutional effectiveness efforts with accurate, consistent, and timely institutional data.

3. Report consistent and accurate institutional data to the federal and state governments, regional and/or specialized accreditation associations, and other external agencies in a timely manner.

4. Proactively conduct integrated research and data analysis to support the institutional efforts at Lewis University to enhance the quality of education and improve the student support services for still greater student success.

5. Systematically evaluate the university performance and operations for continuous improvement by surveying students, alumni, and employers to identify student perceptions and satisfaction and assessing operational expected outcomes.

6. Effectively report and disseminate institutional data that help publicize the University, promote the University, and enhance the visibility and image of the University.
For the institutional effectiveness purposes, the Office of IRP will assess the achievement of the OIRP goals on an annual basis to identify the strengths and especially the areas for future improvement in the process of institutional research and planning.

**OIRP Objectives:** Objectives are in alignment with the OIRP goals as stated above:

**Goal 1.** Effectively support informed decision making and planning at Lewis University by providing accurate, consistent, and timely information about students, faculty, and administration, and responding to various data requests, internal and/or external, in a timely manner.

1.1 Retrieve institutional data on a regular basis, systematically maintain institutional data, proactively analyze institutional data, and consistently translate the institutional data into useful information in support of decision making, planning, and policy development;

1.2 Provide timely institutional data updates for the Board of Trustees Key Performance Indicators dashboards as well as Academic Dashboards at the University;

1.3 Generate semester reports on student enrollment, credit hour production, first-year and transfer profiles, student persistence at the university level as well as at the college level and disseminate the reports in a timely manner;

1.4 Develop internal reports for faculty and staff, faculty promotion and tenure reports, and advancement support for donor development;

1.5 Provide support for all internal institutional data needs from colleges, departments, and academic programs, as well as non-academic units.
Goal 2. Effectively support the data needs of Lewis University and its colleges and educational programs for accreditation, program review, outcomes assessment, and other institutional effectiveness efforts with accurate, consistent, and timely institutional data.

2.1 On a continuous basis, assist the University in preparation for and response to the data needs for the AQIP Systems Portfolio, action projects, and reaffirmation of accreditation; and support the University in its efforts to meet the Higher Learning Commission’s Standards of Quality - the Criteria for Accreditation and Core Components;

2.2 Collect institutional information for the specialized accreditations and support colleges and departments of the University in their data needs to prepare for specialized accreditation reviews; and develop internal reports as needed for academic program review, new program review, outcomes assessment, and self-study, etc.;

2.3 Respond to any accountability reports or surveys from the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), Illinois Longitudinal Data System (ILDS), etc. with accurate and reliable data in a timely manner;

2.4 Respond to ad hoc reports, surveys, or any kind of data requests in a timely manner;

2.5 Assist Lewis University in identifying and tracking outcomes performance measures.

Goal 3. Report consistent and accurate institutional data to the federal and state governments, regional and/or specialized accreditation associations, and other external agencies in a timely manner.
3.1 Complete and/or coordinate with relevant departments and offices to complete all federal and state government reports, such as IPEDS data collection, IBHE/ILDS reports, etc.

3.2 Complete and submit HLC annual institutional updates, etc. in a timely manner;

3.3 Respond to all external surveys or report needs from higher education associations and publications, such as Common Data Set, US News surveys, College Board, Princeton Review, Peterson’s, ACT, etc. in a timely manner.

**Goal 4.** Proactively conduct integrated research and data analysis to support the institutional efforts at Lewis University to enhance the quality of education and improve the student support services for still greater student success.

4.1 Regularly conduct the following studies:

4.1.1 Retention study

4.1.2 Graduation study

4.1.3 Enrollment projection

4.1.4 Trend analysis and peer comparison

4.1.5 Other institutional studies or analyses as needed

4.2 Provide expertise and assistance, as needed, to support any academic and scholarly endeavors, institutional study or research across the University, such as research design, data collection, and statistical analysis;

4.3 Support faculty and staff in grant writing and renewal, and/or in any other research efforts.
Goal 5. Systematically evaluate the university performance and operations for continuous improvement by surveying students, alumni, and employers to identify student perceptions and satisfaction and assessing operational expected outcomes

5.1 Supervise institutional survey data collection, analysis, and reporting at the University;

5.2 Conduct or coordinate institutional surveys, which include but are not limited to the following as needed:

5.2.1 New student survey
5.2.2 Graduating student survey
5.2.3 Academic Advising Survey
5.2.4 Alumni survey
5.2.5 Employer survey
5.2.6 Any other internal survey

5.3 Coordinate national student and faculty/staff surveys, which include but are not limited to the following:

5.3.1 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
5.3.2 Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshmen Survey
5.3.3 HERI Faculty Survey
5.3.4 Chronicle’s Great Colleges to Work for Survey
5.3.5 Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI)
5.3.6 Noel Levitz Adult Student Priority Survey (ASPS)
5.3.7 Noel Levitz Alumni Survey (AS)
5.3.8 Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA)
5.4 Conduct statistical analyses of the survey data and report survey findings in a timely manner.

**Goal 6.** Effectively report and disseminate institutional data that help publicize the University, promote the University, and enhance the visibility and image of the University.

6.1 Enhance the accessibility of the University’s administration and faculty to the institutional data by implementing the University dashboard as well as interactive reporting system, using Tableau;

6.2 Develop the OIRP Webpage and constantly update and maintain the information on the OIRP Webpage to reflect the updated mission, goals, and objectives of the Office and especially the updated information of the University;

6.3 Include the following information on the OIRP Webpage:

   6.3.1 Enrollment (trend), retention and graduation rates, credit hour production, student profiles, and faculty productivity

   6.3.2 Trend analysis and peer comparison study results

   6.3.3 University fact book, quick facts

   6.3.4 Interactive reporting system

   6.3.5 Common data sets

   6.3.6 University surveys, studies, data analyses, and learning outcomes
II. Procedures for Assuring Data quality

Data consistency, accuracy, and timeliness are the three primary objectives as well as priorities that the Office of IRP aims to achieve in order to ensure the quality of the institutional data generated and provided by the Office. To achieve the objectives, the following procedures are established and must be followed to the letter.

Note: The procedures below do not include operational data reporting or report design and development in Cognos or ODS.

1. For consistency:
   a. The Office of IRP is the central office for collecting, analyzing, and disseminating the institutional data at Lewis University. All data requests, internal or external, except requests for financial data, should be directed to the Office of IRP;
   b. The Office of IRP is the only central depository for Lewis University’s official institutional data and has the sole privilege to release and report such data. No other offices on campus, except otherwise designated, should provide institutional data to any external data reports;
   c. The Office of IRP uses the official data, or census day data, usually of Fall Semester, for all official reports, which include IPEDS and IBHE/ILDS reports, HLC and other accreditation reports, institutional data reports and the university fact book, etc.;
   d. Also only census day data should be used in response to any internal and/or external data reporting or requests, strictly following the data definitions covered in the University Data Dictionary, including higher education association reports, journal or magazine surveys, data analysis
and comparison, such as enrollment trend analysis and peer comparison, institutional studies, such as retention, enrollment projections, etc., unless otherwise indicated;

e. End of term institutional data is also available in the Office of IRP, but it should mainly be used internally, unless otherwise indicated.

f. External reports and surveys completed by other offices, departments, or colleges at the university should use the data provided by the Office of IRP and must be reviewed and checked by the IRP staff for consistency and accuracy before being submitted or sent out;

g. Procedures of data retrieval, analysis, and reporting are documented in the Office of IRP so that the same procedures will be followed or used for the same or similar reports or data requests in the future.

2. For accuracy:

   The Office of IRP will ensure that all data provided by the Office is accurate. In order to achieve data accuracy, the following must be observed strictly:

   a. Before the institutional data is downloaded on the University census day, data validation procedures should be run in an attempt to identify missing or incorrect data (See “c”), so the appropriate or relevant offices can be contacted for corrections before census day data is retrieved;

   b. After the census day data is downloaded, the data files should be carefully reviewed and examined by the OIRP staff to identify any possible data issues (See “c”). If any questions are raised or errors found, the Office of
IRP should contact or coordinate with the appropriate or relevant offices to clean the data and resolve the problems before the data is used;

c. Examples of data errors for data cleaning include but are not limited to the following:
   i. Missing values/records (i.e. Null values, default values)
   ii. Misfielded values (i.e. City=USA)
   iii. Embedded values (i.e. multiple values in one attribute)
   iv. Illegal or invalid values (i.e. bdate=10/15/2013)
   v. Violated attribute dependency (i.e. Hours=6 and Enroll status = Full-Time)
   vi. Wrong coding
   vii. Duplicated records

d. After census day data is cleaned, a clean copy of the data file(s) will be saved and a summary data report should be generated for the final check-up. The clean data file(s) will then be the source data file(s) to be used for any reporting purposes or data requests. (After Enterprise Data Warehouse (EDW) is implemented, data will be retrieved from EDW);

e. Any completed data report, survey, or data request, must go through peer review or cross checking to ensure accuracy before it is submitted:
   i. Work completed by the IRP staff will be reviewed for accuracy by other IRP staff in the office;
   ii. Work completed by other offices or departments must be reviewed and checked by the IRP staff for accuracy;
iii. If necessary, work completed may be subject to cross-checking to ensure accuracy, using different methods.

3. For timeliness:

When completing or coordinating the completion of any federal and state government reports, or surveys or reports, the Office of IRP must observe the due dates strictly and make sure that all reports and surveys be completed and submitted in time or before the due dates. No excuse for any delay should be accepted. In order to ensure the timely submission, the following should be observed:

a. In order to assure the timely processing of the data requests, all data requests, internal or external, should be directed to the Office of IRP through a formal data request protocol, to be located on the Provost’s Office Webpage or in the University Portal (MyLewis);

b. The IRP staff completing a report or survey or offices responsible for the completion of a report or survey must be notified the due date of the report or survey;

c. A reminder of the report or survey due date will be sent to the individuals or offices working on the report or survey before the due date;

d. Work on the report or survey should start early, at least 2-4 weeks before the due date in case any data issues arise that prevent timely completion or submission.