

Institutional Research



Compilation of IR Units' Mission Statement from Peer Institutions of the University of Puerto Rico Rio Piedras Campus

by

Annette De León Lozada
Coordinator - IR Unit

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**UPR-Rio Piedras Campus * Deanship of Academic Affairs
Unit of Institutional Research * Office of Academic Planning**

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Introduction

This compilation of mission statements of Institutional Research (IR) units or equivalent offices is intended to help readers, in particular University of Puerto Rico Rio Piedras Campus (UPR-RPC) Office of Academic Planning staff (OAP), understand the structure and language used when establishing a precise statement of purpose. The mission statements are from peer institutions of the UPR-RPC, based on the classification list provided by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The analysis of this compilation would help OAP conceptualize and rewrite its own mission statement.

The process to examine this compilation and develop a draft statement for OAP is framed in Drucker's suggested criteria¹ for an effective mission statement. The criteria are that it:

- Is short and sharply focused
- Is clear and easily understood
- Defines why we do what we do; why the organization exists
- Does not prescribe means
- Is sufficiently broad
- Provides direction for doing the right things
- Addresses our opportunities
- Matches our competence
- Inspires our commitment
- Says what, in the end, we want to be remembered for

This report includes three main sections: (1) a list of peer institutions; (2) mission statements of each institution; and (3) an analysis of the IR Units' missions by focusing in four elements: action words; description of data or information, institutional efforts or processes supported by IR and users or recipient's of information provided by IR.

Methodology

The web sites of the 38 higher education institutions identified as peers of UPR-RPC were examined in order to find out the IR Unit's or its equivalent office's mission statement. An e-mail was sent to those IR units which mission was not available at the Internet. A total of 30 mission statements were compiled.

A content analysis was conducted on the compilation in order to obtain basic information and keywords associated with the roles and functions of IR Units. The analysis involved the selection of the mission statements to be studied, the development of categories (main elements under examination) and the frequency of appearance of each category. In general, the aspects cited by category or element were constantly present in almost all the mission statements under study.

¹ The Drucker Foundation Self-Assessment Tool: Process Guide, a publication of the Drucker Foundation and Jossey-Bass, Inc., Publishers. Available at <http://leadertoleader.org/leaderbooks/sat/mission.html>

SECTION 1

UPR-Rio Piedras Campus Peer Institutions²

1. Auburn University
2. Brigham Young University
3. Florida Atlantic University
4. Florida International University
5. George Mason University
6. Georgia State University
7. Indiana University-Purdue University
8. Mississippi State University
9. New Mexico State University
10. Old Dominion University
11. San Diego State University
12. Temple University
13. Texas Tech University
14. University of Akron
15. University of Alabama
16. University of Central Florida
17. University of Houston – University Park
18. University of Louisiana at Lafayette
19. University of Louisville
20. University of Memphis
21. University of Missouri-Kansas City
22. University of Montana-Missoula
23. University of Nevada – Las Vegas
24. University of Nevada – Reno
25. University of New Orleans
26. University of North Texas
27. University of Oregon
28. University of Texas at Arlington²
29. University of Texas at Dallas
30. University of Texas at El Paso
31. University of Toledo
32. University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee
33. University of Wyoming
34. Utah State University
35. Virginia Commonwealth University
36. Western Michigan University
37. Wichita State University
38. Wright State University

² Based on the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching Classifications: RU/H: Research Universities (high research activity), and L4/NR (Large four-year, primarily nonresidential. Fall enrollment data show FTE enrollment of at least 10,000 degree-seeking students at these bachelor's degree granting institutions. Fewer than 25 percent of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus, includes exclusively distance education institutions).

SECTION 2

IR Units' Mission Statements

1. **Auburn University** <http://oira.auburn.edu/>

The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) serves as the official source of objective, research-based data about the University's students, faculty, and staff; its programs and their effectiveness; its resources; and its peer institutions and external environment.

The main purpose of the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment is to serve Auburn University's senior academic and administrative officers by providing an effective framework of information and analysis to support planning, evaluation, and performance improvement. We serve as the official source of objective, research-based data about the University's students, faculty, and staff; its programs and their effectiveness; its resources; and its peer institutions and external environment. We support the University's overall performance measurement activities and coordinate the assessment activities of its academic and administrative departments. Resources permitting, we also offer consulting services to assist other campus units with their own programs of self-study, planning, and assessment.

In support of our main purpose, we also answer requests for information about the University from other campus units as well as from state and federal agencies, accrediting bodies, college guides, and the general public. We maintain a wide variety of continuing databases to support longitudinal studies and statistical analysis. And we collaborate with other offices to insure the integrity and usability of the University's information systems.

2. **Brigham Young University**

<http://w2.byuh.edu/PIRAT/Institutional%20Research/index.php>

The Institutional Research office is responsible for collecting, interpreting, and disseminating university information to both internal and external constituencies through routine and ad hoc reports. This information supports institutional management, planning, and decision making and serves as a basis for reports and surveys requested from governmental and commercial agencies (e.g., U.S. Department of Education IPEDS reports and college guidebook surveys).

Institutional Research is dedicated to making information easily accessible to users on campus. In a joint effort with MIS, Institutional Research maintains a data warehouse to preserve BYUH data history and supports the Business Objects reporting tool that is used to access that data.

The Institutional Research office also supports research conducted on campus by providing information and reports to faculty and students as requested. In addition, IR sponsors Student Research Associateships to give students valuable research and/or development experience in their chosen fields of study.

3. **Florida Atlantic University** <http://iea.fau.edu/inst/about.htm>

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Analysis provides accurate, relevant, and timely information for use by the university community and external constituencies.

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Analysis (IEA) collects and analyzes data, and disseminates results; provides accurate and timely data and information in support of administrative decision making, planning and policy analysis to internal and external constituencies; conducts studies on issues of significance to the FAU community; and direct university processes for determining and documenting institutional effectiveness in academic departments and academic support units.

What we do:

- Provide historical or current data about FAU's students, programs, personnel, and resources, in response to internal and external requests.
- Complete surveys and questionnaires as requested by external agencies.
- Respond to surveys and questionnaires from external agencies.
- Publish an annual "Quick Facts" brochure.
- Provide a website including a Fact Book, interactive reporting tools, departmental dashboard indicators, and other official statistical data and research reports.
- Build and maintain institutional databases to meet the ongoing data needs of the University.
- Coordinate the reporting of official data to the Florida Department of Education, Federal agencies, and other organizations.
- Coordinate the reporting of academic activity and workload productivity.
- Design and administer survey instruments, manage data collection, and analyze, interpret and disseminate results.
- Conduct special studies as requested by University committees or administrators.
- Assist academic departments and academic support units in assessing, reporting and improving the effectiveness of their programs and activities.
- Support teaching improvement through sponsorship of faculty workshops.
- Regularly evaluate and document IEA's effectiveness and use findings for improvement.
- Contribute professionally by attending conference, making presentations, publishing papers, and holding office.

4. **Florida International University**
<http://www.fiu.edu/~opie/directory.htm>

Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (OPIE)

5. **George Mason University** <http://irr.gmu.edu/>

The Office of Institutional Research and Reporting (IRR) functions as the official source of institutional information. It is the mission of IRR to define, collect, analyze, maintain and disseminate official institutional data, and to provide official institutional information to both internal and external constituents for the purposes of describing, documenting, and publishing institutional information and measures of effectiveness

6. **Georgia State University** <http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwire/index.html>
7. **Indiana University-Purdue University** <http://www.planning.iupui.edu/imir/>
 The Office of Information Management and Institutional Research (IMIR) provides and coordinates information support for planning, administering, and evaluating academic and administrative programs in ways that will continuously improve IUPUI. IMIR provides fundamental support for IUPUI campus, school, and program planning and evaluation activities by:
- developing for academic deans and other campus administrators a series of management reports and analyses that integrate information from a variety of institutional and external data sources;
 - providing academic and administrative managers with information needed to address ad hoc problems and issues;
 - creating organized, documented, and accessible data resources based on institutional, survey, and external databases;
 - conducting survey research to assess the expectations, satisfaction, and outcomes of students, alumni, faculty, staff, employers, and other stakeholders;
 - providing direct support to specific campus, school, and program evaluation and planning activities;
 - developing computer network-based systems for collecting, accessing, and analyzing information in a more timely and cost-effective manner; and
 - helping staff from other academic and administrative units to conduct institutional research, reporting, and analysis.
8. **Mississippi State University** <http://www.msstate.edu/dept/oir/>

The mission of the Office of Institutional Research is to provide accurate, appropriate, and timely information to decision makers at Mississippi State University (i.e., administrators, faculty, and staff), members and staff of the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning, the Federal government, and other constituents. In addition, the Office of Institutional Research provides a variety of services to administrators, faculty, staff, and students that are intended to improve teaching, learning, and services on campus.

Goals : What We Want to Achieve

A university where senior administrators, faculty, and staff regularly receive and utilize important information about Mississippi State University to achieve the goals of the institution effectively.

A system of services that effectively meets the needs of constituents and customers across campus and beyond.

A successful and high-achieving Office of Institutional Research staff that is adept at learning through inquiry and that uses planning and assessment to improve the effectiveness of the office's efforts to achieve its goals.

An office that exemplifies responsible stewardship of resources for the good of the university as a whole.

9. **New Mexico State University** <http://irpoa.nmsu.edu/>

The purpose and functions of Institutional Research, Planning, and Outcomes Assessment are as follows:

Institutional Research

- Provide relevant, general instructional information to the institutional community, administrators, the external community, and external agencies.
- Initiate and perform research relevant to anticipated institutional policy and decision-making.
- Provide support institution-wide for obtaining data or information, or performing analyses in response to specific needs.
- Participate in the design and maintenance of internal information systems for administrative uses.

Planning

- Coordinate development of policy analyses and other supporting resources for institutional evaluation, planning and policy-making.
- Assist with the integration of planning with institutional research and outcomes assessment in support of institutional decision-making and policy development.
- Assist the institution in understanding the external environment, its opportunities and challenges, and build on institutional strengths and values to aid decision-makers in setting directions which will guide policy and strategies to achieve our institutional mission.
- Interact with and provide information on institutional goals, priorities, needs, and perspectives to external agencies for their planning, policy development, and recommendation processes in coordination with other liaison activities and responsibilities of institutional administrators.

Outcomes Assessment

- Facilitate the development of an awareness of outcomes assessment in the institutional community.
- Function as a conduit for communication of outcomes assessment activities which are occurring in the units. Coordinate assessment activities.
- Integrate outcomes assessment into both the external and internal planning and program review activities of the institution.
- Provide resource support for unit activities related to outcomes assessment.

10. **Old Dominion University** <http://www.odu.edu/ao/upir/irhome.html>

Institutional Research and Assessment

11. **San Diego State University** <http://asir.sdsu.edu/app/>

Analytic Studies & Institutional Research provides official university information to the SDSU community, the California State University Chancellor's Office and external agencies.

12. **Temple University** <http://www.temple.edu/>

- 13. Texas Tech University** <http://www.irs.ttu.edu/index.html>
Institutional Research and Information Management
 The department of Institutional Research and Information Management provides precise statistical and management information to all units of the university, regulators, and others; designs, develops, and implements strategies and techniques to research, assess, and improve effectiveness.
- 14. University of Akron** <http://www.uakron.edu/ir/>
 The University of Akron's Office of Institutional Research(IR) assists and supports institutional decision-making, budget and facilities planning, enrollment management, policy formation, and assessment by providing analyses that transform data into useful information.
 IR also oversees compliance reporting to federal and state agencies and coordinates all major survey requests from public and private agencies.
- 15. University of Alabama** <http://bama.ua.edu/~oir/>
 The primary mission of the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment at The University of Alabama is to collect, organize, maintain, and report relevant institutional data to support the University's management, operations, decision-making, and planning functions. Secondly, the Office serves as the responsible unit of the University for regulatory reporting of institutional data to the Alabama Commission on Higher Education and the National Center for Educational Statistics. The student assessment section manages and oversees the development or continuation, administration, scoring, analysis, and reporting of institutional effectiveness assessment processes. It also assists in selecting research designs, obtaining information, and interpreting results for various research requests.
- 16. University of Central Florida** <http://www.iroffice.ucf.edu/>
 The mission of the Institutional Research office is to support planning, decision-making, and assessment at the University of Central Florida by providing information that is timely and of the highest quality.
- The Office of Institutional Research (IR) is a service oriented unit that provides information and proposes alternative solutions to support the decision-making process. The scope of the unit's responsibility is university-wide. The unit provides official reporting to external agencies, the Florida Board of Education, and the entire University community including the Board of Trustees, the colleges, their departments and other academic and administrative units. The unit also assumes the responsibility of either generating or supervising the development of all official University data reports.
- 17. University of Houston – University Park** <http://www.uhd.edu/about/irp/>
- 18. University of Louisiana at Lafayette** <http://instres.louisiana.edu/>
 The Office of Institutional Research (IRES), a division of Information Technology, functions to provide accurate and consistent administrative and management information about UL Lafayette. IRES is responsible for the coordination and completion of all external surveys, questionnaires and mandated governmental reporting about UL Lafayette. IRES also provides semester and longitudinal reports to members of the university community.

IRES is also responsible for the coordination, execution and processing for the Student evaluation of Instructors (SEI) system. In addition, IRES also works closely with the Office of Information Systems in order to insure that the University's administrative data systems are able to satisfy all required data reporting and provide UL Lafayette officials with management information as required.

19. University of Louisville <http://institutionalresearch.louisville.edu/>

The Office of Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) functions as staff to the President and Provost in coordinating the strategic planning, institutional research, and institutional effectiveness functions of the University.

In order to accomplish these responsibilities, Planning and Institutional Research will:

- Oversee the preparation of the University Strategic Plan;
- Coordinate and supervise necessary institutional studies and research to support planning, institutional research, and institutional effectiveness;
- Respond to both external and internal requests for institutional information;
- Make enrollment projections for undergraduate, graduate and professional programs;
- Serve as liaison with the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) on planning and institutional research activities, including accountability reporting; and
- Provide staff assistance in program reviews

20. University of Memphis <http://oir.memphis.edu/>

The Office of Institutional Research is committed to providing reliable information to academic and administrative units in support of policy formation, planning, and decision making. Detailed information is available to administrative officials, such as the President, Provost, Deans, department heads, and governing boards. Aggregated data are available for public use. The office staff invites requests for data analysis and endeavors to honor all requests within the time constraints of the requestor.

In performance of its function, the Office of Institutional Research:

- Serves as the centralized electronic repository of archived information on students, faculty and staff.
- Identifies trends that will affect resource commitments in the future.
- Reports to the Tennessee Board of Regents and other agencies that monitor the activities and assets of the University.
- Produces decision-support programming and analysis for University and departmental purposes.
- Provides data for surveys through its web pages.

21. University of Missouri-Kansas City

<http://www.umkc.edu/ir/default.asp>

To provide useful and accurate information and analyses that support efforts to carry out the mission and goals of UMKC.

Major functions include:

- *Assessment* – Facilitate the development of a comprehensive assessment and evaluation system for UMKC. Provide administrative, technical, and

informational resources to support the operation and enhancement of the assessment and evaluation system.

- *Catalog* – Review catalog content and facilitate the development of a new catalog production system
- *Consulting* – Provide needed assistance to solve problems and/or questions at the departmental, college/school and university level.
- *Data Integrity & Reporting* – Provide reliable and valid university data and timely reporting.
- *Planning* – Provide needed internal and external data and support for planning processes at the departmental, college/school and university level.
- *Research & Decision Support* – Provide data analysis and reporting for administrative decision making.

* function for IR at UMKC that needs to be continued until a new system can be put in place.

22. University of Montana-Missoula

<http://www.umt.edu/plan/staff.htm#mission>

The mission of the Office of University Planning, Budgeting & Analysis is to provide decision support for the campus communities of the U of M system, through compilation, analysis and dissemination of information that contributes to principled decision making in the planning and allocation of UM resources and assessments of institutional effectiveness.

23. University of Nevada – Las Vegas <http://ir.unlv.edu/>

The UNLV Office of Institutional Analysis and Planning collects and analyzes data about the university to enhance the quality of the decision-making process for those leading the institution.

The mission of the Office of Institutional Analysis and Planning is to collect, analyze, and interpret information to enhance the quality of decisions guiding institutional direction. To be effective in the role, the staff must be user-oriented; they must accurately assess current issues, identify emerging issues, and provide a timely response to UNLV's executive management. Activities of the office address a broad array of institutional issues and encompass all vice-presidential areas.

24. University of Nevada – Reno <http://www.unr.edu/ia/>

The office of Institutional Analysis - a unit of Planning, Budget, and Analysis - conducts both descriptive and analytical studies used to support evaluation of university operations. The Office produces the Databook and provides institutional research support to the university community.

25. University of New Orleans <http://www.dmar.uno.edu/#>

Office of Data Management, Analysis and Reporting

26. University of North Texas http://www.unt.edu/ir_acc/

The Office of Institutional Research & Accreditation (IR&A) develops and maintains extensive data bases, conducts detailed research and provides timely, accurate, and useful data to address the needs of university decision-makers, external agencies, and internal constituents. IR&A reports to the Provost and

Vice President for Academic Affairs and takes the lead role in responding to institutional accreditation requirements and helping university decision makers ensure that the principles for continued accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools are met. The office also provides guidance in the area of institutional effectiveness to help improve the quality of academic offerings, institutional operations and support, and student services at the university in accordance with the institution's mission.
(September 17, 2003)

27. University of Oregon <http://www.ous.edu/irs/>

The Institutional Research division provides analytic support and expertise for all units of the Chancellor's Office to aid in policy development, evaluation, and management. IRS is responsible for creating and maintaining the system wide repository of student data, known as SCARF (Student Centralized Administrative Reporting File), as well as preparing several of the IPEDS reports on behalf of the OUS universities.

IRS staff play a major role in developing and maintaining analytic models for budget, enrollment, and faculty salaries; coordinating peer institution analysis; conducting and consulting on various surveys (such as the annual Post-High School Plans survey); preparing information for the Board and legislative presentations; and communicating quantitative information to a variety of audiences through vehicles such as the OUS Fact Book.

28. University of Texas at Arlington <http://www.uta.edu/irp/>

The mission of the Office of Institutional Research and Planning, a component of the Office of the Provost, is to conduct research and analysis in order to provide information to support institutional planning, assessment, policy analysis, and decision making, and to facilitate institutional effectiveness to advance the mission of the University.

Goals of the office of IRP are consistent with this mission, and include:

- Collect, disseminate, and promote the use of accurate and accessible institutional data in a professional and ethical manner;
- Coordinate a broad based, comprehensive, program of institutional planning;
- Coordinate and support a systematic program of institutional evaluation and assessment, and facilitate the incorporation of the findings into the planning and accreditation processes;
- Fulfill institutional reporting obligations to regulatory agencies and other external entities;
- Maximize the efficacy and efficiency of IRP processes through responsible use of allocated resources, and use of the latest

29. University of Texas at Dallas <http://ospa.utdallas.edu/>

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING AND ANALYSIS

MISSION: To support the achievement of UTD's mission in research, learning, teaching and public service through effective planning, institutional research and evaluation.

30. University of Texas at El Paso

<http://irp.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=30537>

Center for Institutional Evaluation, Research and Planning

MISSION

To support the achievement of UTEP's mission by facilitating on-going, integrated, institution-wide, research-based planning and evaluation processes

VISION

The Center for Institutional Evaluation, Research and Planning will continue to facilitate institutional planning. The Center will continue to support the creation of plans, the accumulation of knowledge supporting the development of effective strategies to accomplish goals, evaluation of outcomes, and evaluation of the overall planning system and processes.

The Center will provide data and analysis to decision makers to facilitate planning and decision making

The Center will continue to develop staff expertise in areas of institutional evaluation, research, and planning

The Center will adjust and respond to the planning needs of a dynamic institution

31. University of Toledo http://institutional_research.utoledo.edu/

The mission of the Office of Institutional Research & Assessment is to support the fulfillment of University goals by providing insightful information and analysis to members of the University community.

Examples of the types of information and analysis produced by the Office of Institutional Research & Assessment include:

- Enrollment reports by college and department and by demographic and academic characteristics
- Analytical studies of student graduation, persistence, satisfaction, and success;
- Information that describes the faculty and staff;
- Survey research and analysis;
- Recurring data reports to external agencies such as the Ohio Board of Regents and the United States Department of Education.

The Office of Institutional Research & Assessment operates with the highest ethical standards and follows the Association for Institutional Research Code of Ethics.

32. University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee

http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Acad_Aff/assessment/index.html

UW-Milwaukee faculty and staff engage in assessment practices across the institution that focus on courses, faculty, degree programs, and the university as a whole. UWM continually strengthens and extends the range of assessment activities, with a special focus on the assessment of student learning outcomes. The Academic Program and Curriculum Committee and the Graduate Faculty Council serve as the central governance bodies.

General education has long been a valued component of the UWM undergraduate curriculum. Program review also has a long standing tradition at

UWM. Undergraduate and graduate programs are thoroughly reviewed every ten years; the UW System exercises oversight of programmatic quality through a separate review process. And, since 1993, the Board of Regents has called upon each system institution to prepare an annual Accountability Report on student-oriented goals.

Student surveys, including the Graduating Senior Survey, NSSE, FSSE and CIRP are used extensively to ascertain students' assessments of academic and student support programs.

The Office of Assessment and Institutional Research also provides support for major campus projects including Enrollment Management and the Milwaukee Commitment and collaborates extensively with other campus offices, including the Office of Resource Analysis and I&MT Data Administration to ensure the accurate production and reporting of campus data to meet both internal and external needs.

33. University of Wyoming <http://www.uwyo.edu/>

34. Utah State University <http://aaa.usu.edu/>
Office of Analysis, Assessment, & Accreditation

35. Virginia Commonwealth University
<http://www.vcu.edu/ireweb/text/mission.htm>

The Office of Institutional Research and Evaluation (IRE) enhances the institutional effectiveness of Virginia Commonwealth University by leading and supporting management decision-making, evaluation, assessment, policy formulation, and information development and reporting activities.

To accomplish this mission, the Office:

- coordinates the collection and reporting of quantitative data and qualitative information
- provides timely, accurate and reliable statistical data and analyses
- prepares analyses on issues of interest to members of the university community
- conduct primary surveys of students, alumni and faculty on their evaluation of programs and services
- coordinates required reporting for external governmental and accreditation organizations
- supports internal planning, evaluation and assessment activities across the University
- provides technical and professional assistance to other university units in the collection, analysis and reporting of data and information

These activities come together in a series of publications, reports, databases, and web sites which translate raw data into knowledge that is useful to decision-makers as they work to improve the quality and effectiveness of VCU.

36. Western Michigan University <http://www.wmich.edu/ir/>

The Western Michigan University office previously known as Academic Planning and Institutional Data, or APID, has a new name: the Office of Institutional Research. Although the name has changed, the office's location in Seibert Administration Building and mission of collecting and analyzing data and information about WMU remain the same.

Institutional Research is responsible for guiding and coordinating University strategic planning, and for providing data and information for administrative decision making. The Office collects and analyzes data and information and reports the findings to University administration and others associated with the University. The Office also provides data and information to government agencies, and for use in accreditation or communication with external groups. Student Academic and Institutional Research's analyses center around information about students, faculty, courses, and programs at the University.

Student Academic and Institutional Research is available to assist other University offices with gathering and structuring data and reports. The Office can lend assistance with strategic planning and other organizational improvement processes. The Office relies on and works closely with other parts of the University that collect data used as the basis for Student Academic and Institutional Research's reports.

37. Wichita State University

http://webs.wichita.edu/depttools/tot/index.asp?http://webs.wichita.edu/depttools/user_home/?view=oir&page=index

The mission statement of the Office of Institutional Research is to develop, maintain and distribute accurate information to assist academic and administrative decision making at Wichita State University. The office serves the entire university community as a depository and clearinghouse for institutional data; responds to internal and external requests for data and research; initiates and conducts studies; and provides consultation on institutional research related activities within the university.

The Academic Institutional Research Discipline

Data gathering and analysis in Institutional Research is focused on improved understanding, planning, management, and operation of post secondary educational institutions. Some institutional research examples include retention and graduation studies, enrollment management studies, student impact studies, academic program review, and cost analysis studies.

38. Wright State University <http://www.wright.edu/admin/bpra/>

The Office of Budget, Planning & Resource Analysis (BPR) supports the university decision makers through development and management of data.

The scope of managing data includes management of many survey instruments and effective assessment at all levels. The office also is responsible for the overall development of university budgets and the allocation and control of resources that are consistent with the University's strategic plan. Additionally, the Office serves to effectively manage risk through the development and management of applicable policies and procedures.

SECTION 4

Analysis of the IR Units' missions

The objective of the exercise reported in this section was to gather ideas and identify phrases commonly used in IR units' missions in order to provide a framework to OAP's process of revisiting its own mission statement. Four main elements were identified as the focus of the examination of the 30 missions compiled: (1) action words, (2) description of data or information, (3) institutional efforts or processes supported by IR, and (4) users or recipient's of information provided by IR. Numbers surrounded by parenthesis correspond to the frequency of appearance or number of mission statements that incorporates each expression.

Action words

- *Information gatherer-Organizer (19)*
 - Defines data **(1)**
 - Collects data / Organizes data **(12)**
 - Conducts studies on issues of significance to the University / Conducts survey research / Designs and administer survey instruments / Initiate and performs research/ Coordinates and supervises necessary institutional studies and research / Conducts both descriptive and analytical studies **(14)**
 - Maintains institutional data **(5)**

- *Data provider-Reporter (30)*
 - Is a service oriented unit / User-oriented **(2)**
 - Serves as official source of data/Provides official institutional (or university) information / Serves as the centralized electronic repository of archived information / Creates and maintains the system wide repository of student data as well as preparing IPEDS reports / Serves as a depository and clearinghouse for instituional data **(7)**
 - Serves as liaison with the Council on Postsecondary Education **(1)**
 - Provides data / information utilized to achieve the mission or goals of the institution **(11)**
 - Provides information needed to address ad hoc problems and issues / Must accurately assess current issues and identify emerging issues **(5)**
 - Disseminates information and results / Provides semester and longitudinal reports / Reports institutional data **(14)**
 - Prepares publications, reports, databases, presentations and web sites which translate raw data into knowledge **(13)**
 - Fulfills institutional reporting obligations / Serves as a basis for reports and surveys requested / Is responsible for the coordination and completion of all external surveys, questionnaires and mandated governmental reporting / Oversees compliance reporting **(10)**
 - Produces the Databook or Factbook / Production of campus data **(6)**
 - Reports the activities and assets of the University **(3)**
 - Develops a series of management reports and analyses / Assumes the responsibility of either generating or supervising the development of all official University data reports **(2)**

- *Database administrator-Information Technology Developer (8)*
 - Maintains a wide variety of continuing databases / Maintains a data warehouse (4)
 - Collaborates insuring the integrity and usability of information systems / Insures that the University's administrative data systems are able to satisfy all required data reporting (3)
 - Develops computer network-based systems (1)
 - Participates in the design and maintenance of internal information systems for administrative uses (1)

- *Analyst-Interpreter (21)*
 - Provides analyses that transform data into useful information / Analyses data (10)
 - Provides analysis to support / Provides and coordinates information support / Provides support institution-wide / University-wide scope (10)
 - Interprets (3)
 - Coordinates peer institution analysis (2)
 - Interacts with and provide information on institutional goals, strengths, priorities, needs and perspectives (1)
 - Invites requests for data analysis and endeavors to honor all requests within the time constraints of the requestor (1)
 - Proposes alternative solutions to support the decision making process (1)
 - Identifies trends (1)

- *Evaluation specialist (16)*
 - Coordinates assessment activities, policy analysis and/or institutional planning (5)
 - Supports the achievement of the University's mission by facilitating (*on-going, integrated, institution-wide, research-based*) planning and evaluation processes (4)
 - Plays a major role in developing and maintaining analytic models for budget, enrollment, and faculty salaries (4)
 - Oversees the preparation of the University Strategic Plan / Guides and/or coordinates strategic planning (3)
 - Takes the lead role in responding to institutional accreditation requirements and helping university decision makers ensure that the principles for continued accreditation are met (3)
 - Provides guidance to help improve the quality of academic offerings, institutional operations and support (3)
 - Designs, develops and implements strategies and techniques to research, assess, and improve effectiveness (2)
 - Functions as a conduit for communication of outcomes assessment (2)
 - Evaluates and/or documents effectiveness (2)
 - Provides staff assistance in program reviews (2)
 - Produces decision-support programming and analysis (1)
 - Facilitates the development of an awareness of outcomes assessment (1)
 - Supports the creation of plans, the accumulation of knowledge supporting institutional processes (1)

- Consultant-Speaker (11)
 - Supports research conducted on campus (8)
 - Offer consulting services/ Provides technical and professional assistance in collection, analysis and reporting of data and information / Provides consultation on institutional research related activities within the university (5)
 - Helps other units' staff to conduct institutional research, reporting and analysis (3)
 - Sponsors associateships to give student valuable research and/or development experience / Sponsors faculty workshops (2)

Description of data or information

- Accurate (8)
- Timely (7)
- Administrative and management information / Precise statistical and management information (4)
- Accessible / Easily accessible (3)
- Reliable (3)
- Useful (3)
- Relevant (2)
- Quantitative data (2)
- Consistent (1)
- Objective (1)
- Research-based (1)
- Effective framework of information (1)
- General instructional (1)
- Highest quality (1)
- Institutional (1)
- Organized (1)
- Documented (1)
- Appropriate (1)
- Important (1)
- Aggregated (1)
- Detailed (1)
- Valid (1)
- Needed internal and external data (1)
- Qualitative information (1)

Institutional efforts or processes supported by IR

- Decision making process (18)
- Planning and Evaluation (Campus, school and program planning and evaluation activities) (18)
- Assessment / Outcomes assessment (12)
- Institutional effectiveness (10)
- Policy analysis / Policy-making / Policy formation / Policy development (8)
- Enrollment management / Enrollment projections (6)
- Institutional management (6)
- Evaluation of university operations / Institutional evaluation (6)

- Strategic planning or other organizational improvement processes **(5)**
 - Build on institutional strengths and values (1)
 - Understanding the external environment (1)
- Self-study / Accreditation **(5)**
- Administration and evaluation of academic and administrative programs/ Academic program review **(5)**
- Planning and allocation of resources **(5)**
- Budget and facilities planning **(3)**
- Program effectiveness **(2)**
- Accountability reporting **(2)**
- Effectiveness of efforts to achieve goals **(1)**
- Evaluation of programs and services **(1)**
- Cost analysis studies **(1)**
- Performance improvement / Performance measurement **(1)**
- Publication of institutional information **(1)**
- Effective risk management through the development and management of applicable policies and procedures **(1)**
- Improvement of teaching, learning and services on campus **(1)**
- Recommendation processes **(1)**

Users or recipient's of information provided by IR

- Decision makers **(15)**
 - Those leading the institution (2)
 - President (2)
 - Provost (4)
 - Chancellor (2)
 - Vice President and/or Dean of Academic Affairs (1)
 - Senior academic and administrative officers (1)
 - Academic deans and other campus administrators / Department heads (6)
 - Academic and administrative managers / Executive management (4)
- Campus units / Units of the university **(4)**
- Users on campus / University community / Institutional community / Campus communities **(12)**
 - Faculty
 - Students
 - Campus staff
- Internal constituencies **(5)**
- External community / External agencies / External constituencies **(10)**
- Regulators **(2)**
- Board of Trustees **(2)**
- Commission on Higher Education **(1)**
- Governing boards **(2)**
- College guides **(2)**
- State agencies **(2)**
- Federal agencies / Federal government **(3)**
- Accrediting bodies **(1)**
- Governmental and commercial agencies **(2)**
- General public **(3)**

Final remarks

The majority of mission statements for IR units were compiled for UPR-RPC peer institutions. All missions were short and easily understood. In general, the main roles of IR were present at the mission statements. Two decades ago, institutional research office was primarily responsible for: submitting reports to the state and federal government, completing questionnaires for the college guides, monitoring space utilization, extracting data from mainframe computers for special reports, creating an institutional fact book, and developing specialized reports for senior management.³ However, actual mission statements reveal IR emerging roles due to the proliferation of powerful data management tools and the increased demands of information and accountability concerns. The missions reviewed through content analysis evidence the importance of institutional researchers as data providers, reporters, analysts and interpreters. However, more missions are incorporating aspects associated with IR new roles as evaluation specialists and database administrators (DBA) or information technology developers (ITD).

The analysis of this compilation of IR missions emphasizes the IR functions of support for high relevant institutional processes, such as decision making, institutional planning & effectiveness, assessment, and policy formulation & analysis. Institutional researchers must define, collect, maintain and report accurate, timely, easily accessible, reliable and useful precise statistical and management data. Various information users were identified, ranging from policy decision makers, internal and external constituencies and regulators right through campus community and general public.

Another finding, which does not represent the focus of this compilation, was that there are differences in the name of the units or offices related with institutional research, which associates this field with diverse institutional processes and efforts. The statement of purpose declared as their mission also reveals the position of IR at different organizational level at the institutions. Finally, the tasks or functions related with technology applications (DBA, ITD and webpages design) have a more remarkable standing at IR units and offices. These aspects can be the basis for further research.

³ Frank J. Doherty (1999). *Useful evaluations: What does it take? The role of formative evaluation research for the Institutional Research Professional*. Paper presented at the 39th Annual Forum of the Association for Institutional Research Seattle, Washington May 30--June 2, 1999.