

Opportunities for Improving the Viabililty of Academic Data

DRAFT prepared for the
Reporting Strategies
Task Force
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The present situation

“... we are data rich and information poor.”

Robert Mullen Assistant Director Institutional Research & Planning, UM System

Task Force Charge

UM System Vice Presidents Steve Lehmkuhle, Ralph Caruso, Ken Hutchinson, and Nikki Krawitz are sponsoring a Task Force on Reporting Strategies. The task force is to recommend to the Vice Presidents an overall plan that the University would implement to enhance reporting capabilities of administrative and academic units. This recommendation will be presented to the Vice Presidents no later than the end of May 2003.

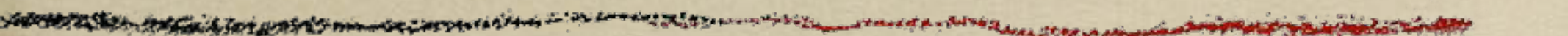
The task force will need to examine:

1. How can the University enhance reporting capabilities and respond to the data needs of faculty, administrators, and staff?
2. How can the University address these reporting needs in the short-term during PeopleSoft implementation and in the long-term once PeopleSoft is fully implemented?
3. What strategies are needed to leverage new technologies and best practices to support reporting?
4. What resources, if any, are needed to implement any proposed interim and long-term reporting strategies?

The Task Force is chaired by Bob Mullen, Assistant Director of Institutional Research and Planning. The membership of the Task Force will consist of representatives of each major functional area and campus.

Necessity for accurate academic information and data

The RedAC, Program Viability Audit (PVA), and other responses to current economic challenges require data and information on faculty productivity, student learning outcomes, and other viability measures.



This presentation is to underscore the essential relationship to supporting the best use of the intellectual capital and cultural assets of this institution by having accurate and essential information.

Opportunities

Perhaps the most obvious challenge in academic reporting support is related to the information needs of department chairs through Provost.

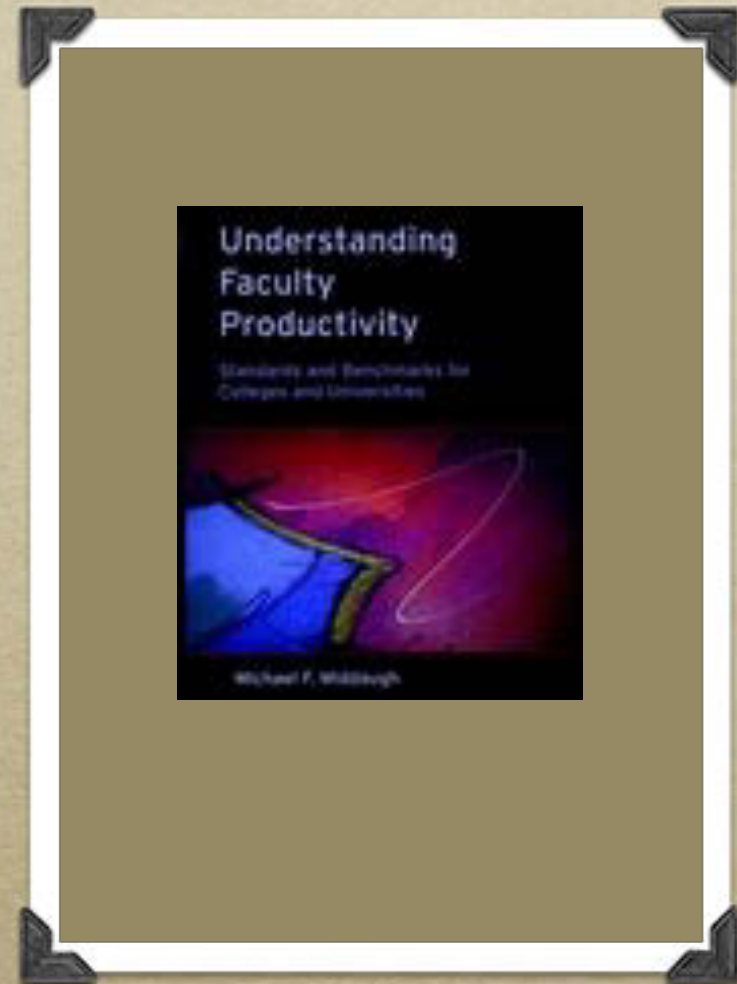
At the present time there are many separate reports on the System, campus, and academic units levels that are often both too complex and not integrated with data or information from the other systems.

A system is needed to support academic administration's specific needs.

Understanding Faculty Productivity: Standards and Benchmarks for Colleges and Universities

Michael F. Middaugh

I do not intend to lay blame on any constituency within higher education. That administrators lack the appropriate information to manage resources and ensure accountability is, however, a fair characterization of the state of affairs in many colleges and universities. Henry Rosovsky, former dean of the faculty of arts and science at Harvard University, himself underscores this point:



From the point of view of a dean, two observations are in order. First, the dean has only the vaguest notion concerning what individuals teach. Second, the changes that have occurred [in faculty workloads, over time] were never authorized at the decanal level. At least that is what I believe, and that is my main point. No chairman or group of science professors ever came to the dean to request a standard load of one-half course per year. No one ever requested a ruling concerning, for example, [workload] credit for shared courses. Change occurred through the use of fait accompli, i.e., creating facts..." [p.1 B]

Criticism of Faculties

Henry Rosovsky (1992), former dean of the faculty of arts and science at Harvard University, characterized American faculties, when viewed as social organisms, as operating "without a written constitution, and with very little common law. That is a poor combination, especially when there is no strong consensus concerning duties and standards of behavior. This situation has been made infinitely worse by the lack of information in the hands of [academic] deans concerning [the workload of] individual professors."

"A wise senior colleague with whom I recently discussed our predicament strongly argued that the administration should assume most of the blame precisely because of our manifest unwillingness to set clear tasks and clear limits. The university setting and competition with other institutions make these assignments unusually difficult..."

Henry Rosovsky (1992)

Task Force Meetings

- Thus far there have been excellent presentations and discussions surrounding matters of budgeting and fiduciary reporting matters.

Focus Groups

- The recent focus groups on all 4 campuses (and at the System level) revealed the crucial need for improved academic reporting mechanisms.

Some examples of academic reporting needs

- Cost recovery
- SCH
- Productivity
- Research
- Cost effectiveness
- Student demand
- Satisfaction
- Comparative data

Some UMKC Focus Group comments

In my perfect world this is what would occur – at any point that our student credit hours would be able to be transferred into a formula and with this amount of students, we could expect in budget at this time of year. Student credit hours would be a formula.

Have a faculty load printout as it relates to productivity – so we have a unit target – maybe print out the full time faculty – and we have a target of 270 credit hours in a semester, then it would be there.

Cost recovery – what is the formula – what are the elements and generate it on a regular basis?
Transparent admission process – so that at any point we could call up the admission process and see exactly what this student needs to get in UMKC – tracking of the status of the students – faculty get very frustrated trying to get good students in and can't tell why they can't be in Student Retention report.

Need to be able to track co-curricular activities of, students, their scholars, and achievements so we can target alumni to help us financially with our program.

A better system of tracking alumni – a university or campus wide – or by school – (Several said this) and we also need profile of our students. I had a chance to work on an alumni effort and I had no idea that we had no data on our successful graduates.

Student retention information – especially transfer students – many have transferred from other institutions –

Room usage – needed to re calculate the indirect cost recovery rate – trying to find the information that we need to determine which closets were closets and not research labs and what it was used for – we need a central room inventory and who is in them. We had to get actually employee id numbers and how they were being paid – we need which were used for what.

Space issues for externally funded research –

Development records – we need to know what goes on in this office and how it relates to us. Access to the office of development records on what are they doing for us – who have they contacted and have they gotten money – and who has given money.

Academic Reporting

On March 13, 2003, Larry Kaptain will make the Academic Reporting recommendations to the Reporting Strategies Task Force at their monthly meeting in Columbia.

University of Missouri **Planning and Budget**

Focus Group Role

http://www.system.missouri.edu/planning/staff/Focus_role.html