Institutional Research in Iowa: Challenges and Opportunities

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Purpose of the Survey

- To better understand the status, nature, strengths and weaknesses in institutional research functions in Iowa;

- To stimulate dialogue among IR professionals; and

- To develop a statewide IR association, either physical or virtual.
Background

- **Survey instrument modeled from two studies on the role of IR in Higher Education**
  - Anne Marie Delaney from Babson College
  - William Knight from Bowling Green State University
Population Characteristics

- Population
  - 33 Four-year colleges/universities
  - 16 Two-year colleges (community, trade etc.)
- Sample
  - 22 Four-year colleges/universities
  - 12 Two-year colleges (community, trade etc.)
- Response Rate
  - 4-Year response rate = 66.7%
  - 2-Year response rate = 75.0%
IR Office Characteristics

- Mean IR office staff = 2.17 (minimum 1, maximum 5)
- Years of experience in IR Mean = 8.62 years (minimum 6 months, maximum 35 years)
- Mean FY04 Budget $129,167, median $90,000.
- Report to which office…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report to…</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provost/VP for Academic Affairs</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>53.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the President</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VP for Enrollment Management</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the Registrar/Student Services</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Majority of IR staff members have at least a Masters degree

Top 5 Degree Fields
- Education
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Business
- Higher Ed Administration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters Degree</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>39.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelors Degree</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associates Degree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS Diploma</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IR Presence at Institutions

- Yes, have an IR office: 56%
- No: 12%
- No, but people engaged in IR: 32%
Software in Use

*Numbers do not add up to 100% as individuals were able to choose more than one option*
Hardware in Use

*Numbers do not add up to 100% as individuals were able to choose more than one option*
# IR Membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIR</td>
<td>57.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIRUM</td>
<td>42.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MidAIR</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associated Colleges of the Midwest</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society for College University and Planning</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Numbers do not add up to 100% as individuals were able to choose more than one organization*
What Do IR People Know?

**Strongest Skills**
- Standard variable categories
- Basic counting rules
- Work successfully with others
- General knowledge of structures
- Written communication
- Oral communication skills

**Possess to Large Extent**: [Graph showing possession to large extent for each skill]

**Expert**: [Graph showing expert level for each skill]

**Weakest Skills**
- Instructional evaluation
- Faculty workload analysis
- Student flow modeling
- Enrollment forecasting
- Values and attitudes

**Possess to Large Extent**: [Graph showing possession to large extent for each skill]

**Expert**: [Graph showing expert level for each skill]
Obstacles to IR

1. Demand for routine reporting
2. Campus politics interfere
3. Results too complicated
4. Diff. anticipating requests
5. Not part of leadership team
6. Making reports understood
7. Leaders don’t want info.
8. Disagree over imp. issues
9. Lack access to dec. makers
10. Recommendations in reports

Mean

4-Year Institutions

2-Year Institutions
5 institutions (14.7%) reported that they used data mining techniques and 6 (18.2%) said they planned on investing in data mining software in the near future.

45.5% of respondents have a data warehouse.
New Training Needed

![Bar chart showing new training needed across various topics. The chart compares 4-Year and 2-Year programs, with topics including Data Management, Personal Computer Applications, Research Design, Statistical Analysis, Data Warehousing, Survey Design, Data Mining, Mainframe Applications, and OLAP.](chart_image)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Organization</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State level membership</td>
<td>60.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web-based</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination of types</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet newsgroup</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interest in an All-Iowa IR org?
Conclusions

- Traditional IR practices still strong
- Lack of leadership/advocacy skills
- Lack of skills in emerging areas of Information Technology
Challenges Ahead

- Resource constraint
- Emerging Information Technology