

Institutional Research

Institutional Research refers to research conducted within an institution of higher learning in order to provide information that supports planning, policy formation, and decision-making. The mission of the University's Institutional Research (IR) program is to create a comprehensive data collection process that serves the institution in three ways:

- Measure and assess student ("customer") satisfaction and educational effectiveness
- Gather and archive all data elements and reports required of the University by governmental and regulatory organizations (e.g., WASC Senior College and University Commission, IPEDS: The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System)
- Inform all aspects of operational policy making, program development, and strategic planning

A central function of IR is to support institutional efforts to solicit feedback from students and other constituents by contributing expertise in all phases of survey development, administration, and data analysis. IR presents findings and provides context from multiple data analysis projects to institutional leaders with the aim of informing decision making. Some of the areas IR engages with include: operational and strategic planning, assessment of academic programs, tracking historical trends and forecasting future enrollments, and supporting efforts to provide compliance data to requesting agencies.

As part of the University's efforts to assess institutional effectiveness, including the attainment of Program Learning Outcomes by students, Academic Affairs and IR may collect a sample of student work (e.g., final papers, dissertation proposals, case study analyses, etc.) for evaluation with objective rubrics. All sample materials are treated confidentially by the Program Chair or instructor when retrieved for archival and assessment purposes, and anonymously when reviewed by an evaluation team. The assessment of Program Learning Outcomes does not focus on individual student performance but rather on aggregate attainment of Program Learning Outcomes.