From the Executive Producer…

Where does the time go? It’s difficult to believe that it’s already Fall of 2013 (and football season is in full-swing)!

As you know from prior NOIRE editions, we administered the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) to our Denver Campus freshmen and seniors during the spring. Our response rate was an impressive 33.4%!! It’s definitely a testament to all of those individuals and units that worked with OIRE to achieve such a remarkable student response rate. My sincere gratitude to all of you who supported the NSSE endeavor! And our thanks to all of the students who took the time to respond and provide us with feedback and information! Check out “Coming Attractions” for more NSSE information.

In July we held our OIRE Strategic Planning Retreat sessions. Our FY 2014-2016 Strategic Plan is available on the OIRE website. I encourage you to peruse the plan so that you can not only see what we’ll be focusing on over the next three fiscal years, but so that you can understand what is important to us as an office.

I’d like to take this opportunity to thank all of the members of our Survey Working Group (SWG). We have representation from more than thirty different units across the two campuses and they are a very engaged and valuable group. With the support of the SWG, we’ve made headway on developing and providing our campus communities with survey resources and will continue to do so. Please see “Now Showing” for additional survey-related information.

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Christine A. Stroup-Benham, Ph.D.
Requesting Data from OIRE

To quickly and efficiently submit a request to OIRE, please use our online Data Request Form. This allows your request to not only be received by our automated tracking system, but also directly emails one of our Research Coordinators for processing. (Tip: To make future requests even easier to submit, apply for a User Account, which will then allow the Data Request form to be pre-filled with your name and contact information.)

To ensure that we meet your needs, it is important that we receive your request two to four weeks in advance of the date you require the information. Please be assured that we will work with you when emergency requests arise; however, so that all customers enjoy the same level of service and projects/requests are appropriately prioritized, it is important that we know of your needs as far in advance as possible. Some requests can be quite complex and can take months to complete. Also, keep in mind that the online Report Library is an excellent resource for information.

Data Request Form  ■  Main Phone: 303-315-2840  ■  IR Email: IR@UCDenver.edu

Feedback!! We have recently revised our OIRE Customer Feedback survey for FY2014. We use this data during our annual strategic planning retreat to help inform our decisions and directions for the upcoming year. You can view past results, or take our current survey here.

Yet another way to provide feedback! Many of the pages on the OIRE website have a link to a feedback form on which you can provide immediate comments/suggestions for a specific web page. This form is completely anonymous; however, you can choose to provide your name if you’d like to be contacted regarding the feedback you submit.

FAQ:  Why are Pre-ISIS Data Requests a Challenge?

First, a little background: SIS was the data tracking system for student records prior to 2010. ISIS is the PeopleSoft, Campus Solutions-based system that we now use that was implemented in 2010. Because these are two different systems, the data tables that house SIS and ISIS data are fundamentally different.

In SIS, a student has one row per institution, per campus (i.e., Denver Campus vs. what was then known as the Health Sciences Center), per academic unit (Main Campus vs. Extended Studies). In ISIS, a student has just one row per institution. We are still able to delineate between Main Campus and Extended Studies in ISIS; however, it is done by creating “flags” that allow us to select Main Campus or Extended Studies enrollments (or both) along with the credit hours that go with each. In ISIS a student could be enrolled at the Denver and Anschutz Medical Campuses at the same time and had separate rows for each. In ISIS, while students can still be enrolled in courses on each campus, they are assigned a primary campus and have just one row/record that reflects that primary campus.

Another challenge that our office faces when reporting these data is that in SIS students could have different careers (e.g., undergraduate or graduate) in different academic units. This means that a student could be identified as an undergraduate in Main Campus and a graduate in Extended Studies. In ISIS, this is not the case, since a student should have only one active career (e.g., undergraduate or graduate). In SIS, if a student had multiple majors, those majors were listed in multiple fields in the same row; in ISIS each major has a separate row. For this (and other) reasons, whenever possible we try to focus our reporting on a student’s primary major.

In addition to the structural differences between the two data systems, SIS and ISIS have different values for major and college codes. In SIS, a major code was four characters. In ISIS a major code is the traditional four characters plus the degree code (e.g. BIOL-BS). In the transition to ISIS many major codes changed (from what they had been in SIS) so there is not always an exact match between SIS and ISIS codes. College codes are different as well. SIS college codes are 2 characters and ISIS they are 5. ISIS also has no college code set-up for the Graduate School.

These are just a few of the differences that cause challenges when reporting across the SIS and ISIS boundary. We also have to process data from SIS and ISIS separately when doing a report and piece those data together. To remedy this and other challenges faced by using SIS and ISIS data together, OIRE is currently mapping SIS and ISIS data to make the SIS structure and values look as much like ISIS as possible to facilitate easier and more directly equivalent longitudinal reporting. This a huge endeavor but having all data living in the same table with equivalent values will make longitudinal reporting faster, more efficient and less prone to error.
Newsreel: Survey Edition

Alumni Survey:

The Survey Working Group (SWG) has a number of sub-committees working on specialized surveys important to the institution. One such subcommittee is working on collection information from our Alumni. This subcommittee is putting together three separate surveys seeking Alumni opinions about the Denver Campus Undergraduate programs, the Denver Campus Graduate Programs, and the Anschutz Medical Campus programs. We hope these surveys will answer questions about how our alumni feel about these programs, how the alumni themselves are doing, as well as questions about internships, student clubs, research activities, alumni employment, and other topics.

All of our schools and colleges were invited to participate in the survey development process; however, not all have decided to participate in this survey administration. We have custom questions written specifically for the Physician’s Assistant program and the School of Dental Medicine at AMC, the School of Business as well as the School of Public Affairs on the Denver Campus. While the content design phase has ended for this coming year, let us know if you have questions you’d like for us to consider including next year!

We are currently in the testing phase to determine if there are any changes that need to be made to the survey. Areas of focus for testing are errant skip-patterns (questions which get skipped if they don’t apply), unclear questions, typos or other editing mistakes, and how long the surveys take to complete. This way, the survey we administer will be concise, simple, and professional.

Over the next few months we’ll be gathering data for the alumni mailing lists, brainstorming ideas to increase response rates (a big concern), dotting all the i’s and crossing all the t’s. We plan to administer the survey in early 2014. After the data have been collected, in addition to a summary report for each survey version, a report for each individual school/college will be created. Other analyses are being planned, so if you have any suggestions, please let us know!

Should you have any questions about the survey, please contact Nathan Schwab (Nathan.schwab@ucdenver.edu or x52828).

Staff Spotlight: Carrie John

As many of you may already be aware, Carrie John has moved from OIRE to Student Affairs and is now the Director of Analytics for Enrollment and Retention. While we certainly miss having Carrie as part of our team, we hope that she is enjoying her new Student Affairs “family!” Of course, we continue to enjoy working closely with Carrie (and many other folks within Student Affairs) on a variety of projects!

Project Spotlight: Student Intervention (Lynx-Links)

During a conference in 2011, Dr. Stroup-Benham learned about an intervention that was being used by Mississippi State University (MSU): students who missed class were being contacted by the residence hall advisors, who engaged with those students in a brief conversation about the importance of attendance and supplied them with information about available resources. Not only does the literature confirm a relationship between attendance and student success, but the results of the MSU intervention were truly remarkable: an increase of 10% in student graduation rates!

With the aid of Student Affairs, Peer Advocacy & Student Engagement, Undergraduate Experiences, and other administrative and faculty units, a pilot was undertaken in Fall 2012. Faculty in about 30 course sections (primarily First Year Seminar courses) agreed to take attendance for the first 6 weeks of the Fall 2012 semester. When a student missed for the second time in the course, a trained Peer Advocate Leader (PAL) contacted the student to perform the intervention.

The pilot was continued in Spring 2013. However, due to logistical impediments, the pilot was not carried out this Fall. This hiatus is being used to gear up for a re-initiation in 2014 and to conduct some preliminary analyses with the data already collected.

If you are interested in participating in the pilot or in learning more about it, please contact Dr. Christine Stroup-Benham.