



INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH 101: What is Institutional Research, Anyway?

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11/16/16

BRIEF HISTORY OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

- ❖ Dates back to about 1960...
- ❖ Or 1701...
- ❖ Or the early 1900's
 - ❖ studies supported by foundations
 - ❖ only about 10 schools had IR offices by 1955
 - ❖ 1956 - American Council on Education (ACE) created the Office of Statistical Information and Research (OSIR)

BRIEF HISTORY OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

- ❖ Early 1960's - 5 National Institutional Research Forums
- ❖ Association for Institutional Research – 1965
 - ❖ 6th Forum and first AIR meeting in 1966
 - ❖ regional groups started
 - ❖ state groups (FAIR 1968; CAIR 1971)

FUNCTIONS OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

- ❖ Benchmarking Studies
 - ❖ governance models
 - ❖ institutional structure and management
 - ❖ resource allocation
- ❖ Surveys
 - ❖ field inquiries of other institutions

FUNCTIONS OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

❖ Decision Support

supplying data for:

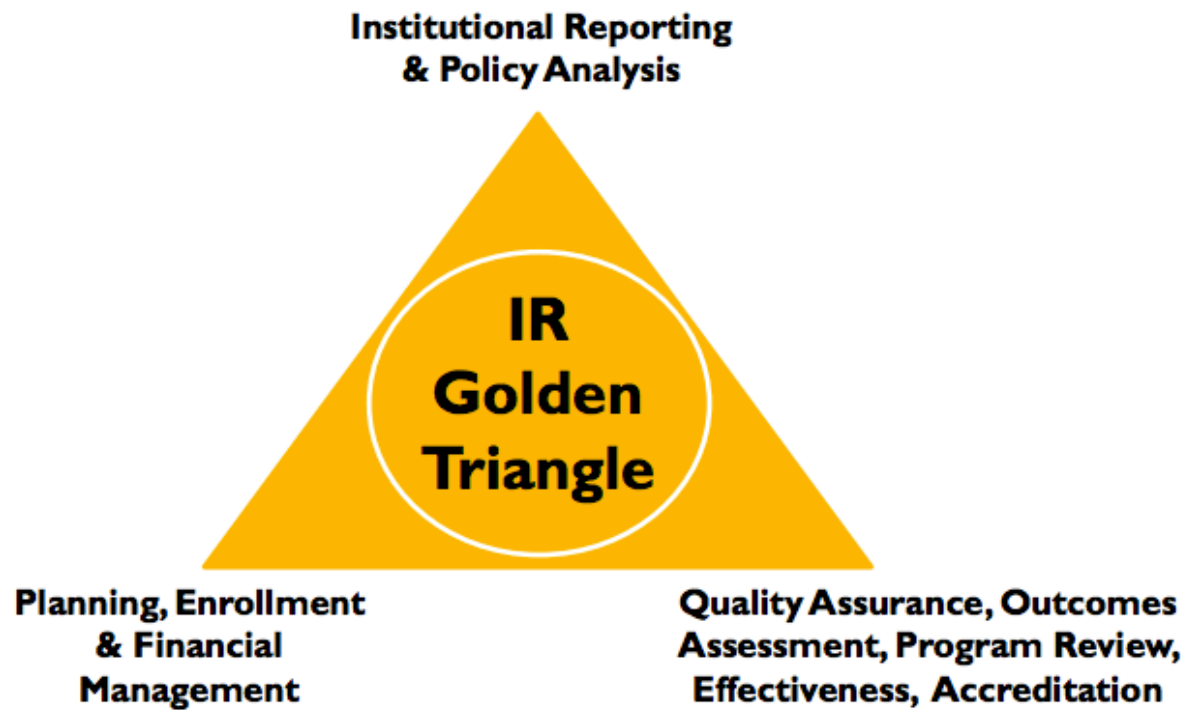
- ❖ planning
- ❖ policy formation
- ❖ decision making

❖ Organizational Intelligence (Terenzini,1993)

- ❖ technical and analytical
- ❖ issues intelligence – requires developing relationships
- ❖ contextual intelligence

GOLDEN TRIANGLE

The Golden Triangle of Institutional Research



Source: Volkwein, 2008

Five Faces of Institutional Research

Organizational Role and Culture	Purposes and Audiences	
	Formative and Internal, for Improvement	Summative and External, for Accountability
Administrative and institutional	To describe the institution; IR as information authority	To present the best case: IR as spin doctor
Academic and professional	To analyze alternatives; IR as policy analyst	To supply impartial evidence of effectiveness: IR as scholar and researcher
Technology	To gather and transform data into information and knowledge; to collaborate in creating and maintaining information repositories and to facilitate the process of knowledge creation, capture, and sharing; IR as knowledge manager	

Source: Andrea Serban (2002), "Knowledge Management: The Fifth Face of Institutional Research." In J. F. Volkwein (Ed.) *New Direction for Institutional Research*, #113, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.

IR IN THE ORGANIZATION

Report to

- ❖ president, chancellor
- ❖ provost or other academic vice president
- ❖ finance, business
- ❖ planning, evaluation, institutional effectiveness
- ❖ student services
- ❖ development, advancement, marketing
- ❖ IT/information systems

ACRONYMS

- ❖ AIR – Association for Institutional Research
- ❖ IE – Institutional Effectiveness
- ❖ IPEDS – Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System
- ❖ CDS- Common Data Set
- ❖ WSCUC – WASC Senior College and University Commission

ACRONYMS



PRIORITIES

Good data!

This means being a good data janitor

- ❖ do you have the right data?
- ❖ do you have all of the data?
- ❖ are the data error free?
 - ❖ duplicates
 - ❖ compare with previous data?
- ❖ do the data make sense with what you know about the institution?



GOOD QUESTIONS = GOOD ANSWERS

❖ Clarify

❖ **what?** enrollment example

- ❖ data available, limitations, etc.
- ❖ teach them to fish

❖ **why?**

- ❖ audience
- ❖ presentation of information (chart, graph, table)
- ❖ level of granularity

❖ **when?**

- ❖ time sensitivity



QUESTIONS

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