Dealing with Multiplicity and Complexity to Sustain Simplicity in Institutional Research Management

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Dean, Research, Planning & Institutional Effectiveness

Christian Anderson
Professor, Economics
Co-chair, Institutional Review Board

The California Association for Institutional Research (CAIR)
41st Annual Conference
November 16-18, 2016
The Millennium Biltmore Hotel, Los Angeles
Dealing with Multiplicity and Complexity

The objectives of this presentation are to:

• Share innovative ideas and experiences with effective strategies in managing data/public information/internal and external research requests that involve multiple entities/offices that provide oversight and service.

• Discuss and demonstrate dynamics of developing processes, protocols, tools and improvement models that directly impact the institutional effectiveness in these areas.

• Stimulate audience participation, engagement and feedback.
Multiplicty & Complexity

Student Research

- Grants
- IRB
- Public Info
- Found.
- IT
- IR
- Res. Comp.
- VP Acad.
- Dean
- Division
- Dept.
- Course
- STEM Prog.
Complicated vs Complex

Sargut & McGrath, 2011
The Jungle – full of the unexpected
The Zoo – order and regularity
Complexity

Structural mitosis
accumulation of gradual changes in reporting relationships, new units/programs, organizational configurations, etc.

Product proliferation
creation of new offerings/services/features

Institutional Complexity*

Managerial habits
exacerbation of problems created by structural mitosis, product proliferation, & process evolution. e.g. information requests

Process evolution
response to new regulation/mandates, new leadership, etc.
Organizational Multiplicity and Complexity

- People
- Systems
- Processes
- Protocols
We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.

Everything should be made as simple as possible, but no simpler.

~Albert Einstein
Issue
Research JUNGLE!
Structural Solutions

- Rationalize reporting relationships (i.e. IRB management)
- Reduce the number of levels in the hierarchy (delayering - e.g. Research Advisory, Solutions Group)
COS IRB Reporting Structure

Rationalizing Reporting Relationships

- President
- Academic Services
- Academic Senate
- Board of Trustees
- President

Research Office

- Research
- Planning
- Institutional
- Effectiveness

IRB
Delaying Reporting Relationships

President

Research Advisory Work Group

Solutions and Innovations Work Group (SIG)

Accreditation (ALO)
- Standards
- Self-Evaluation
- Quality Assurance

R-PIE
- Research
- Planning
- Effectiveness

Technology Services
- Data Warehouse
- EIS
- Other
Purpose: Solutions and Innovations Work Group has been established in fall 2013 to coordinate district’s efforts in utilizing available data that can be used for research, assessment and decision support purposes. The work group meets on a regular basis to discuss and generate solutions to issues and challenges related to data and data systems that directly affect district’s research capacity. The group also pays special attention to innovations in data management systems that are critical to continuous improvement of quality.
Issue

Research JUNGLE!

Proliferation

Solution

- Consolidation of functions and tasks (i.e. Mother Lode and Giant Questionnaire, Data Request Form)
What: A District-wide Survey
When: Spring 2017 (February)
Who: All COS Students
- Full-Time Students
- Part-Time Students
- First-Time Students
Why: District-wide feedback is an important part of the planning and evaluation process at the College of the Sequoias.
District Surveys....

The Student Support Services Survey (Mother Lode)
The Giant Questionnaire

What: A District-wide Survey
When: Spring 2017 (February)
Who: Everybody
- Full-Time Faculty
- Adjunct Faculty
- Administrators
- Confidential Staff
- Classified Staff

Why: Many, Many Reasons!
District Surveys....

The Giant Questionnaire (GQ)
Proliferation = Ad-Hoc Data/Research Relationships

Processes

RESEARCH/DATA REQUEST FORM

All requests for research require submitting a Data Request Form. We will make every effort to acknowledge your request within 24-48 hours by email. Please submit your request a minimum of two weeks prior in advance by submitting this form. Depending upon the difficulty and detail level, the data request may take two weeks or longer to complete.

Requestor's Name:
Mehmet Ozturk

Department:
Institutional Research

Request Date:
11/2/2015

November, 2015

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
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22 23 24 25 26 27 28
29 30 1 2 3 4 5

Today is Monday, November 02, 2015

Purpose for Request:
(Check all that apply)

- Accreditation (All Types)
- Assessment (SLO/SAO)
- Consultation
- Curious
- Enrollment Management
- Equity Plan
- For Board of Trustees Interaction
- Grant
- Mandated Reporting
- Program Information
- Program Review
- Public Information Request (PIO Only)
- Shared Governance
- Strategic Plan
- Student Success Support Plan (SSSP)
- Other (Please Specify)
Does the study involve interaction or intervention with **live human subjects**?

Is the collected information/data obtained **about** the subjects?

Is the collected information/data **private** information?

Is your study designed to produce **generalizable** knowledge?

(Generalizable knowledge is that which can have predictive value for populations, subjects or situations other than the one being studied. Generalizable is often indicated by intent to publish, presentations, or interest by others in the same field.)

Is the study **systematic**?

(Follows step by step procedures organized according to interrelated ideas or principles evidenced by a research plan and objectives.)

What do you want to know and why?
What do you want to know and why?

Examples of research questions.

Information Being Requested: In order to give you the most accurate data, please be specific when describing the information needed. Please include the following, if applicable: term/semester ranges, year ranges, date ranges, Visalia, Hanford, Tulare, or any combination, student type(s), total FTEF or FTES, detail data, aggregate data.

Example of what NOT to use: How many students are at COS?

Example of what TO use: How many full-time, degree-seeking, first-time students were enrolled at COS during Spring 2011 on all campuses? OR What was the unduplicated headcount on the Visalia campus for 2006-07?
### Processes

#### Documentation/Attachments:

If you have documentation or other attachments relevant to this request, please attach them here.

- Click here to attach a file

#### What data products will your project require?

(Examples of data products)

- Data summary tables and/or charts
- Full report with background, methodology, results, and conclusions/recommendations
- Mini report with a summary of findings
- Paper Survey
- Raw Data Only
- Web Survey
- Other (Please Specify)

#### Confidentiality/FERPA:

Confidential information is provided in response to specific requests. Disclosure of this information to unauthorized parties violates the Family Education Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA).

It is expected that you will:

- Handle this information in a confidential manner, keeping it secure at all times.
- Communicate this information ONLY to other parties authorized to have access to it in accordance with the provisions of FERPA.
- Use this information only for its intended purpose.
- Properly dispose of this information when it is no longer needed.

I understand and will comply with the FERPA regulations stated above.

Submit
Issue

Research JUNGLE!

Process Solutions

- Develop processes and protocols for:
  - Existing (i.e. Code Change Workflow)
  - New (i.e. IRB Checklist)
**Special thank you to the UCLA Office of the Human Research Protections Program (OHRPP)**

**Criteria Required by Federal Regulations for IRB Approval of a Human Research Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Risks to subjects are minimized</td>
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<td>- Procedures are consistent with sound research design and do not unnecessarily expose subjects to risk.</td>
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<td>- Study utilizes procedures/data already performed/colllected - when appropriate.</td>
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<td>2. Risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to anticipated benefits, if any, to subjects and the importance of the knowledge that may reasonably be expected to result</td>
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<td>3. Selection of subjects is equitable</td>
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<td>- Inclusion/exclusion criteria are adequate</td>
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<td>- Research purpose and setting are appropriate</td>
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<td>- Recruitment process is fair</td>
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<td>- Special Requirements for vulnerable populations are addressed</td>
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<td>4. Informed consent will be sought or waived in accordance with 45 CFR 46.16</td>
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<td>5. Informed consent will be documented or documentation waived in accordance with 45 CFR 46.17</td>
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<td>6. Provisions for monitoring collected data are adequate to ensure the safety of subjects - when appropriate</td>
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<td>7. Provisions to protect privacy of subjects are adequate - when appropriate</td>
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<td>8. Provisions to maintain confidentiality of data are adequate - when appropriate</td>
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<td>9. Vulnerable populations are adequately protected by additional safeguards. See criteria for protecting children, prisoners, pregnant women, fetuses, and neonates.</td>
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<td>1. If multi-site research study management of information relevant to protection of subjects is adequate.</td>
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<td>2. For continuing review or review of modifications, new information that might affect the willingness of participants to continue to participate will be provided - when appropriate.</td>
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<td>3. Frequency of review 12 months</td>
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<td>4. Less: determine appropriate approval period:</td>
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</table>
**CRITERIA REQUIRED BY FEDERAL REGULATION TO APPROVE INFORMED CONSENT**

1. **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**
   - Information is in **language understandable** to participants or representatives
   - There is **no exculpatory language** through which participants or representatives are made to:
     - Waive or appear to waive any legal rights or
     - Release or appear to release the investigator, the sponsor, the institution or its agents from liability for negligence

2. **BASIC REQUIRED ELEMENTS**
   - Statement that the *study involves research*
   - Explanation of the *purpose(s) of the research*
   - Expected *duration* of the participant’s participation
   - Description of the *procedures* to be followed
   - Identification of any *procedures which are experimental*
   - Description of any *reasonably foreseeable risks or discomforts* to the participant
   - Description of any *benefits* to the participant or to others which may reasonably be expected from the research
   - Disclosure of appropriate *alternative procedures or courses of treatment*, if any, that might be advantageous to the participant
   - Statement describing the extent, if any, to which *confidentiality of records* identifying the participant will be maintained.
   - If research poses greater than minimal risk, information on availability and nature of *compensation or medical treatment available if injury occurs*
   - An explanation of whom to *contact in the event of a research-related injury* to the participant
   - *Contact information for the research team* for questions, concerns, or complaints

Special thank you to the UCLA Office of the Human Research Protections Program (OHRPP)
Special thank you to the UCLA Office of the Human Research Protections Program (OHRPP).

Research Proposal Form Internal Check List

Date Research Proposal Form Received: __________________________

Completion
1. Research Proposal Form (Application) Completed
2. Questionnaire attached (if applicable)
3. Consent forms attached
4. Additional documents to be used
5. Certificate of Completion from NIH
6. External support proposal or award letter (if applicable)
7. Letters of approval from supervisor and or cooperating entities
8. Copy of approved thesis/dissertation proposal or prospectus (if applicable)
9. If the research is part of a research proposal submitted for federal, state or external funding, submit a copy of the FULL proposal (if applicable)

Internal Checklist Completed by: ____________________________

Date: __________

Reviewed by Research Office: ____________________________

Date: __________

Additional IRB Meeting Checklist:

IRB Meeting needs to be scheduled

IRB Meeting has been scheduled

Date of IRB Meeting

Meeting Packet Prepared & Approved

Meeting Room Reserved

IRB
Institutional Review Board
Finding “Simple” Solutions

Issue

Research JUNGLE!

Managerial Solutions

- Develop Management Guidelines (e.g., External Research, Survey, Approving Data Requests)
- Management by exception (e.g. the “other” option)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management Council</th>
<th>• All Managers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deans Council</td>
<td>• All Area Deans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President’s Senior Management Council</td>
<td>• VPs, Provosts, HR and Research Deans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

College of the Sequoias
Management Council
March 18, 2016
Visalia, CA
District Board Policy:
Outside entities and individuals interested in conducting research at COS must obtain approval from the COS Office of Research, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness.
Please be aware that research subjects/participants may not be recruited at COS, nor may data be collected, until the research project has:

(1) Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from an accredited University/institution, and

(2) The request has been approved by
   a. the COS Office of Research, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness, and
   b. the COS Institutional Review Board (COS IRB)
An approval from the COS Office of Research, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness to conduct external research must be obtained when:

1) **The researcher is not a COS employee, or**

2) **The researcher is a COS employee, but the intended research project is not part of the person’s responsibilities at the District (e.g., the person needs to collect data for a master’s thesis or doctoral dissertation).**
This approval process is neither intended to serve as, nor replace, review of a research project/proposal by an IRB board. Only research projects that have already been approved by an IRB board at an accredited University may be considered for approval to conduct external research at COS.
District-wide feedback is an important part of the planning and evaluation process at the College of the Sequoias. The Office of Research, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (Research Office) **routinely conducts and/or facilitates surveys and questionnaires** that support the District’s planning activities, outcomes and assessment cycle, grant requirements, mandated reporting requirements, various research projects, accreditation needs, ad-hoc requests, and other requests that directly **support the District’s mission.**
Before submitting your request, please review the following guidelines to learn more about the process and to determine if a survey/questionnaire is the most appropriate method to obtain the information/data you need. These guidelines serve to increase/improve effectiveness and efficiency of data collection through survey instruments.

If you are considering a survey for your research/planning/assessment needs, please contact the Research Office.
RESEARCH/DATA REQUEST FORM

All requests for research require submitting a Data Request Form. We will make every effort to acknowledge your request within 24-48 hours by email. Please submit your request a minimum of two weeks prior in advance by submitting this form. Depending upon the difficulty and detail level, the data request may take two weeks or longer to complete.

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- Mandated Reporting
- Program Information
- Program Review
- Public Information Request (PIO Only)
- Shared Governance
- Strategic Plan
- Student Success Support Plan (SSSP)
- Other (Please Specify)

Survey of Everything
Processes

Documentation/Attachments:
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- Click here to attach a file
- Add Another Attachment

What data products will your project require?
(Examples of data products.)

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- Mini report with a summary of findings
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  - Web Survey
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Survey of Everything

Confidentiality/FERPA:

- Submit on behalf of Requestor

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I understand and will comply with the FERPA regulations stated above.

Submit
Know Your Purpose!

✓ What do you want to know and why (think value and benefit to the District)?

✓ Clearly define your research questions

✓ Can you find answers in the research literature in general and existing district studies/reports?
How will you utilize the results?

- Satisfy Curiosity
- Advocacy
- Problematizing
- Propensity
- Accreditation
- No Idea!

Appropriate utilization of the findings
Seek Alternatives

Everyone requests surveys! Requestors are encouraged to explore alternative methods to obtain the information/data needed. Although surveys are helpful, they are but one tool that can be used. Other data collection methods include reviewing internal documents and protocols and/or conducting individual or focus group interviews. It is also important to consider if there are already existing data that can be used. At times, requests may be made for data that have already been collected, which may require unnecessary and duplicated work.
The Research Office maintains a District Surveys and Questionnaires web site, which houses copies of major surveys used. In addition, a District-wide Survey Calendar, which details the schedules of known District surveys and questionnaires.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Name</th>
<th>Target Audience</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Next Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COS Customer Service and Expectation Survey</td>
<td>All Students</td>
<td>One-Time</td>
<td>Spring 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COS Health Center Questionnaire</td>
<td>Health Center Students</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<tr>
<td>COS Research Advisory - Data Needs Questionnaire</td>
<td>All District Employees</td>
<td>As Needed</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Division Chair Training Evaluation</td>
<td>Academic Deans, Current and new division chairs</td>
<td>As Needed</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distance Education Student Satisfaction Survey (CCCD)</td>
<td>Sample of Distance Education Students</td>
<td>As Needed</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distance Education Faculty Satisfaction Survey (CCCD)</td>
<td>Sample of Distance Education Students</td>
<td>As Needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>District Governance Questionnaire</td>
<td>All District Employees, Board Members, Community Advisory, Student Senate</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>Spring 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Alert Faculty Survey</td>
<td>All Faculty</td>
<td>Triennially</td>
<td>Fall 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Alert Student Survey</td>
<td>All Students Receiving an Early Alert</td>
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<td>Facilities Questionnaire</td>
<td>Faculty, Staff and Students</td>
<td>Quinquennially</td>
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<td>Faculty Technology Survey</td>
<td>All Faculty</td>
<td>As Needed</td>
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<td>Faculty Development Needs Survey</td>
<td>All Faculty</td>
<td>As Needed</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finance and Accounting Customer Survey</td>
<td>Faculty, Staff and Students</td>
<td>As Needed</td>
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<td>Institutional Self-Study Survey</td>
<td>As Needed</td>
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<td>Spring 2012</td>
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<td>Learning Outcomes Follow-Up Survey</td>
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<td>Fall 2011</td>
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<td>Library Instruction Evaluation</td>
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<td>Master Plan Summit Questionnaire</td>
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<td>Online Learning Readiness Survey</td>
<td>As Needed</td>
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<td>Online Faculty Development Survey</td>
<td>As Needed</td>
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<td>Fall 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participations of the Program Review Cycle</td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Decennially</td>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
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<td>Participants of the Master Plan Summit Students</td>
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<td>Fall 2015</td>
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<td>Students Enrolled in Online Course</td>
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<td>Spring 2013</td>
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<td>Staff Technology Survey</td>
<td>All Classified and Administrators</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>Fall 2016</td>
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<td>Student Technology Survey</td>
<td>All Students</td>
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<td>Student Engagement Survey</td>
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<td>Sample of First-Year Students</td>
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- One-Time
- Ongoing
- Annually
- Biannually
- Triennially
- Quinquennially
- Sexennially
- Deciennially
- As Needed
### Survey Calendar

**Active Surveys For 2014-2016**

**April, 2016**

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<th>Sunday</th>
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<td><strong>Institutional Learning Outcome Assessment Survey</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Program Review/Training Evaluation Form/Survey</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2015-16 Above-Base Resource Allocation Questionnaire</strong></td>
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Avoid Fatigue

The administration of too many uncoordinated and/or poorly designed surveys may cause survey fatigue among respondents, which decreases the effectiveness of surveys and the number and quality of survey responses received. To avoid survey fatigue among respondents, the Research Office oversees and coordinates District survey needs and efforts, designs high-quality surveys, and attempts to reduce the number of surveys administered in a short period of time.
Avoid Fatigue

Fatigue = Low quality feedback

Over-surveying
Lack of coordination
Poor design
Bored, tired, or uninterested respondents
Participation in District surveys is voluntary. Although participant input is extremely valuable for improvement of the District, no tangible compensation is given for participation in the surveys (except for occasional incentives).

Data collected through the surveys are confidential. Survey results are only reported in the aggregate so that the privacy of the respondent is protected.
Be Aware of the IRB Rules

Some surveys require review by the District's Institutional Review Board (IRB). It is the responsibility of the IRB to evaluate each research proposal in terms of ethical standards. In particular, the Board will assess if there are appropriate measures planned to maintain confidentiality, establish informed consent, and avoid any risk to individuals. For further information, please visit the IRB web site: http://www.cos.edu/About/Research/Pages/IRB.aspx
It is the responsibility of the IRB to evaluate each research proposal in terms of ethical standards. In particular, the board will assess if there are appropriate measures planned to maintain confidentiality, establish informed consent, and avoid any risk to individuals.

The District considers all research involving the use of humans, or data maintained by the College as being subject to federal regulations regardless of the type of research being performed or the source of funding. Generally, investigators should submit a research proposal to the IRB for review if data collection involves Intervention or interaction with a living human being and any one of the following conditions applies:

1. Collection of information that is intended to contribute to generalizable knowledge (i.e., data will be used to make inferences about persons outside the group from which the data are collected),
2. Anonymity cannot be assured,
3. Conclusions drawn from the data are intended to be shared publicly.

Institutional Review Board Calendar
The COS IRB will meet, as needed, on the third Friday of the following months: August (exception–last Friday), September, October, November, January, February, March, and April. In months where the designated Friday meeting falls on a college holiday, the IRB will convene one week later.

To be placed on the agenda, completed research proposals must be submitted 30 days in advance. The last day to submit protocols for review is the first Friday in May, and the next opportunity to submit protocols is the first day of instruction in Fall.

Co-Chairs:
- Dr. Mehmet "Dali" Ozturk
- Christian Anderson

IRB Members:
- Steven Howland
- Tom Giampietro
- Lisa Brandis
- Carol Enns (Alternative)
- Adam Peck (Alternative)
- Sabrina Cerreon (Student)
- Bridget Carreon (Student)

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<th>IRB Application</th>
<th>IRB Policy Documents</th>
<th>Conducting External Research at College of the Sequoias</th>
<th>Resources</th>
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<tr>
<td>IRB Research Proposal Form</td>
<td>📄 AP 3290&lt;br&gt; 📄 BP 3290</td>
<td>📄 Conducting External Research at COS.pdf</td>
<td>📄 Human Subject Regulations Decision Charts</td>
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<td>Option 1:&lt;br&gt; 📄 Application Form (PDF)</td>
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Recognizing responsibility to the District, all managers:

J. Engage in research and are knowledgeable and skilled in research techniques, use sound and defensible methodologies, conduct and report investigations in a manner that minimizes the possibility that results will be misleading, inaccurate, and/or deceptively incomplete.

(Source: COS 2015 Management Handbook, pp. 6-8).
Management by exception

The “other” option
RESEARCH/DATA REQUEST FORM

All requests for research require submitting a Data Request Form. We will make every effort to acknowledge your request within 24-48 hours by email. Please submit your request a minimum of two weeks prior in advance by submitting this form. Depending upon the difficulty and detail level, the data request may take two weeks or longer to complete.

Requestor’s Name: Mehmet Ozturk
Department: Institutional Research
Request Date: 11/2/2015

Purpose for Request: (Check all that apply)
- Accreditation (All Types)
- Assessment (SLO/SAO)
- Consultation
- Curious
- Enrollment Management
- Equity Plan
- For Board of Trustees Interaction
- Grant
- Mandated Reporting
- Program Information
- Program Review
- Public Information Request (PIO Only)
- Shared Governance
- Strategic Plan
- Student Success Support Plan (SSSP)
- Survey of Everything

TelephoneNumber/Extension: (559) 000-0000
Preferred Return Date:
Management Guide to Approving Data/Research Requests

Management Council
Deans Council
President’s Senior Management Council
(VPs, Provosts, HR and Research Deans)

College of the Sequoias
Management Council
March 18, 2016
Visalia, CA
Why is research/data relevant AND important?

**COS 2.0:** The analysis of data is central to the COS Model for Integrated Planning.

**Core Values:** Innovative thinkers and problem solvers: Proactively explore and adapt, innovative and sustainable, data driven solutions to achieve institutional excellence.

**General Ethical Standards**- Recognizing responsibility to the District, all managers:

J. Engage in research and are knowledgeable and skilled in research techniques, use sound and defensible methodologies, conduct and report investigations in a manner that minimizes the possibility that results will be misleading, inaccurate, and/or deceptively incomplete.

(Source: COS 2015 Management Handbook, pp. 6-8).
Guidelines for Approving Data/Research Requests

Benefit to the College: Consider how the data request will benefit the College.

Engagement: Get involved in the data request process prior to the submission.

Alternatives: Explore alternative methods to obtain the information/data needed.

Sense and Sensibility: Make sure it makes sense, reasonable, logical, understandable, and practical.

FERPA & Ethics (Identity Protection): Protect sensitive/personally identifying information.

Human Subjects: Be aware of the IRB rules.
“Seek simplicity and distrust it”

*Alfred North Whitehead*

- Tunnel vision/ singlemindedness
- Simplification is often distrusted, e.g. investment, election forecasting models, clinical vs. statistical diagnosis.


Thank You!

College of the Sequoias
Research, Planning & Institutional Effectiveness

RESEARCH
Measuring Success Everyday

www.cos.edu/Research