Unlocking the Potential of Data
Connecting People, Policy, and Practice

Christine M Keller, PhD
Executive Director & CEO
Association for Institutional Research

2018 IPEDS Coordinators Meeting
& NCES State Data Conference
so that higher education institutions effectively use institutional research - data, information, and analysis for decision support - in a rapidly changing environment.
educational resources

innovative practices & research

professional development
Value of Higher Ed ??

Increasing Student Debt

Rising labor market demand

Fragmented Data Infrastructure

Rising student costs

Declining state support

Role of analytics

Changing student profiles

Student Success Goals
AND AFTER BIG DATA SOLVES ALL OUR PROBLEMS, WE'LL RIDE AWAY ON MAGIC FLYING UNICORNS.
What Got Us Here, Won’t Get Us There
Data-informed decisions for student success ...

- Data, analytic tools, technology
- Knowledge & Insights
- Collaboration & Community
- Supportive Policies & Structures
Knowledge & Insights
“Data sensemaking”

Infrastructure for sensemaking

Emphasis on technologies

predict
monitor
communicate
analyze
explore

report
store
integrate
transform
clean
collect

Activities of sensemaking

Emphasis on humans

Role of IR

What do we want?

• Improve student success

How does it happen?

• Decisions based on evidence

How can IR help?

• Data Capacity
• Data Literacy

Role of IR

Data and Decisions for Higher Education
Collaboration & Community
A Statement of Aspirational Practice for IR

- A Student-Focused Paradigm
- An Expanded Definition of Decision Makers
- New Structures for IR
- Leadership for the IR Function

Available at: www.airweb.org/AspirationalStatement
The Community of Decision Makers

Students
• Students have access to information to support their decisions
• That information is released “just-in-time” for decision making

Faculty
• Faculty have access to data and information to support their decisions

Staff
• Staff have access to data and information to support their decisions
IR Function

- A collection of offices across an institution that produce data and information for decision makers
- A strong, collaborative IR function is required for a data-informed decision culture
Without an institution-wide data strategy and leadership, data often become siloed and difficult to access and use.
**FRAMEWORK FOR LARGE-SCALE INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION**

- **Operating capacities** enable the institution to mobilize to effectively serve a larger, more diverse student base.

- **Interventions** are ways in which the institution attempts to improve student outcomes.

*Source: BCG analysis*

*Source: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*
Contextual factors provide both challenges and opportunities outside the present leadership's control.

Institutional decisions are purposeful choices within the institution's control, setting the stage for pursuing transformation.

Operating capacities enable the institution to mobilize to effectively serve a larger, more diverse student base.

Interventions are ways in which the institution attempts to improve student outcomes.

Source: BCG analysis

Source: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Policies & Structures
Source: Archie Cubarrubia and Patrick Perry, *Creating a Thriving Postsecondary Education Data Ecosystem*, Institute for Higher Education Policy, May 2016.
Momentum ... Timing ... Opportunities

state

federal

POLICY
WHAT'S YOUR STORY?