

OIR Annual Report



2019-20

Office of Institutional Research (OIR)
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Letter from the Director

Fiscal year 2020 (FY20) was an exciting one for the Office of Institutional Research (OIR). During the course of the year, the OIR staff completed hundreds of short- and long-term projects, supported dozens of university committees and initiatives, and surveyed thousands of students, faculty, and alumni. FY20 also marked the second year of the office's [Strategic Plan](#), and we made progress on many of our goals, including the creation and deployment of a variety of Tableau-based on-demand data tools; a major reorganization of our share drive; the development and refinement of documentation standards for office projects; an increase in formal and informal knowledge sharing opportunities; the completion of in-depth documentation for Tufts' IPEDS reporting; and improvements to our survey reporting tool ("Qualtrics Tools").

FY20 was an exciting year for other reasons as well, not least of which was the COVID-19 global pandemic. On March 17th, 2020, the staff of OIR, along with most other employees of Tufts, began working from home to help stem the spread of COVID-19. This was the first time the office has ever been fully virtual, and although it was a major change, all members of the staff—including our student Research Assistants—adjusted to the new work format incredibly well. We miss seeing one another in person, of course, but we all feel incredibly fortunate that we have remained healthy and have been able to continue to support the university. At the time of this writing we are still working remotely and will likely do so for most if not all of FY21. By the time we return to in-person operations, we will no doubt miss our Zoom gatherings, especially the backgrounds and effects we like to use to make each other smile!

Time and attention in 2019-20 was devoted to supporting several major initiatives and projects, many of which are detailed in this report. Of particular note is the work that OIR did over the past few months to support students and faculty in their adjustment to the pandemic-affected world. For example, shortly after instruction was moved online in mid-March, OIR worked with the Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELT), Educational Technology Services (ETS), and the university-wide Academic Continuity Committee, to design a survey to gather feedback about the experience of students and faculty as they transitioned to remote learning. Within a week of the survey opening, we delivered school-specific results to academic deans, allowing them to make timely adjustments. After the semester was complete, OIR worked with the Medford-based Counseling and Mental Health Services, the Boston-based Student Wellness Advisor, and Student Affairs deans at each school, to develop and administer a mental health needs assessment to students. This survey asked students about the stressors they had faced due to COVID-19, coping strategies they were using, and support they felt they needed from Tufts. The survey results will be released in early July and will be used to develop programming and other supports for students returning to Tufts in Fall 2020 (either remotely or—dare we hope—in person).

2019-20 was a productive and eventful year, and I look forward to 2020-21.



Jessica Sharkness
Director
Institutional Research

Mission

The Office of Institutional Research serves as a resource for the Tufts University community. We provide accurate and timely information to stakeholders across the university, support informed planning and decision-making at all levels, and fulfill key external reporting requirements. We employ an innovative and resourceful staff with expertise in survey research and data analysis, who can communicate the results of their research clearly and effectively.

Primary Functions

OIR's core activities include the following:

Mandated reporting & accreditation

OIR manages many of the university-wide federal reporting requirements, including the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Surveys and the data disclosures mandated in the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA). On a five- and ten-year cycle, the office participates in the university's self-study for reaccreditation by the New England Commission on Higher Education (NECHE, formerly called the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, or NEASC); on an annual basis, the office prepares the NECHE Annual Report. OIR also works to provide schools and academic departments the data needed to complete their own self-studies for program review and reaccreditation.

Tufts University *Fact Book*

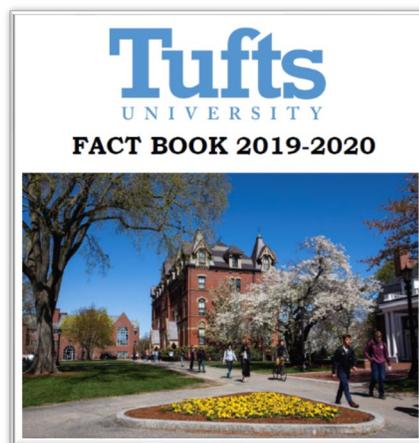
OIR annually produces the Tufts University *Fact Book*, a compilation of basic information about Tufts, covering its students, staff, facilities and finances. Updating it each year is a major undertaking that involves working with hundreds of individuals across the university. The final product is a comprehensive collection of information about Tufts.

Survey research for the university community

Survey research is an integral part of the work of OIR. The office develops and conducts surveys for a wide variety of offices on campus, including annually-administered admissions, exit, and student experience surveys, faculty and staff surveys, alumni surveys, employer surveys, ad hoc projects on specific topics, and consortial surveys. OIR also provides consultations on survey best practices for individuals across Tufts who are interested in doing their own surveys.

Data requests and short-term projects

OIR is regularly called upon to assist university stakeholders in answering questions about the university. These questions range from simple enrollment inquiries to more complex analyses on particular topics. OIR also responds to a large number of data requests from external agencies such as University & College Accountability Network (U-CAN), Boston Business Journal (BBJ), and Clarivate Analytics, and provides data to a variety of rankings agencies like U.S. News and World Report, Peterson's, Times Higher Education, and QS. In addition, OIR annually facilitates the collection and reporting of faculty compensation data to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).



Dashboards, Risk Register, and other university-level undertakings

In conjunction with the trustees and the Offices of the President and Provost, OIR develops, collects, organizes, monitors and maintains university- and school-level strategic indicators. Some examples of this work include the University Dashboard, the Risk Register, the Trustees Academic Affairs Committee (TAAC) dashboards, and the [Diversity Dashboard](#).

Business Intelligence and Data Integrity

OIR is actively involved in issues of business intelligence and data integrity at Tufts. One member of the office staff is appointed to work closely with TTS' Data and Analytic Services Team, which ensures an open flow of communication between the two offices. OIR has also led the effort to ensure the accuracy and accessibility of student and faculty data in source systems and the university's data warehouse.

Service to the university

All members of OIR staff serve on committees across the university. These include outcomes assessment committees on all three campuses, the Social, Behavioral & Educational Research (SBER) Institutional Review Board, the ASE Enrollment Council, the IT Governance Administration Subcommittee, the Undergraduate Admissions and Financial Aid Committee, and many more. A member of the office also convenes and leads the university-wide Tableau User Group.

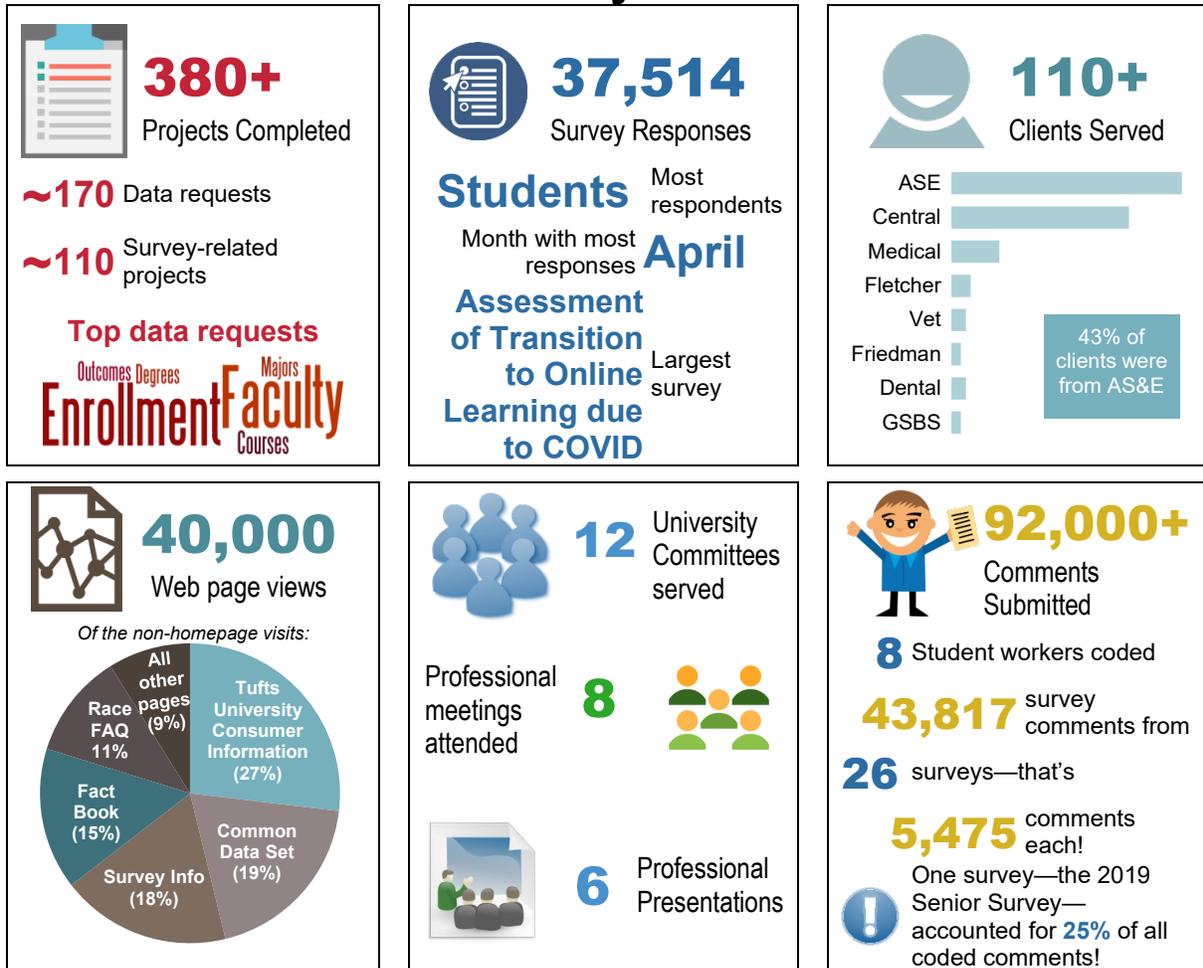
Knowledge dissemination and service to the profession

One of OIR's points of pride is the service that it provides to the institutional research profession and the higher education community at large. Office staff members hold memberships in the North East Association for Institutional Research (NEAIR) the Association for Institutional Research (AIR), and routinely review conference proposals for the NEAIR and AIR annual conferences, serve on association committees, and present at NEAIR and AIR on topical issues in institutional research. The OIR staff also occasionally publishes work in journals and books.

Our work

During the 2020 fiscal year, OIR staff logged over 380 projects, the bulk of which were internal and external data requests (~170 projects) and survey-related work (~110 projects). Most of the remaining projects involved committee work, business intelligence and data integrity projects, mandatory reporting, accreditation-related projects, and work on dashboards, strategic metrics, and the risk register. In addition, the member of the office that sits on the SBER IRB reviewed approximately 65 IRB proposals and modifications.

OIR 2019-20: By the Numbers



The following pages summarize some of our major projects in FY20.

Our Work - Highlights

Mandated reporting & accreditation

NECHE

- Complete & submit NECHE annual report
- Serve on outcomes assessment committees

IPEDS

- Serve as IPEDS Keyholder & ensure timely and accurate data submissions
- Develop IPEDS reporting capabilities out of SIS
- Maintain official university statistics

HEOA

- Maintain Tufts University Consumer Information (TUCI) page
- 27% of OIR web traffic goes to TUCI pages
- Top pages: net price calculator, top undergraduate majors, student financial data

University Fact Book

Fact Book

- Released in February/March
- Over 100 pages of information on the university
- Fact Book page is one of the most-visited pages on our website
- Over 500 views per month
- Ongoing work to create historical database of Fact Book metrics

Data requests and short-term projects

Internal

- Over 150 requests for data from the Tufts community
- Primarily enrollment, faculty info, addresses, student majors and degrees awarded
- Key reports/analyses:
 - Clearinghouse/admissions
 - Faculty salary analyses
 - Graduation/retention

External

- Academic Analytics
- AAUP
- AICAD & NASAD
- Common Data Set
- NEBHE
- CGS/GRE
- Boston Business Journal
- UCAN
- NCAA

Rankings

- Petersons
- ARWU
- Kiplinger
- US News
- QS
- Clarivate Analytics
- Times Higher Ed

Dashboards, Metrics, etc.

Dashboard & Strategic Metrics

- Maintain metrics and template for University Dashboard and TAAC Dashboard; update three times a year for trustee meetings
- Ongoing work in developing, collecting, organizing and presenting strategic metrics (done in close partnership with Trustees, Provost, President and other senior leadership)
- Maintain and update Diversity Dashboard

University Risk Register

- Create, maintain and disseminate annual risk and compliance schedule
- Solicit data from key constituents and stakeholders, follow-up and provide data to Office of the EVP
- Serve as key contact for data requests and questions
- Maintain integrity of reporting schedule and risk and compliance template changes

Our Work - Highlights

Survey Research

<p>Admissions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolling and/or Non-Enrolling Surveys for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate A&S and EN • Undergraduate AS&E • Fletcher • Cummings - Vet • Friedman • Medical 	<p>Student Experience (Undergrad)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation Survey • First-Year First Week • First-Year and Sophomore Surveys • Student-athlete Survey • Senior Survey 	<p>Student Experience (Grad & Prof)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fletcher Continuing Student Survey • Fletcher MATA Survey • Cummings Academic Climate Survey
<p>Student Experience (Grad & Undergrad)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dining Survey • Spiritual Interests Survey • Tisch Library Survey • COVID-19 Mental Health Needs Assessment 	<p>Student Exit Surveys</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AS&E Undergrad (Senior Survey) • GSAS & SOE (Grad) • Fletcher • PHPD • Cummings - Vet • Friedman • Dental 	<p>Faculty, Staff & Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of Transition to Online Learning (due to COVID-19) • Dental Institutional Culture Survey
<p>Faculty/Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catering Survey • International Research Survey • Internal/External Fee Survey 	<p>Alumni</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni surveys for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PHPD • Dental • Cummings - Vet • Engineering • Medical • Friedman 	<p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TUSDM Patient Satisfaction Survey • COVID-19 Reopening Survey for MA Institutions of Higher Ed • Employer Surveys for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cummings - Vet • Engineering • Medical

Consulting & User Groups

<p>User Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conveners of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tableau User Group • Tufts' Analyst Group 	<p>Survey Consulting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey consultation with a variety of individuals on projects, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSAS/Diversity & Inclusion Leadership Studies Survey • Faculty Election Ballot survey for AS&E • Osher Institute Course Evaluation • Tisch College 20th Anniversary Survey
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Our Work - Highlights

Committee Work

Committee Membership	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social, Behavioral and Educational Research (SBER) IRB (Vice Chair) • Outcomes Assessment Committees for Cummings, Dental, Engineering, Liberal Arts • ASE Enrollment Council (including Housing and Reporting subcommittees) • IT Governance Information Stewardship Subcommittee • Data Strategy Advisory Group • Undergraduate Admissions and Financial Aid Committee (UAFAC) • Undergraduate Admissions Dean Search Committee • Alcohol and Other Drugs Steering Committee • Mental Health Steering Committee • Tisch College Social-Emotional Learning and Civic Engagement Steering Committee • Sexual Misconduct Prevention Steering Committee • Title IX Adjudication/Liaison

Additional Work

Evaluations	Qualitative Research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postbaccalaureate Research Program (PREP) Evaluation • Pre- and Post-surveys for faculty mentors & PREP scholars • FAST-TRAC Exiting Student Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cummings School Exiting DVM Student focus group

Knowledge Dissemination & Service to profession

Service	Presentations	Panel and Group Discussions (NEAIR & AIR)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEAIR 2019 and AIR 2020 Conference proposal reviewers • NEAIR Communications and Outreach Committee • NEAIR ad hoc Research Committee co-chair • NEAIR Nominations Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Basics fo Regular Expressions in Tableau (NEAIR) • Meeting Demand Through Process Improvement (NEAIR) • Almost Too Easy: A New Way to Wrangle IPEDS Data (AIR webinar; presented with Smith College staff) • Do you need to know Statistics? (WIRA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing Nature of Institutional Research (NEAIR)

Our Staff

The Office of Institutional Research welcomed a new Research Analyst in FY2020 to fill an open position. Kathleen McGreal joined our team in August, coming to Tufts from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Staffing levels remained at 9.0 FTE throughout the fiscal year.



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Administrator



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Assistant Director

Lauren Conoscenti
Assistant Director



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Senior Data Analyst

Rebecca Hatch
Senior Research Analyst



Steve Babin
Research Analyst

Inger Bergom
Data/Research Analyst



Kathleen McGreal
Research Analyst