Tufts

Office of Institutional Research

Strategic Plan FY19-FY21

Vision

To be a leading, trusted resource for information and insight that helps Tufts achieve its strategic objectives.

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.'

Values

Ethics and Integrity	We follow best practices for information stewardship, uphold confidentiality, and maintain objectivity. We follow the code of ethics of our profession.
Accuracy	We endeavor to be as accurate as possible. The work we do is verifiable and auditable.
Context	We are informed about current issues in higher education and at Tufts and provide context for analyses where appropriate.
Customer Service	We strive for excellence in customer service; we communicate clearly, respond in a timely manner, and work to anticipate and meet the needs of our clients.
Improvement and Innovation	We seek continuous improvement through professional development. Whenever appropriate, we employ new techniques and procedures to enhance the quality of our work.
Leadership	We share our expertise with the Tufts community and the institutional research profession at large; we lead by example.
Collaboration and Partnership	We establish collaborative partnerships across the university to enhance the quality, flow, and use of information at Tufts.

Primary Functions

The core activities of Tufts' Office of Institutional Research (OIR) include the following:

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.

Tufts University Fact Book
OIR annually produces the Tufts University *Fact Book*, a compilation of basic information about Tufts, covering its history, programs, 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.

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 Thomson Reuters, 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).

Business Intelligence and Data Integrity
Since the implementation of the new student information system (SIS) and the associated new data warehouse, OIR has been 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 data in SIS and the data warehouse.

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 is involved in the university's self-study for reaccreditation by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE); 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.

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.

Service to the university
All members of OIR staff serve on committees across the university. These include outcomes assessment committees at most schools, the Institutional Review Board, the Diversity and Inclusion Working Group, the Sexual Misconduct Prevention Task Force, the University Work/Life Balance Committee, and the IT Governance Administration Subcommittee, among 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 EAIR (The European Higher Education Society). The Associate Provost and former director of OIR is a past president of both AIR and NEAIR, as well as a past chair of the Executive Committee of the National Postsecondary Education Cooperative (NPEC). OIR staff routinely review conference proposals for the NEAIR and AIR annual conferences, serve on conference committees, and present at NEAIR and AIR on topical issues in institutional research.

Strategic Goals

1 Continue to manage key university survey projects and provide valuable survey reporting and analysis.

Identify priority survey projects and create criteria for new survey projects	• Establish a series of requirements that a survey project must meet for our office to take it on • Develop set of trusted referral resources for projects we cannot carry out
Examine usefulness of current survey reporting	• Modify existing comment coding practices to improve efficiency • Survey/interview clients about their reporting needs • Further improve summary report process
Add value to survey reporting	• Create longitudinal survey files • Create reports following students over time • Implement findings from surveys/interviews with clients

2 Proactively anticipate the data needs of university stakeholders in order to provide more readily available and timely information.

Modernize/Revise the Fact Book	• Assess the value of the information currently presented and use results to revise Fact Book content • Develop an electronic (non-print-based) version of the Fact Book that contains key info and that is published earlier in the academic year. • Create database of historical Fact Book metrics
Develop self-service tools for on-demand data access	• Increase the number of self-service tools managed by OIR that are available on-demand to the community • Create a schedule for updating the data
Maintain and grow partnership with TTS Data and Analytic Services group	• Partner with TTS to create data sources and documentation that make information in the data warehouse more accessible and understandable • Continue to partner with TTS on the Tufts Data Service and other key data requests

3 Improve the overall effectiveness of the office by cultivating a highly skilled and informed team. Develop policies and procedures to enhance knowledge transfer and workflow management.

Improve formal knowledge transfer	• Ensure documentation is kept for all office projects • Create documentation for key office tasks and a schedule for updating it
Ensure all staff members maintain relevant skills and knowledge	• Have each staff member establish a technical goal related to their work and demonstrably work toward it • Have each staff member annually attend at least one IR/Higher Ed meeting/conference, or another training that expands or deepens the staff member's professional skills
Improve informal knowledge transfer	• Ensure all staff regularly present/share work and technical knowledge within the office • Hold post-conference meetings where staff members can share what they learned.
Ensure information is easily accessible	• Reevaluate our organizational strategy for internal files • Put all key documentation in one location
Obtain regular feedback on office performance	• Create mechanism(s) for clients to provide feedback • Create mechanism(s) for office staff to assess and evaluate how the office is functioning

4 Increase effectiveness and transparency of external reporting.

Evaluate external reporting	• Examine key external reports and coordinate with data contributors to ensure that the data we supply is as accurate and optimal as possible • Develop dashboards that track key metrics provided to rankings agencies; make data available by school, if possible • Create documentation about external reporting for OIR staff members and for other stakeholders outside the office
Improve efficiency of IPEDS reporting	• Develop documentation about all IPEDS reporting; revise documentation as needed • Revise and improve data checking processes • Automate HR reporting (eliminate manual data entry)