Designing an Office of Management Information and Research: Lessons Learned

Richard L. Riccardi
Southern Connecticut State University
1. Establish the Project

• Create Office Mission
  – *Provide information products and services that are timely, reliable, relevant, and easily obtained, to support the operations and decision-making of the University leadership and all University departments and offices.*
2. Identify Stakeholders

- **Primary customers/information suppliers**
  - President and cabinet
  - Academic deans and academic departments
  - Enrollment Management offices
  - Human Resources
  - Student and University Affairs
  - CSU System Office; state & federal authorities
  - Information Technology (IT)

- **Secondary customers/info suppliers**
  - Other divisions/departments at University
  - Other external agencies
3. Determine Needs

- Reports and analyses of institutional data (both standardized and specialized research products)
- Design/Development/Maintenance of information products and services
- End-user training and support
4. Create Features

- Monitor continuously customer needs for information products and services
- Create and maintain library of standard reports that can be accessed by appropriate offices
- Establish and maintain a web-based report generator that offices can use on their own
- Provide training and support to end-user offices and departments
5. Develop Process

- Maintain a mutual and flexible customer/supplier relationship with IT as new products/services are developed.
- Conduct continuous training and cross-training of staff in best software to meet current and emerging information needs.
- Aim to increase the self-sufficiency of University office in meeting their management information needs.
6. Pilot and Adjust

• Utilize existing staff into new structure:
  - **Director**: coordinate activities and ensure effective working partnership with end users and with IT and System Office
  - **Institutional Research**: meet University reporting responsibilities, generate standard reports, conduct specialized research and analyses based on operational data
  - **Development**: analyze end user information needs, design/develop/implement products or services to meet needs
  - **Training and Support**: train end-users in use of products and services, support their use, and monitor customer satisfaction
7. Implement

- Relationships of OMIR, IT and Clients

Consult to Mgmt Info Users
Design and Develop Info Solutions
Train and Support Users
Reporting Services
Analysis of Mgmt Performance Data

OMIR
IT
CLIENT

Database Mgmt and Security
Hardware and System Software
Telecommunications and Networks
Academic Computing
Helpdesk
8. Monitor and Improve

• Assess and increase the timeliness, reliability, accessibility and relevance to customers’ needs for information products and services

• Assess and increase efficiencies of time and cost at the University through improved management information
Concept Information Over the Silos

OMIR

Academic Affairs  Student Affairs  Fiscal Affairs  Alumni Affairs
Reality: What Works

• Ability to view the University in a cross-functional manner
• Involvement in major projects that affect students in a positive manner
  – Registration One-Stop Shopping
  – Optimized Course Scheduling
  – Strategic Planning
  – End-user Reporting
Reality: What Doesn’t Work

• Stressful relationship with IT
  – Perception that office is “doing their job”
  – Data security (need modify access to provide true solutions)

• Data requests have increased in volume and complexity exponentially

• Never enough resources
  – Time
  – Money
  – People