Data Stewardship Committee: Minutes of August 25, 2015

In attendance: Leah Feroleto (SW), Joe Mantione (OIA), Kim Yousey-Elsener (Assessment and Evaluation), Mark Molnar (OIA), Corey Hill (Student Accounts), Shirley Walker (Student Accounts), Craig Abbey (OIA), Gary Pacer (EAS), Rachel Link (OIA), Greg Olsen (Data Analytics), Ashley Kravitz (Resource Planning), and Beth Corry (Business Services).

Meeting called to order at 3:05 p.m. by Craig Abbey.

Craig and Gary Pacer wanted to present an update on what has been going on since the last Data Stewardship Committee meeting in May. Craig shared the eight Data Governance Principles that the committee had agreed upon, with some additional information about each principle:

1. Recognition of Primary Data Sources : identifying what the data sources should be, and documenting this
2. Unambiguous Transformation of Data: from operation data systems to what is used for decision making
3. Transparency: shining light upon the process to keep it clear
4. Data Quality, Integrity and Security: to ensure that the output is good quality and measures what it should be measuring
5. Systematic and Continuous: keeping the process running smoothly
6. Feasible: realizing that committee members have other commitments, but that this process has the approval and sanction of the president and provost
7. Alignment of Data Management Approaches: this part is still in progress, but Craig and Gary have been examining various tools to make this easier, with a presentation by Data Cookbook attending by individuals on the DSC and OIA staff members to explore using it as a tool.
8. Evaluative: if the process isn't working, switch gears and see what else may work.

Craig next displayed a slide to explain the roles and responsibilities of Data Governance, which is attached to the end of these minutes. The Data Governance Council recommends policy and structure and offers guidance on management of data. The DGC also provides review and resolution on data definitions as per its guiding principles. The Membership of the DGC are vice-presidents, vice provosts, and deans, along with the chairs of the data stewardship committee. The DSC recommends standard data definitions, as well as policies to improve quality and assure good data management. The DSC is comprised of functional area leaders, academic unit representatives, and ex-officio members from Budget, IT, and OIA. Working teams, comprised of subject matter experts, are led by data stewards to write definitions that will be sent to the DSC and eventually to the DGC for approval. A data stewardship coordination assists the working teams with definitions, maintains the metadata repository, and coordinates efforts.

Craig next reviewed the data definition creation and approval process, which is attached to the end of these minutes. Data definition needs are identified, and the data steward and working groups recommend definitions to the DSC, which either approves and send them to the DGC, or rejects them and returns them to the working group for edits. If the DGC approves definitions, they will become approved definitions, housed in the metadata repository, and with the addition of logic from these definitions and meta data, institutional data can be created.

The fall 2015 agenda was presented next. Craig and Brice Bible, CIO, met with the provost, which wants simple data definitions to start. There is interest in dean's data dashboards for each dean to see information and data, but data definitions need to happen first. There will be a meeting for the DGC on September 9 where they are expected to approve the data definition process.. The current focus for the DSC and working teams is to finish data definitions and approve key strategic metrics.

Gary spoke about the process to arrive at a "single source of the truth". We currently have multiple approaches o getting to data and providing numbers. How do we align the business processes and rules? SIRI only covers HR and financial data, leaving enrollment data out. When different units have different systems, they may come up with very different results. What will it take to get us to a single source of the truth? We need to quantify the process in terms of what it may cost financially, for personnel, or for time.

Working teams next presented their reports. Kara Saunders is now working as co-chair of the strategic enrollment plan, so Mark Molnar and Nigel Mariner have taken over her role on the DSC. Mark stated they continue to work on definitions to keep them at a simple, easy to understand level. The challenge is to distill the definitions down to the essentials while still preserving needed detail. The team continues to work on the 10,000 foot view so that executives may use the definitions easily.

Shirley Jackson and Corey Hill spoke for the student accounts working team. They have definitions on tuition and fees, but wound up with more terms than they envisioned. So far, more than 60 terms have been identified, many of which cross with records, so they need to ensure compatibility.

Gary presented the HR report for Mark Coldren, as Sue Kryzstofiak has taken another role. Terms have been identified and can be brought back to the DSC for comment and review, before routing to the team for final edits and cleanup.

Greg Olsen presented for admissions. They have not met since Mary, and personnel changes mean they may not meet for another month. Much of their work crosses with enrollment, so they will need to ensure compatibility for definitions.

Beth Corry spoke for Business Services. The team has identified more than 300 terms, of which 200 are financial. 80 terms are procurement only. The remaining terms are primarily UBF terms. The procurement and UBF teams are taking the first cut at definitions before passing these recommendations back to the main group. At the first meeting, the main group got through twenty terms. Many action items and comments resulted from this meeting. The last 20 minutes of each meeting is to focus on ambiguous data: to identify it and work on plans to nail down definitions.

Craig presented an update about the physical space working team. This is an area with many definitions and little debate due to state and federal regulations and external definitions, making the task of identifying definitions much easier. Craig met with this team in the spring and work continues.

Mark presented additional information about entity hierarchy. Many definitions have been identified and are in the process of collation onto another structure. In terms of research foundation definitions, Mark met with Tom Wendt and a member of his staff. The meeting focused primarily on the Sponsored Projects Office information, so they discussed what data are available and what would be needed for official purposes. We do have an outline of RF definitions, making for a good start although further work will need to be done.

John Gottardy was not able to attend. Craig and Gary will ask him for an update prior to the next DSC meeting. Due to the Federal and State regulations on financial aid, many definitions already exist and can be utilized.

Craig will reach out the chairs of each working group asking for progress on definitions and what can be moved forward on after the September 9 meeting with the Data Governance Council.

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.