What Do Student Affairs and Success Professionals Know About College Students' Data Privacy?

Surprising Results and Strategies for Improvement

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Action Item

Mapping Student Affairs and Student Success Data on Your Campus

Every campus has multiple streams of student data—academic records, academic activities, health and well-being, student life information—typically kept in multiple data systems. Some institutions' data systems are homegrown, and some are purchased from a vendor. Institutions may keep some types of student data in a combination of homegrown and vendor platforms. Understanding which data exists, where institutions keep it, and how professionals can ethically use the data is an important part of contemporary student affairs and student success (SASS) work. Research shows that many SASS professionals do not fully understand the categories of data that exist on their own campus, where the data is kept, and the appropriate ways they can access the data to promote students' success.

Mapping your campus data is a way to check your understanding and learn more about how you might use data to improve your work on behalf of student success. The attached worksheet can help you start and serve as a foundation as you learn more about student data on campus.

Mapping Student Affairs and Student Success Data on Your Campus

Fill in information for each of the following categories. Once you complete it, share with a colleague and/or your supervisor to see if they agree. If you aren't completely sure about a category, set a goal to ask someone who might know (e.g., a colleague in that department, your supervisor, someone in your unit). Add additional categories as appropriate for your campus, and update over time.

Category of data	Where is it collected and stored?	Is it covered by FERPA and/or HIPAA?	Whom would you ask for permission to use it?	How would you get it?	What other privacy or human subjects (IRB) issues might be involved?
College academic transcript (grades, courses, degrees awarded)					
Admissions records (e.g., high school grades, ACT/SAT scores, college application)					
Student demographics (e.g., race/ethnicity, sex, age)					
Financial aid records (FAFSA, institutional forms, award history)					
International student documentation (e.g., student visa records/documentation)					
Student contact information (mailing and email address, phone)					
Documentation of student disability for receiving accommodations					
Student conduct (academic and non-academic)					
Participation in limited programs such as TRIO, summer bridge, honors program/college					
Campus employment information (on campus jobs held, hours worked, reason for leaving)					
Health records: campus health center visits					
Health records: on-campus counseling/psychological services					

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Institutional billing and payment records					
Health records: physicals and vaccinations from outside campus health center					
Academic course data, including log-ins and activity such as discussion boards and assignments submitted through learning management system (e.g., D2L, Blackboard, homegrown systems)					
Housing data, including "ID swipes" to enter halls					
Athletic participation (intervarsity/against other schools)					
Dining data, including ID swipes for meals					
Co-curricular activity records, such as student club memberships, student government, volunteering					
Recreational sports (intramurals/on campus)					
Use of academic support, such as tutoring					
Campus transportation (bus, shuttle) using ID swipes					
Other:					
Other:					
Other:					