Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

Service Statement 2021-2022

Introduction

The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) is a unit of the Division of Academic Affairs, which provides leadership for continuous improvement in academic operations to support our journey to become a top-tier public research university. Institutional Research is a national field which has always had at its core supporting institutional improvement through data-informed decision support and scholarly research. The office exists in some form at nearly every U.S. institution. Assessment is another institutional effectiveness function and generally includes student learning outcomes assessment and survey administration.

OIRA's mission is to provide accurate and reliable data to university administrators, departments, and faculty to illuminate and inform their decision-making. OIRA also supplies a variety of information for federal and state mandated reporting (including accreditation), and for external publications.

OIRA impacts campus culture through our relationships with other units and key administrators, our knowledge of campus data and assessment needs, and our role in data governance. Our responsibilities in ensuring accurate and timely data and reports for decision-making are broad in scope and rely on partnerships across campus, accessible and complete data sources, and a full and well-trained staff.

Duties

A large proportion of our time is spent on external and regulatory reporting including mandatory federal IPEDS reports, SACSCOC accreditation reporting, student-data submissions to the UT System for THEC (including for Formula Funding), THEC Quality Assurance Funding, international and U.S. rankings publications and college guides, national faculty studies, APLU and other data reporting initiatives, and data exchange groups.

OIRA also provides official census reporting across the university: the Fact Book and Common Data Set report (used internally and externally), Academic Unit Statistics dashboards for academic leaders, Academic Program Review reports, retention/graduation metrics, and other information to assist units such as the Division of Student Success, the Division of Diversity and Engagement, and the Chancellor's office. OIRA also leads academic program assessment of student learning outcomes, which assists academic departments in measuring their programmatic effectiveness and in reporting to accreditation agencies. We administer the end-of-course evaluations (TN Voice) which provide student evaluation of teaching at UTK.

OIRA conducts projects for provost staff, colleges and departments, and faculty or student research studies. Examples include retention analyses of first-generation freshmen and under-

represented minorities; analysis of course withdrawal patterns; and peer benchmarking on U.S. News undergraduate rankings. We also assist with setting and measuring strategic plan metrics.

OIRA works closely with OIT on creating and maintaining the university's student data warehouse, and collaborating on some reporting. We also work closely with Enrollment Management units, the Graduate School, and Faculty Affairs to provide guidance and assistance in monitoring data quality. OIRA staff work with college data analysts on their reporting needs. We assist various committees and individual faculty and staff with data and information.

Staffing

OIRA currently has eleven full-time and one 0.75 FTE staff members, plus two graduate research assistants.

Assistant Provost and Director, OIRA		
Associate Director for Institutional Research	Administrative Assistant	Associate Director for Assessment
2 Assistant Directors 4 Research Analysts 1 GRA		2 Research Analysts 1 GRA