

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS & PLANNING (IE&P)



Welcome to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Planning's quarterly communication. We hope that this will be an effective way to continue to support the UNI community with data informed decision making and communicate important continuous improvement efforts.



We would like to welcome Sarah Madsen to the IE&P team. A UNI graduate, Sarah joined our office in February 2022. As data analyst, Sarah will lead external surveys and reporting. Sarah will service a wide range of data and analysis requests for partners across campus. Sarah graduated from UNI in December 2021 with a B.A in Economics and a B.A. in Finance. As a student, she tutored and supported her peers in The Learning Center at the Rod Library, as a student leader for various different courses. She is excited to return to UNI and once again support the UNI community.

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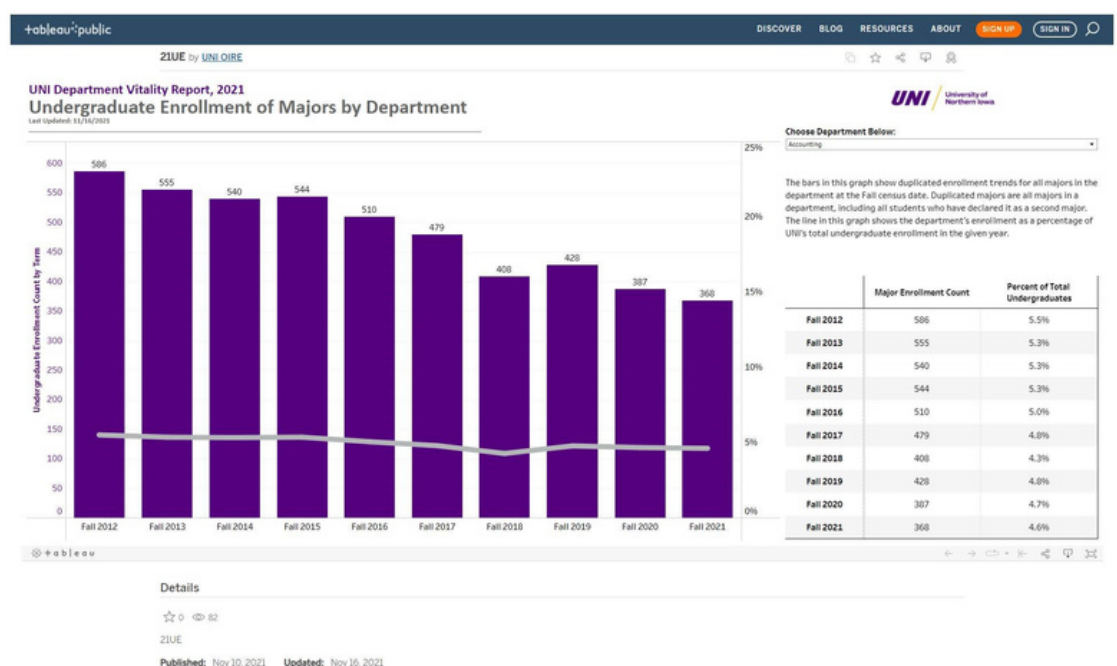
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Data Dashboards

A data dashboard is a visual and often interactive data interface. It provides an at a glance view on key performance indicators such as enrollment, retention, and graduation. At UNI we use dashboards as a way to increase data accessibility and display key information in a format that allows users to accomplish the following:

- Monitor and examine performance across desired targets
- Drill into the detail of the data through data desegregation in order to identify gaps
- Identify patterns in the data through the visual representation of data sets through time aggregations such as yearly and semester views
- Explore and tell a story with data. To be useful, data needs to be contextualized to explore and analyze impact

The example below is an interactive dashboard available on the Program Vitality Metrics (PVM) dashboard on the continuous improvement website. In this department vitality report we are able to explore undergraduate enrollment of majors by department. The drop down menu on the right hand side allows for the user to select a desired department. The graph auto-populates based on department selection and shows total undergraduate enrollment count by term, as well as department's enrollment as a percentage of UNI's total undergraduate enrollment in a given year.



Program Vitality Metrics

Dashboards 101: Tips on how to use interactive dashboards

Get to know the dashboard: Before you begin to explore the data, know the various data points displayed in the dashboard. If needed use the data cookbook to better understand the type of data available.

1. Explore the data: Allow yourself to explore and play around with the data. As you make selections and/or add additional filters take note of the graph updates and changes.
2. Find relationships between data points: As you interact with the dashboard draw attention to important changes and examine data to find relationships.
3. Identify gaps: If the data allows for desegregation across filters such as race, legal sex, age, academic program, college etc., notice differences among groups in order to identify gaps that might exist.
4. Develop the story: As you review the data, what are the results? What trends can be observed from the data?

To explore UNI dashboards visit the Report Center

Data Cookbook

As an office, we strive to support the UNI community in using available data to make decisions that better the institution and improve student outcomes. A key component of the informed decision making process is to source through data dashboards and reports. As more offices become familiar with UNI's report center, program vitality metrics, and common data set, they will likely encounter unknown data terminology. UNI's Data Cookbook is a guide to data terminology and definitions used in standard reports and dashboards. Data cookbook is a national cloud-based data management tool designed for higher education. The cookbook includes both functional and technical definitions that are frequently updated. To access UNI's data cookbook, please click below. Use the search box to look up a term in the Data Cookbook.

[Access UNI's Data Cookbook](#)



Data Informed Process Improvement



In this communication, we would like to highlight the work carried out by the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships. Throughout the past year they have improved their services and consequently the lives of students through data informed decision making. The following is an account of a short interview carried out with Tim Bakula, office Director.

Please provide a short description of your office?

The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships assists thousands of students and their families each year in exploring financial aid opportunities. Balancing regulation and education, the office plays a significant role in the recruitment and retention of students based on the financial resources offered, as well as providing educational initiatives that relate to the student's circumstances.

How does the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships use data?

The usage of data is embedded into virtually every responsibility that our office encounters on a daily basis. Whether it's tracking initial FAFSA and scholarship applications, all the way through loan repayment, the data that we use helps inform all of our policies and procedures. Data usage also assists us in our interactions with students, as we strive for timely and accurate responses to inquiries that we have.

How were processes improved and what was the impact of using data more effectively?

UNI is often acknowledged for its low indebtedness levels amongst four-year colleges in Iowa. That did not happen by accident, but rather from a careful analysis of student loan data, which allowed our office to identify patterns within private loan borrowing. Following the analysis we implemented "private loan counseling" which requires every borrower to meet individually with us each time they applied for a private loan. This small intervention has allowed us to help students budget more effectively, while also gaining a more comprehensive understanding of their overall borrowing. A true win-win for both the student and the university. Another example of data-informed process improvement can be found in the collaboration with IE&P to project our scholarship expenditures for incoming students. The data used involves both Admissions data and scholarship criteria which ultimately allows us to have more accurate projections when it comes time to budget for the amount of aid needed to help support our financial aid programs. Yet another process improvement involves the methodology behind the offering of Federal Work-Study. Economic conditions have altered the work patterns and preferences of many students. In evaluating earnings data for on-campus work-study, we were able to make the decision to increase the amount of work-study offered to students that qualify. These changes will be implemented for Fall 2022 so I look forward to analyzing the data to see if any further adjustments need to be considered.

Campus Surveys

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Planning supports the UNI community with its survey research needs. In addition to administering our own surveys, we work closely with other campus constituents in the design, distribution, and analysis of various surveys using a web survey platform called Qualtrics. Some of these surveys are designed to be distributed on a one time basis, others are on-going surveys we administer every year.

How does the IE&P office support your efforts to engage in survey research?

1. **Survey Design:** Through a consultation our office will work with you in clarifying research purpose and identifying clear objectives. Based on your research purpose and objectives, our office will provide recommendations on what approach will yield best results. Will it be survey data, interviews, or focus groups?
2. **Survey Instrument:** In order to obtain meaningful survey information our office will support you in question design and developing an appropriate timeline for administration.
3. **Target Population:** In order to administer your survey to the right people, IE&P can provide you with a targeted list of potential survey respondents.
4. **Analysis of Results:** IE&P will analyze the data and provide you with a report.

Examples of surveys administered through the IE&P Office:

1. Climate/Diversity Survey
2. Graduate Program Survey
3. Graduating Senior Report
4. NSSE
5. The Summer School Report



Fact Book



The University of Northern Iowa has an annual Fact Book. Produced by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Planning, the Fact Book is a compilation of university information telling the story of how UNI engages students in high-quality and high-impact learning experiences. The Fact Book provides current and historical information regarding student enrollment, faculty and staff, departments, the budget, and peer institutions.

The following data points are found in the fact book:

- UNI Organizational Chart
- Application trends
- New student enrollment and demographics such as admit type and ACT scores
- Enrollment patterns over time and by demographics such as age, college level, and race/ethnicity
- Number of degrees granted
- Continuing education credit enrollment and courses offered
- Alumni numbers by college, state, and Iowa county
- Faculty and staff profiles and counts
- UNI workforce employment categories
- Budget and finance statements such as revenues, expenses, financial aid, tuition and fees, as well as project proposals and awards
- International student information
- Peer institution data

2021-2022 Fact Book

Vision:

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Planning (IE&P) provides leadership in the innovative use of campus wide data for decision making by challenging institutional thinking and framing critical issues within the context of continuous improvement.