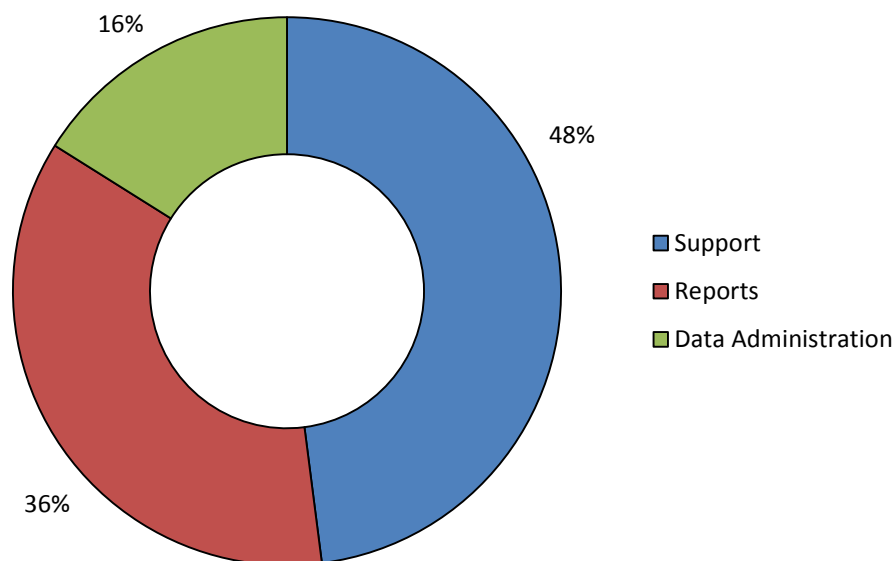# Annual Operations Report

2016-2017

Institutional Research & Reporting

Overview

This past year was a time of transition for the IRR team. After a few years of careful preparation, we were able to start making significant progress toward our long-term goals: increased access to IRR data via self-service/dashboards, and increased time for research and analytics. The progress made involved a lot of internal process change, however, which was challenging to pull off while simultaneously keeping pace with regular requests and reporting obligations. IRR team members managed to stand up a new online reporting portal, transition to a more cohesive and professional workflow process, establish a social media presence, shoulder the burden of obtaining state authorization for distance education, contribute to university data governance efforts, and significantly increase staff presentations and participation in professional conferences.

One reason why IRR transitioned to a new workflow system was to allow us to better capture what populations we typically serve, and in what proportions. Below is a general overview of the types of support IRR provided in 2016-2017. Despite what our name suggests, IRR does not spent most of our time on standard reporting. We spend the majority of our time providing information and data support to OU constituents and external groups, about a third on standard reports, and the remainder on data administration.
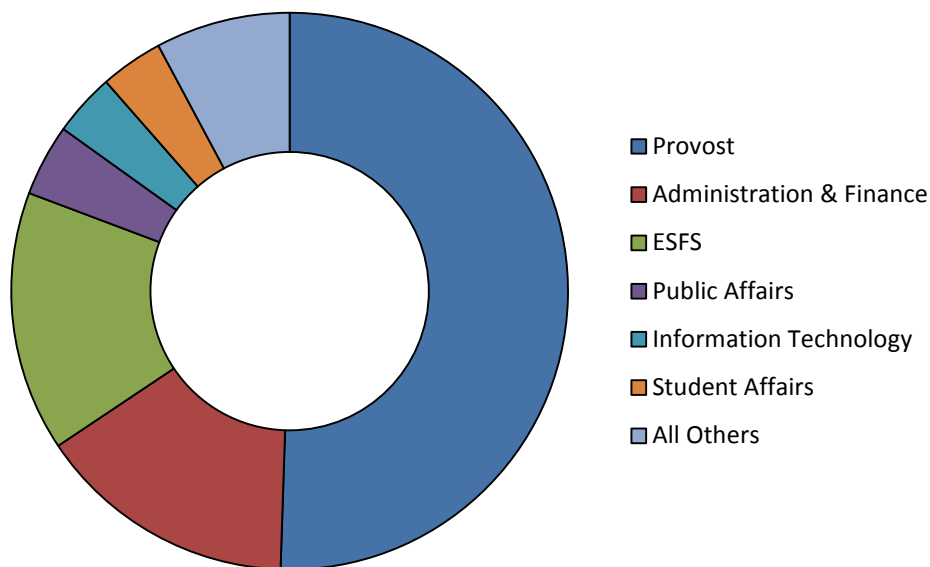
IRR Effort by Category

OU Support

While about half of IRR's time is spent on supporting the Provost (excludes support provided to academic units), we also provide a lot of support to the CFO and to ESFS – mostly Admissions in areas of freshman predictive analytics and incoming class tracking. We also field requests from almost every vice presidential area at the university over the course of a year.

OU Support by VP Area

- Provost
- Administration & Finance
- ESFS
- Public Affairs
- Information Technology
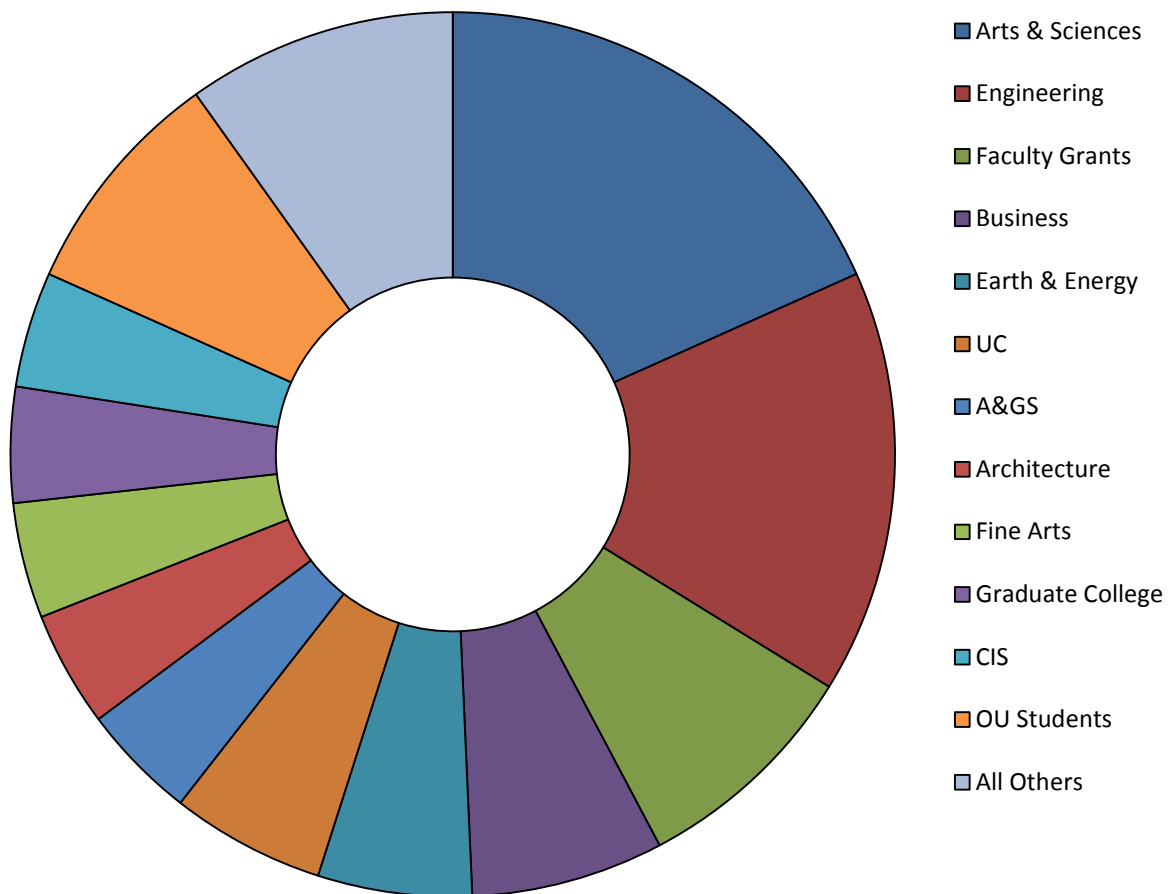- Student Affairs
- All Others

All Others: Continuing Education, Development, President, Research, University Community

In examining the Provost support subgroup more closely, we found that about 25% of the workload was spent on generating email lists, about 18% on providing information needed for regular operations, 12% each for retention research and Provost research questions, and the rest fairly evenly divided between concurrent high school, faculty initiatives, academic personnel, teaching technology, assessment, and support for the Faculty Senate.

One of IRR's goals in the past year has been to make ourselves more available to colleges and other departments under Academic Affairs, offering support to deans, faculty needing data for grant proposals, and departments needing official reporting data for program accreditation processes. We saw a significant increase in the number of requests for grant support in 2016-2017. There were more requests for grant support this past year than were

handled by IRR in the previous five years combined. We are also seeing more OU students contacting our office in search of information about the institution for class projects. IRR continues to cultivate relationships with each academic unit, looking for ways in which we can use the new Minerva dashboard tool to provide information on a more self-service basis, rather than requiring departments to make formal requests.
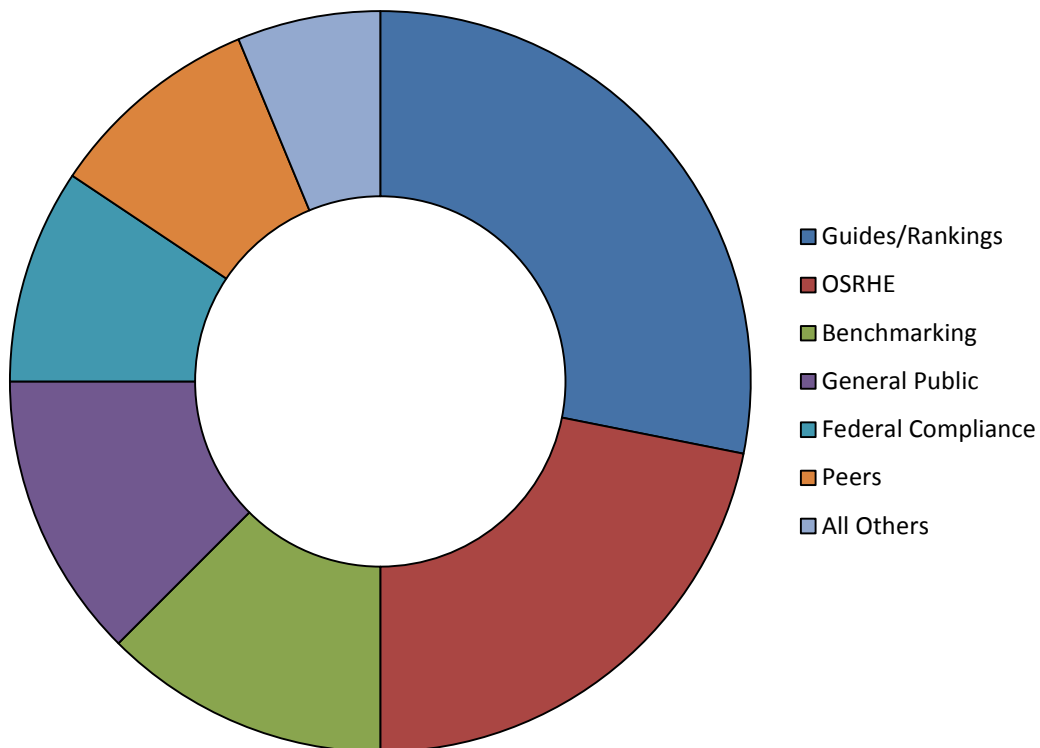
College Support by Area

All Others: Education, Honors, JMC, Law, University Libraries

External Support

In addition to the support IRR provides to OU colleges and departments, we are also responsible for handling compliance reporting to regulatory agencies, as well as providing official university responses to surveys, peer institutions, and the general public.

IRR responded to just over 100 surveys in 2016-2017. Of those, about a third were for college guides or rankings (e.g., US News) and a third for federal/state compliance. The rest are almost evenly divided between surveys gathering data for benchmarking (e.g., AAUP Faculty Salary) and requests from peer institutions. In the past few years, we have seen a sharp uptick in the number of surveys attempting to provide global/international rankings of higher education institutions. There is also increased attention being paid to specific subpopulations, such as veterans and international students.

External Support by Type

- Guides/Rankings
- OSRHE
- Benchmarking
- General Public
- Federal Compliance
- Peers
- All Others
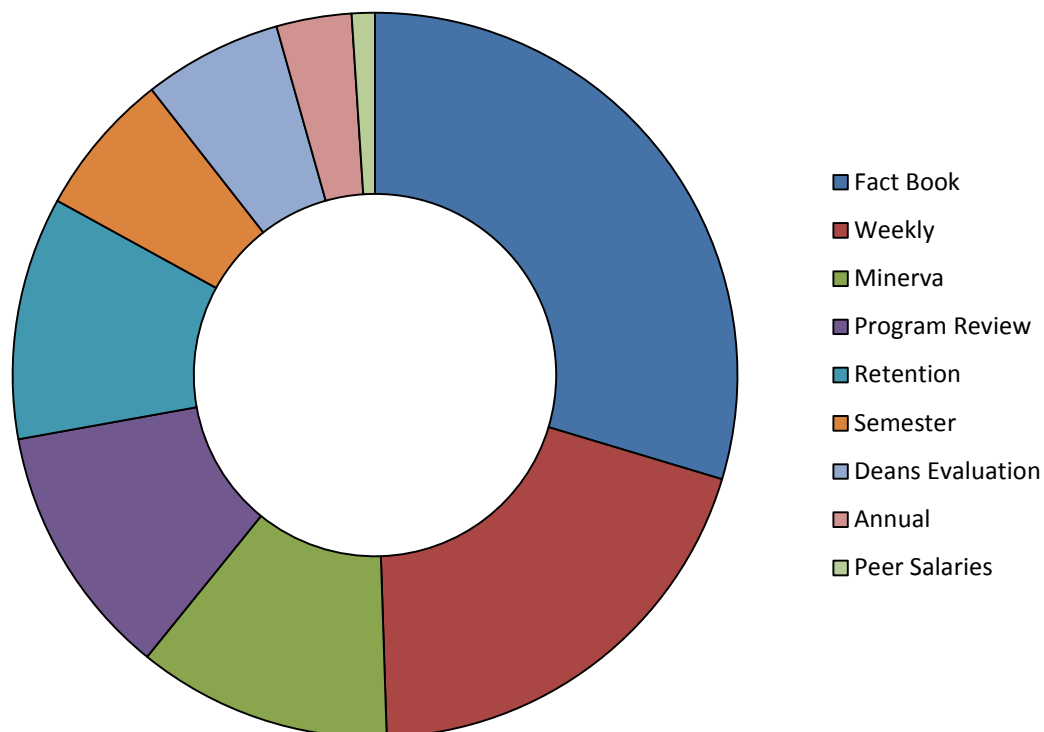
All Others: State Authorization, HLC

Reports

Official reporting of institutional information is one of IRR's primary functions. Our data collection and cleansing efforts are all in aid of providing campus with access to accurate, reliable information. Over the past couple of years, IRR has been systematically reviewing long-standing reports, trying to determine if they are still needed, if they completely meet current needs, and what gaps may still exist in official university reporting.

IRR publishes a comprehensive Fact Book each year, providing both an online copy and bound print copies. This publication is the only source of total OU statistics, as well as providing summaries for each of the three campuses and CCE operations. Because of the wide-ranging subject matter, updating the Fact Book is a significant time investment. We also provide regular updates on strategic initiatives, including the new freshman class, pre-enrollment for upcoming terms, and retention-focused enrollment updates.

Going forward, IRR will continue to put more time and effort into building reporting capability in the Minerva system, covered in more detail later in this report.
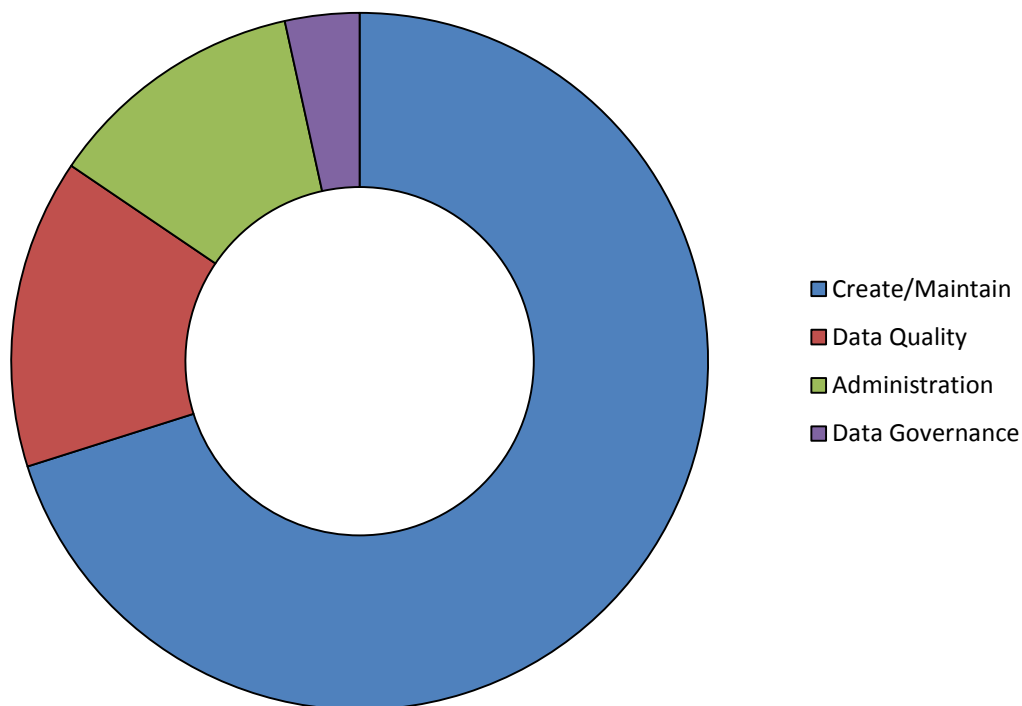
Reporting by Subject Area

- Fact Book
- Weekly
- Minerva
- Program Review
- Retention
- Semester
- Deans Evaluation
- Annual
- Peer Salaries

Data Administration

Creating and delivering reports and analyses to requestors is just the last few steps of a larger process. IRR works hard to ensure the data added to our official reporting tables are generated and stored in an accurate, reliable, and timely manner. Every one of the IRR team plays some part in dealing with data quality issues, trouble-shooting technical problems, administering key applications, and data governance.

Data Administration by Task Type

- Create/Maintain
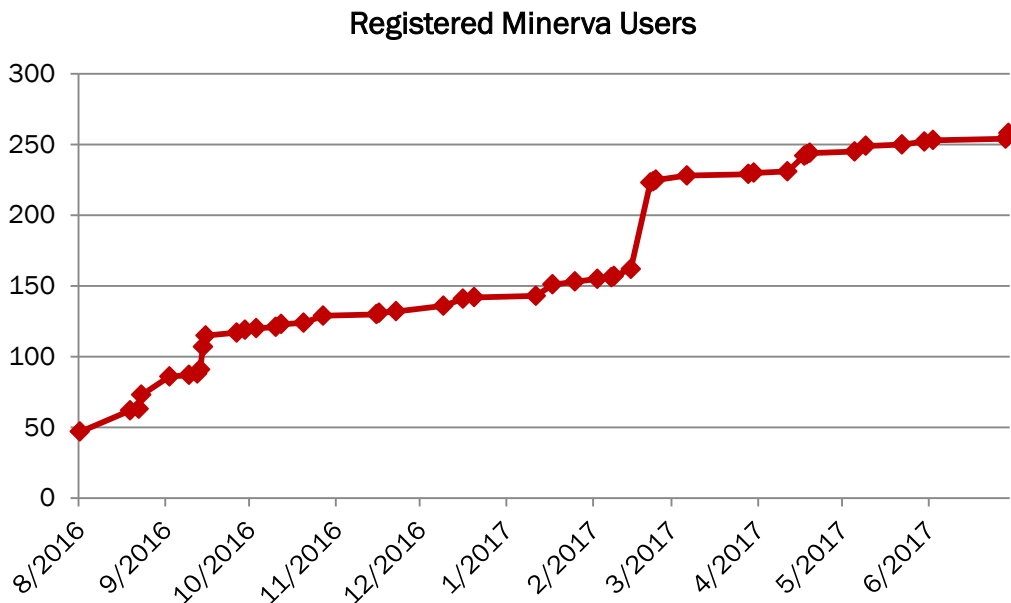- Data Quality
- Administration
- Data Governance

At the end of all that hard work, however, we have access to a rich array of institutional information, some parts of it going back as far as the 1970s, and covering areas from student enrollment to faculty appointments to undergraduate retention and graduation. We freeze institutional data many times over the course of a year – from large snapshots of student data twice a semester to more focused snapshots on a weekly basis.

Minerva

IRR has been gathering feedback from the campus community, trying to figure out how we can more effectively distribute information generated by our office to those who need it most. We decided to work toward creating a web-based self-service reporting portal, something that would meet administrative requests for a more graphical, "dashboard" interface. With support from the Provost's office, IRR was able to reach that goal when we launched the Minerva reporting system in August 2016. Minerva is accessible via internet browser and mobile application and is powered by SAS Visual Analytics/Visual Statistics software. Implementation of this new system is planned in several phases:

Phase I: Static official reports previously created and distributed via Excel/PDF will be replaced by interactive reports available through the Minerva portal. Reports will have both graphical and tabular elements. Reports are read-only.

Phase II: Standardized datasets will be made available in the Data Exploration tool; users will be able to perform analyses in the tool using extensive range of SAS statistical functions.

Phase III: Qualified users will be provided access to create their own Minerva reports, drawing on official IRR datasets.

IRR is currently on Phase I, with initial work being done on Phase II. So far, Minerva has over 250 registered users, and reports on enrollment, credit hours, degrees, freshman admissions, pre-enrollment, and faculty.
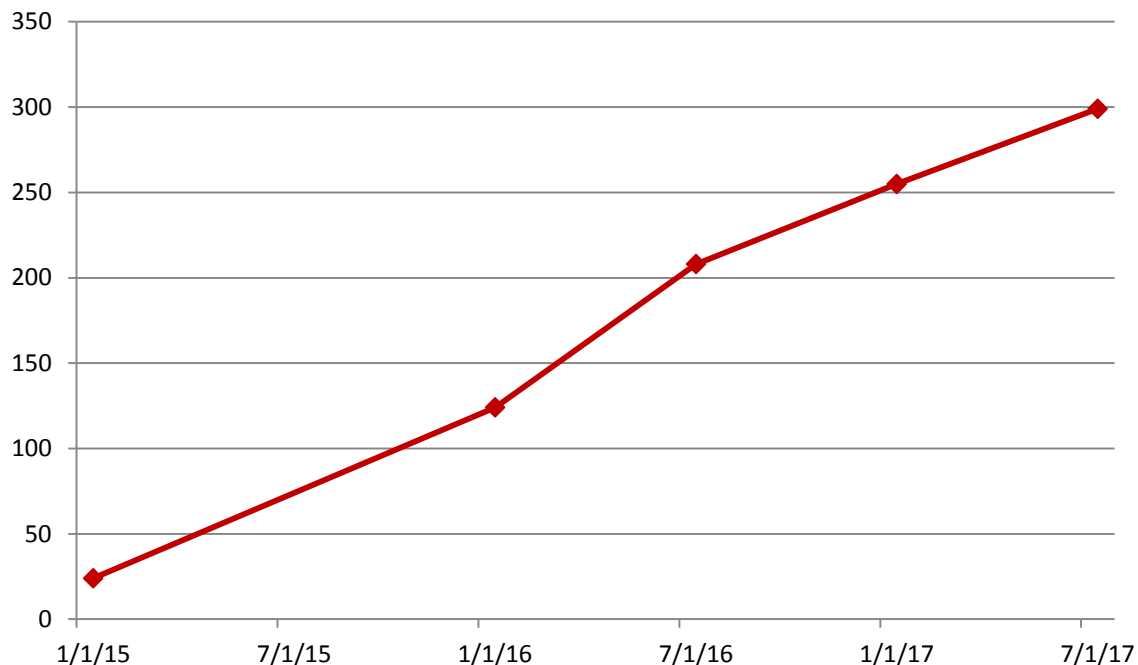

Registered Minerva Users

Outreach & Social Media

One of IRR's goals in the past year has been to increase visibility of the reports and resources our office provides. Between our public-facing website and our Twitter presence, we have made significant progress in this area.

- IRR Website
  - New site sessions have increased 11% in the past year.
  - Our site is starting to gain traction with search engines – 47% of traffic this year came from search engine referrals, up from 26% two years ago.

- Twitter - @ou_irr
  - *IRR is one of just a handful of institutional research offices with a social media presence.* No other Big 12 institutional research office has one; there are also no Big 10 or SEC institutions with IR twitter accounts.
  - @ou_irr has 299 followers, up 44% since July 2016. Our tweet impressions increased by 39% over this time last year.

@OU_IRR Twitter Followers

Staff Accomplishments & Service

IRR could not provide our consistently high level of service without talented, dedicated, well-trained team members. Below is a sampling of the kinds of things that IRR team members are doing and achieving, embodying OU's commitment to service and learning.

Awards

- Patti Otto: Distinguished Performance Award, Informational Staff Association, 2016
- David Wilkins: Distinguished Performance Award, Informational Staff Association, 2017

Certifications

- Shawn Hall: SAS Certified Predictive Modeler Using SAS Enterprise Miner 13

Presentations

- Susannah Livingood:
  - "Bringing Structure to Data Chaos: Formalizing Data Governance at OU" – Southern Association for Institutional Research
  - "Moving to Minerva: So Much More than Changing Tools" – Oklahoma Association for Institutional Research
  - "From Data Management to Visual Reporting: Two Universities' Journeys" – Association for Institutional Research, Co-Presented with University of Tennessee-Knoxville
- Lisa Moore
  - "Data Informed Recruiting: Using Predictive Analytics to Improve Recruitment Practices" – Texas Association for Institutional Research
- Yan Zhou
  - "Study Abroad and Graduation" – Southern Association for Institutional Research
- Susannah Livingood & Lisa Moore
  - "Reframing Campus Data Discussions: New Tool, New Attitudes" – Virginia Data Analytics Summit

- Shawn Hall
    - National Symposium on Student Retention – Proposal Reviewer
- Susannah Livingood
    - Accreditation Liaison Officer for University of Oklahoma, Higher Learning Commission
    - Assurance Argument Coordinator for University of Oklahoma, Higher Learning Commission
    - Inaugural Member, Commission on Information, Measurement, and Analysis (CIMA) Data Policy Advisory Committee
    - National Symposium on Student Retention – Proposal Reviewer
    - SAIR Conference Track and Workshop Committee: Proposal Reviewer
    - Interviewer for Whittier Middle School's Annual 8th Grade Mock Interview Day
- Lisa Moore
    - Board Member, Oklahoma Association for Institutional Research
    - Executive Board Member, SAS User Group for Institutional Researchers

Internal Service

- Shawn Hall
    - Faculty/Staff Advisor to:
        - American Cancer Society Relay for Life
        - Colleges Against Cancer
        - Camp Kesem OK
        - Phi Delta Alpha of the Multicultural Greek Council
- Susannah Livingood
    - Chair, Data Governance Coordinating Committee (DGCC)
    - President, Alpha of Oklahoma Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa
- Lisa Moore
    - Member, DART Data Dictionary Sub-Team
- Patti Otto
    - Member, Student System Portfolio Committee
    - Member, DART Sub-Teams: Data Review, Policy & Recommendations
- David Wilkins
    - Chair, Data and Reporting Team (DART)
    - Member and Chair, DART Sub-Teams: Community Support, Data Dictionary, Policy & Recommendations
- Yan Zhou
    - Member, DART Sub-Teams: Data Quality & Training, Policy & Recommendations