



Internal HLC Processing

Academy for Student Persistence and Completion Application Evaluation

Part A: General Information

1. Institution: Illinois Institute of Technology City, State: Chicago, IL Date: 06/03/2014
2. HLC liaison for institution: Sunil Ajuha
3. Purpose of Application:
 Quality Initiative AQIP Action Project Other Institutional Purposes

Part B: Evaluation for Selection to Academy

1. After reading the institution's responses to the application questions, indicate the following:

- The institution demonstrates evidence of need and benefit.

Comments:

Academy participation aligns with strategic priorities.

- The institution demonstrates evidence of commitment and focus.

Comments:

IIT demonstrates clear goals including the development of "inquiry-based experiential learning environments in the classroom, faculty development, and leveraging technology." The institution also assures senior leadership is committed to the institution's full participation.

- The institution demonstrates evidence of potential impact.

Comments:

Clear expectations for what can be gained via the Academy are evident. Progress on stated goals will result in broad, meaningful impact on student persistence and completion.

2. Describe the degree to which institutional data sets can provide the institution with data beyond general tracking and demographics that can be the basis for informed planning about persistence and completion.

Comments:

The Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) demonstrates wide-spread preparedness in using data beyond general tracking and demographics. IIT maintains a stand-alone Retention Database that holds retention and graduation data from 1996 to the present. This Database tracks persistence and completion by cohort, the race/ethnicity, gender, department, and Federal financial aid status. The database is updated with data from Banner each fall. The Database contains a number of code tables and five data tables: Cohort Master, Cohort Initial Population, Cohort Periods Students, Cohort Student Departments, and Person Sports. The Retention Database enables IIT to monitor retention, persistence, and graduation by race, gender, department, athletic participation, and Federal Financial Aid status. Banner data is used to compare persistence and graduation rates for student cohorts and classes, and when a current rate is found to be lagging, IIT digs deeper into the data to try to identify the reason for the change.

3. What does the institution's history of retention efforts suggest about data-based planning?

Comments:

For recent efforts, IIT use a variety of data including persistence and success data for students who have taken a special course for at-risk students; specific data (cohort and class level, unpaid balances, holds) and individual survey results to identify risk factors for students who have failed to register for the upcoming term; analysis of aggregated data to identify more general factors affecting a group of students; and, the predictive analytics and advising dashboard of the Education Advisory Board's Student Success Collaborative to help improve degree completion for at-risk students.

4. Based on your reading of the application, does the institution have enough in-depth data to support its plans for the Academy?

Comments:

Yes, IIT demonstrates having adequate in-depth data to support its plans. In its planning IIT provides mile markers for each of the initiatives and sets specific data targets.

5. Given the historical information and the data set information the institution has provided, is its proposed work in the Academy practical and appropriate?

Comments:

Yes, the proposed work is practical and appropriate. The work builds on existing initiatives and data. Further current initiatives focus on advising and first-year-experience courses that address learning skills. The Academy goals add an enhanced experience in the classroom and learning processes. These goals will involve a move toward more inquiry-based experiential learning, enhanced faculty development in both advising and teaching, and leveraging technology to support improved teaching, learning, and advising.

6. In what ways do you think the institution might focus its data sets and its Academy plans before it begins the Academy?

Comments:

IIT might find it useful to think about what additional data might help it measure its Specific Outcomes:
"Increased student engagement in the learning process
Increased student satisfaction with their first- and second-year academic experience
Increased student satisfaction with their advising experience in their first and subsequent years"

Part C: Track Recommendation

After reading the institution's description of its data sets and efforts to use that data to improve student persistence and completion, please make an initial recommendation, with rationale, for placement in Track A (Data Development) or Track B (Data Analysis and Strategy Refinement). This recommendation can be revised following the Mentor-facilitated Data Review.

Comments:

IIT is well positioned to enter the Academy in Track B.

- They have two databases (the home-grown Retention Database and Banner) providing them with the capability to pull in-depth data
- They are already using data analysis of student and cohort characteristics to target appropriate at-risk students for additional support and to determine where initiatives are effective
- Their participation in the Education Advisory Board's Student Success Collaborative gives them access to analytics and an advising dashboard, both of which can help them with predictive data
- They already have the confidence to define measures and set targets.

