

Plan for Pitt 2025

Focus Group Notes

Date: February 14, 2020

Theme: Data and Analytics

Thematic Focus Groups

Each group addressed this set of questions for their assigned topic:

1. How do you see this theme play out at Pitt?
2. What does Pitt do well in this area?
3. What could Pitt do better?
4. How do you see this topic relating to each of the six Plan for Pitt goals?
5. Now that we have more information about this theme, is it important to Pitt's success? Why or why not?

THEME: Data and Analytics

1. How do you see this theme play out at Pitt?
 - Research about Pitt (institutional research)
 - Research at Pitt (research) – how to collect data, share data
 - Different process/procedure/tools across disciplines/schools/depts (lower vs upper campus)
 - Collecting data
 - Teaching center
 - Answering questions from Provost office about who attends workshops
 - Graduate students
 - Not just about recruitment, job placement but data from current students
 - External vs internal data sources
 - Data silos- lack of talking across dept/schools
 - Lack of sharing data, resources, information
 - Schools have adopted and created systems that work but not able to share
 - Sensitive data -sharing, collecting, de-identify to prevent retribution, issues
 - Implications of data
 - How do we use data to determine, change policy, procedures?
 - Dental – repetition of process, costs for applications
 - Sharing data across campus
 - Data from departments, centers
 - Data repository
 - Data warehouse is financial student info
 - A central place for data, but in a standardized form
 - Data dictionary – formalized by other bodies, university-bases
 - Many people involved – IT, departments, administrations

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- Project management team
 - Documentation – sharing best practices across university
 - How do we prevent reinventing the wheel? Dept. have creating “working” systems, but where do we share that information across?
 - Pitt provides tools – are they most up to date?
 - UPMC complication – external applications/programs for specific programs
 - Pitt’s decentralized nature presents challenges in this area. Systems don’t talk, inconsistencies amongst different areas
 - The systems we have do not always give us the info we need
 - Different areas identify things in different ways that make data reporting difficult/inconsistent
 - There is not a centralized governance/process so that there is more consistency or central systems for data
2. What does Pitt do well in this area?
- The business intelligence unit (Pitt IT) provides tools and access for the university that is meaningful and useful
 - The adoption of sales force
 - IT’s person/department specific – driven by people who have worked to find solutions to their specific problems
 - Research school – knows the important of data
 - But many people still prefer Excel – are we using the effective tools? (i.e. tableau for data visualization)
 - More training for people to use new tools
 - Integration of different systems
3. What could Pitt do better?
- Often times it is a top down decision and primarily IT people are consulted with, without input from non-IT people giving their opinions
 - We don’t have convening bodies to figure out what areas need
 - An environment that brings relevant people together
 - Formal, functional area groups should be formed, consulted, and a part of decisions
 - Huge example of area of need: Pitt does not have a centralized financial reporting system that accounts for encumbrances. Depts use IT works/Dept manager to do this
 - The university tends to find tools that need use versus problems that need a solution
 - OMETs
 - Academic offerings coordination

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- Each area is independent
4. How do you see this topic relating to each of the six Plan for Pitt goals?
 - Student improvement via intervention
 - Could help submission via capability knowledge
 - Through data collection analytics
 - Better admissions
 - Internal comparisons
 - Alumni outreach, gift giving
 - If we had data, the numbers can determine our work/success in these goals
 - I.e. educational excellence – can we use data to determine if we're doing this well
 - Foundational strength – use data to make better decisions, improve communication
 - How are things impacting student success? Construction on student expectations/success
 5. Now that we have more information about this theme, is it important to Pitt's success? Why or why not?
 - Yes, if done correctly