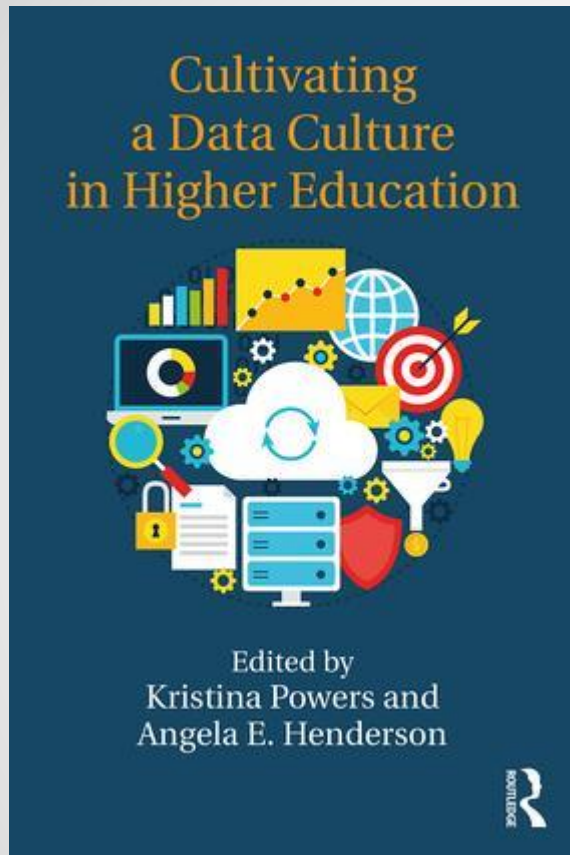# Misconceptions of the Higher Education Data Landscape:
Taking Action to Develop a Data Strategy

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About Me

Cultivating
a Data Culture
in Higher Education

Edited by
Kristina Powers and
Angela E. Henderson

Common Data Misconceptions

Data are available

Data are meaningful
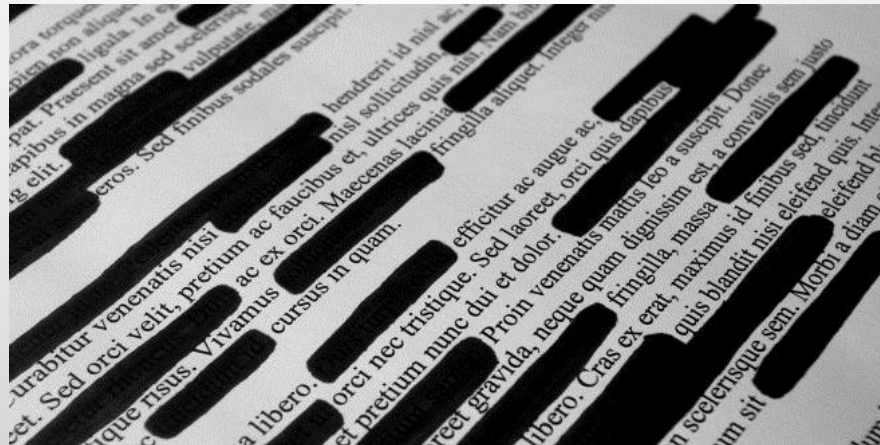
Data structures/definitions do not change

Data are Available

- We operate in silos

- Information asymmetry is common

- We treat data as a luxury, not a utility

Data are Meaningful

- Data management is often piecemeal

- Data definitions are incomplete and/or disconnected

- Student outcomes data measures what we want, not what students want

Data Structures/Definitions Do Not Change

- Institutional policies change

- State/board priorities/initiatives shift

- Disruptions occur

Think – Pair – Share

- Take 1 minute to think about the previously discussed topics. Which misconception have you experienced in your work?

- For 1 minutes, turn to the colleague next to you and discuss.

- We'll spend 2 minutes sharing with the larger group.

What Action Can We Take?

- Work toward a comprehensive data strategy
  - Comprehensive vision and actionable foundation for an organization's ability to harness data-related or data-dependent capability. It also represents the umbrella for all derived domain-specific strategies, such as Master Data Management, Business Intelligence, Big Data, etc.

- Chief Data Officers and a data-management function are becoming more common.

- Neither can be fully effective in the absence of a coherent strategy for:
  - organizing,
  - governing,
  - analyzing,
  - and deploying an organization's information assets.

Cultivating a Data Strategy

- We should CARE about our data:
  - Connected
  - Actionable
  - Relevant
  - Evolutionary

Adapted from Lahanas, S. (2014). Why organizations need a data strategy? *Dataconomy*, retrieved from http://dataconomy.com/2014/11/why-organizations-need-a-data-strategy/

Cultivating a Data Strategy

- Are your data management practices focusing on Defense or Offense?

	Defense	**Offense**
Key Objectives	Ensure data security, privacy, integrity, quality, regulatory compliance, and governance	Improve competitive position and profitability
Core Activities	Optimize data extraction, standardization, storage, and access	Optimize data analytics, modeling, visualization, transformation, and enrichment
Orientation	Control	Flexibility

Adapted from Dallemule, L. & Davenport, T. (2017). What's your data strategy? *Harvard Business Review*, retrieved from https://hbr.org/2017/05/whats-your-data-strategy

Determine Your Data Strategy Position

Develop analytics and digital capabilities	O
Meet industry regulatory requirements	D
Respond rapidly to competitors and market changes	D
Create new data tools	O
Improve the quality of data	D
Prevent cyber attacks and data breaches	D
Use sophisticated, real-time or near real-time analytics	O
Rationalize multiple sources of the same data and information	O
Reduce general operating expenses and streamline business processes	D
Optimize existing analysts and data scientists	O
Leverage new sources of data, internal or external	O
Improve IT infrastructure and reduce data-related costs (number of databases, etc.)	D

Adapted from Dallemule, L. & Davenport, T. (2017). What's your data strategy? *Harvard Business Review*, retrieved from https://hbr.org/2017/05/whats-your-data-strategy

Steps to Creating a Data Strategy

1. Build awareness
2. Assemble a team
3. Educate the team
4. Assess current state
5. Develop a vision and goals
6. Develop recommendations
7. Develop a roadmap
8. Develop justifications
9. Prepare for change
10. Execute the strategy

Adapted from Eckerson, W. (2017). How to create a data strategy. *Eckergron Group*, retrieved from https://www.eckerson.com/articles/how-to-create-a-data-strategy-part-1-overview

Current Developments

State Data Officers Provide Feedback on Federal Data Strategy

The State CDO Network — a newly formed group of government data leaders from 14 states — penned a letter offering support and feedback after the federal government released an initial draft of its own data strategy.

BY ZACK QUAINTANCE / JULY 30, 2018

"much of the data used by the federal government is collected and provided by agencies at the state and local levels … those agencies should have a significant role in helping to form the federal data approach."

"harmonizes the current landscape of confusing and conflicting privacy regulations and establishes clear and consistent guidance aligned to various federal laws governing the use of protected data…"

Final Thoughts

- Data management and data strategy activities provide leadership opportunities.

- Data collections are ever expanding.

Questions / Ideas

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