Georgia Tech | Institutional Research and Planning

Georgia Tech
CREATING THE NEXT®

2020 - 2025

Strategic Plan: Institutional Research and Planning

Executive Summary

The vision, mission, and values in this plan provide a pathway for expanding the presence of the Office of Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) at Georgia Institute of Technology. Our focus is on strengthening the role of IRP by providing products and services to the Georgia Tech community to promote and support data-informed decision-making. We are committed to providing information and meaningful insights in a timely, ethical, and efficient manner with an emphasis on data quality and integrity. IRP's strategic plan includes four (4) strategic goals supported by fourteen (14) strategies and twenty-one (21) measures of success.

Our Focus

In support of the Institute Strategic Plan, the Office of Institutional Research and Planning seeks to promote a culture of deliberate innovation through data practices and using analytic tools to drive decision-making. Specifically, we focus on four primary areas: (1) Data Curation and Support, (2) Research Support, (3) Planning Support, and (4) Decision Support and Data Science.

Our focus coincides with the focus areas of Georgia Tech's Institute Strategic Plan in the following areas:

Amplify Impact

Lead by Example and

Champion Innovation

Our Story

The Office of Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) consists of seven employees. Over the past two years, IRP has dramatically changed the way it does business with the Enterprise Data Management's (EDM) implementation of the Enterprise Data Warehouse (EDW) and LITE. Simple ad hoc data requests are now provided by LITE. The LITE website created the opportunity for IRP to shift focus from simple data requests to complex research and analysis requiring a higher level skill set in data, statistics, visualizations and research analysis.

IRP's focus has shifted to include customized reporting and packaging of data sets, research reports, and analysis. Additional focus on third party data sets to provide additional context to Georgia Tech's internal data is also being incorporated in GT reporting and institutional research.

IRP has historically faced employee turnover due to changing demands and diverse skill sets required to work within the office. Changing demands and an emerging need for interdisciplinary skill sets made staff recruitment and retention much more challenging. The essential skills required for success working in IRP include continuous learning, technical savvy, critical thinking, attention to detail, working under pressure, and proficiency in verbal and written communication.

Challenges for IRP include leveraging technologies within the silos on the Georgia Tech campus and finding and retaining talented staff to ensure the future success and institutional knowledge needed to create the next generation of Institutional Researchers who contribute Georgia Tech and the IR profession.

Our Vision

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Vision

The Office of Institutional Research and Planning will be a leader in driving an evidence-based culture that leverages data, research, analysis, and analytic tools, critical for decision-making and continuous improvement.

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We accomplish our vision by:

- Creating and establishing exceptional client relationships that are collaborative partnerships to enhance the mission of the Institute.
- Fostering an environment where IRP works effectively, efficiently, and collaboratively sharing access to resources, knowledge of critical issues in higher education, and strengths in research methodology.
- Conducting research in an objective manner utilizing the highest standards for accuracy in methodology, data quality, and the presentation of findings with professionally responsible interpretation.
- Modeling, compiling, analyzing, and interpreting various data that inform institutional strategic initiatives, promote accountability, and foster a data-driven culture.
- Representing the University on various state and national committees and task forces
- Complying with federal and state mandated reporting requirements, along with various external agency requests.
- Following best practices as set in the "Code of Ethics and Professional Practice" by the Association for Institutional Research, the premier international organization for institutional research in higher education.

What will it look like when we have achieved our vision? IRP will be the go-to resource for decision support by providing research and analytics within the context of IR best practices to help our customers understand Institute data and leverage it to improve student outcomes, as well as business processes. We will be the prime source for predictive analytics via proactive environmental scanning and communication of local, state, federal, and global issues with the potential to impact higher education and Georgia Tech's mission. IRP's core focus is in our name: Institutional **Research** & **Planning**.

Our Values

Our core values support the vision, shape the culture, and influence the decision-making processes within our unit and are integrated in the services we provide campus stakeholders. These values help us create the NEXT at Georgia Tech.

Ethics and Integrity

- We follow best practices for information stewardship, uphold confidentiality and maintain objectivity. We follow the code of ethics of our profession.

Quality

- We provide timely, accurate, reliable information and analysis. We endeavor to be as accurate as possible in everything we do.

Customer Service

- We strive for excellence in customer service; respond in a timely manner, anticipate needs of customers and customize reports to meet the needs of the audience.
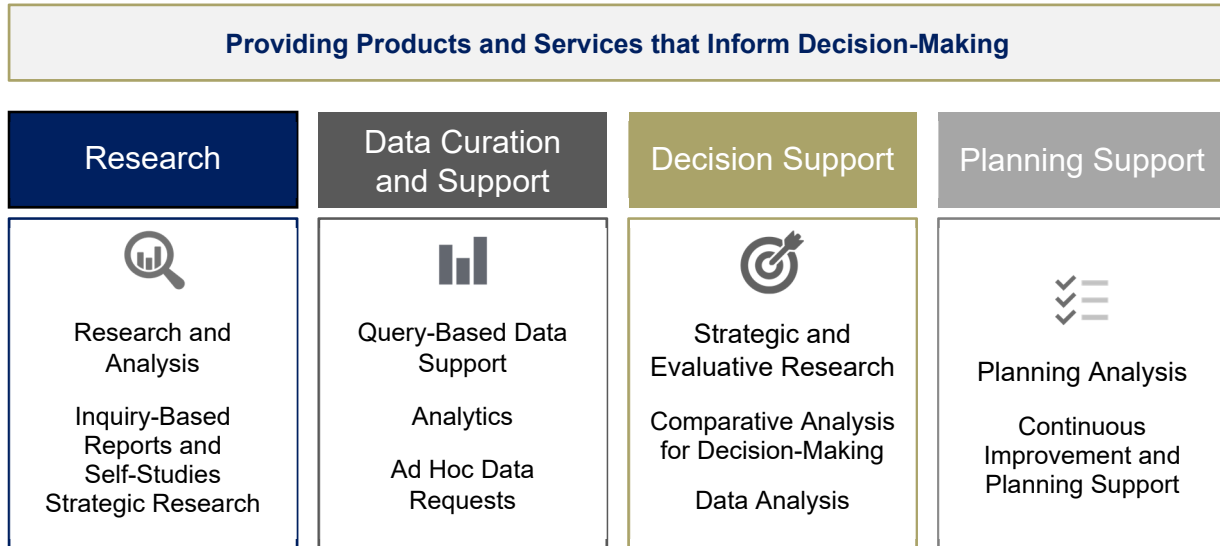
Innovation & Continuous Improvement

- We nurture a culture that strives for innovative ideas by collaboration with others, continuous learning, seeking new opportunities, and employing new techniques and procedures. We strive for improvement in increased efficiency, accuracy, and insights.

Collaboration and Partnerships

- We collaborate with others at Georgia Tech to enhance quality, services and to tap subject matter expertise across multiple disciplines.

What We Do

Providing Products and Services that Inform Decision-Making

Research	Data Curation and Support	Decision Support	Planning Support
Research and Analysis Inquiry-Based Reports and Self-Studies Strategic Research	Query-Based Data Support Analytics Ad Hoc Data Requests	Strategic and Evaluative Research Comparative Analysis for Decision-Making Data Analysis	Planning Analysis Continuous Improvement and Planning Support

Other Functions and Services Include:

- Federal and State compliance reporting
- External Surveys and Ranking Reviews
- Georgia Tech Digital Fact Book
- Academic Program Review Data Portfolios
- Data Quality Reviews with the University System of Georgia
- Open Records and Solomon Act Overflow Requests from Registrar's Office
- Analysis using external data sources to provide additional context to GT data

Our Goals

GOAL 1: Increase recognition and utilization of Institutional Research and Planning to provide data and research services that support campus innovation and insight [Amplify Impact, Champion innovation]

Strategies:

1.1 Educate campus partners on information and services available from IRP in order to reduce repetition and replication across campus units.

1.2 Encourage optimization of resources and improve efficiency by working with EDM, OUE, OAE, and Registrar.

1.3 Ensure the security and integrity of all personally identifiable information in the transmission and reporting of data

Measures:

- Provide data in a timely and accurate manner (meet customer deadlines)
- Number of new customers per year
- Well-defined IRP documents, processes and educational materials
- Information on IRP products/services visible on website
- Number of collaborative projects with data partners

Goal 2: Offer a portfolio of advanced analytics, research, and services to the Georgia Tech community.   [Amplify impact]

Strategies:

2.1 Empower campus community by providing decision support services as well as analysis needed for making informed and transparent decisions.

2.2 Identify research services, reports or specialties provided by IRP to inform the campus community.

2.3 Provide contextualized data and analyses to better understand and evaluate Georgia Tech by utilizing data, data science, and decision science to promote and support the continuous improvement efforts of the campus community.

Measures:

- Number of reports produced using advanced analytics, mixed methods research, or external data sets.
- Number of projects requiring IRP knowledge/skill sets by other departments
- Number of projects using combinations of data sets (both internal and external)

Goal 3: Maintain a comprehensive and enhanced quality control program for data and information produced by Institutional Research and Planning (IRP)

Strategies:

3.1 Develop data extracts used by IRP team for common surveys and requests.
3.2 Create a formalized data quality protocol for all ad hoc reports, research and surveys
3.3 Ensure documentation is kept for all projects, reports, and surveys.

Measures:

- Fully vetted data sets created and used by IRP
- IRP staff produce reports with no errors and consistent across surveys, research and with data reported in LITE.
- IRP staff follow all protocols for data mining, analysis, and dissemination.
- IRP has detailed work notes for all projects, reports, and processes.

Goal 4: Improve the overall effectiveness of the office by cultivating a highly skilled and informed team that is resilient, adaptable, and knowledgeable [Lead by example]

Strategies:

4.1 Apply frameworks from other disciplines to IRP practices (Social Sciences, Forensics, Data Analytics, Biology)
4.2 Establish a formalized continuous improvement process.
4.3 Establish formal documentation processes and efficiencies.
4.4 Develop policies and procedures to enhance knowledge transfer and workflow management
4.5 Create a succession management plan.

Measures:

- Professional development in a research area outside of Institutional Research.
- Attendance at a professional IR/Higher Ed training or meeting.
- IRP staff complete one or more trainings through Linked In Learning, Georgia Tech Library offerings, or professional training with documentation of training completion
- Yearly training objectives list completed during IRP weekly meetings.
- Create learning and promotion pathways for current employees to foster and develop skills/knowledge

Our Commitment to Continuous Improvement

The Office of Institutional Research and Planning strategic plan is the result of feedback provided to senior staff, several working sessions with the IRP staff to discuss opportunities for improvement and ways to mitigate weaknesses and potential threats, and the senior staff's assessment of the department's current state and future plans.

Self-Assessment

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Access to Key Data • Positive Customer Service Reputation • Diverse Skillset • Non-Complacency • Team Camaraderie • Resiliency and Willingness to Adapt • Expertise in Data Curation and Analysis, Research Methods, and Creating Efficient Business Processes • Knowledge Of Institutional Business Processes • Institutional Knowledge Of Senior Staff	• "Five-Alarm Fire" approach to requests • Overload of requests • Limited number of staff for complex requests and inquiries requiring in-depth analysis and/or research methodology • Lack of robust documentation • Continuous evolution of business processes that impact documentation • Bandwidth to increase skillset and leverage professional learning opportunities
Opportunities	Threats
• Expanding IRP's presence • Rebranding IRP and increasing its reputation as a viable research support and analytics unit rather than an "Ad hoc requests shop" • Increasing IRP's capacity for developing in-depth reports and visualizations • Increasing IRP's capacity for conducting in-depth analysis • Increasing collaboration • Leveraging professional learning opportunities • Leveraging new technologies	• Data Quality and Integrity • Miscommunication • Information Gaps • Data complexity and structure • Competing Priorities • Overlapping Scope of Work • Misperceptions of responsiveness due to project complexity • Lack of Data Literacy by customers • Misrepresentation as an "Ad hoc data shop" rather than a viable research support and analytics unit

Leveraging Our Strengths and Opportunities

We are committed to leveraging our strengths and opportunities while mitigating any potential threats by:

- Expanding IRP's presence by providing stakeholders with various data resources and decision support services
- Educating campus stakeholders about research, analytics, and decision support services offered by IRP
- Directing stakeholders to data available in LITE for simple queries in order to Increase IRP's capacity for developing in-depth meaningful reports and visualizations, as well as increase participation in professional learning opportunities
- Leveraging new technologies to provide stakeholders with robust information, interactive tools, and other resources