Title: Data Governance Policy

Background: This policy is written to establish the authority and responsibilities of the Data Governance Council, and the Data Working Group, and to ensure Lewis-Clark State College (LC State) employees, students, contractors, consultants, affiliates, and vendors act ethically and responsibly with respect to data.

Point of Contact: Office of the Vice President for Institutional Research, Planning & Effectiveness, and Information Technology Department

Other LC State offices directly involved with the implementation of this policy, or significantly affected by the policy: President, Vice Presidents

Date of approval by LC State authority: September 25, 2024

Date of State Board Approval: N/A

Date of Most Recent Review: September 25, 2024

Summary of Major Changes incorporated in this revision to the policy: This is a new policy.

1. **Policy**

   LC State is committed to protecting the access, use, quality, security, and retention of all college data. Data are a valuable institutional asset and must be maintained and protected for the purpose of carrying out institutional business. The college has established the Data Governance Council and the Data Working Group to establish governing operating standards, policies, procedures, practices, and ethical use standards, representing the broad interests of the college as a whole. The Data Governance Council reports to the college president.

2. **Philosophy**

   All data is LC State data and is an institutional asset vital to the success of the mission of the college. Therefore, structured efforts must be undertaken to protect, enhance, and leverage LC State data assets.

3. **Definitions**

   A. Data Governance

      Formalizes behavior around how data are defined, produced, used, stored, and destroyed to enable and enhance organizational effectiveness.

   B. Data Governance Council (DGC)

      The managing authority for the establishment of college operating standards, policies, and values to promote and guide effective and responsible data governance.

   C. Data Quality

      Refers to the planning, implementation, and control of activities that apply quality management techniques to data, in order to assure they are reliable, valid, fit for consumption and meets the needs of data consumers.

   D. Data Standards

      Reflect the operational use and application of different types of college data and definitions for various purposes.

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 E. Data Working Group (DWG)

Provides expert functional area knowledge and expertise to enable all college departments and divisions to collaborate in data stewardship and governance.

 F. Institutional Data

Includes all items of information that are collected, maintained, and utilized by the college for the purpose of carrying out institutional business. This includes data that are aggregated into metrics relevant to operations, planning, or management of any unit at LC State. Note that research data independently collected by faculty for research may not fall within the scope of Institutional Data.

4. Data Governance Council (DGC)

 A. The DGC serves as the executive governing body and is led by the vice president for Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Planning on issues about data governance throughout LC State.

 B. The DGC meets quarterly. Additional meetings may be scheduled if proposals require discussion before the next scheduled meeting. The DGC is chaired by the vice president for Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Planning and is further comprised of the provost/vice president for Academic Affairs, senior vice president / vice president for Student Affairs, vice president for Finance and Administration, and the director of Information Technology.

5. Data Working Group (DWG)

 A. The DWG is comprised of standing representatives from the offices of Information Technology and Institutional Research. The DWG is a task force that is convened as needed, therefore additional representatives from other college functional areas may be included when the topic of data governance relates to their business function, expertise, and/or are critical stakeholders in those data integrity. Examples include the offices of the:

  i. Registrar when topic of data governance is related to student records.

  ii. Finance and Administration when topic of data governance is related financial or facilities information.

  iii. Human Resource Services when topic of data governance is related to personnel records.

 B. Discusses solutions and recommends policies and procedures regarding the stewardship of LC State data. The DWG may form subcommittees for focus areas (e.g., Data Integrity and Data Access & Security) and create temporary workgroups to address individual data issues.

 C. The DGC makes appointments to the DWG based on nominations from the functional areas represented on the DWG; the DGC may appoint additional members to the DWG as needed. The associate director of Institutional Research will serve as DWG chair, and the DGC may appoint a co-chair if deemed appropriate. The DWG will be scheduled to meet when necessary to address critical issues or define potential solutions for timely issues.

 D. Twice a year, the DWG will hold a townhall meeting inviting all campus members to hear the agenda items discussed and addressed.

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6. **The DGC and the DWG will coordinate to accomplish the following**

   A. Data Access

      i. Adopt, communicate, and oversee the implementation of college-wide standards for data administration and business processes around permissions for internal and external access to data.

      ii. Ensure data are available to support LC State initiatives, projects, and services that benefit the college as a whole.

      iii. Establish and/or endorse processes and guidelines for responding to internal and external requests for data (e.g., the data entry and collection process and responsibilities for fulfilling institutional requests).

      iv. Endorse and/or approve authorities of record for data sources.

   B. Data Use

      i. Create a "common data culture" in which data are centralized, stored securely, and ensure that data are used with cross-institutional understandings of the meanings and uses of key data elements.

      ii. Enhance data-driven decision-making through improved access to reliable, valid, and well-documented data elements allowing better decision-making and planning.

      iii. Draft and recommend policies or enhance existing policies to help safeguard college data.

      iv. All protected data must be saved to encrypted files. Any protected data stored on removable media, the media title must also be encrypted.

      v. Develop, document, and publish data standards for core reports and college metrics.

   C. Data Quality

      i. Enable increased data interoperability by establishing standards for data collection, storage, and data use (e.g., reporting), including common data definitions, data dictionaries, and naming conventions.

      ii. Promote data quality standards (validity and timeliness) and address issues that threaten data quality.

   D. Data and Record Retention

      Promote best practices and support existing college policy in record retention.

7. **Authority**

   A. GLBA Requirements for Higher Education

   B. LC State Policy 1.211 Control and Access of SSNs

   C. LC State Policy 1.212 Cybersecurity and Information Technology Risk Management

   D. LC State Policy 4.103 Records Retention

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8. **Additional Information**

   Questions, requests for assistance or other issues regarding this policy should be directed to the vice president for Institutional Research, Planning & Effectiveness or the director of the Information Technology Department.