

# APS Summit

2019

## Engaging Academic Leaders in Data-Informed Decision-Making



# Today's Presenters



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**Kathryn Pham**

*Strategic Leader*

KPham@eab.com



**Harrison Greer**

*APS Dedicated Consultant*

HGreer@eab.com



**JuliAnn Mazachek, PhD**

*Vice President for Academic  
Affairs*

Washburn University

# 1 **The Challenge of Engaging Academic Leaders**

2 Strategies to Engage Academic Leaders Across Campus

3 Highlighting Best Practices

4 Next Steps on Your Campus

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*What does "engaging academic leaders with data" mean?*



## **Academic Leaders**

Individuals on your campus who are responsible for resource allocation and planning decisions, such as Associate Provosts, Deans, and Department Chairs

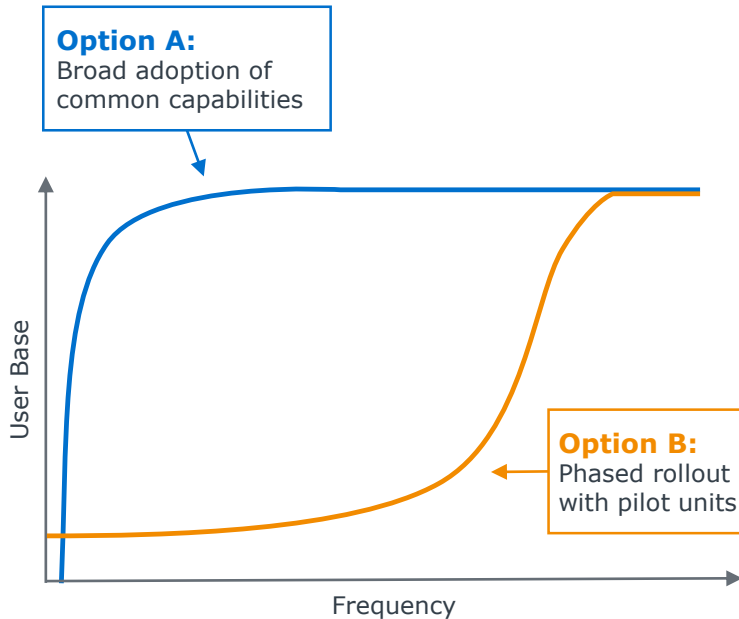


## **Engagement**

Not only exploring the data, but also using it to inform decisions and facilitate conversations

# Customizing Utilization Strategy

## Two Approaches to Achieving High and Frequent Utilization



### Considerations

- Best strategy is based on your goals—fast adoption, standardization, certain functionality, etc.
- Consider what your accountability system will be during rollout
- Rolling out by use case and process helps users with training
- Variations of these two options exist based on goals

# New Resource Available: Toolkit

## Strategically Tackling Challenges to Data Engagement

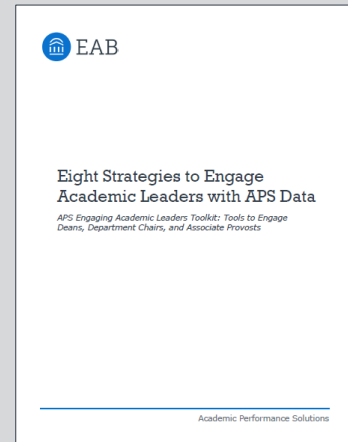
### Common Challenges

Institutional Leadership encounter obstacles to data use when there is a lack of:

- Data Governance → *Are there standards for data accessibility, management, and meaning?*
- Data Literacy → *Are leaders able to consume data for knowledge and think critically about it?*
- Accountability → *What mechanisms are in place to encourage leaders to use data and keep them on track towards change?*
- Buy-In → *Are leaders bought into the idea of using data to inform decisions and do they trust it?*
- Expectations → *In what ways are users expected to use the data and when?*
- Support → *Do leaders have the resources and guidance they need to use the data?*

### **New Toolkit**

Eight strategies paired with tools to support you



1

The Challenge of Engaging Academic Leaders

2

## **Strategies to Engage Academic Leaders Across Campus**

3

Highlighting Best Practices

4

Next Steps on Your Campus

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# Know Your Elevator Pitch

## Use Different Avenues to Share Your Pitch, but Keep it Consistent

### Four Elements of a Good Pitch

- 1 Provide Some (Not All) Context:** Explain the challenges that spurred the investment in the technology
- 2 Articulate Strengths of the Platform:** Clearly explain the value that it brings to your institution, including supporting leaders with data to inform decisions, better support students, better balance instructional workload, etc.
- 3 Highlight Goals of the Initiative:** Clearly explain how the partnership will help resolve or improve the central challenges you first articulated (i.e. by prioritizing courses for course completion improvement)
- 4 End with How Leaders Can Help:** End with an answer to the unspoken question, *What's in it for me?* Let leaders know what changes they can expect to happen in their day-to-day work

“

“Academic Performance Solutions (APS) is a data analytics tool that brings our institution’s student, HR, and finance data into a single platform that generates structured reports and peer benchmarks on KPIs...”

”





# Clearly Communicate the Move to Data Transparency

## Proactively Prepare for Objections to Data Use

### Set Context for Your Investment in the Data

Academic leaders are responsible for numerous critical resource decisions, such as hiring faculty. Data provides the unbiased support they need to surface opportunities for improvement.

*How APS Data Helps:*

- ✓ **Minimizes Burden and Improves Efficiency:**  
Reduces time for manual data collection and analysis
- ✓ **Opens the “Black Box”:** Allows academic leaders to understand what kind of info is used to inform decisions.
- ✓ **Makes Once-Difficult Conversations Easier:**  
Places all academic leaders on the same ground and at conversation starting points
- ✓ **Illuminates Resource Use and Opportunities:**  
Helps leaders understand state of their unit

### Potential Objections to Data Use



*“The data is wrong, so I don’t trust it.”*

*“The data, especially benchmarks, will be used against our department or school.”*

*“We’re being asked to abandon all other data sources and just use this.”*

Tool 2: Preparing for Data Use  
Objections Worksheet (pg. 11)



# Require Data be Used in Planning Processes

## Four Ways to Leverage APS Data for Smarter Decision-Making

1

### Academic Program Review

*How can we more strategically evaluate department health on an annual basis?*

- Compare enrollment trends and course completion rates to peer benchmarks
- Assess demand-capacity mismatches across all programs

2

### Budget Planning

*...standardize and streamline resource allocation decisions?*

- Consolidate underfilled sections and redirect resources to bottlenecks
- Evaluate instructional costs per student credit hour across departments

3

### Faculty Line Allocation

*...make smart decisions about where to add faculty lines?*

- Evaluate student credit hour production across departments
- Compare faculty teaching loads to peer benchmarks
- Analyze course completion rates by instructor type

4

### Capacity Management

*...structure offerings to align with demand and support student outcomes?*

- Compare class sizes and fill rates to peer benchmarks
- Match proliferation of distinct courses with enrollment trends
- Analyze course load trends by instructor type

Tool 4: Establishing Utilization Expectations Worksheet (pg. 17) ▶



# Put a Support Plan in Place

## Don't Leave Academic Leaders Hanging

### Key Components of a Follow-Up Plan



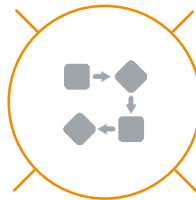
#### **Offer Ongoing Support**

Office hours, custom use guides, standardized templates, or centrally produced reports



#### **Track and Measure Progress**

Specific timelines and expectations around expected impact



#### **Hold Lunch and Learns**

Informal meetings focused on a specific task or planning process involving a group exercise and discussion



#### **Collect Feedback**

Surveys or questionnaires to gather feedback after trainings to inform future session content and focus areas

Tool 7: Creating Your Follow-Up Plan Worksheet (pg. 26)



# Fostering a Data-Informed Culture



Washburn University | Public Master's University in Topeka, KS



## **Desire for Comprehensive Insight into Departments**

- Program Review occurred every five years, so leaders didn't have frequent look into departmental health
- Dr. Mazachek's Office created new annual department review process, in which reports were created using APS data and given to department leaders



## **"Shadow Year" of Annual Reviews (2018)**

- Trial run used to acculturate department leaders to new process and use of data
- Value Leader and Associate Dean helped champion process, including use of APS data, among peers
- Even without official ties to resource allocation decisions, staff gained better sense of resource implications (e.g. not requesting to fill vacant faculty lines, administrative positions)



## **First Official Year of Annual Process (2019)**

- First round of reports distributed to department leaders
- Using data to support resource decisions is seen as the expectation
- Continuous process of ensuring leaders have the most directionally accurate data in hands




**JuliAnn Mazachek, PhD**

Vice President for Academic Affairs

# Exercise: Diagnostic

## Prioritize Your Focus with Specific Tools from the New Toolkit


Academic Performance Solutions

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### Diagnostic: How Well Are You Engaging Academic Leaders with Data?

Access to data itself does not automatically make your campus more data-informed. The key is to strategically confront common challenges to data use and effectively promote use among academic leaders. Use this diagnostic to rank how well your institution is performing on each of the following engagement strategies. Then, use your responses to prioritize the strategies your institution will place its focus on in the toolkit.

**Strategy 1: Advocate from Top Down**  
An effective and outcomes-driven leadership team is in place to create a vision for success and instill accountability.

LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE				
1	2	3	4	5

**Strategy 2: Craft Your Data Transparency Message**  
Academic leaders understand why we invested in reporting tools/technologies and how we will use it.

LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE				
1	2	3	4	5

**Strategy 3: Identify a Champion**  
Across campus, we have enfranchised individual(s) who are data savvy, will carry the vision forward, and coach peers.

LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE				
1	2	3	4	5

**Strategy 4: Embed Data in Existing or New Processes**  
There is clear guidance on which data points are required in specific planning processes.

LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE				
1	2	3	4	5

**Strategy 5: Leverage Influence to Promote Data Use**  
We understand what influence is and how we can leverage it to drive behavioral change.

LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE				
1	2	3	4	5

**Strategy 6: Coach Others Towards Data Use**  
Our leadership team and champions collaborate with academic leaders by facilitating relationships fueled by communication and feedback.

LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE				
1	2	3	4	5

**Strategy 7: Maintain Momentum with Follow-Up**  
We have a concrete follow-up plan in place to continuously provide leaders with opportunities to engage with data and build sustainable data use.

LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE				
1	2	3	4	5

**Strategy 8: Make Resources Easy to Access**  
Academic leaders can easily find resources on our online resource hub to support their use of APS data.

LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE				
1	2	3	4	5

**GRADING SCALE**

1 = We need a lot of additional support to improve performance	3 = Not sure	5 = There is no room for improvement
2 = We are behind and need additional support to improve	4 = We feel good about our performance	

1. Complete the Diagnostic (page 5)
2. Take a photo with your phone or tablet
3. Send it to your APS dedicated consultant or [APS@eab.com](mailto:APS@eab.com) to ensure we're supporting you as best we can



**Learn More About the Strategies:**  
*Eight Strategies to Engage Academic Leaders with Data Toolkit*

Source: Academic Performance Solutions.



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202-747-1000 | [eab.com](http://eab.com)