

SSSC Planning Principles

To accomplish its objectives the University builds and/or adopts computing systems to record and share student information with offices servicing faculty, students, and its administration and other important constituencies. Over time this network, the collection of connected student information systems, evolves in response to expanding demands and needs, or as technology advances. As financial resources, priorities or degrees of interdependence foster or constrain development of the network, without coordinated oversight, some of the networked parts may become obsolete, inefficient, expensive to support, duplicative, even orphaned from their original purposes.

The Student Systems Steering Committee (SSSC) is positioned to inventory the student information systems network, verify the viability of the subsystems that make up the whole and catalog the data that are recorded and managed within the structure. With the aim of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the network, the SSSC shall superintend the network's present and future operation and development. This oversight shall take the form of questioning and challenging the assumptions about the network or its parts and, the way the network is organized, including data within it. Thinking more broadly, the SSSC shall draw from the visions of the university's constituents for use of student information, so that data may be added to support their information needs.

The Committee finds the unimplemented recommendations of the "Student-Information Needs Assessment", The Stillwater Consulting Group, December 23, 1996 a compelling source for its deliberations. Two recommendations included in that assessment are worthy of further consideration and action: 1) document system SIS files and data elements (SIS should be expanded to include the central student information systems network), and 2) enhance data-access and reporting capabilities. Ultimately, the Committee continually strives to be a resource to those with local systems that may require inter-connectivity with central systems, and to counsel how they may successfully comply with the principles for maintaining coordinated central systems.

1. The university shall plan and implement a single central university system of record, for collecting, storing and extracting student information data that will service, as practicable, all academic departments, auxiliary enterprises, and organizations.
2. Information elements shall be available and deliverable to users of the central system in accordance to best security practices, compliance to state and federal laws and as appropriate per the interpretation of these authorities by Student Systems Steering Committee (SSSC).

3. Local information systems that contain student information and are presently serviced by the central system may be reviewed to ensure the missions and the functions of the local systems are not wholly or in part redundant or duplicative of, or in conflict with the central system. Such reviews shall determine the continued viability of the local systems. (As appropriate, local system reviews shall dictate development opportunities for and enhancements to the central system). In the event local systems are necessary and an integral part of the student information network of systems, data exchanges are regulated by the SSSC. Admissions systems are local systems that necessarily collect data for establishment of records in the central system.
4. All proposals for related student information systems must be reviewed and approved by the SSSC; SSSC will evaluate systems for their appropriateness and fit with student information network of systems. (The decision of fitness turns on the systems' functionality, ability to integrate in the current or prospective data environment and other data processes, as opposed to technical or technological quality.)
5. To the extent practicable or appropriate, information shall be delivered securely online to the university constituencies; the browser-based client is the preferred means for online delivery