	Data Requests ☐ NEW POLICY ☒ REVIEW OF EXISTING POLICY	**LINK TO CURRENT POLICY** *(N/A)*
OFFICIAL POLICY TEMPLATE		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: *Office of Institutional Research & Planning* **POLICY OWNER:** *Director, Office of Institutional Research & Planning*	**ORIGINATOR OF GOVERNANCE DOCUMENT:** *Director, Office of Institutional Research & Planning* **ORIGINATION DATE:** *2015/03/31*	**EFFECTIVE DATE:** *2015/12/18* **REVISION HISTORY:** *2020/09/29*

PART 1. RATIONALE

This policy is established to promote the availability and to ensure the accuracy of official college data used by individuals, offices, and departments on campus. It also provides an orderly and predictable process for the Office of Institutional Research and Planning and for the constituencies that it serves.

PART 2. SCOPE

This shall apply to all requests for existing official college data by any campus entity.

PART 3. DEFINITIONS [AS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT]

client	the person or entity requesting the data
frozen files	files that capture data for a specified date each semester. Such files are often referred to as "census" files.
IRP	Office of Institutional Research and Planning at Rhode Island College
official college data	all data produced using and/or stored within the college's information technology systems or hard-copy files; include but are not limited to information pertaining to current and prospective students, employees, financial and operational data, alumni and donor data, and data pertaining to past, ongoing, and future research. Also includes data gathered through institution-developed/sponsored surveys managed by IRP or other offices on campus.

PART 4. STATEMENT OF POLICY

A.   Internal data

    1.   Any college office or individual working on a project requiring official college data shall contact the Office of Institutional Research and Planning (IRP). Projects requiring official data may include but are not limited to:

        a.   trend analysis for institutional, departmental, or unit planning and budgeting

        b.   accreditation or membership applications/renewal forms, etc.

      c.   surveys for college guides, accrediting and licensing agencies, vendors, etc.

      d.   marketing/recruitment publications

2.   Generally, IRP works with frozen data files and cannot meet requests for live data (e.g., the number of students enrolled in a class in real-time) or requests for lists of individuals. Requests for these types of data should be directed to the office that manages the pertinent database. One exception would be lists/contact information required for administering surveys to RIC constituencies; IRP may help individuals or offices generate such lists, particularly when sampling is necessary.

3.   Generally, IRP provides aggregated data and not raw data (e.g., data on individuals, such as students or faculty).

4.   Individuals or offices requiring reports for day-to-day operations should consult the office maintaining this data and/or work with Management Information Systems (MIS) to develop a query.

B.   External environment data

1.   In addition to providing internal institutional data, IRP also serves as the key resource for statistical information about the college's external environment and maintains the college's official set of peer institutions. Projects requiring such data may include but are not limited to:

      a.   environmental scans

      b.   program development/reviews

      c.   strategic plans

      d.   benchmarking against peer/aspirant institutions

PART 5. PROCEDURES

A.   Questions to consider when planning to make a data request of IRP:

1.   Are the requested data already available from a document published by IRP and posted on line, such as the Common Data Set, Fact Book, or Enrollment Reports?   Please check IRP website: http://www.ric.edu/oirp/Pages/default.aspx

2.   What are the parameters for the request? For example, if the requested information pertains to students, what category or categories of students must be included (e.g., all students, undergraduates only, full-time only, students who entered the college as first-time freshmen, specific demographics).

3.   What is the timeframe for the request? Just the current semester? The past three years?

4.   Is this a one-time request or is it anticipated that additional and/or updated data would be requested on a regular basis?

5.   Have these data been requested and obtained in the past?

6. What is the purpose of the request (e.g., to meet an external/internal mandate, for departmental planning/evaluation purposes, for scholarly research, as a requirement for a grant proposal).

7. When is the requested/expected/required deadline for provision of the data?

B. Process for making a data request

1. All requestors should contact IRP prior to making a formal request for data to discuss the nature, scope, and timeline for the request. The preferred method of making this initial contact is via email; requestors can either email an IRP staff member or send a message to the Office of Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) email address.

2. Depending on the complexity of the request, IRP may ask that the requestor follow up with a more detailed email regarding the request or require that the requestor complete and submit an "IR&P Data Request Form" on the IRP website.

3. Completing an "IR&P Data Request Form" is necessary when the request requires considerable time and office resources to complete. Such requests also require the endorsement of RIC senior administrator (Dean/Assistant Vice President or higher). The specific senior administrator endorsing the request must be noted in the appropriate space on the form, and that individual must send an email to the Director of Institutional Research & Planning indicating endorsement for the request.

4. Note that IRP can only guarantee accurate, timely, and thorough responses to data requests made following this process.

C. Response procedures for the Office of Institutional Research and Planning

1. Upon receipt of the formal request, IRP staff will review the request for completeness, determine if the data are available, and ascertain whether there are restrictions on their release. If additional information is needed, the client will be contacted.

2. Requests will be reviewed on a weekly basis.

3. After the request has been reviewed, the IRP office will inform the client of the planned timetable for delivery of the information. Depending on the scope and nature of the information requested, turnaround times may vary. Some requests can be fulfilled within a short timeframe while others may take several months.

D. Response format

1. Responses are provided in writing; if the deliverable is simple, the response will be contained within the body of an email message.

2. More complex responses, such as tables of figures, will be delivered as an e-mail attachment, dated, and labeled "Office of Institutional Research & Research." It will generally be a .pdf file.

3. Normally, IRP will not provide raw data.

PART 6. GUIDELINES

N/A

PART 7. RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsible Official	List of Responsibilities
Director, Office of Institutional Research & Planning	administration and oversight

PART 8. CONTACTS

Subject	Office or Position	Telephone Number	Email
policy clarification and other assistance	Office of Institutional Research & Planning	(401) 456-8998	irpo@ric.edu

PART 9. POLICY ENFORCEMENT

violation(s)	Any circumvention of Parts 4 or 5 of this governance document
potential consequences	Requested data may not be provided or provided in a timely manner
where to report violations	Office of Institutional Research & Planning

PART 10. FORMS/TEMPLATES/REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

IR&P Data Request Form