Tracking Graduate Student Progress (or lack thereof) to the Degree

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Purpose
For a university where research and graduate education are integral to the mission, reporting on graduate students is key. Programmatic reporting on graduate students is especially useful for:
- Program reviews;
- Accreditation;
- Accountability;
- Ad hoc reporting;
- Prospective students.

The Original System

Student matriculates in a plan (degree + program)

Student completes milestones

Student awarded degree

- Includes doctoral students only → would have required separate system for master’s students.
- Multiple plans for the same student (e.g. master’s/doctoral, joint degrees) are never considered together.
- Unsatisfactory mechanism to determine whether a student who left a doctoral program obtained a master’s degree.
- No link to enrollment records. Start term of graduate career was determined based on start date in a specific degree program.
- Manual clean-up.

The New System

Includes all graduate students
→ easier to see comprehensive portrait of student.

Students have one or more careers, programs and plans (the program/plan stack)

Create one stack for each career.
Earliest enrollment record for the career determines start date.

Delete repeated stacks.
Delete records before enrollment, after completion, other issues.

Add degree information.
Merge concurrent programs, similar subjects, related records, changes to similar programs.

Add milestone information.
Create file for reports.

Challenges

- PeopleSoft student system is not a relational database → many data integrity issues.
- Missing data entry validation and conversion from previous system led to bad data.
- Different paths to a doctoral degree (master’s/no master’s, breaks in enrollment).
- Institutional reorganization and program name changes → difficult to identify what should go together.

Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Request for STEM doctoral outcome data.</td>
<td>Collaboration with Graduate School for data clean-up and improved procedures.</td>
<td>Work begins on revamped graduate tracking system.</td>
<td>(Jan) Doctoral reports available.</td>
<td>(Nov) Fall 2012 reports available.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Work begins on graduate tracking system.</td>
<td>System used to respond to NRC assessment of doctoral programs.</td>
<td>NRC results become available.</td>
<td>(Oct) Launch of doctoral program review.</td>
<td>(Feb) Master’s reports available.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>(Nov) Data available from new system.</td>
<td>Systematic improvements to deal with errors.</td>
<td>(Jan) Doctoral reports available.</td>
<td>Systematic improvements to deal with errors.</td>
<td>(Nov) Fall 2012 reports available.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Doctoral Reports

Completion Rate and Time to Degree

Student Outcomes

- Graduation rates for a specific program or department.
- Number of students starting a program.
- Number of students completing a program.
- Number of students obtaining a degree.

Future Directions

- Data will be moved into DataWarehouse in own datamart:
  - creation of dashboards,
  - even easier creation of reports.
- Various analyses on predicting time to degree, completion rates and student outcomes.
- Eventually linking to other areas: admissions details, full enrollment history, research and teaching assistantships.

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