

UCLA Board on Privacy on Data Protection

Monday, April 27, 2015 | 2:00-4:00 PM | 5628 Math Sciences (Portal)

Attendees:

Burton Swanson, Amy Blum, Andrew Metz, Christine Borgman, Ed Pierce, Frank Wada, Julian Pellico, Kent Wada, Leah Lievrouw, Lubbe Levin (phone), Marti Arvin, Ross Bollens; Kelly Arruda (resource)

Guests:

Joanne Valli-Meredith, Ph.D., Director, Evaluation and Educational Assessment, Office of Instructional Development
Adrienne Dellinger, Ph.D. student, Graduate School of Education and Information Studies

A. Welcome

1. Approval of minutes
2. Introduction of guests

B. Use of Gradebook Application for Course Evaluations

Chris Borgman, Joanne Valli-Meredith

Action: Information and Discussion

During the 1970's instructor accountability movement, a task force determined that all faculty members must be evaluated by students, and that it would be up to individual departments to determine how they'd like to handle the evaluation process. The UCLA Evaluation of Instruction Program (EIP) is housed inside the Office of Instructional Development (OID). They handle 300,000 evaluations per year.

The move to online evaluations came from the request of faculty. EIP met with numerous areas, and 94 groups committed to this online pilot. The EIP is open to discussing adjustments to the process.

Tying evaluation to instruction is a well-intentioned change. It aims to get greater student involvement and better results by giving students credit for completing evaluations. Participation points are also meant to include students as participants in the learning/teaching process at the university.

However, there have been unintended consequences since moving from a paper-based to an online evaluation system. The system in use shows exactly which students have/have not filled out their evaluation via a CSV file; those faculty get high response rates. The process is not IRB reviewed, so the data may be used for purposes not originally intended, and students may not realize what the data is being used for.

From a student's perspective, UCLA has an inconsistent evaluation system where there may or may not be an opportunity to opt out; grades may be tied to participation; students may be affected by not participating. It would be helpful to have some set of standards (e.g., whether or not names are displayed) across campus (e.g., undergraduate division), which could be implemented uniformly before getting to the specific questions of individual departments. There are perceived vulnerabilities of having names on a list, regardless of whether it is benign in practice. There may be a difference in behavior by a student who knows the instructor will know it was he/she that gave a particular response, compared to the behavior of a student who thinks the instructor may or may not be able to tell that it was her/him.

Currently, faculty get access to evaluations when they finish grades. If an instructor is using participation points and has less than 4 students, the instructor will not get a report. 8 of the UC campuses are using participation points. Some campuses require at least 5 students to participate in order for the instructor to get the report; one campus requires at least 10 students.

The ability to see whether a student has completed an evaluation is only suppose to appear if the student has agreed to opt in, and the evaluation process should be included in the course syllabus. However, a glitch resulted in the student names and evaluation status showing up automatically.

This is an opportunity to examine the larger issue about collection of student data and determine which principles apply. Is privacy being protected? What steps being taken to that end?

C. Data Governance Task Force

Chris Borgman, Kent Wada

Action: Update and Discussion

Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Waugh charged a joint Senate-Administration work group with establishing principles and a governance structure to address ongoing complex data issues for the campus.

There are a multitude of concerns about the vast amounts of data on campus, including how to generate better data about ourselves, how to guide appropriate use of data, and how to wrap our values into the contracts and partnership we make with outside entities. The committee has made solid progress on developing principles and is currently working through ideas for the governance and operational structure.

The group imagines the governance and operational structure as guiderails that help move these data issues in an appropriate direction. They envision a balancing between encouraging autonomy to handle low risk items, while also establishing a clear path to further assistance, review, and analysis when necessary. Daily operations need to continue in as efficient a manner as possible, while also respecting a systematic review process of complex items as they pop up.

Currently, there is not an established entity tasked with taking on complex operational data items. When there are data use inquiries that do not fall under the purview of the IRB, there is nowhere else to go for guidance.

The committee is thinking about where to house an entity tasked with reviewing these data items and inquiries, with consideration to resourcing and scaling the group as necessary. One possibility is to work within already established boards (e.g., the Privacy Board, IT Planning Board, etc.) that might take on some of this work. The committee is also considering whether an entirely new group will need to be established.

The Privacy Board has a new structure in place that is moving in a more operational direction. The Chief Privacy Officer is taking on more operational tasks and in a position to build up case studies and determine staffing resource needs. The CPO could triage issues and bring items to a subcommittee of the Board to work through. Larger issues could be brought to the entire Board. Is there are willingness to take this on? It would require the Board to become more operational. However, it is an opportunity for faculty to lend their voice to campus operations. If so, we may want to re-visit the operational structure document.