

 RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE OFFICIAL POLICY	<i>Data Standards</i>	EFFECTIVE DATE: 2014/01/14 REVISION HISTORY: new policy
RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Institutional Research & Planning	POLICY OWNER: Director, Institutional Research & Planning/Chair, Data Standards Committee	SUPERSEDES: N/A

PART 1. RATIONALE

The purpose of the data standards policy is to develop and enforce an agreed-upon set of standards for maintaining Rhode Island College's data. While individual departments and units may maintain certain categories of data, collectively the college's data constitute a vital shared resource. A data standards policy will help to make consistent and accurate information available for the college to fulfill its operations, reporting, and compliance requirements and to support planning at all levels of the organization.

PART 2. SCOPE

Policy applies to all RIC employees who maintain shared data at the college, or to contractors retained by the college for such purpose; however, faculty research and student research/coursework are specifically excluded.

PART 3. DEFINITIONS

Change	includes the addition of a new data field, a modification to an existing data field (e.g., updated coding, change in name of field, change in source for field, etc.), or the deletion of an existing data field
Data	recorded values of quantitative or qualitative variables (within the scope of this policy), regardless of form or the media on which they may be recorded
Data Standards Committee	the group charged with developing and executing the data standards policy. The group is chaired by the Director of Institutional Research & Planning, with members representing each of the major data-intensive administrative areas of the college
Field	data element that represents a particular concept and for which a code or text data are entered (e.g., "Gender" is a "field")
Official Information Technology System	an internal or hosted system that the college sponsors and maintains
Shared Data	fields that reside on an official college information technology system that are used in some manner (e.g., for operations, reporting, research) by more than one unit or department at the college
Value	a code associated with a data field (e.g., "M-Male" is a value used for "Gender")

PART 4. STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. A Data Standards Committee is established to carry out this policy. The committee is chaired by the Director of Institutional Research and Planning. There is to be representation on the committee of offices and departments that constitute major users of the college's shared databases.
- B. The Data Standards Committee must be notified of any change made to data on a RIC Official Information Technology System that potentially affects the college's shared data. The intent of this

requirement is to ensure that steps can be taken to minimize any unintentional negative impact such a change may have on the ability of other units to carry out their work or for the college to meet its reporting and compliance requirements.

PART 5. PROCEDURES

- A. When considering making a change to the college's shared data, the following steps must be followed:
1. Contact the Chair of the Data Standards Committee and provide the following regarding the change; whenever possible, please notify the committee of the change prior to making it:
 - a. The nature of the change (possibilities are listed below)
 - i. Addition of a field
 - ii. Removal of a field
 - iii. Changing the location of a field (e.g., PeopleSoft table)
 - iv. Discontinuing the maintenance of a field
 - v. Changing the meaning or operational definition of a field
 - vi. Addition of a code or value for a field
 - vii. Changing the format of codes for a field
 - viii. Changing the meaning or definition of a code for a field
 - ix. Eliminating a code for a field
 - b. Why the change is necessary
 - c. Responsibility for change
 - i. To which information systems will the change be made?
 - ii. Which office/individual is responsible for making the change?
 - iii. Plan for ensuring quality control in the maintenance of any new data that result from the change
 - d. Timeframe for when change will take effect
 1. Committee will discuss the change, either in person or remotely, depending on the nature of change. Note that the committee is mindful that a proposed change may require immediate action in order for the requestor to perform the duties of his/her position or unit. The intent of the policy is not to interfere with the work of any individual or unit at RIC but to ensure that all potential parties that may be affected by the change at the college are adequately informed. Keeping this intent in mind, the committee will consider the following when reviewing the proposed change:
 - a. Committee will determine if change affects the work of other units at the college.

- b. Committee will determine if change duplicates any other data already maintained by the college.
 - c. Committee will determine if change has implications for the college's operational or reporting/compliance requirements.
 - d. Committee will determine if change has implications for executive management of the college, in which case the President's Executive Cabinet (PEC) may be consulted.
2. After these considerations have been made, the chair of the Data Standards Committee will convey to the individual/unit making the proposed change any concerns the committee may have and recommend an appropriate course of action.
3. The chair of the Data Standards Committee will communicate changes to affected individuals/units at the college.

PART 6. GUIDELINES

N/A

PART 7. RESPONSIBILITIES

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL	LIST OF RESPONSIBILITIES
Data Standards Committee	Administer Data Standards policy
Director of Institutional Research & Planning	Chair Data Standards Committee

PART 8. CONTACTS

SUBJECT	OFFICE OR POSITION	TELEPHONE NUMBER	E-MAIL
Policy Clarification	Director of Institutional Research & Planning	(401) 456-8998	chourigan@ric.edu

PART 9. POLICY ENFORCEMENT

Violation(s)	Making a change to a data field without notifying the Data Standards Committee.
Potential consequences	1. Administrative processes may not function properly. 2. Inaccurate or incomplete data may be reported.
Where to report violations	Director of Institutional Research & Planning

PART 10. FORMS/TEMPLATES/REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Form, Template, or Document (use hyperlink if available)
Documentation of Data Elements