
EXTERNAL RELEASE OF UNIVERSITY DATA

POLICY SUMMARY

All external requests for Official University Data must go through the Office of Strategic Planning, Institutional Research, and Analytics (SPIRA).

REASON FOR THIS POLICY

Standards governing the release of Official University Data help to ensure that data are accurate and compiled using consistent definitions and data sources. Such practices and internal controls help to provide assurance that all external reporting is identified, managed, and validated to help protect the University from potentially harmful scenarios including, but not limited to:

- Improper release, maintenance, or disposal of Official University Data, which may be damaging to the University community and could expose NAU to significant risk or legal action.
- Release of unvetted or inconsistent data, which could result in penalties, fines, or negative publicity.

ENTITIES AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

- Any University unit or individual intending to share Official University Data externally
- Data & IT Governance Trustees
- Data & Business Process Advisory Committee (DBPAC)
- Information Technology Services (ITS)
- NAU Communications
- University Marketing

WHO SHOULD KNOW THIS POLICY

- Academic Deans
- Any University unit or individual intending to share Official University Data externally
- Data & IT Governance Trustees
- Data & Business Process Advisory Committee (DBPAC)
- Grant Administrators
- Information Technology Services (ITS)
- NAU Communications
- Principal Investigators
- Sponsored Projects/Vice President for Research Staff
- University Data Stewards or Administrators
- University Marketing

DEFINITIONS

Data & IT Governance Trustees: University administrators who are responsible for guiding NAU's data governance efforts and ensuring resources are allocated in alignment with University strategic priorities. Data & IT Governance Trustees include, but may not be limited to, the Chief Information Officer; Chief Institutional Data Officer; Chief Marketing Officer; Chief of Staff; Provost; Vice President for Finance, Institutional Planning and Analysis; Vice President of Enrollment Management; Vice President of Research; Vice President of Student Affairs.

Official University Data: Institutional data that is most often used to describe the University and based on standards imposed either by external regulatory agencies or by internal University practice.

University Data Steward: University employee responsible for ensuring the quality of and access to data, usually within a particular unit or functional area.

POLICY

All external requests for Official University Data will be validated by SPIRA. SPIRA shall maintain data snapshots for Official University Data about the University and is responsible for responding to requests for such data from external agencies, including the federal government, state and local governments, college guidebook publishers, and ranking organizations.

Examples of the types of external requests for which SPIRA is responsible include, but are not limited to:

- Mandated reports (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, State of Arizona, Arizona Board of Regents, Higher Education Opportunity Act, Higher Learning Commission, etc.)
- Publications by external entities (American Association of University Professors, College and University Professional Association, National Science Foundation, College Board, Princeton, etc.)
- Ranking publications (U.S. News and World Report, the Center for World University Rankings, etc.)
- Surveys (Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange, Faculty Survey of Student Engagement, National Survey of Student Engagement, etc.)
- Research grants that require Official University Data
- Contractual reporting (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education-Western Undergraduate Exchange, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education-Western Regional Graduate Program, Oracle, Microsoft, etc.)
- Other external reports available to the public
- Official University reports for release through University publications or websites (Fact Book, SPIRA website, marketing material, etc.)

There are specific instances when SPIRA will coordinate with other offices on the external release of Official University Data. These include, but are not limited to:

- Accreditation Reports
- Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Public Records Requests
- Media Requests

RESPONSIBILITIES

Any University unit or individual intending to share Official University Data externally: to ensure the validity and ethical use of data being reported, and **to adhere to the** *External Release of Data* policy individually and collectively.

Data & IT Governance Trustees: uphold the *External Release of Data* policy and help to educate University employees on the importance of the policy; promote processes and procedures throughout the institution that ensure proper data validation and external release of information.

Data & Business Process Advisory Committee (DBPAC): uphold the *External Release of Data* policy and assist in educating University employees on the importance of the policy; promote processes and procedures throughout the institution that ensure proper data validation and external release of information.

Information Technology Services (ITS): ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and accessibility of data in accordance with institutional policies and procedures, including, but not limited to, the *External Release of Data Policy*.

NAU Communications: work collaboratively with SPIRA to ensure accurate and consistent data are being provided in response to FOIA, Public Records, Media, and other external requests.

University Data Stewards or Administrators: uphold the *External Release of Data* policy; refer University employees and external entities who are requesting Official University Data to SPIRA; promote processes and procedures throughout the institution that ensure proper data validation and external release of information.

University Marketing: uphold the *External Release of Data* policy; promote processes and procedures throughout the institution that ensure proper data validation and external release of information.

PROCEDURES

Submit an [online data request](#) to SPIRA at least two weeks prior to the external due date. If the request relates to an unforeseen new requirement with a deadline nearer than two weeks, please submit the request and contact SPIRA to discuss the situation.

RELATED INFORMATION

Forms or Tools

There are no forms or tools associated with this policy.

Cross-References

[NAU Access Management](#)

[NAU Data Classification & Handling](#)

[External Data Use Agreements](#)

Sources

[ABOR Policy 6-912](#)

[Arizona State Statute 39-121.01](#)

[FOIA](#)

APPENDIX*

None

*Disclaimer: all documents, links, or other materials included in this policy's appendix are provided solely for the user's convenience and are not part of official University policy.