An invitation to a conversation: Towards a South African ethical use of student data framework/policy

Keynote at the 3rd Siyaphumelela Conference
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Making sense of the collection, analysis and use of student data is [~~increasingly~~] like…

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Confession(s)

Reflecting on the collection, analysis and use of student data often leaves me with more pieces one the floor than what I've bargained for, or can deal with, or know how to put back together again.

I am sorry

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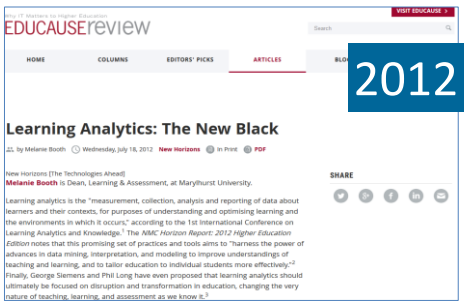

2012

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2015

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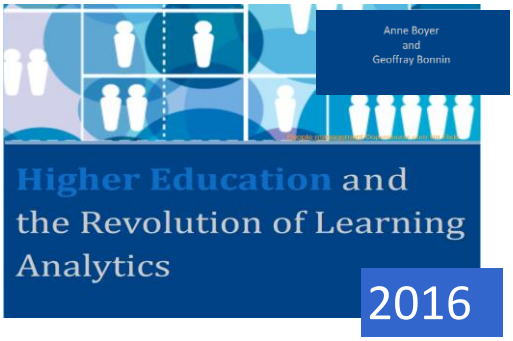

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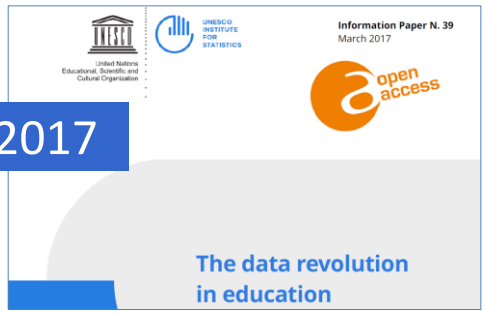

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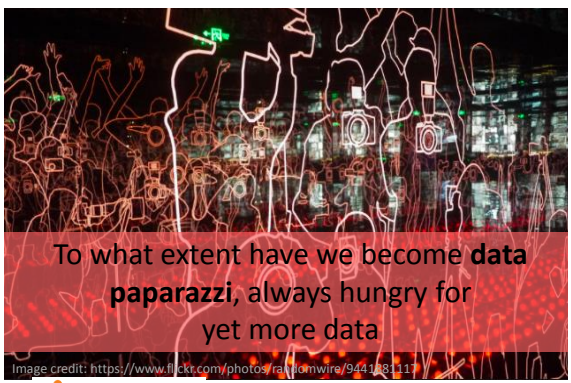
Page credit: http://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2017/01/11/506361845/the-higher-ed-learning-revolution-tracking-each-students-every-move



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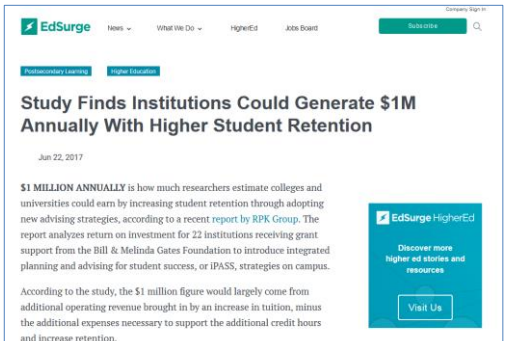
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Postsecondary Learning Higher Education

Study Finds Institutions Could Generate $1M Annually With Higher Student Retention

Jun 22, 2017

$1 MILLION ANNUALLY is how much researchers estimate colleges and universities could earn by increasing student retention through adopting new advising strategies, according to a recent report by RPK Group. The report analyzes return on investment for 22 institutions receiving grant support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to introduce integrated planning and advising for student success, or iPASS, strategies on campus.

According to the study, the $1 million figure would largely come from additional operating revenue brought in by an increase in tuition, minus the additional expenses necessary to support the additional credit hours and increase retention.

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TECHNOLOGY-ENABLED ADVISING: iPASS SOLUTIONS

WHAT CAN iPASS INVESTMENT PATTERNS SHOW?

WHAT EXACTY IS ROI?

Adopting and implementing iPASS solutions and other emerging models for traditional colleges and universities typically requires new spending. But how might the financial lens through which new initiatives are viewed shift from "What does it cost?" to a more useful understanding of "What do we get for the resources we spend?" This refocusing, from spending to return on investment, is critical to understanding and creating sustainable innovation.

Transitioning to an ROI lens requires three fundamental shifts.

1 A holistic understanding of resources
2 A focus on unit cost
3 A connection between student success and financial sustainability

Technology-enabled Advising and the Creation of Sustainable Innovation:
Early Learnings from iPASS

Donna M. Desrochers and Richard L. Staisloff

Source credit: http://rpkgroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/rpkgroup_iPASS_whitepaper-Final.pdf


BIG DATA:
SEIZING OPPORTUNITIES, PRESERVING VALUES

Executive Office of the President

Big Data: A Report on Algorithmic Systems, Opportunity, and Civil Rights

"…pathways for fairness and opportunity but also cautions against re-encoding bias and discrimination into algorithmic systems."

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Source credit: https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/2016_0504_data_discrimination.pdf


NEW AMERICA EDUCATION POLICY HIGHER EDUCATION

MANUELA EKOWO AND IRIS PALMER

PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Five Guiding Practices for Ethical Use

THE PROMISE AND PERIL OF PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

A Landscape Analysis

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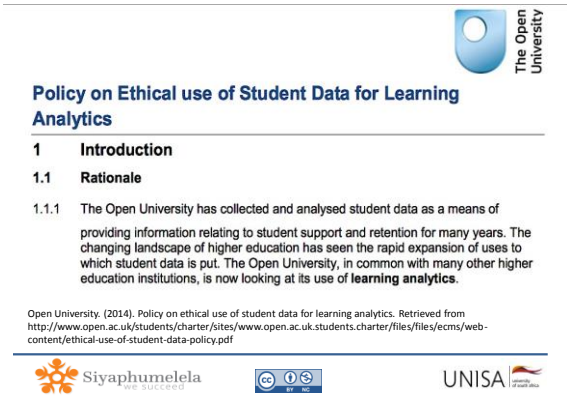
Source credit: https://na-production.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/Promise-and-Peril_4.pdf


The Open University

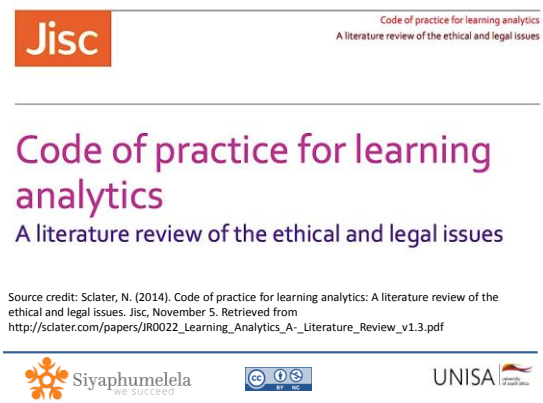
Policy on Ethical use of Student Data for Learning Analytics

1 Introduction

1.1 Rationale

1.1.1 The Open University has collected and analysed student data as a means of providing information relating to student support and retention for many years. The changing landscape of higher education has seen the rapid expansion of uses to which student data is put. The Open University, in common with many other higher education institutions, is now looking at its use of **learning analytics**.

Open University. (2014). Policy on ethical use of student data for learning analytics. Retrieved from http://www.open.ac.uk/students/charter/sites/www.open.ac.uk.students.charter/files/files/ecms/web-content/ethical-use-of-student-data-policy.pdf

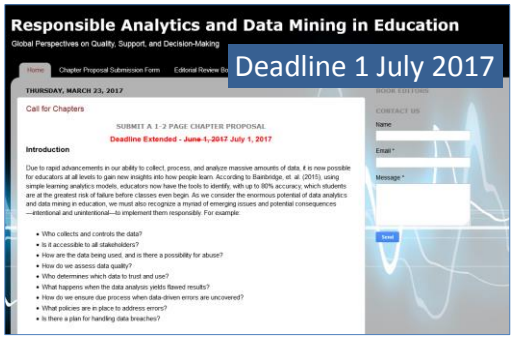

Jisc

Code of practice for learning analytics
A literature review of the ethical and legal issues

Code of practice for learning analytics

A literature review of the ethical and legal issues

Source credit: Sclater, N. (2014). Code of practice for learning analytics: A literature review of the ethical and legal issues. Jisc, November 5. Retrieved from http://sclater.com/papers/JR0022_Learning_Analytics_A-_Literature_Review_v1.3.pdf



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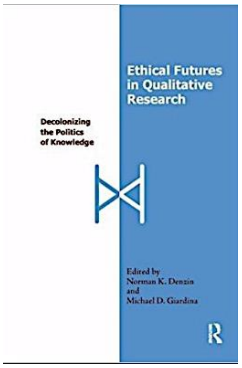

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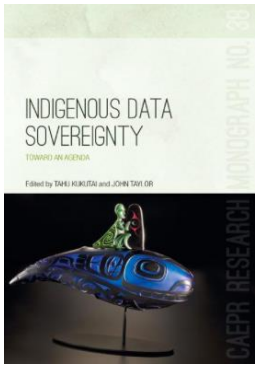
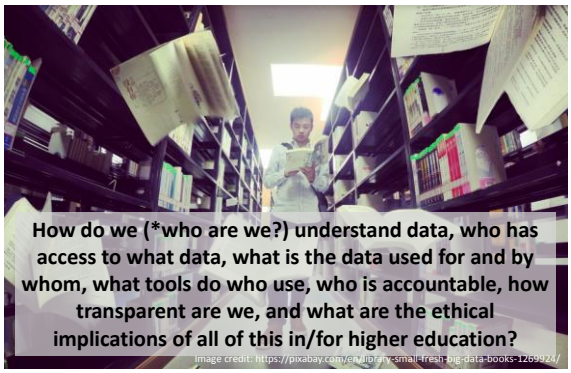


Page credit: https://press.anu.edu.au/publications/series/centre-aboriginal-economic-policy-research-caepr/indigenous-data-sovereignty



How do we (*who are we?) understand data, who has access to what data, what is the data used for and by whom, what tools do who use, who is accountable, how transparent are we, and what are the ethical implications of all of this in/for higher education?

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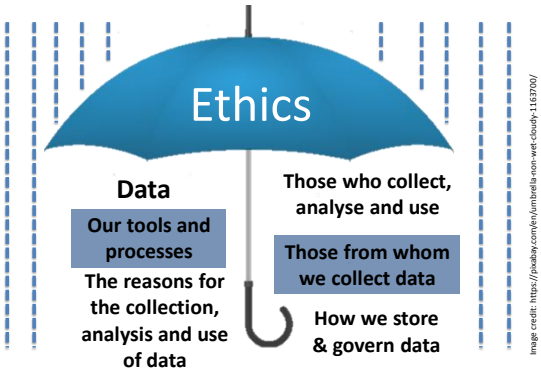

Image credit: https://pixabay.com/en/umbrella-rain-wet-cloudy-1163700/

Image credit: https://pixabay.com/en/data-letters-scrabble-information-2355698/

- Institutional researchers
- Researchers in institutions
- Contract researchers
- Third party vendors, learning management system providers
- Every social media platform you advise students to use
- Faculty, course support teams, advisors
- Students
- Automated algorithmic decision-systems

- From whom do 'they'* collect the data , in which format, for what purpose, using what tools, with whose permission?
- How transparent are 'they'* about the fact that they collect the data, the purposes, and whether the data subject will have input in the 'findings', the categories and labels and the way the data is used?
- Who will hold 'them' accountable?
- How will we 'hold' them accountable?

Image credit: https://pixabay.com/en/spider-web-spiderweb-arachnid-1285293/

There are also different types of data

- Structured and unstructured
- Qualitative and quantitative
- Small, big, deep, surface, (in)consequential data
- *Required* at point of entry – "to need this service you need to provide us with the following information"
- *Gifted* during interpersonal, digital and analogue transactions and interactions
- Specifically collected and used
- Automatically collected and used
- Automatically collected, stored for future use
- All of the above in combination with any number of the above

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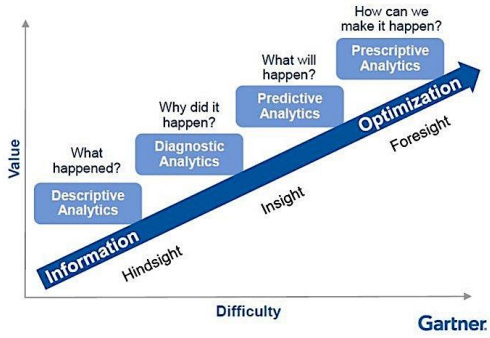

Source credit: http://timoelliott.com/blog/2013/02/gartnerbi-emea-2013-part-1-analytics-moves-to-the-core.html

Many (most?) of the discourses pertaining to the use of collection, analysis and use of student data have been and are shaped by the Global North

Image credit: https://pixabay.com/en/globe-puzzle-earth-world-planet-673010/

Context is everything

What does a contextualised, South African perspective on the ethical collection, analysis and use of student data entail?

Prinsloo, P. (2016, October 26). Mapping the ethical implications of using student data – A South African contextualised view. Retrieved from https://www.slideshare.net/prinsp/mapping-the-ethical-implications-of-using-student-data-a-south-african-contextualised-view

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A contextualised approach to the ethical collection, analysis and use of student data …

- Acknowledges the lasting, inter-generational effects of colonialism and apartheid
- Collects, analyses and use student data with the aim of addressing these effects and historical and arising tensions between ensuring quality, sustainability and success
- Critically engages with the assumptions surrounding data, identity, proxies, consequences and accountability
- Responds to institutional character, context and vision
- Considers the ethical implications of the purpose, the processes, the tools, the staff involved, the governance and the results of the collection, analysis and use of student data

Guiding principles for an ethics of care:

Principle 1: The moral, relational duty of learning analytics
Principle 2: Defining student success in the nexus of student, institution and macro-societal agencies and context
Principle 3: Understanding data as framed and framing
Principle 4: Student data sovereignty
Principle 5: Accountability
Principle 6: Transparency
Principle 7: Co-responsibility

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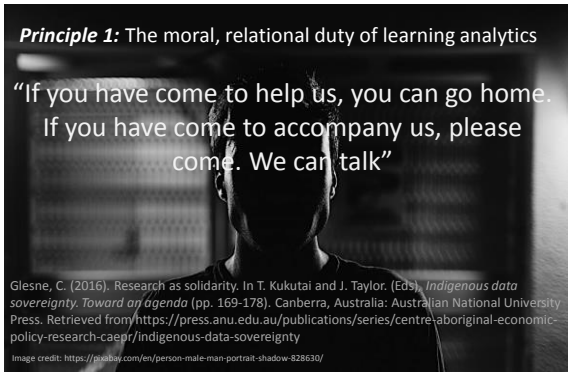
Principle 1: The moral, relational duty of learning analytics



Glesne, C. (2016). Research as solidarity. In T. Kukutai and J. Taylor. (Eds), *Indigenous data sovereignty. Toward an agenda* (pp. 169-178). Canberra, Australia: Australian National University Press. Retrieved from https://press.anu.edu.au/publications/series/centre-aboriginal-economic-policy-research-caepr/indigenous-data-sovereignty

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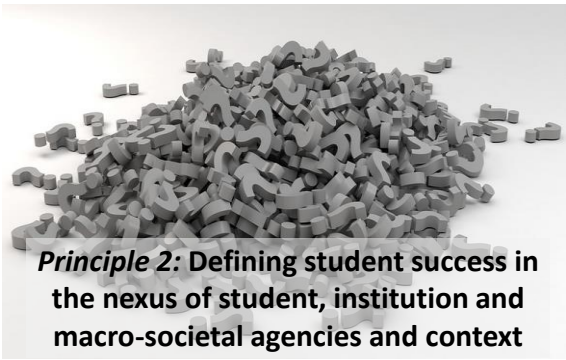

Principle 2: **Defining student success in the nexus of student, institution and macro-societal agencies and context**

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Principle 3: **Understanding data as framed and framing**

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Data collection, analysis and use are *political acts* and serve declared and hidden assumptions about the purpose of higher education and the masters it serves

(Apple, 2004, 2007; Grimmelman, 2013; Johnson, 2015; Watters, 2015)

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Principle 4: **Student data sovereignty**

Student data is not something separate from students' identities, their histories, their *beings*. This framework accepts that data is an integral, albeit informational part of students being. Data is therefore not something a student owns but rather is. Students do not own their data but are constituted by their data.

Floridi, L. (2005). The ontological interpretation of informational privacy. *Ethics and Information Technology,* 7(4), 185-200.

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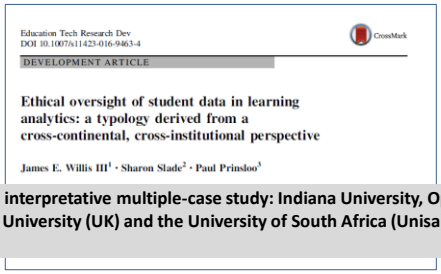
Principle 4: Student data sovereignty (cont.)

- Students have a right to *control* what personalised data is collected from them, for what purposes, by whom, and how it will be stored, governed
- Students have the right to access the data we have of them, to know who accessed their data, and how their data was used
- Students have a right to know what the rationale/criteria are for how we categorise them, our 'regimes of truth' and to engage with us to make sense of their data
- We should think past the binary of opting in/out – there are different nuances and possibilities
- Students have a right to supported and accessible recourse

Principle 5: Accountability


Education Tech Research Dev
DOI 10.1007/s11423-016-9463-4

DEVELOPMENT ARTICLE

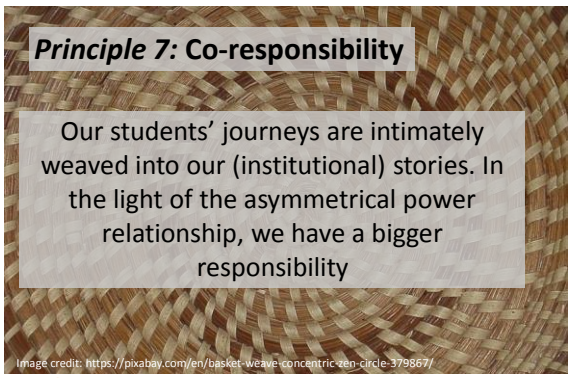
Ethical oversight of student data in learning analytics: a typology derived from a cross-continental, cross-institutional perspective

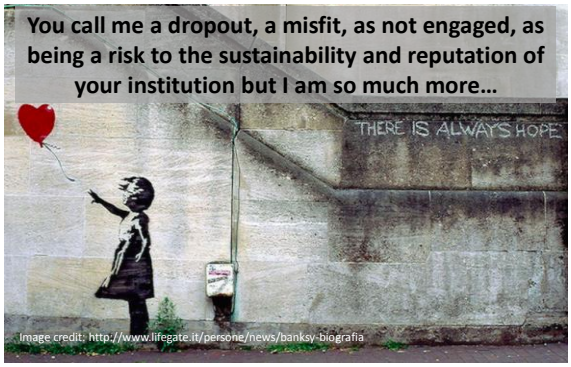
James E. Willis III[1] · Sharon Slade[2] · Paul Prinsloo[3]

An interpretative multiple-case study: Indiana University, Open University (UK) and the University of South Africa (Unisa)

Willis, J. E., Slade, S., & Prinsloo, P. (2016). Ethical oversight of student data in learning analytics: A typology derived from a cross-continental, cross-institutional perspective. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 64, 881-901. DOI: 10.1007/s11423-016-9463-4 http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11423-016-9463-4

Typology: Learning analytics as…	Approval/oversight/ accountability
Research	Formal, well-defined processes
An emerging form of research	Undefined, unclear Our current processes do not allow for any oversight
Scholarship of teaching and learning	Undefined, unclear Consent normally not required. Oversight? Student complaints, feedback
Dynamic, synchronous and asynchronous sense-making	Undefined, unclear
Automated	Undefined, unclear
Participatory process and collaborative sense-making	All stakeholders are involved – may need broad, blanket consensus at the beginning of each course – oversight by the highest academic decision making body. Important here is the role of students as collaborators in sharing interpretation, governance, quality assurance, integrity of data





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You call me a misfit, a risk, a dropout and stop-out
Your research indicates that 'students like me' may not make it
You ask me questions regarding my financial status, where I live,
how many dependents I have, and I know that once I tell you,
I will become a number on a spreadsheet
I will be color-coded
I will become part of a structural equation model that re-affirms that
People like me
Don't belong here
Somehow I don't fit in you spreadsheet
But I want you to know that I am so much more
I am so much more than how *you* define me
I am so much more than my home address
(the one I lied about to get access to funding or to get a place in residence)
I am also a brother, a sister, a mother, a dependent, a carer
I don't fit in your spreadsheets
I am not a dropout, I am a refugee, a migrant
I am in exile
Talk to me

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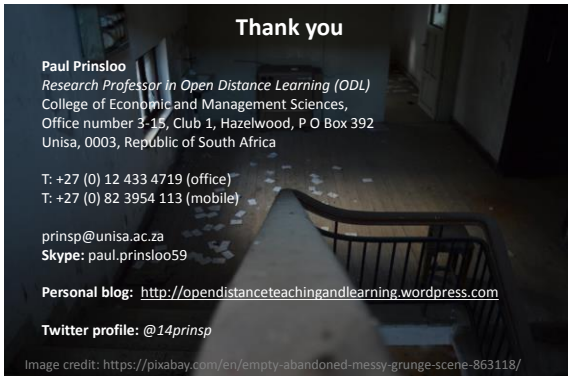

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