Statement of Purpose

The need of an “institutional data dictionary” has long been discussed among several offices at the Institutional Research Council meetings, and through some other venues as well. The question was raised from an interest in an institutional reference to various internal and external reporting standards and related data definitions. It has been the consensus that such a data dictionary would help concerned individuals understand types of data related to all areas of Stockton for reporting purposes.

Definition of this dictionary. This Institutional Data Dictionary (hereafter, “the Dictionary”) is a handbook for reference to institutional data and guide to understanding various data terms, elements and types as defined by mandatory reports as well as other data collections utilized at Stockton.

Intended Users or Audience The Dictionary is intended for organizations and individuals at Stockton who prepare and collect institutional data for both internal and external reporting purposes. It is also intended for any staff member who is concerned with related data instructions and definitions, when he/she inputs, updates and maintains departmental information.

Benefit from the Dictionary Users of this dictionary should have a clear sense of the categories and types of data utilized in the current mandatory reports to state, federal and regional agencies, as well as other external surveys and data collection processes. Users should also find standard definitions of these various data types and elements in order to be consistent in accurately collecting and reporting such data.

Format of the Dictionary The Dictionary is compiled in an electronic version for release on the institutional research website, so that users have an easy and quick access to the reference. Data entries are prepared by data category and subcategory or type that is related to a specific area of the institution (student enrollment, enrollment status, admission status, etc.). Data entries are also listed alphabetically (e.g. “academic program,” “books and supplies,” “certificate,” etc.). Each data entry contains the following elements – name of entry, related code (or abbreviation), description (or definition), cross reference to other related entry, data type (numerical or textual), and data entry source. If available, there is a hyper link to the data entry source for additional reference information.
Limitations and Updates The Data Dictionary is limited to required institutional data reports to state and federal agencies and other accrediting agencies and limited to the data collected, shared and used among concerned offices and individuals. Therefore, data entries in this dictionary do not include any terminology specific to an academic discipline or professional program. This dictionary will be updated when existing terms and definitions are revised and new changes are implemented in the external reports and data collections. Data entries may also be updated at the request of a concerned individual.