

To: Data Management Council
From: Bob Carpenter
Re: Helio Campus Update
Date: 2/14/21

What is Helio Campus?: “Helio” is a bundle of several components. It is a data warehouse. It is a system to visualize data (using Tableau) that supports decision making. It provides analytics playbooks (curated sets of analytics that focus on a particular problem). It is a provider of data science consulting services.

Why are we partnering with Helio?: Because of longer-term business risks associated with our current provider of the data warehouse product. Because Helio presents cost advantages compared to our current provider. Because Helio provides a long-term foundation for improved analytics not available through other vendors.

What is the status of the implementation?: Helio currently provides us with a set of interactive dashboards showing admissions information, enrollment trends, graduation and retention, persistence and re-enrollment, and completions. These are all available through the [HelioCampus Portal](#) at analytics.umbc.edu.

Importantly, in January 2022 and on schedule, the first data science playbook was delivered to campus and being used by our student success professionals in UAA. This playbook predicts first-year retention of freshmen. This model was deliberately chosen to support UMBC’s record-breaking 2021 cohort. The predictive model results are available in the [Student Success Section](#) of analytics.umbc.edu

What’s next? Our activities can be placed into a few buckets.

Technical advancement of the project: We are working to move what is called alternatively census, frozen, or official data into the Helio environment. (Currently snapshot data is in Helio.) We are also working to design and move finance data into Helio.

Operational advancement of the project: We are in the midst of training our staff to develop depth of skills in Tableau. We are discussing staffing needs and deployment of people to support reporting and decision support using Helio and Tableau. We are conducting an inventory and will start to triage key reports in our current REX/RS environment for a move to Helio/Tableau. We meet at least every two weeks with Helio to plan the project and refine what’s already been done.

Importantly, we have already started to construct key decision support presentations of data using Tableau. In particular, the OVPR and [Strategic Enrollment Plan dashboards](#) use Tableau.

Training and Outreach: We are building capabilities to train new Tableau users. In addition, we have scheduled a variety of events that present “use-case examples” of Tableau. The calendar of events is available at analytics.umbc.edu. (Please come and bring a friend!) Our guiding principle is that it’s easier to learn something when you see the uses to which it can be put.

We have developed both an Analytics Roadmap and a release calendar for Helio to discuss with key user groups (and this group) as the project progresses. Our latest [Annual Report](#) gives more information about analytics, business intelligence and student success technologies.