USING DATA-INFORMED PRACTICES TO IMPROVE COLLEGE STUDENT SUCCESS

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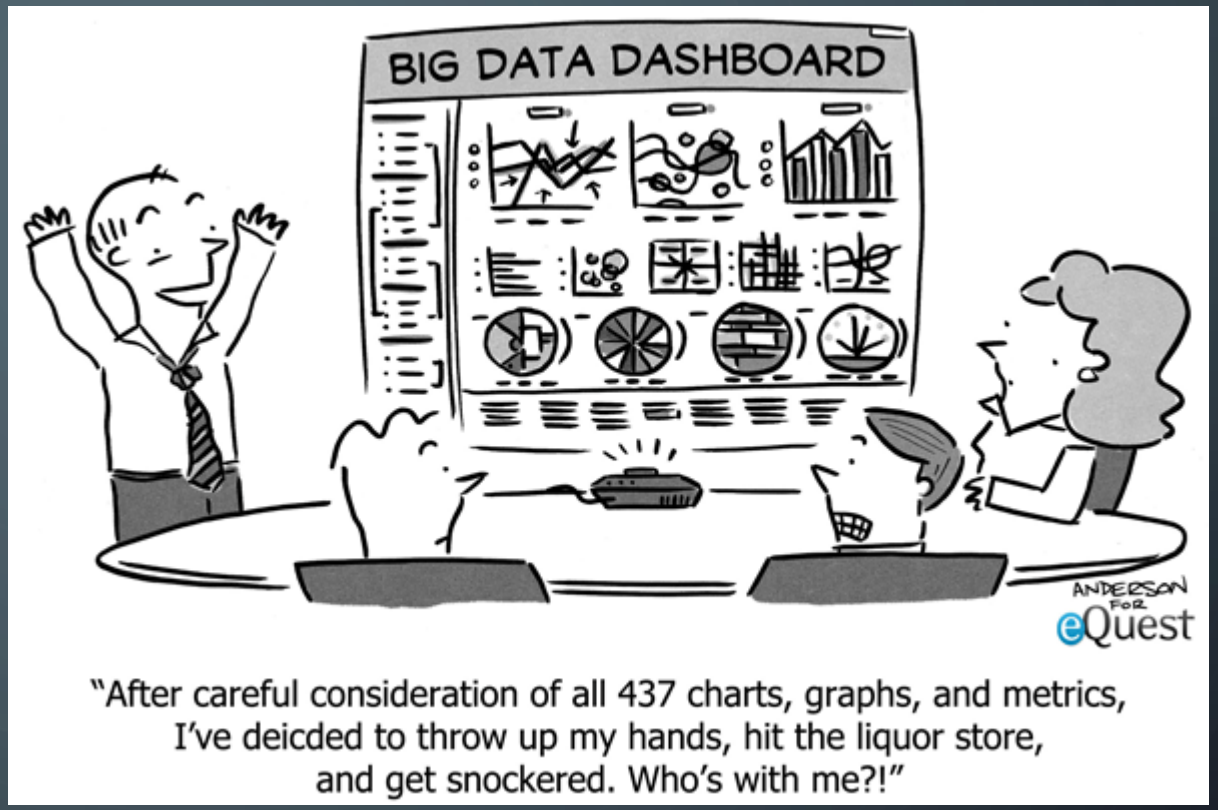


WHY DATA ISN'T SCARY

GETTING UP CLOSE & PERSONAL WITH NUMBERS, CHARTS AND STATS

WHY IS DATA IMPORTANT?

- Stakeholders Expect Return on Investment: Student services is often viewed as "touchy-feely" & not worthy of investment;
- Limited Resources: Smart to find impactful ways to use what we have;
- Changing Demographics: College student populations are changing so you can't assume existing programs/methods will work;
- Continued Growth: Large numbers of students to support & track.

WHY IS WORKING WITH DATA SO DIFFICULT?

QUALITY/ACCURACY

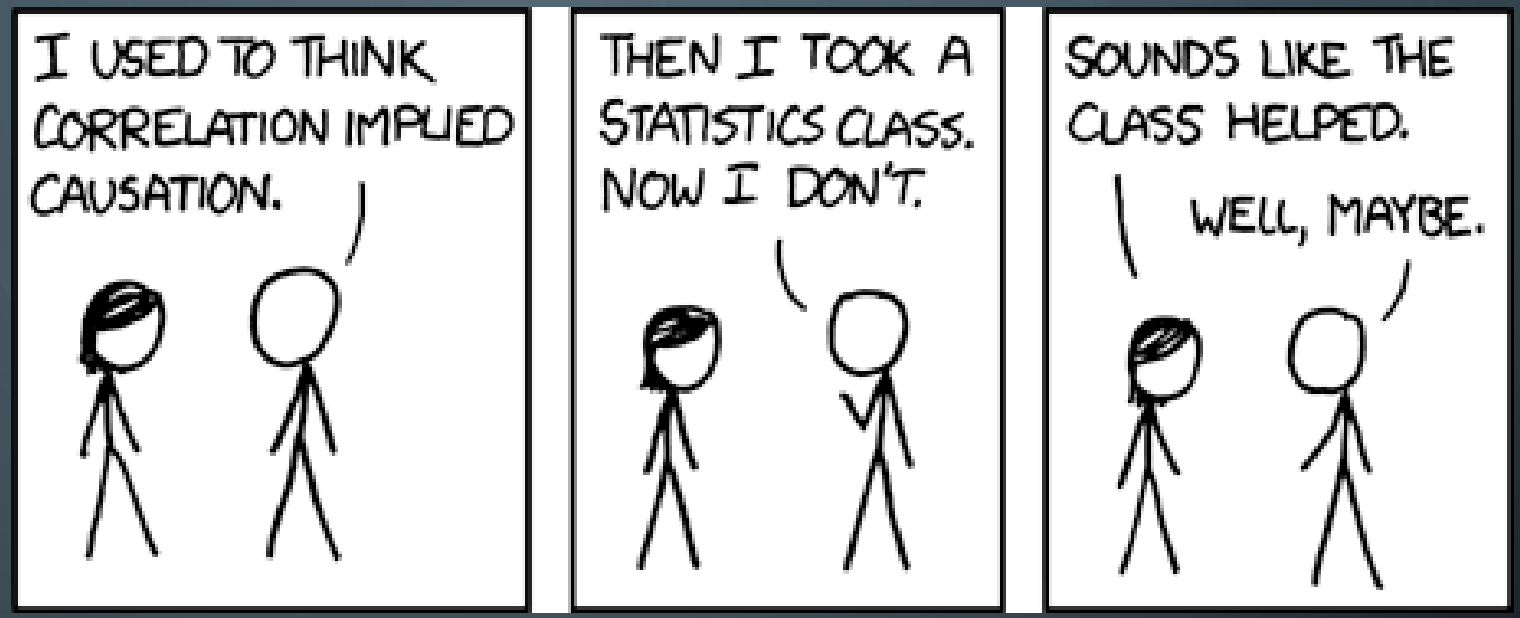
- Where did this data come from?
- Who collected it? Processed it?
- Is this the right information to show what I do?
- Can numbers even show what I do?

ACCESSIBILITY

- Where do I find this type of information?
- Am I allowed to have access to this data?
- Am I able to understand & apply the data I receive?

WHY DO IT ALONE: *SOURCES FOR DATA (AND ASSISTANCE)*

- Institutional Research/Effectiveness
- Enrollment Management (Admissions, Records/Registrar)
- Academic Administrators (Deans & Dept Chairpersons): These folks may have data that they may not be sharing with you!
- Faculty/Graduate Students: Try fields such as math, education, psychology, computer science, business analytics



WHAT DATA CAN TELL YOU

THE WHO, WHAT, WHY AND HOW…MAYBE!

EXCUSES, EXCUSES: WHY WE DON'T LIKE DATA

- Students are all special snowflakes, so generalization doesn't work.
- If I use data to measure student success, the institution will use it to measure me.
- Numbers can't tell you anything about the relationship and conversations that student support is really about.

WHAT THIS DATA IS REALLY ABOUT

- Improvement not assessment (remediate not punish).
- Correlation not causation (related to not the cause of).

MEASURE VS PROMOTE SUCCESS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

What is the most commonly shared data related to student success?

Retention & Graduation Rates

This has limited value in promoting student success because this data comes too late to be actionable.

(Reactive not Proactive)

Instead consider looking at data that can show student decisions or behaviors that can positively or negatively impact outcomes.

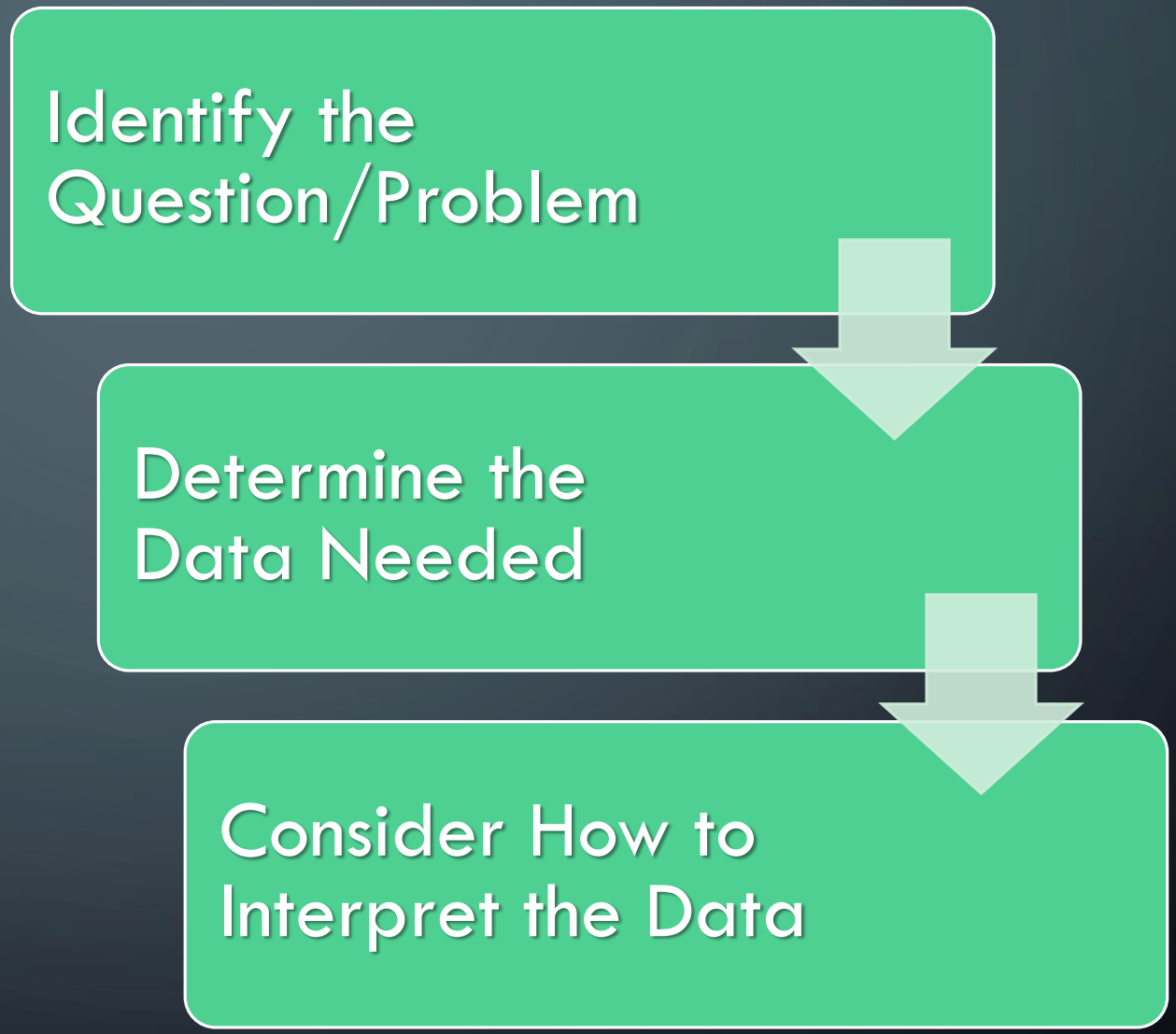
USING DATA TO EXAMINE STUDENT BEHAVIORS

- Courses with high DFW rates: What subjects? When do students take these courses?
- Prerequisites: If students are struggling in a course, how did they performing in the prereq?
- Orientation: Do students attend? When do they attend?
- Registration: When do they register? How many credits do they take?
- Dropped Classes: Which classes? How many? When do they drop courses?
- Satisfactory Academic Progress: Number of hours attempted? Completed 80% of attempted courses? First term GPA? When major declared?

HOW TO USE DATA…THE RIGHT WAY

HOW THIS WORKS

Let's examine a real-life case study involving an institution using data to address a student success related problem.



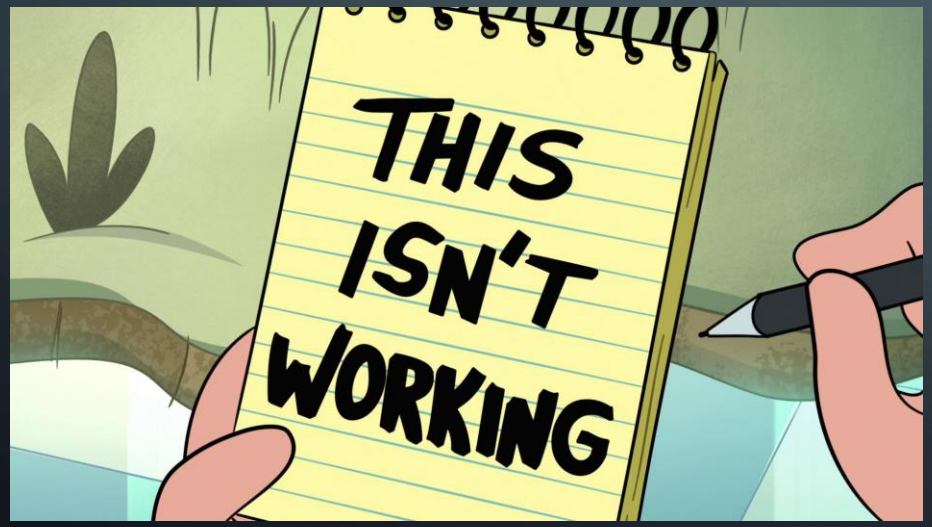
SCENARIO #1: MAGNOLIA STATE

Magnolia State University is a large public research university located in a major metropolitan area in the southern United States. With an undergraduate enrollment of around 25,000 students, this university serves a **large part-time population** as well as a number of students who **commute**. Almost 60% of the student body is female with over **60% from underrepresented minority** groups. Additionally over **90% of students receive some type of financial aid**.

MSU has a strong first-to-second year retention rate, retaining over 80% of freshmen into their second year. Despite years of this success, administrators notice that these high retention rates did not translate into equally high graduation rates; their **six-year graduation hovered consistently around 40%**.

STEP ONE:

Identify the Question/Problem



- What makes a student more likely to graduate?
- What causes a student to stay enrolled but not progress to graduation?

STEP TWO:

What data can help you answer the questions you just created?

- Academic standing/GPA
- Completion percentage: Earned hours / attempted hours
- Attempted hours each term/year
- Course withdrawals, D/F/W rates
- Credits towards degree
- Unmet need

STEP THREE: WHAT THE DATA TELLS YOU

The school in the scenario is….**Georgia State University.**

What They Learned & What They Did…

- **Only 22%** of students were earning enough credit hours to become sophomores (PT and D/F/W)
  - Create freshmen learning community cohorts
  - Summer Success Academy (earn addt'l credits in 1st summer)

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA'S STORY

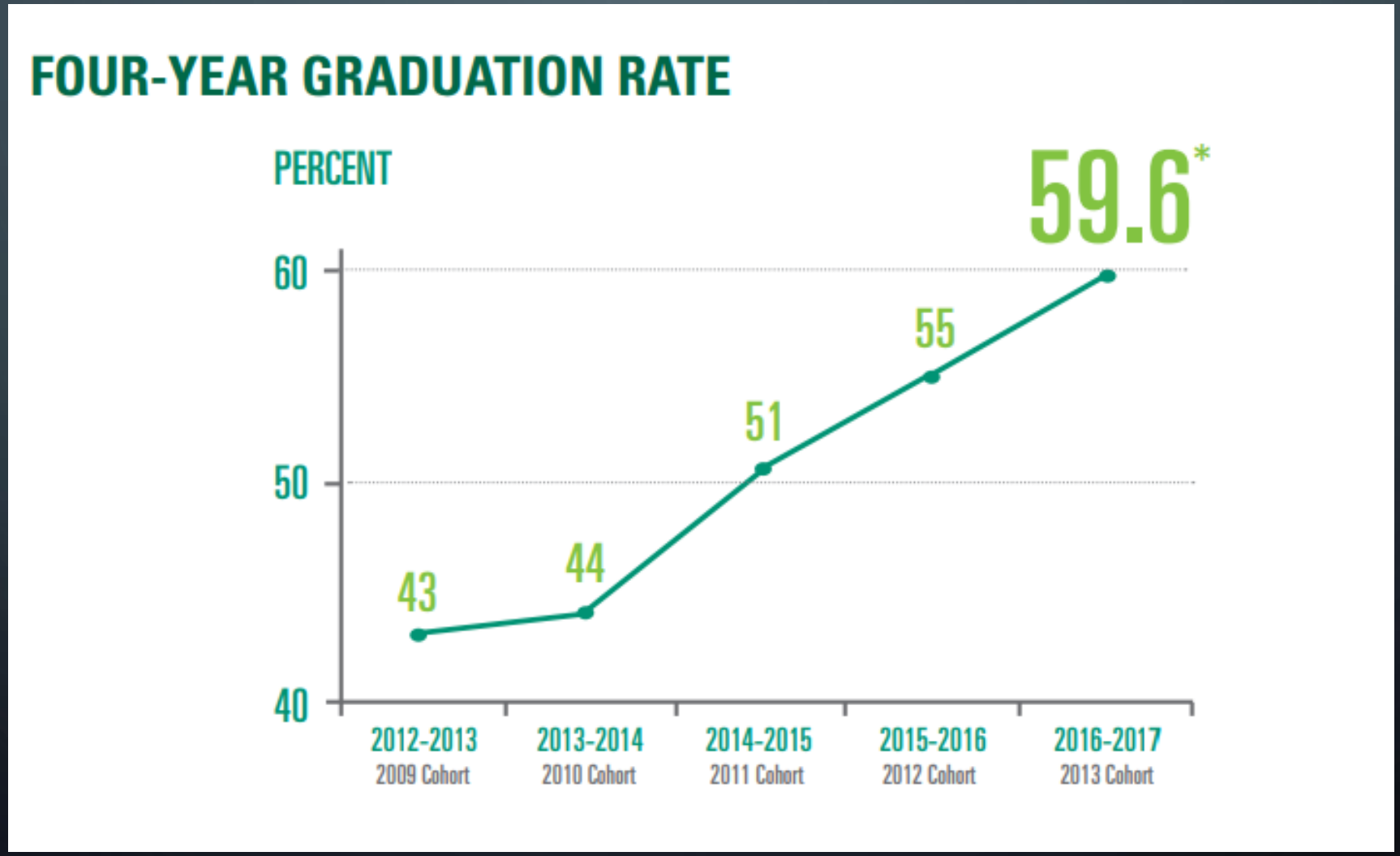
What the University of South Florida Discovered…

- If FTIC students were not graduating in four years (8 semesters), a large majority were only taking one additional semester to complete.

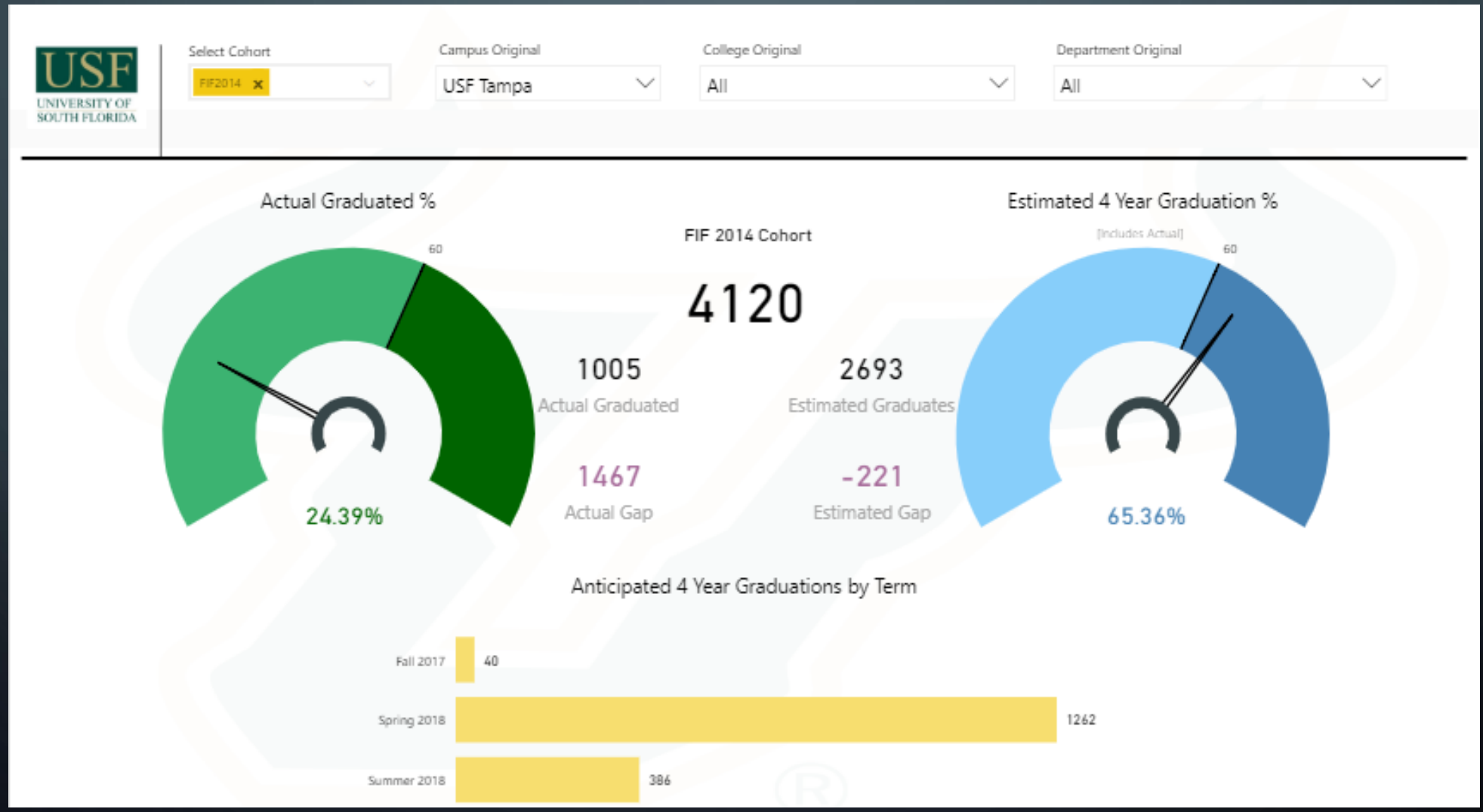
What the University of South Florida Did…

- Year Four graduation plans
- Incentivize summer (aid and books) – for Fall grads AND Spring grads who don't complete
- Tracking with Graduation advocates (case manager)

SO WHAT HAPPENED NEXT…



AND DATA KEEPS THINGS MOVING NOW…



USING DATA IN YOUR DAILY PRACTICE

THE WRAP-UP:
HOW ARE THINGS SHAPING UP FOR YOU?

Things You're "Square" About

Things You're Seeing from A "New Angle"

Things You Still Can't Wrap Your Head A"Round"

Questions? Thoughts?

THANK YOU!

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Sources

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