

Statistical and Qualitative Software Support Advisory Panel
April 23, 2009
Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Laurie Broadwater, Patrick Coy, Erica Eckert, Julie Gedeon, Ann Jacobson, Steve Schindler, Barbara Schloman, Richard Sierpe, Murali Shanker, Tina Ughrin, Manfred VanDulman, Kathryn Wilson

1. Minutes of March 31 meeting accepted
2. Changes made to needs assessment report (based on input from Panel members) were presented; the report received endorsement by the Panel
3. At the March meeting, it was suggested the Panel devise some guiding principles surrounding software and support services. The notion of generalized versus specialized was brought up. Tina drafted a table with cells for specialized and generalized, teaching and research as a starting point for this discussion. Numerous ideas were generated as to how the information could be presented.

The table was seen as constraining, because the software and service decisions are multidimensional. Other dimensions suggested include licensing, delivery, support; undergraduate versus graduate instruction; specific discipline. Eventually the group decided flow charting may be a better way to present the information. Elements to be included are:

Teaching

is this used in the classroom?
undergrad/grad

Research

What is usage level?
Threshold for usage
Productivity Potential for future usage: would availability of tool increase the success of researcher

Licensing/pricing

Dollars prohibitive
University pays all ----- individual pays all

Capability/features

Units: college/depts.

Target audience (students, researchers)

Availability models

Concurrent; electronic classrooms

Support—adopt open source model of documentation and transfer of knowledge

Other ideas that need to be included in a statement of principles to guide statistical software decisions include:

USE ISSUES

Generalized

Teaching: Basic programs, used instructionally, use in labs

Research: higher/analytical tools; latest tools

Research university, people need to stay on the cutting edge; need to experience new technologies in order to improve, environment needs to be conducive

Model of centralized may be narrower than university-wide—maybe it's college/dept

Specialized

Decision of specific researcher to stick with SW that doesn't have traction

May require reconsideration when there is enough demand; can we define threshold new SW reaches that requires centralized support

FUNDING ISSUES

Venture capital needs to be included or there will be no growth

Require investment with assessment—in 3 years, who is using, what have they done with it, what have they produced?

User group should be formed to disseminate

No cost to departments/colleges for lab licenses—university should provide

Certain level of “specialized” that should be paid for centrally

Central funding is crucial—investment in university future

Murali surveyed College of Business: teaching, labs, research

It was suggested that other units be surveyed using similar survey

Department level may be better than college for collecting data

Decisions may be made at the college level

4. Package renewal decisions need more discussion

Use of EQS and LISREL higher in sociology and psychology than previously thought

AMOS used instructionally b/c it works seamlessly with SPSS

6. The Panel agreed to continue meeting over the summer