

DES MOINES UNIVERSITY



# DMU Data Dojo

## *Community of Practice*

Formerly known as “Power BI Workshop”

Meeting 001 – Launch!



# Introductions

- Your name, department, team, etc.
- Your specialties and/or areas of knowledge/expertise
- Your biggest current challenge with data
- What you're most eager to learn
- What you'd most like to accomplish with data
- An interesting fact about you



# What is the DMU Data Dojo?

- We're a "Community of Practice"
  - Newbie-friendly
  - Cross-functional
  - Non-hierarchical
  - Non-judgmental
  - Collaborative
  - Passionate about data!



# Why was the DMU Data Dojo formed?

- DMU's data is growing exponentially
  - Size (storage space – “on-prem” & “in the cloud”)
  - Sources (Recruit, eValue, Raiser's Edge, etc.)
  - Silos (departments, colleges, programs, etc.)
  - Solutions (data sources, datasets, reports, etc.)
  - Significance (business units, users, students, etc.)
- Successful use of data analysis requires
  - **Speed**
  - **Accuracy**



## Speed (time between problem & solution)

- Situation on the ground is changing constantly
- Decisions are being made every day, impacting
  - Students
  - Faculty
  - Staff
- Stale (outdated) data is often worse than **no** data
- Decision makers need their data...  
...and they need it ***yesterday!***



# Accuracy

- Bad (inaccurate) data
  - Often even worse than stale or missing data
  - Difficult to identify for those unfamiliar with the source
- Decision makers using bad data
  - Make bad decisions
  - Observe negative impact
  - Lose trust in the data
  - Revert to gastronomy methodology
    - a.k.a. “gut feelings”



# Data-Driven Decision Makers

## What they **do know**

- Decisions they must make
- Dimensions (students, courses, etc.)
- Qualities (names, dates, etc.)
- Facts (attendance, grades, etc.)
- Measures (counts, sums, averages, standard deviations, etc.)
- How to spot anomalies in raw data
  - e.g., missing, stale, or bad data

## What they often **don't know**

- How to ask their data a question
- What questions to ask
- How to interpret the data's answers
- Best practice data analysis presentation standards
- How to spot data anomalies in a production data analysis solution (report, dashboard, etc.)



# The Old (Current) Paradigm

## ITS Business Intelligence & Data Analytics (BI/DA) Team

- Small (currently just **one** member)
- Project backlog growing longer every day
- Analytics & reporting solutions (reports, dashboards, etc.)
  - Require “Subject Matter Expert” (SME) input at every stage
  - Design, development, testing, deployment, and maintenance
- Short-term (maintenance and updates on existing solutions)
  - Constant competition for prioritization and development time
  - Frequent mid-project pivots to keep pace with changing situation on the ground
- Long-term (tech debt, new projects, and large-scale initiatives)
  - Currently at a virtual standstill
  - Increasing tech debt makes existing solution maintenance more time-consuming
  - Cannot start any new projects or initiatives

THE WALL BETWEEN US

## Stakeholders and decision makers (colleges, programs, depts, etc.)

- Many individuals and groups
- Constant flow of requests for data analysis
- SMEs scattered throughout the organization
- Low visibility into the data analysis process
- Long lead time for
  - Maintenance on existing solutions
  - Development of new solutions
- Frequent meetings with BI/DA team during data analysis solution development process
- No clear source of truth
  - “These reports are different. Which one is right?”
  - “There are 18 different Excel files with almost identical names here. Which is the ‘real’ one?”
- No designated Data Steward to resolve questions and conflicts
  - “What does ‘applications accepted’ mean?”
  - “Is it different for Admissions vs. Registrar?”





# The New Paradigm (DMU Data Dojo)

- No more wall between decision makers and data analysts
- Clearer, more effective communication
- Shorter lead and completion times on projects
- Faster turnarounds on maintenance and updates
- Fewer project meetings and support tickets
- More innovative data analytics projects and initiatives
- Unambiguous source of truth for every data question
- Designated SME and Data Steward for every data source
- Better data-driven decision making at DMU!



## But how will we do *all of that*?

- By breaking down that wall between decision makers and data analysts!
- We're embedding a data analyst (*you*) directly in the decision makers' teams (*your existing teams*)
  - Yes, this is kind of a semantics game, but there's a lot of power in language, so just bear with me 😊
  - No, your job title won't change, at least not right away
- Providing a peer support network and collaborative framework for embedded data analysts to solve problems and develop solutions together



# Testimonials



## Next Steps

- Yammer Community
  - A private social network
  - You'll receive an invite shortly
  - Start posting!
- Power BI Learning Resources
  - An Excel list of links to recommended resources.
  - You'll receive an email shortly
  - Start learning!



# Questions?