MANAGING DATA AND CRITICAL FACTORS IN IMPLEMENTING AN INFORMATION GOVERNANCE (IG) INITIATIVE WITHIN A TEXAN COLLEGE PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT
This paper outlines the development and sustainability process of an Information Governance (IG) Program at a college program in Texas. It employs an action research as methodological approach to lay out the critical factors in executing the information governance(IG) program, while discussing the key components in designing and implementing strategies,policies, practices, and compliance. Findings emphasize the importance of aligning the IG program with strategic objectives and organizational culture. The participatory nature of action research enhances program sustainability and buy-in. Effective communication, training, and change management are highlighted as crucial for successful information governance adoption,along with the relevance of eDiscovery in the process. The study aims to provide a tailored governance framework within the context of a college program, while considering its unique needs, offering potential applicability to various industries.

Keywords: information governance; eDiscovery; records management; compliance; privacy.

RESUMO
Este artigo delineia o processo de desenvolvimento e sustentabilidade de um Programa de Governança da Informação (GI) em um programa universitário no Texas. Ele utiliza uma pesquisa-ação como abordagem metodológica para apresentar os fatores críticos na execução do programa de governança da informação (GI), enquanto discute os componentes-chave no design e implementação de estratégias, políticas e práticas em conformidade. As descobertas enfatizam a importância de alinhar o programa de GI com objetivos estratégicos e cultura organizacional. A natureza participativa da pesquisa-ação melhora a sustentabilidade do programa e o engajamento. A comunicação eficaz, treinamento e gestão da mudança são destacados como cruciais para a adoção bem-sucedida da governança da informação, juntamente com a relevância do eDiscovery no processo. O estudo tem como objetivo fornecerum quadro de governança personalizado no contexto de um programa universitário, levando em consideração suas necessidades únicas, oferecendo aplicabilidade potencial a diversas indústrias**.**

Palavras-chave: governança da informação; eDiscovery; gestão de registros; conformidade; privacidade.

RESUMEN
Este artículo describe el proceso de desarrollo y sostenibilidad de un Programa de Gobernanzade la Información (GI) en un programa universitario en Texas. Emplea la investigación-accióncomo enfoque metodológico para presentar los factores críticos en la ejecución del programa de gobernanza de la información (GI), al tiempo que se discuten los componentes clave en el diseño e implementación de estrategias, políticas y prácticas que están en conformidad. Los hallazgos enfatizan la importancia de alinear el programa de GI con objetivos estratégicos y cultura organizativa. La naturaleza participativa de la investigación-acción mejora la sostenibilidad del programa y el compromiso. La comunicación efectiva, el entrenamiento y lagestión del cambio se

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destacan como cruciales para la adopción exitosa de la gobernanza de lainformación, junto con la relevancia de la eDiscovery en el proceso. El estudio tiene como objetivo proporcionar un marco de gobernanza personalizado en el contexto de un programa universitario, teniendo en cuenta sus necesidades únicas, ofreciendo aplicabilidad potencial en diversas áreas e industrias.

Palabras clave: gobernanza de la información; eDiscovery; gestión de registros; cumplimiento normativo; privacidad.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the rapidly evolving digital age, the exponential growth of data has become an unmistakable hallmark of the modern world. Organizations and academic institutions alike find themselves at the epicenter of this data deluge, grappling with the challenges posed by its management, utilization, and protection. With the staggering volume, velocity, and variety of information, the need for a robust and comprehensive framework to govern this treasure trove has never been more apparent. This paper seeks to explore the relevance of information governance in both organizational and academic contexts, shedding light on its pivotal role in ensuring efficiency, compliance, and innovation. It discusses a case study the author(s) are currently working on at a university in Texas, United States.

An Information Governance (IG) program helps an organization establish standards and policy that dictate how information and data are organized to increase efficiency in locating and sharing data and information (Smallwood, 2014). It also allows for future implementation of business intelligence. A successful IG Program offers records retention, proper security and compliance policy, data governance initiatives, and a solid knowledge management program. All of these endeavors can equate to the ultimate IG goals which are to reduce costs and potential legal liability, improve security for an organization's data and information, and improve efficient access to and sharing of data and information.

Information governance refers to the strategic management and control of an organization's information assets to ensure they are effectively utilized, protected, and compliant with legal and regulatory requirements. It involves the establishment of policies, procedures, and processes for collecting, storing, accessing, and disposing of information in a way that maximizes its value while minimizing risks. (Moynihan, 2016).

In this paper, the authors discuss the concept of information governance and its relevance in both achieving compliance with regulations and gaining a competitive edge for organizations. They explore the challenges and benefits of effective information governance implementation.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Data management is the rising driving force behind any successful organization, regardless of its size, segment, or industry. Data and information governance are organizational approaches

to build d effectively use tacit and explicit knowledge towards building business intelligence and competitiveness. Kooper, Maes, and Lindgreen (2010) investigates the governance of information, technology and management support defending that:

> Governance is generally interpreted as a hierarchical framework for guidelines, policies, responsibilities, and procedures to ensure a certain level of control within an organization. But the definition of information governance does not necessarily restrict its use to one specific framework. Information governance may vary from a set of policies, a way of working, or the creation of a space within a predefined settlement (such as an online community).

The proliferation of digital technologies, coupled with the advent of the Internet of Things (IoT), has led to an unprecedented surge in data generation. Organizations and academic institutions are now inundated with vast amounts of structured and unstructured information streaming from a plethora of sources. Embracing the potential of this data holds the promise of informed decision-making, transformative research, and enriched learning experiences. However, without a well-defined information governance program, the influx of data can quickly transform from a blessing to a burden, hampering productivity, and exposing vulnerabilities. Information governance serves as the backbone of prudent data management strategies. At its core, it involves the systematic alignment of policies, processes, and technologies to facilitate the seamless handling of data throughout its lifecycle. By ensuring data integrity, security, and accessibility, information governance empowers organizations and academic institutions to harness the full potential of their data while minimizing risks and enhancing compliance (Davoudi et al., 2020).

The challenges surrounding information governance are multifaceted and require a nuanced understanding to effectively address. In organizations, compliance with data protection regulations, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), poses significant hurdles (Krol, 2018). Moreover, ensuring data quality, interoperability, and data sharing among diverse departments demand a coherent governance framework.

In academia, the need to preserve the integrity and confidentiality of research data while promoting open access presents a unique set of challenges (Moulaison, 2018). Balancing the desire for data-driven innovation with ethical considerations regarding data privacy calls for a delicate yet effective information governance approach.

This study engaged stakeholders, including faculty, administrators, and Information Technology, Human Resources, Student Admissions, Finance, and other College business units fostering a participatory and inclusive approach. It aims to delve into the fundamental aspects of information governance, examining its relevance in both organizational and academic settings. Studies have shown that IT structure is an important factor in the adoption and use of IG, either enabling or challenging the holistic management of information; however, a successful IG goes beyond data protection as one of the critical aspects of the program, it involves information

artifacts that includes leadership, organizational culture, IT governance, and strategic processes that will boost the organizational performance (Tallon, Ramirez, Shirt, 2013).

The action plan described below reflects an existing program currently in implementation in a college in Texas. It serves as evidence in the emphasis on successfully data management within the context of a college program shedding light on the best practices and strategies employed to confront the challenges posed by the ever-expanding data landscape. By elucidating the symbiotic relationship between information governance and successful organizational performance and academic advancements, this study seeks to underscore the indispensability of a robust information governance program.

2.1 CRITICAL FACTORS IN THE DATA GOVERNANCE PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

2.1.1. Executive Level Support

A vital key to success in developing an Information Governance Program is obtaining executive level administrative support in an organization. Trying to implement any program that relies on culture and behavior change is very difficult, if not impossible, without an executive level sponsor. This sponsor may be a Chief Information Officer, Chancellor, Chief Executive Officer, or some other C-suite level individual. Without appropriate muscle to help advocate the importance of and the need for an IG Program, this is a monumental task (Saldanha, 2019). This C-suite level individual provides consistent, high-level support, creative advocacy, and necessary tools and staffing to ensure the success of a new IG program (Milton & Lambe, 2020).

2.1.2. Enforcement Policies

One of the main reasons new IG programs fail is because they have no enforcement mechanisms. Often, a mid-level employee is told to create IG initiative such as email retention, eDiscovery, or data governance projects/programs. The new employee spends countless months or years developing a potentially successful program and then attempts to implement the program. Any IG sub-program such as email retention, eDiscovery, or data governance, requires a lot of training and culture change to obtain broad acceptance and implementation. However, mid-level employees often do not have the political clout to enforce participation by all employees at an institution and to endure the painful change required to implement the new IG program. Thus, the program never reaches full implementation. However, having a C-suite sponsor with appropriate political clout can ensure full adoption of IG programs (Hilger & Wahl, 2022). Therefore, one of the first steps to having a successful and sustainable IG program is to obtain and maintain a high-level executive sponsor.

2.1.3 Appropriate Staffing

After obtaining executive level support, it is vital to ensure adequate staffing to establish and sustain an IG program. Often, by default, a Chief Information Officer may appoint one person to create an IG program. That person is then responsible for data governance, knowledge management, accessibility issues, privacy and compliance, and other related IG tasks. One person cannot create and maintain an entire IG program. This person will simply have too many responsibilities and never accomplish any task. Instead, a multitude of people in various roles are needed for such an endeavor. For example, a plethora of writing is involved in creating, editing, reviewing, retiring, and amending processes and procedures, thus technical writers are vital for an IG program. A Director and Associate Director are also usually needed so that high level issues can be divided and conquered by two high level employees who have substantial knowledge of IG issues. One or two Knowledge Management Specialists are requited to supervise knowledge bases; organize, preserve, delete, and provide adequate access to organizational information. A data scientist or two are further needed to manage the data governance issues. It is additionally important to employee a records manager to deal with records and data retention issues. Also, it is helpful to employee multiple project managers, and other flexible business analysts who can assist with accessibility, privacy, knowledge management, compliance, legal, and records management issues (Blummauer & Nagy, 2020).

2.1.4 The Discovery Phase

After obtaining appropriate levels of staffing, it is also important to complete a thorough discovery phase prior to attempting to develop a data governance, knowledge management, information retention program, or any other information governance endeavor. The discovery phase manifests what organizations already have in place, what works, what is broken, what improves employee efficiency and saves money, and what contributes to high legal risk (Blumauer & Nagy, 2020). For example, if creating a knowledge management program, a properly implemented discovery phase reveals where people store digital information, how they access and share it, whether such access and sharing is efficient, is an information retention program in place, and other key issues. In essence, the discovery phase is a gap analysis and a learning process in that it highlights potential areas of improvement and what is working well Garfield, 2022).

To discover where the gaps are and what processes and technology are already operating efficiently, various techniques are utilized. Focus groups, one-on-one interviews, questionnaires, surveys, and observations are effective discovery data collection tools. A discovery phase should touch as many departments of an organization as possible. A sample size of about 30 individuals

total from many different departments offers a rich data pool. Since, most IG discovery phases are qualitative approaches, tools such as Nvivo, Delve, or Dovetail are helpful to quickly garner gaps and effective processes and technologies. For example, thematic analysis of the qualitative data gathers can manifest technologies that are causing knowledge workers to spend 20% of their day searching for stored information. Whereas the thematic approach can also highlight in-place efficient software that allows employees to seamlessly share information. When these gaps and efficiencies are discovered, this gives the IG team a starting place to determine which gaps to address first, and how to further use of the efficient tools.

2.1.5 Communication: Email and Chat Retention Programs

After garnering the needs of an organization, the IG team can begin to implement pieces of the IG program. One of the key programs often built into the overarching information governance program is an email retention program. Email retention programs define how long organizational emails will be retained and when they must be deleted. Some emails are saved longer due to legal holds. For example, an email retention program may mandate that all emails 4 years old or older will be automatically deleted by an information technology department. Having a consistent process to discard emails can greatly reduce legal risk for organization (ING, 2013). Legal risk is reduced because organizational personnel can reference that they have common business practice in effect to delete all company emails unless a legal hold exists. It also reduces the number of emails that must be discovered and culled when a request for information is presented (Smallwood, 2014).

Similarly, organizations can implement chat and text messaging retention programs. These programs primarily discourage company personnel from sung personal devices to send business related chat or text messages. They also plan into effect a standardized process of deleting chat or text messages such as 90 days, one year, or two years. Generally, chat and text messaging retention programs mandate smaller time periods for retaining data compared to email retention programs. Usually, text and chat messaging data contains more transitory information compared to email (Ragbeer, 2021).

Chat and text messaging programs also mandate correct etiquette and behavior. For example, an effective chat and text messaging retention program instructs personnel not to sue profane language, not make derogatory statements, and basically not chat or text anything someone would not want posted on the front page of a paper or digital newspaper (Ragbeer, 2021). Maintaining a chat and text retention program can also save organizations money and reduce legal risk (Smallwood, 2014).

2.1.6 eDiscovery and Compliance

Another important facet of a successful IG program is the implementation of eDiscovery. eDiscovery is the process of locating, collecting, preserving, culling, and delivering data and information to appropriate authorities during a request for information or litigation (Broucek, 2020). When faced with requests for information or lawsuits, many organizations today manually search through email and other electronic communication platforms to locate pertinent data. Such a process can take 80-85% of legal, human resources, or other departments time for weeks or months. However, implementing an automated eDiscovery program can save time and reduce legal liability. Such software as lexbe can reduce time spent on locating data. An automated eDiscovery tool such as lexbe can allow an organization to thematically locate and gather pertinent data and information within a 12-24 hour period (lexbe, 2023). Once gathered in-house counsel, paralegals, or contracted consultants can cull the data, place specific data into legal hold systems, and organize in preparation for delivery of relevant data. Coupling an eDiscovery automated program with proper email and text retention tools, an organization can reduce legal risk and cost by a large percentage (Smallwood, 2014). Additionally, utilizing technology assisted review (TAR) tools can improve efficiency during eDiscovery. TAR applies predictive coding and is utilized to review large data sets for responsive determinations withing the discovery phase of litigation (Broucek, 2020).

3. DATA GOVERNANCE PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION IN A TEXAN COLLEGE PROGRAM: METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Aiming at verifying the relevance and impact, as well as the factors impacting the data governance process the authors conducted action research (AR) approach during the data governance program implementation in a college in Texas, USA.

The methodology AR for this paper shares the experience of a three-year process of implementing and maintaining an IG program at a college, the process involved, best practices, critical factors, the challenges and the opportunities identified, which can, hopefully, be utilized as roadmap by other organizations seeking to implement an IG Program.

The first phase of this study consisted of a college-wide discovery phase to learn the IG needs of the College (6-8 months). The next phase included hiring new IG staff to ensure proper person-power to create an IG Program (6- 8 months). The last two years involved the creation, implementation, and sustainment of an IG Program.

The action research process commenced with an initial assessment of the college's existing information management practices, followed by the formulation of a comprehensive governance framework encompassing policies, procedures, and technological solutions. Through cycles of

planning, action, observation, and reflection, the research team engaged with stakeholders to address emerging challenges, fine-tune the program, and ensure seamless integration within the college's operations. This iterative approach facilitated continuous feedback and adaptation, fostering an information governance culture that transcended silos and promoted data stewardship among all stakeholders.

The current IG program implementation within the studied college involves six(6) major phases, from the discovery to compliance, as described below:

Phase One: DISCOVERY PHASE AND ESTABLISHIGN AN IG PROGRAM

The first phase of this case study consisted of a discovery phase that lasted six to eight months. This discovery phase helped locate data systems implemented at the college, learned where data and information was stored, and how it was shared and accessed. This discovery phase also explored what worked well for knowledge workers and what problems manifested. The discovery phase also probed the College's record lifecycle, and current eDiscovery, risk management, compliance, and data management processes and workflows.

FINDINGS OF THE DISCOVERY PHASE

The discovery phase manifested that information and data were being stored in unsafe locations such as flash drives, on personal devices, via paper, and in other insecure locations. It also became apparent that knowledge workers spent hours and sometimes days trying to locate stored information. This is common in organizations that do not have an IG Program in place (Smallwood, 2014). Additionally, the discovery phase indicated knowledge workers were storing and disseminating personally identifiable information (PII) and personal health information (PHI) via email and chat. Also, despite having a records retention program in place, no email retention or electronic communications retention policy was in place. Thus, numerous PII and PHI was being stored and transmitted via email and other electronic communications.

The discovery phase further manifested that the College administration was open to an IG program that could provide better security, more efficient access to and sharing of information, and a reduction of ROT (redundant, outdated, and trivial information). It also revealed that the College was lacking in IG policy that could help improve data and information and reduce potential legal liability.

Phase Two: IMMEDIATE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITES

Many immediate challenges manifested via the discovery phase. Some of these included needing to obtain buy-in from administration, developing training and communications to support the IG program, craft and gain acceptance of IG policies such as email retention and data governance, create a knowledge management sub-program, partner with the legal department to

streamline eDiscovery processes, and improve compliance issues for the College.

Obtain Administrative Buy-In

Any successful and sustainable IG Program must have a strong executive sponsor (Seiner, 2014). Therefore, after the discovery phase was completed, I met with the Chancellor, Campus Presidents, and other upper administration to explain the importance of and IG Program and the necessity of their muscle to enforce the IG Program. Fortunately, these stakeholders comprehended these necessities of an IG Program and offered perpetual encouragement, support, and enforcement. However, I still could not implement an entire IG Program on my own. I needed to hire staff.

Phase Three: HIRING STAFF AND ESTABLISHING A TIERED STEERING COMMITTEE

After the discovery phase, I realized I needed to hire staff to complete the needed tasks that were discovered during the discovery phase (the need to create trainings, effective communications, policies…). Thus, in the budget cycle I requested five new positions - to help establish the IG Program. Due to first obtaining administrative support, College administration understood the need for these requested positions, and although obtaining the positions took time, I was granted five new positions during the next budget cycle.

However, I still needed help outside of my staff to roll out an IG program with an organization that employes about 5,000 knowledge workers and serves approximately 46,000 students. Therefore, once the new employees were hired, we established a tiered, steering committee that had representation across all 6 campuses at the College. This committee was used to develop and offer new training and to disseminate IG communications across the College.

Phase Four: DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING IG POLICY

Communication: Email Retention Policy

During the discovery phase it was apparent that the College lacked IG policy that could improve the security of stakeholder data and reduce legal liability. Thorough and effective IG policy can reduce security and legal risk for an organization (Franks, 2018). For example, many College employees transmitted and stored PII and PHI via electronic communications and retained unnecessary data for 10 + years. Thus, the IG department crafted, obtained approval from General Counsel, and implemented an email retention policy and a data classification policy. Previous to the adoption of these policies, the College allowed employees to save PII and other information in email in perpetuity. Also, data floated in and out of the College at the will of the employees.

The new email retention policy mandated emails four years old or older were automatically deleted. Training and communications were developed by the tiered steering

committee to teach people how to save College records, remove them from email, and store them in an appropriate place. Training and communications were also developed and conveyed that explained the why and the benefit (reducing legal liability, reduction of storing redundant, outdated, and trivial information) (Smallwood, 2014) of applying an email retention program. We also developed a data classification policy for the College.

Phase Five: DATA GOVERNANCE POLICY

While crafting the email retention policy we discovered that the College had no data classification standards either. Thus, highly sensitive data was stored with public data. There was no direction for people in the College as to where to store data, and which types of data should be stored in what repositories. Having no direction as to where to store data can lead to confusion, legal risk, client risk, and lost information and data (Eisen, 2020). Therefore, we crafted, received approval from General Counsel, and implemented a data classification policy with the following standards – Public Confidential, Restricted, Prohibited. These categories are depicted in Table 1.

Table 1- Data Governance Classifications

	Public	Confidential	Restricted	Prohibited
Description	Information that the College is under obligations to make available to the public Information for which there is an expectation of confidentiality or privacy Information that the College or its employees have the right to make and have chosen to make available or to publish for the explicit use of the general public	Information that typically is excepted from the Public Information Act Note: This data and associated information system is not generally available to the public, and is not regulated or under contractual obligations for data protection	Information and associated information system, used in the conduct of college business, in which data is not legally regulated, but which an expectation of privacy or confidentiality exists. Information that the Information System Owner, Data Owner, and/or College executive leadership have determined not to publish or make public Information protected by contractual obligations All public-facing information systems exposed to the Internet.	Information and associated information system that is legally regulated with a requirement to self-report to the government and/or provide notice to the individual if such information is inappropriately accessed, such as: • HIPAA • PCI • Sensitive PII (SSN) • FERPA • Tax information Information systems designated as 'High Risk"

These data classification standards are just now being implemented as we transfer data from legacy systems to new systems as we implement a new ERP. Ultimately, we would like to apply data loss prevention and identity access management to data as our data governance program becomes mor mature. Both DLP and IAM will provide further security for the College.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICAITONS RETENTION POLICY

While crafting the email retention and data governance policies, we also realized many people utilize MS TEAMs chat and other electronic chat to store data. Also, this chat feature had no retention applied. Thus, data stored in these electronic chat tools potentially expose the College to legal liability. Also, data stored in chats would be difficult to retrieve later, whereas if it were stored in an appropriate knowledge repository such as OneDrive, Laserfiche…, it could be more efficiently retrieved and shared later. Therefore, we are now in the process of developing an electronic chat retention schedule that we will soon present to the General Counsel for approval.

Phase Six: WORKING WITH LEGAL AND COMPLIANCE

a) The EDISCOVERY process

Through developing the IG Program at the College, we have become close partners with our Legal department. While forming this partnership, we discovered Legal needed help with initial stages for data collection during FOIA requests, lawsuits, and other requests for information. For most organizations today, the volume, variety, and velocity of information requested via a FOIA request, discovery request in a lawsuit, or other request for information can be very time consuming and burdensome. Having help with eDiscovery systems is vital (Broucek, 2020). After learning about this need, the Information Management Office interviewed the Legal Department to discover their specific needs. Subsequently we worked with our procurement office and posted a Request for Proposals from vendors who could help with this process. Through this process, we selected and contracted with a vendor that could help with the initial collection for a FOIA request, lawsuit, or other request for information. Our Office of Information helps with subsequent culling of information post-gathering of the initial data. Thus, we formed a helpful eDiscovery partnership with the Legal Department. Providing eDiscovery services for an organization can increase response time to general requests for information.

b) Identifying COMPLIANCE ISSUES

The Office of Information also learned that no document and process information has ever occurred when rolling out new software, implementing new data systems, or procuring new systems. Not collecting and preserving documentation can lead to subsequent compliance and legal risk issues (Stamper, Phillips, Goodman, & Bonney, 2022). For example, two years after implementation for a new data system, auditors may ask who created certain processes, who made specific decisions, who management system rollouts. By not having documentation to show these process implementations, who was responsible, this can lead to legal risk, fines, and other regulatory violations. Thus, the Information Governance Program created a new Compliance Program in partnership with Information Security and Legal to begin documenting important data system implementation, software rollouts, decision making, project management, employee responsibility… These actions, responsibilities, decisions are documented and preserved in a Knowledge Base in TeamDynamix (Team Dynamix, 2023).

3.1 DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

During the discovery phase we also learned that knowledge workers stored word documents, slide decks, videos, pedagogical material, transcripts, contracts… in many insecure locations. These locations included personal devices, flash drives, email, Google forms… Storing information in such insecure locations can open individuals up to perusal liability and can increase

compliance, security, and legal risk for an organization (Milton & Lambe, 2020).

Therefore, we identified five repositories in which to store such unstructured data. We now direct knowledge workers to store formalized documents such as contracts, memorandums of understanding, transcripts, and other formalized documents with potential PII and PHI in Laserfiche. We direct knowledge workers to store and share working documents such as slide decks, videos, word documents still work in progress in either MS TEAMS or OneDrive. We direct knowledge workers to store processes and procedures in the Knowledge Base inside TeamDynamix, our Information Technology Management System. We also work with faulty to understand how to ephemerally store pedagogical material in Canvas, our Learning Management System, while ultimately transferring any formalized documents to Laserfiche. A chart we use to help direct knowledge worker information storing and sharing behavior is depicted in Table 2.

Table 2. Knowledge Management Storage Chart

Document Type	Laserfiche	MS TEAMS	MS OneDrive	TCC Service Center (TeamDynamix0	Canvas
Contracts and Other Formalized Documents	✓	X	X	X	X
Student Records	✓	X	X	X	X
Personal Identifiable Information (PII), Personal Health Information (PHI)	✓	X	X	X	X
Processes and Procedures	X	X	X	✓	X
Knowledge Articles	X	X	X	✓	X
Working Documents	X	✓	✓	X	✓

The need to help knowledge workers learn to store and share unstructured data in secure locations was part of the impetus for the creation of a Knowledge Management Program as a subset of the IG Program. The KM Program has evolved to include teaching knowledge workers how to transition from paper to digital, reduce printing, rely more on digital technologies, and offer safer more efficient ways to share and store information.

4. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the significance of information governance in organizations and academia cannot be overstated. As data continues to redefine the way we operate, understanding and

implementing effective governance mechanisms will become a critical differentiator for success. This study sheds light on the intricate process of developing and sustaining an Information Governance (IG) Program within a Texas college program. By employing an action research methodology, the research has outlined the pivotal factors crucial for executing the IG program effectively. Through an in-depth examination of key components, encompassing the design and implementation of strategies, policies, and compliant practices, this paper has underscored the significance of aligning the IG program with strategic objectives and the organizational culture.

The participatory nature of the action research approach has proven instrumental in enhancing the longevity and acceptance of the IG program. Furthermore, this investigation has revealed that effective communication, comprehensive training, and adept change management stand as cornerstones for the successful adoption of information governance. This is bolstered by the acknowledged relevance of eDiscovery in the process, emphasizing the importance of managing electronic information for legal and compliance purposes.

By navigating through the intricacies of information governance, this paper, also, aspires to contribute to the broader discourse surrounding data management, enabling organizations and academic institutions to harness the full potential of their data assets while safeguarding against potential pitfalls. It aims at contributing to the growing body of literature on information governance, offering insights into the practical application of action research in a college context. By elucidating the process of developing and implementing an information governance program through collaboration and reflection, this study serves as a valuable guide for other educational institutions seeking to bolster their data management practices. The outcomes of this research demonstrate that an action research approach can foster the evolution of a robust and adaptive information governance program, positioning colleges to effectively navigate the data landscape and uphold data integrity, security, and compliance in the digital era.

As a result, the study's primary objective of providing a tailored governance framework for a college program context has been achieved. By addressing the unique needs inherent to the educational setting, this framework extends its potential utility to a wide array of industries beyond academia. Ultimately, this research advances our understanding of how to implement and sustain an information governance program effectively, underlining its pivotal role in managing data within diverse organizational contexts.

5. FUTURE RESEARCH AND OPPORTUNITIES

A plethora of future research opportunities are available based on this past three-year endeavor. Research needs to be completed to see how the new data governance classifications can be applied as data is migrated into the new ERP systems. User testing then needs to be completed to see how effective the new data classification systems are as the team try to implement IAM and

DLP. Other user testing also needs to occur to ensure the new process mapping and ERP documentation is properly housed within the Knowledge Base in TeamDynamix, and that said documentation can be easily accessed by those who should have access.

This process could be extrapolated and applied to other organizations, whether corporate, non-profit, government, or other. This paper further conveys the experience, benefits, and challenges in developing an IG Program, which include obtaining and maintaining executive approval and support; effectively communicating throughout an organization what Information Governance is, why it is important…; promoting culture change; creating and offering IG training and implementing the various pieces of IG. Some of these pieces include records management, knowledge management, eDiscovery, data governance, privacy, and compliance. Implementing these areas of IG ultimately prevent legal liability, save institutions time and money, and increase security.

While this study contributes valuable insights into the development and execution of an Information Governance (IG) Program within a college program in Texas, there remain intriguing avenues for future research in this domain. Several possibilities for further studies emerge from the findings and gaps identified in this investigation:

1. Comparative Analysis: A comparative analysis of information governance practices across different educational institutions in Texas or even on a national scale could provide a broader perspective on the effectiveness of various strategies and approaches and approach an International Comparative Studies.

2. Long-Term Impact Assessment: Conducting a longitudinal study to assess the long-term impact and sustainability of implemented IG programs would offer insights into how these initiatives evolve over time and adapt to changing circumstances.

3. Cultural and Contextual Variations: Exploring how information governance practices differ in various cultural and contextual settings, both within and outside of educational institutions, can deepen our understanding of the dynamics influencing their success.

4. Technological Integration: Investigating the role of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and blockchain, in enhancing information governance processes and compliance mechanisms could be a promising area of research.

5. Legal and Ethical Considerations: Delving deeper into the legal and ethical dimensions of information governance, especially in the context of student data and privacy regulations, can offer valuable insights into compliance challenges and potential solutions.

6. Cross-Industry Application: Exploring how the lessons learned from IG implementation in academia can be extrapolated and applied to other sectors, such as healthcare, finance, or government, could provide valuable cross-industry insights.

By pursuing these avenues of research, scholars and practitioners can further enrich the

field of information governance and contribute to the continuous improvement of strategies for managing and utilizing data in complex organizational environments

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