

Heather Epstein-Diaz

Office of Institutional Research, Florida State University | hepstein@fsu.edu

Education

Ph.D. Candidate, Higher Education Policy | Florida State University

M.L.I.S., Library and Information Studies | Florida State University

B.A., English and Humanities | Florida State University

Professional Experience

Program Director - Data Governance and Analytics Services | Institutional Research, Florida State University | 2023–Present

- Formalizing our university-wide Data Governance Program
- Launched the Data Partners Program, embedding IR-supervised data analysts in the Colleges of Law, Engineering, and Fine Arts
- Launched our enterprise Data Catalog as Product Owner to catalog and tag knowledge assets
- In collaboration with IR leadership, launched the first Data Literacy and Analytics Certificate
- Developed Data Literacy and Data Handling trainings in partnership with data stewards
- Chair of inaugural Data Day Conference

Data Analyst | Institutional Research, Florida State University | 2017–2023

- Transformed institutional data into strategic insights through analysis, visualization, and reporting for enrollment, admissions, and student outcomes
- Lead architect for Institutional Research Enrollment Model conversion to Power BI; designed and delivered Power BI training for faculty/staff
- Project Manager for data publications (FSU Fact Book, Pocket Fact Book, Fact Sheet)
- Co-founded and administered FSU Data User Group with 20+ departments to address data governance issues
- Led research team analyzing GRE-optional status and PhD academic success using logistic regression

Research Interests

- Chief Data Officers in Higher Education
- Data Literacy and Data-Engaged Decision Making in Higher Education
- Higher Education Access and Attainment
- Data Strategy
- Knowledge Management

Technical & Data Management Interests

Power BI (Lead Developer – FSU Enrollment Model, Post-Graduation Outcomes Dashboard) | **Glossary Development** | **Knowledge Graphs** | **Snowflake** | **Oracle OBI** | **Qualtrics** | **Excel** | **Regression Analysis** | **Event History Analysis**

Professional Training & Coursework

NCES Data Institute (competitive selection, 2023) | **CTE Research Training Institute** (competitive selection, 2021)

Doctoral Coursework: Applied Educational Policy Analysis, Quasi-Experimental Data Analysis, Program Evaluation, Higher Education Policy, Economics of Higher Education

Selected Presentations & Awards

Impact Session (2025). The Analytics Transformation: From Data Informed to Data Engaged Campus. AIR.

Best Innovative Practice Award (1st Place) - Data Catalog Implementation, SAIR, 2024

Epstein-Diaz, H. & Brady, A. (2024). Leveraging Data Catalogs for Organizational Learning. SAIR.

Epstein-Diaz, H. & Burnette, R. (2024). Culture Eats Strategy: Data Literacy Meets Data Governance. AIR.

Epstein-Diaz, H. & Gipalo, K. (2023). The Hidden Hub: Revealing IR's Central Role in Data Governance. SAIR.

Epstein-Diaz, H. (2024). Financial, Academic, and Immigration Determinants of Latinx Graduation. AEFP.

Professional Service

Board Member - 4-Year Institutional Representative, Florida Association of Institutional Research (2025-26)

Committee Lead - Special Topics Sub-Group, EDUCAUSE Data Governance Community Group (2025-26)

Proposal Reviewer - AEFP Postsecondary Education Track (2021); Best Print Publication Reviewer - SAIR (2023)

Professional Memberships

Association for Institutional Research (AIR) | Southern Association for Institutional Research (SAIR) | Florida Association for Institutional Research (FAIR) | American Educational Research Association (AERA) | Association for Education Finance and Policy (AEFP)