

**NCAA Division I Institutional Performance Program
Fiscal Management Frequently Asked Questions (Data Analysis).**

While there is no “prescribed” path or step-by-step progression to analyze data in the system, the following are some questions to help guide analysis.

Question	Interpretation
Where should I start?	Determine which data point(s) are meaningful to your inquiry. Determine whether that information changes your thinking and leads you to respond.
What do the numbers mean?	Determine if the data requires action or whether you need more information to determine if action is needed?
How does the information compare to other groups [i.e., Division I; subdivision; conference; peer group(s)]?	Put the information into the appropriate context.
What else do I need to know?	Focus on identifying the information that would help you make an informed decision.
Where can I get more information?	Find the information you need to better explain the data and/or make an informed decision (i.e., examining subsequent data points).
Who else needs to be involved in a discussion of this data and what is needed to achieve the desired outcome?	Data may identify a need for further analysis and inclusion of additional campus staff.

Other comments regarding data analysis:

1. Institutions should look at expense “drivers” to help quickly identify reasons for dramatic increases or decreases in data over a specific period of time.
2. It’s important to look for “outlier” situations. Specifically, is the institution moving in correlation with the industry in a given financial indicator? Why or why not?
3. Continual question when analyzing data should be: Do I have the appropriate “peer group” relative to the current discussion?