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Assignment 1 Summary

Between the twelve websites we examined, there were two business processes that tied as the most common. We selected six features for our benchmarking standards. First, we chose listing research activity, whether that be numerical data, articles about student/faculty achievement, or upcoming projects. Next, we looked for easily accessible announcement/departments news sections. We felt that it was important these be on the home page or very few clicks away. We found it important that the research office's address and contact information be readily available. Most websites listed it at the bottom of the page. We also checked to see if the department's listed their compliance requirements. This information is crucial in displaying a university's dedication to such standards and the expectations for their researchers. We also checked for listed faculty information. We deemed this important so students could find people to contact and start reaching out for recommendations. Lastly, we catalogued instances of readily available funding information.

The two most common business processes are the center location being listed and funding information being available, the two categories tied for 11/12 websites. There was a two-way tie for the middle, research activity, announcements/news were on 9/12 websites. The least common features also tied. They are compliance standards and faculty information, which came in at 8/12. We found it surprising that only a little over half the websites clearly stated their regulations. Many consider research to go hand-in-hand with guidelines and documentation processes, seeing websites without any of this information isn't what we expected.

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Bailey put emphasis on displaying newsletters and announcements from the research department. She lamented that the public isn't aware of the interesting projects taking place. Therefor, we compared the Announcements/News process on the nine websites that included it.

The University of Toronto has what we believe to be the best implemented process. The section of the website is the most in-line with what Bailey showed examples of. It is visually pleasing, modern-looking, and overall it is effective. We're interested in the headlines because the images have drawn us in. The news pieces are staggered, and the largest tile seems to hint at importance. Articles allow a peek at the first paragraph which is designed to pull in a reader.

Another example of a feature that is implemented well is from Northern Illinois University. Their research stories don't draw the eye as well as Toronto's, but the headlines and snippets are just as enticing. The section is visible from the top of the landing page. This displays its perceived significance to their stakeholders.

On the flip side, Ohio State University has a dedicated location for their research news, but it is two hyperlinks under a header that say *Headlines* and *RSS*. Clicking *Headlines* takes the user to the university-wide search bar, and *RSS* is a broken link. They represent the worst practice we've seen.

We should consider including the compliance, funding, news, and research activity business processes. We must think about the five stakeholders: researchers, students, industry,

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community, and administrators. Only four out of twelve of the websites we examined contain all four of these features.

As we've written, we think compliance is an essential area to cover when considering a research and innovation website. All groups except administration will benefit from knowing the compliance standards. Students and researchers will understand the topics and experiments they can explore and carry out, industry members will know what is feasible, and community members can check to see that the university is responsible.

Funding information is vital to researchers and industry professionals alike. Whether it be information on how to get involved and fund a project, or finding funding to take on a new case. One of the business processes Bailey highlighted is connecting people to funding. This is why we feel so strongly about including this feature on the update website.

Research activity is aimed at the community, industry, and students. The community gets to see what the university is up to. This, like announcements, helps get the word about the research and innovation office out. Industry individuals can access ongoing and completed projects to get a feel about which projects the university accepts. They can also view the average funding numbers and number of projects taking place. Prospective research students may look at the quick numbers, research data, upcoming events, and past projects.