

Recognizing that the problems cluster around research and faculty information, the team investigated four product families associated with Research Information Management Systems (RIMS) and Faculty Information Systems (FIS):

- Academic Analytics
- Watermark Digital Measures
- Interfolio Faculty180
- Symplectic Elements

Academic Analytics

Academic Analytics features two tool sets, Discovery Suite and Benchmarking Suite. Discovery Suite has three tools: Research Insight (an administrative tool to build research teams and find funding opportunities which the University currently subscribes to), Faculty Insight (a faculty tool to find funding opportunities, collaborators, and profile builders), and External Discovery Site (a public-facing website to display the institution's researchers and their activity). Benchmarking Suite has three tools: The Comparative Product and Tools (a database tool for strategic planning, hiring and retention initiatives, department review support, publication strategies, and mentorship planning), Graduate Outcomes (for institutional effectiveness studies), and Unit Modeling (to create what-if scenarios for grants, recruitment, and program development).

The strengths of Academic Analytics stem from its function as a strategic planning tool. It has more fundamental, basic purposes, and the university currently benefits from those, but its real power comes from its employment as a planning suite for research strategy.

The weaknesses of Academic Analytics relate to its lack of tools for reporting performance outside of research, especially for regional and national accreditation. These weaknesses, however, are unrelated to the design and purpose of the suite.

Watermark Digital Measures¹

Digital Measures is an example of a FIS. It is a web-based information management system designed to streamline the collection, organization, storage, and reporting of faculty teaching, research, and service activities. It aggregates data for these processes along with the annual review process, CV creation, and accreditation reporting. Its purpose is to reduce the time required to enter and manage faculty activity data, and it includes advanced tools for monitoring and managing the promotion and tenure processes, supporting faculty web profiles, and analyzing opportunities for process improvement. Digital Measures is one in a suite of tools available from Watermark to support academic program needs.

The strengths of Digital Measures include its user-friendliness, large market presence, and integration with other academic program support tools. It seems also that the initial importing of data into Digital

¹ Please see the Infographic file for full descriptions of these tools.

