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ATLANTA MARCH 16 - 20, 2026

Power BI in Higher Education:

Real Use Cases from Enrollment to Graduation

Andrew Sommer

Lakshmi Ponnurasan

Let’s Imagine…

A student named Maya.

- Applied in Fall 2024
- First-generation student
- Interested in Biology
- Received financial aid
- Lives on campus

Her Journey…

She applies ➡️ data lives in the CRM (Slate)

She enrolls ➡️ now she’s in the SIS (Peoplesoft)

She takes classes ➡️ activity tracked in the LMS

She receives financial aid ➡️ finance system

She changes majors ➡️ advising system

She graduates ➡️ alumni system

The Silo Problem (Great Data. Disconnected Systems)

Every stage generates data.
But each stage lives in a different system.

The Silo Problem (Great Data. Disconnected Systems)

🏫 Admissions CRM

🎓 Academics

🎆 Student Information System (SIS)

💻 Learning Management System (LMS)

💰 Finance System

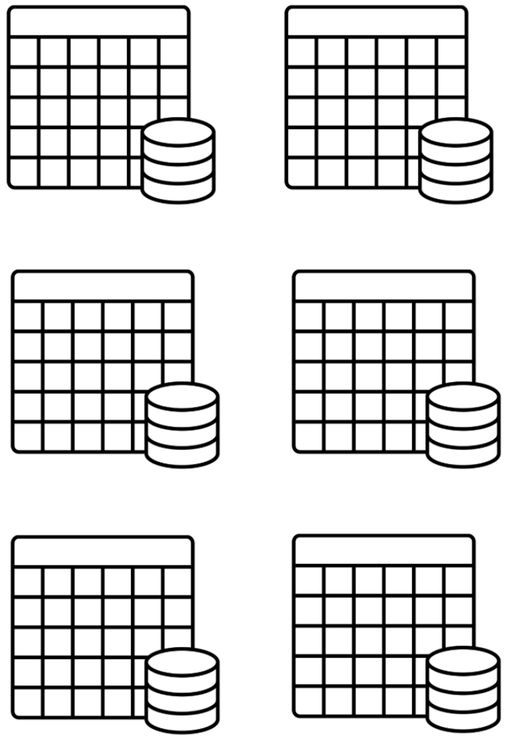
👩‍💼 HR System

🏈 Campus Life & Athletics

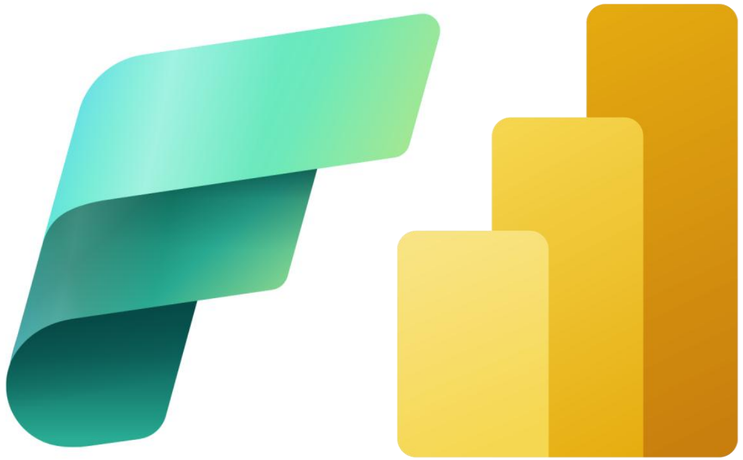
👩‍🎓 Alumni/Advancement System

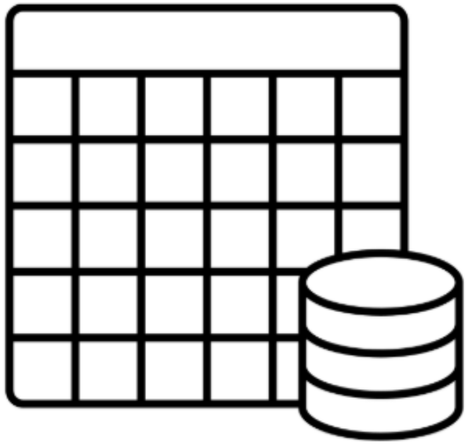
🔬 Research & Specialized Programs

Fabric & Power BI : Connecting the Lifecycle



Scattered systems





Unified single model

Power BI in Higher Education:

Real Use Cases from Enrollment to Graduation

Andrew Sommer

Lakshmi Ponnurasan

Andrew Sommer

Chief Data Officer | MISSOURI S&T

Fabric Community Super User

Santhana Lakshmi Ponnurasan

Power BI DataViz 2025 & 2026 World Championship Finalist

MISSOURI S&T Data Analyst- Institutional Effectiveness

Before we go any further...
... The disclaimer

Session Disclaimer

⚠️ This session reflects **our implementation approach.**

⚠️ What works for us may look different in your institution.

⚠️ Demo reports use **fictionalized sample data.**

⚠️ The goal is to show **how we use** Microsoft Fabric and Microsoft Power BI at Missouri Science and Technology.

Take ideas. Adapt thoughtfully. Build intentionally.

Game Plan

- 🎯 Key Challenges in Higher Ed Data
- 🎯 Modeling in Higher Education
- 🎯 Power BI in action: 4 Real Use Cases
- 🎯 3 Things We Do Intentionally
- 🎯 Bonus: Storytelling Frameworks

Key Challenges

- Data spread across **multiple systems**
- **Different definitions** across departments
- **Complex** cohort and lifecycle **logic**
- **Multiple grains of data** (student, term, course)
- Slowly **changing dimensions** (major changes, advisor changes)
- **FERPA / Privacy** considerations

Modeling Higher Ed Data

ERPs

ORACLE PEOPLESOFT

workday.

CRMs

slate

StarRez

Student Success

STELLIC

CANVAS

Starfish retention solutions

campuslabs Data Driven Innovation

uAchieve

myVITA

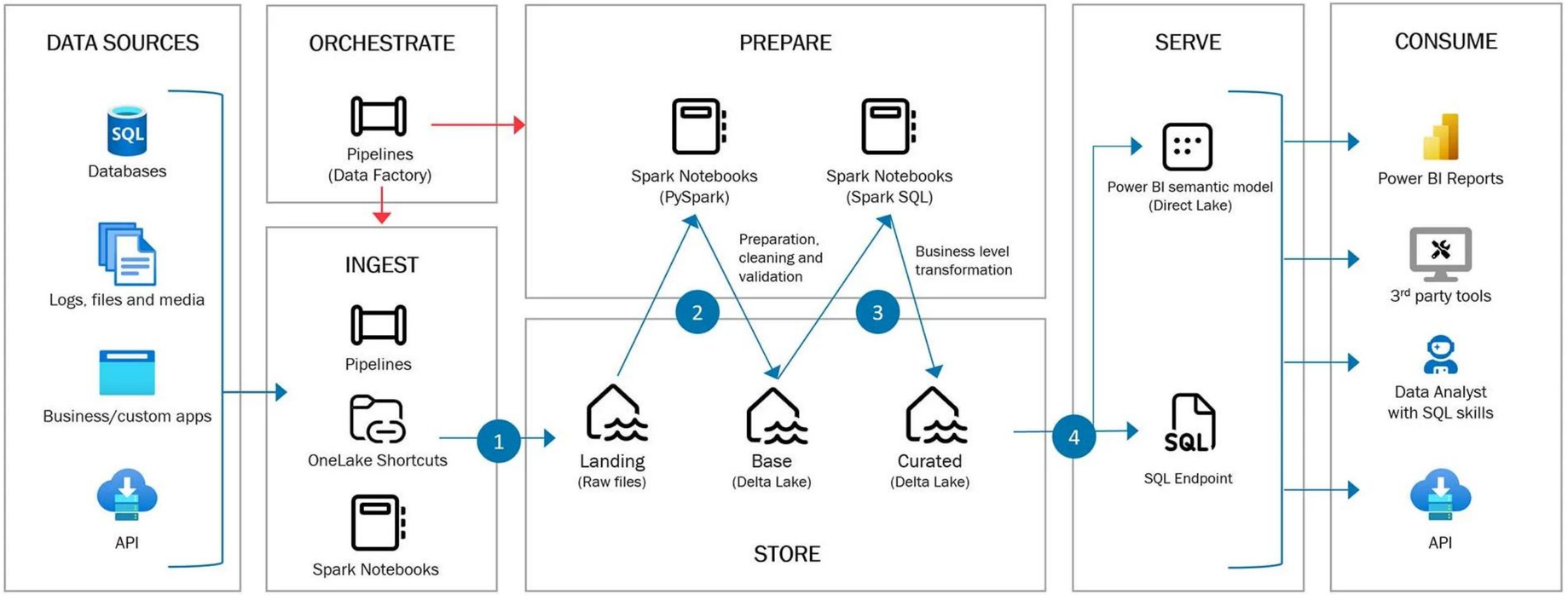
Operations

ellucian. Advance

TeamDynamix

e-Builder

IBM maximo



Demo- Real Use Cases

Admissions & Enrollment Funnel

Demo- Real Use Cases

Retention & Student Success

Demo- Real Use Cases

Faculty & Academic Operations

Demo- Real Use Cases

Graduation & Outcomes

3 Things We Do Intentionally

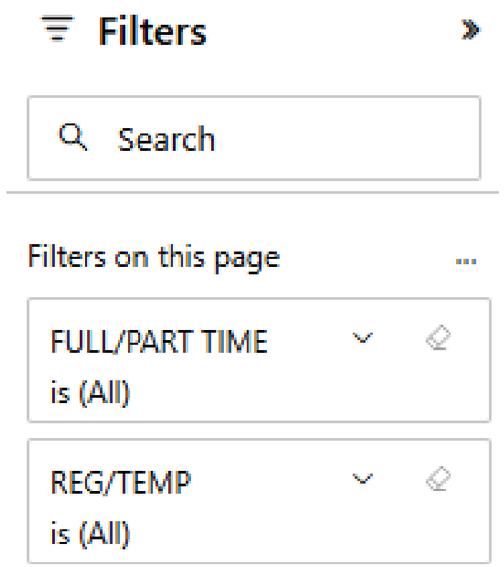
1 **Documentation Built Into the Report**

- About the Page
- User Guide
- Support

Demo

3 Things We Do Intentionally

2 Consistent Global Filters (Filter Pane)



3 Things We Do Intentionally

3 Intentional Drill Experience

-Drill Down: From College → Program → Major

-Drill Through: From Retention Summary → Student Detail

-Tooltip pages for context

-No unnecessary navigation clutter

BONUS:
Storytelling Frameworks That You Could Use

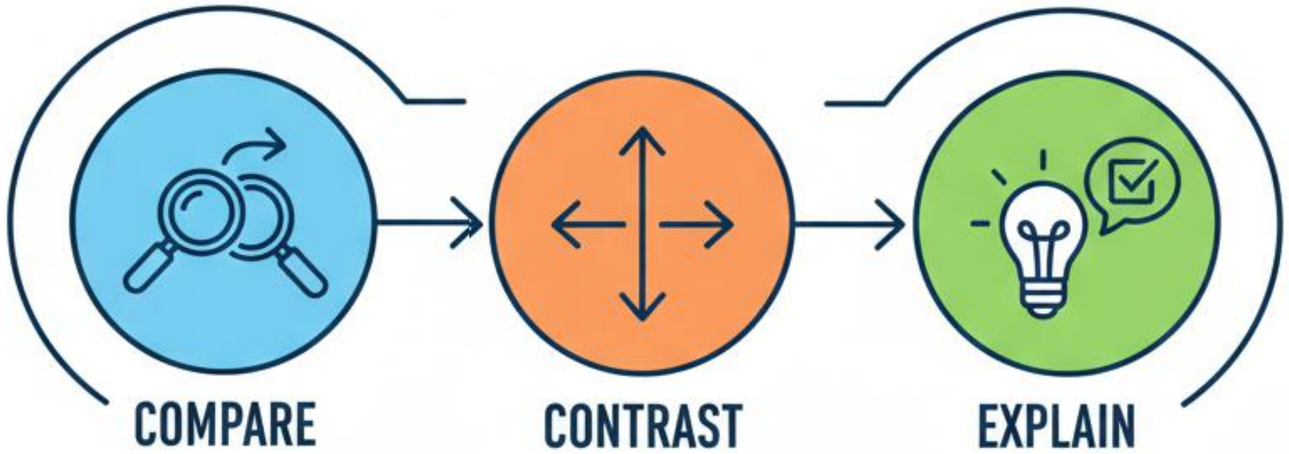
1. The Comparison Framework
2. The Martini Glass Framework

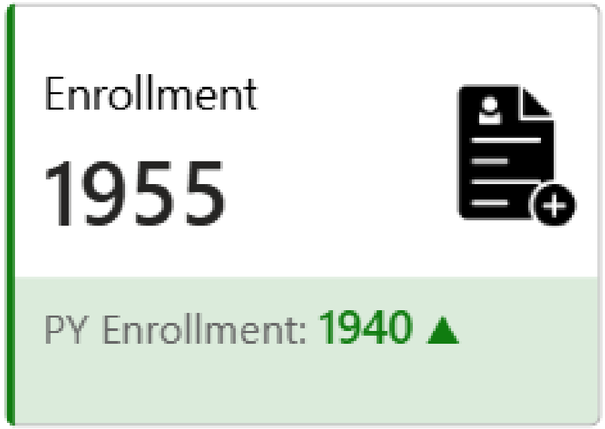
1. The Comparison Framework

Compare
(Establish a baseline)

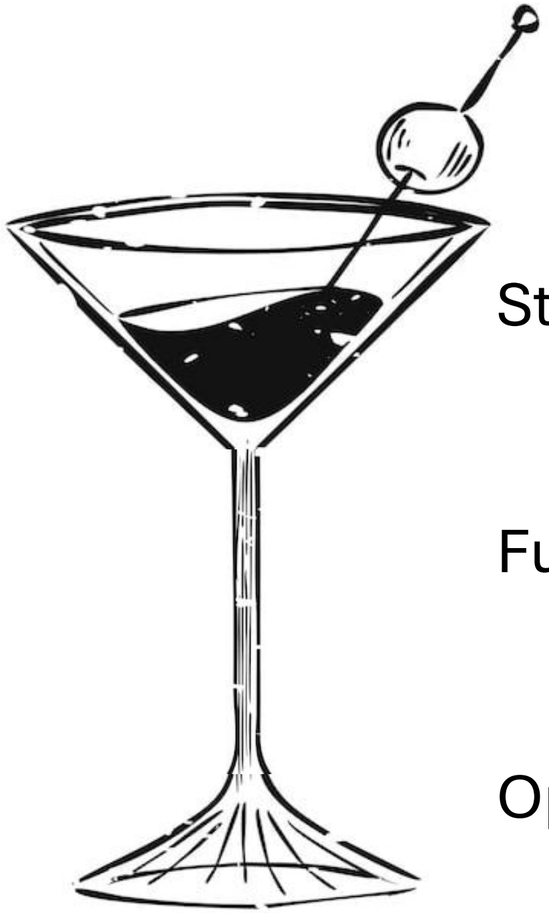
Contrast
(Reveal differences)

Explain
(Provide reasons/ implications)





2. The Martini Glass Framework



Start broad

Funnel to insight

Open up for exploration

Don’t forget to rate our session and leave some feedback!

Presenters:

Andrew Sommer

Santhana Lakshmi.P

How was the session?

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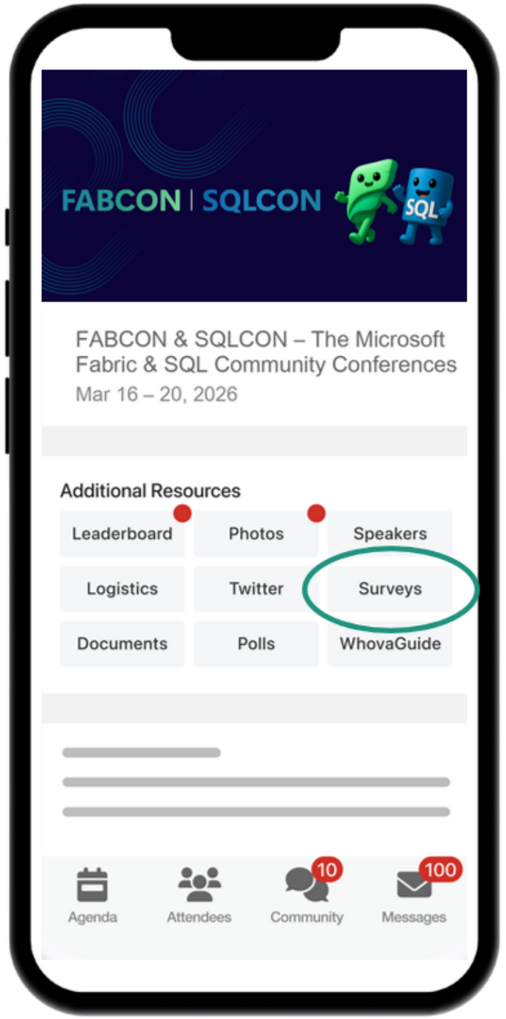

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