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As a functional area specialist, you know your data best. This training is designed to help you understand how Argos can be used to make data easier to attain and to prepare you for filling out your datablock design request forms.

# Introduction to Datablock Design



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# What is a Datablock?

- A Datablock is a “bucket” of data that can be filtered and sorted as needed to produce the results you want
- It is Argos’s primary source for reporting
- Under the hood, it is an SQL Query whose parameters you can control at either the datablock or the report level
- A datablock makes Banner data (and potentially other data) accessible to the end user



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# How to design a datablock

- Think of what data you want in your bucket – What is the pool you are pulling from?
- Think of the most common ways you want to limit that data – What subsets do you analyze or report against?
- What possible data elements will you want in your reports? – What form fields do you report on?

# Sample Datablock

## Address Information

As of Date:   **Required**

Last Name Search:

Enter all or part of a name.

Entity Type:  **Required**

Include Inactive Addresses

Address Type(s):  **Required**

- Alumni Association
- Athletics Association
- Beneficiary Address
- Billing
- Business
- Campus Housing
- Campus Office

Choose multiple selections by using the CTRL or Shift keys.

ID	Last Name	First Name	FromD...	Street 1	Street 2	City	State	Zip	Status
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## Address Information

Example:

- The pool is Students, Alumni, Faculty, Staff, and Vendors (i.e. Everybody in Banner)
- You want to limit addresses to those current as of today, entity type, and address type. You want to be able to include inactive addresses, or search by name.
- You want id, name, from date, address info, and status



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# Input Parameters

Notice the different type of input parameter options.

- Dates can be either an “as of” date or a date range
- Drop-downs allow you to select only one value
- List boxes allow you to select one or more values
- Edit boxes allow you to enter data to search on
- Check boxes allow you to control the pool that is being selected in the list box – here it allows you to include inactive or you may have a default option of All
- Memo boxes are also available for adding data to your datablock result set



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# What does ITS need?

- As much information as possible that you can provide including the view/form/table name that is reported on in Banner and the field names
- Examples of the reports you have now, including those that require you to manually manipulate the data received from ITS
- Groups of reports that come from similar data sets (multiple reports from a single datablock)
- Any additional insights into the data



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# What data is reported on?

- Up until now, the reports provided by ITS have been coming from Banner Production
- Argos Reporting uses the ODS (Operational Data Store) for the following reasons:
  - Reporting does not interfere with daily Banner transactions
  - The ODS was designed for reporting, providing data in a views that are more accessible than Banner tables
- The ODS is refreshed nightly from current Banner data





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# What about OLAP?

- OLAP cubes are a very powerful tool that you may prefer for some of your reporting needs
  - Do you have counts or sums or monetary values that you wish to provide summary data for?
  - Do you look at trends in data over time?
  - Do you wish to analyze or discover information “on-the-fly” without running multiple reports?



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