

The New Era of Fraud in Higher Education



Virtual Learning Committee



Director Wendee Shinsato, CPA, CIA Assistant Vice Chancellor California State University



Volunteer Christiana Oppong, CIA, CCSA Senior Auditor Princeton University



Volunteer Brenda Auner, CIA, CFE Senior Auditor California State University



Volunteer *Virginia L. Kalil, CIA, CISA, CFE, CRISC Chief Internal Auditor University of South Florida*





The New Era of Fraud in Higher Education

Integrating audit & ERM to navigate and mitigate unique risks for colleges & universities

Katja Freeman, Solution Sales Director - Public Sector Chris Trepte, Solution Sales Director - Public Sector

The New Era of Fraud in Higher Education

Fraud in higher education presents significant financial, reputational, and operational risks. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of fraud risks unique to colleges and universities such as student aid fraud, financial fraud, and cybersecurity threats, and options to mitigate those risks.

Today we will:

Discuss how internal audit and an ERM program can work together to proactively detect, prevent, and respond to fraud in higher education, and understand strategies for integrating fraud risk management into audit planning, leveraging data analytics for fraud detection, and aligning and collaborating with enterprise risk management programs.

Learning Outcomes:

- 1. Identify unique fraud risks in higher education
- 2. Evaluate and align how audit and an ERM program can collaborate for a risk-based approach
- 3. Understand technology options for continuous monitoring and continuous risk assessments



Bio

Katja Freeman, Solutions Sales Director, Audit, Risk & Compliance

- Since 2022, Katja has worked as a domain expert for Public Sector, Audit, Risk & Compliance at Diligent (formerly Galvanize and ACL). She previously spent 10 years at the City and County of Denver's Auditor's Office, rising from Senior Auditor to Audit Director, and nearly three years as a Performance Evaluator for Wyoming's Legislative Service Office.
- Katja holds master's degrees in Political Science and Environmental Policy, along with an audit analytics certificate from Rutgers University. She has led performance, IT, financial, and audit analytics teams, earning multiple awards from the Association of Local Government Auditors (ALGA). She also chaired ALGA's Professional Issues Committee on auditing standards.





Bio

Chris Trepte, Solutions Sales Director

- With an IT background, Chris has held consulting roles managing client engagements focused on IT General Controls, SOC 2 Readiness, ICFR, SOX, NIST Compliance, and IT Security reviews.
- In March 2022, he transitioned to Diligent, first as a Client Partner in Customer Success, then managing implementations in Professional Services, and now as a Solutions Sales Director. Across these roles, he has driven client success, GRC technology adoption, and growth.





Learning Objectives

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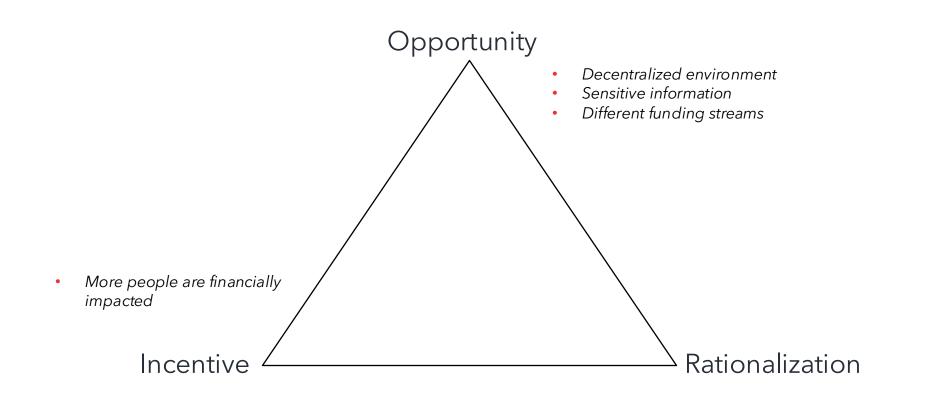
- 1. Introductions
- 2. Fraud vs. improper payments
- **3**. How can auditors and risk managers collaborate in alignment with standards?
- 4. Unique fraud risks in Higher Education
- 5. Example: Vendor fraud
- 6. Continuous risk assessment and internal controls monitoring
- 7. How can technology tools help?
- 8. Analytics, automation, visualization

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What is Fraud? How is it different from improper payments?

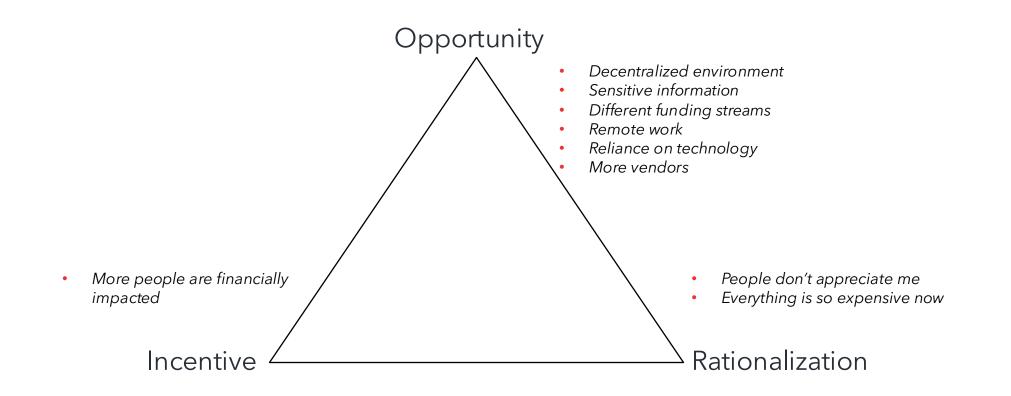


Fraud Triangle





Fraud Triangle





Polling Question #1

Does your institution conduct regular fraud training for all employees?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I don't know





"The typical amount of revenue lost to fraud is reported at 5%" (in reference to occupational fraud)

ACFE 2024, Report to the Nations

->This number has not changed from previous years.

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Improper Payments

What is it?

Definition: Funds that are disbursed which are either incorrect in amount or made to the wrong recipient

Examples:

- Federal student aid misallocation
- Funds disbursed to ineligible individuals, overpayments, underpayments
- Misuse of institutional funds: unauthorized expenses, use of P-Card instead of master purchase agreement, unauthorized use of T&E card





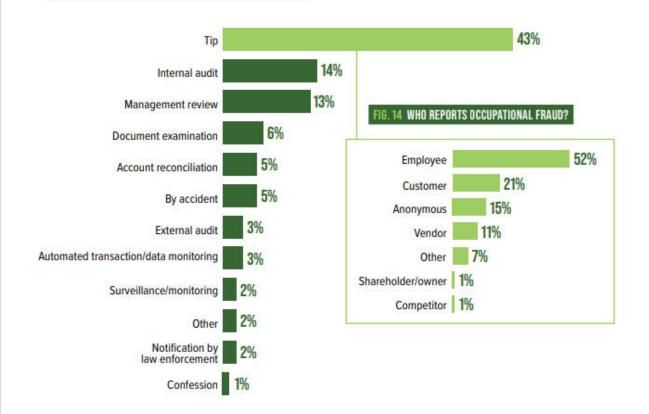
Occupational Fraud ACFE Report to the Nations 2024

What do we learn from this graph?

- Web-submitted or emailed tips (rather than telephone) are most effective
- Data shows need for stronger use of preventive controls

Source: ACFE, Report to the Nations 2024, p. 24.

FIG. 13 HOW IS OCCUPATIONAL FRAUD INITIALLY DETECTED?





Organization-Wide Effort

Compliance Management Prevention Third-Party Information Risk Security Detection Fraud Detection & Monitoring Improvements Audits and Risk Management Investigations



General Challenges for Organizations

Disparate Data Sources

Challenges

- Increased data siloes
- Difficulties in accessing reliable and consistent information
- Makes effective decision-making difficult
- Hinders effective collaboration between different departments, educators, and staff members
- Disparate reporting

Potential Solutions

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- Improve data integration and quality
- Create data dictionaries
- Consolidate solutions



What Do the Standards Say? IIA IPPF



Updated IIA IPPF Standards

What changed?

- New IIA IPPF standards emphasize the importance of a continuous risk assessment in internal audit functions.
- Standards see risk not only as barriers but opportunities to achieve objectives.
- Updated standards emphasize greater reliance on technology integration in auditing processes.
- Encourages auditors to use technology for risk assessments, data analysis, and continuous monitoring to enhance audit efficiency and effectiveness.





Key Areas for Collaboration ERM and Audit



Key Areas where Auditors and ERM can Collaborate

Governance and Independence

- **Independence:** Auditors offer objective assurance while ERM managers are responsible to facilitate risk ownership in the business units of an organization
- **Risk Alignment:** Risk based auditing allows auditors to align their audit plans to ERM risk assessments and prioritize the highest risks affecting an institution
- **Continuous Monitoring:** Use real-time dashboards for fraud, cybersecurity, and compliance risks
- Integrate Information: Share risk data across the institution to prevent data siloes between audit and ERM
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Ensure adherence to IIA standards and the COSO framework (or other risk frameworks)





Real-Time Dashboards

Example

ERM Reporting

Dashboards allow for the consolidation of risk data from different parts of the organization, providing both risk and audit teams with a centralized view of emerging threats, control effectiveness, and mitigation strategies. This transparency:

- Helps the risk team identify and assess evolving risks
- Enables the audit team to evaluate whether internal controls are effectively managing those risks

ERM Board Ready Report Connected to Boards ()

🗇 Take snapshot 🖉 Edit 🔗 Share

5

Executive Summary

- Successfully mitigated a significant operational risk by revamping the inventory management process, leading to a 15% reduction in logistic delays.
 Addressed emerging concerns with the 'GlobalTech' vendor, a maior
- Addressed energing concerns with the addressed recht vendor, a major software supplier, after their data breach incident gained mainstream media attention.
 Additional Info

Enterprise Risk Trends

- Recorded a notable improvement with 22% of assessed risks showing a downward trend for the third consecutive quarter, leading to a lower overall risk score.
- Observed a positive trend with more risks being successfully remediated compared to the number of newly identified risks, indicating effective risk management practices.

Risk Program Updates

Planned

• Sch busi

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on g

- Completed the Q4 ERM Dynamic Risk Assessment, highlighting key
- areas for improvement in cybersecurity and regulatory compliance. Initiated collaborative ERM actions with the Human Resources
- Leadership Team (HRLT) to address emerging HR-related risks, including talent retention.
- Launched a new ERM dashboard in Q1 2024, providing the board and executive team with real-time risk analytics and insights.

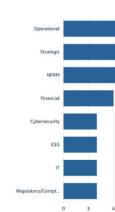
d Activities	Ref	Status	Risk	Description	0
heduled the rollout of the ERM scenario planning tool to Level 3 (L3) siness units, aiming for complete integration by Q2 2024. Inning to conduct a global risk assessment workshop in Q1 focusing geopolitical risks, especially in the Asian and European markets. Andings & Mitigation Plans	R-AOC-2	Response	Critical/High Vulnerability over 90 days old	Aging critical vulnerabilities pose significant risks to both individuals and organizations. Here are some of the key risks associated with these vulnerabilities:Exploitation by malicious actors: As critical vulnerabilities age, they	,

Top Risks

Very Low







Owner

Ryan Torio

Risk Category

Polling Question #2

Have you increased your efforts in collaborating with risk owners to detect fraud?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I don't know
- d. We don't have problems with fraud





Changes in Higher Ed

More data leading to informed decisions

How Can a Continuous Risk Assessment Help?

- Early detection of fraud patterns
- Pro-active risk mitigation
- Continuous monitoring and alerts
- Strengthens internal controls
- Supports data-driven fraud prevention strategies
- Establishes employee awareness and ethical culture
- Auditors can conduct a continuous risk assessment to inform their Annual Audit Plan
- Risk Managers conduct continuous risk assessment to inform their 2nd line of defense duties and the strategic risks of an organization.
- Both can collaborate on these tasks





Integrating a Continuous Risk Assessment with Internal Controls Monitoring

2nd Line of Defense

What can be done?

- Ongoing review of controls to monitor design and functioning of the controls
- Monitoring becomes more targeted when integrated with a continuous risk assessment
 - Real-time detection of control deficiencies
 - Prompt remediation
 - Use tools to automate processes
 - Quick feedback enabling continuous improvement





Combined Assurance for Organizational Governance

Not mandated but Encouraged

Advantages:

- Assurance mapping
- Enhanced governance and monitoring
- Reduced duplication of efforts

Disadvantages:

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- Auditors may observe variations of quality in the work of different assurance providers
- Different assessments/ interpretations of severity of risks
- Lack of objectivity among assurance providers
- Perception of lack of independence of internal audit

In alignment to IIA IPPF 2024



Research and Grant Fraud Indicators

Example



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Research & Grant Fraud Indicators

Reputational and Financial Damage to the Institution

Conflict of Interest: Use funds for personal expenses or non-research related expenses

- Analyze detailed expenditure data for patterns of non-research related spending
- Unusual spending categories
- High personal expense amounts
- Geographically inconsistent spending

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 Discrepancy between expense justification and actual spending



Research & Grant Fraud Indicators

Reputational and Financial Damage to the Institution

- **Data Fabrication:** Researchers submit false or plagiarized information
- Misuse of Research Funds:

Undisclosed relationships between researchers and external people or organizations



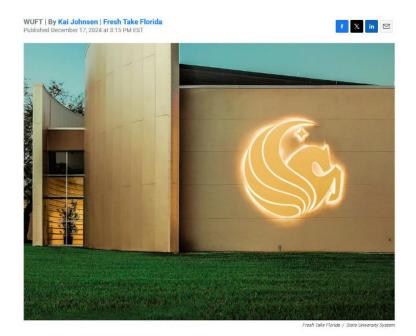


Procurement and Vendor Fraud Example





Thieves steal \$107,000 from UCF in sophisticated hacking scheme



Source: Thieves steal \$107,000 from UCF in sophisticated hacking scheme | WLRN



Procurement & Vendor Fraud

Cause: Lack of oversight of vendor contracts

Examples:

- False or inflated invoices: Making payments to nonexistent vendors or overpaying for services; fake invoices.
- **Conflicts of interest:** Higher Ed staff awarding contracts to relatives or friends or accepting bribes from vendors.
- **Kickbacks:** Vendor and employee working together on fraud. Not receiving agreed-upon number of goods/ overbilling.
- **Unauthorized spending:** Purchase of non-educational items with grant or institutional funds (Could be improper payment or fraud)





What Can Be Done From the Audit Side?

- Conduct surprise audits
- Continuous auditing
- Review policies and procedures related to vendor management
 - Regularly review vendor information and contracts
 - Review contract requirements
- Assess if segregation of duties is working





Procurement & Vendor Fraud

Auditors

Conduct Vendor Audits: Include a right-toaudit clause in vendor contracts

- Use analytics to detect unusual patters around transaction volumes, payment frequencies, and vendor information.
- **Example:** Use cross-referencing of information to identify fake vendors submitting fictitious invoices
- **Example:** Identify irregularities associated with employee vendor collusion where a legitimate vendor submits inflated or duplicate invoices. Such as identical purchase numbers, descriptions, amounts, dates etc.
- Red Flag: Unusual close association with a vendor





What Can Be Done from the Risk Side?

- Continuously monitor internal controls and check for control failures
- Establish tone at the top that drives all risk owners to feel responsible for the process
- Conduct a continuous risk assessment
 - A regular evaluation of potential risks of an organization
 - Understanding the risk landscape for the entire organization and the emergence of new risks
 - Periodic fraud risk assessments
- Integrate continuous risk assessment information into ERM program



Polling Question #3

Are you conducting a continuous risk assessment?

a. Yesb. Noc. I don't know





Leveraging Data to Stay Informed Proactive Approach



"Proactive data monitoring was associated with 52% lower losses and frauds detected in half the time."

Association of Certified Fraud Examiners



What Can Data Do for You?

- Review 100% of data for indicators of fraud
- Automate tasks to increase resource capacity
- Quickly respond to identified fraud real time





Types of Analysis

Ad Hoc/Sampling:

- Manual
- Time Consuming
- Element of Human Error

Continuous:

- 100% Coverage
- Real time notifications
- Quickly covers large volumes of data





				Continuous
			Automated	Investigation and remediation of DA
		Repeatable	Processes are automated in an	program analysis now part of the overall
	Adhoc / Manual	Processes are now repeatable in a DA tool	RDA/RPA tool and require little to no	process. Meta data of program efficiency reportable
No Process	Focuses on ad- hoc/manual testing for	but still require manual action/execution	manual action	reportable
No data analytic program exists today; rely on canned reports	both process and risk- based analysis			



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U	2	3		



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	2	3	4	·



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No data analytic program exists today; rely on canned reports	both process and risk- based analysis			
	2	3	4	5



Introduction to Continuous Monitoring New Era of Risk Monitoring and Mitigation



The ongoing process of monitoring and assessing internal controls within an organization to ensure compliance, efficiency, and risk mitigation

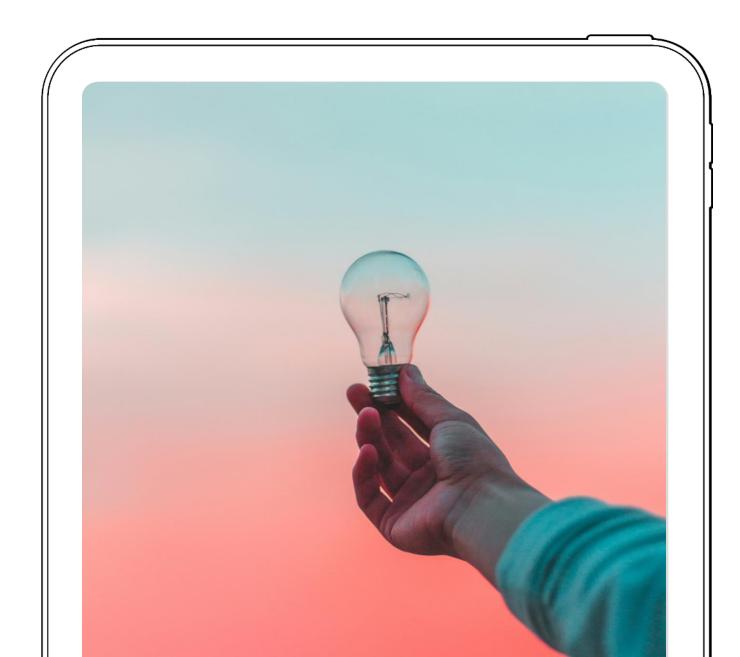
Definition of CCM



Significance of CCM Active Fraud Mitigation

- 1. Early Detection of Fraudulent Activities
 - CCM continuously analyzes transactions, user behavior, and control effectiveness, allowing organizations to identify suspicious patterns and anomalies before they escalate into significant fraud incidents.
- 2. Reducing the Fraud Triangle (Opportunity, Rationalization, Pressure)
 - By minimizing opportunities for fraud through automated controls, CCM discourages fraudulent behavior. If employees know that controls are actively monitored, the risk of detection increases, reducing the likelihood of misconduct.
- 3. Strengthening Internal Controls
 - Traditional audits and periodic reviews may miss real-time fraud, but CCM ensures that internal controls are enforced consistently, preventing gaps where fraud can occur.



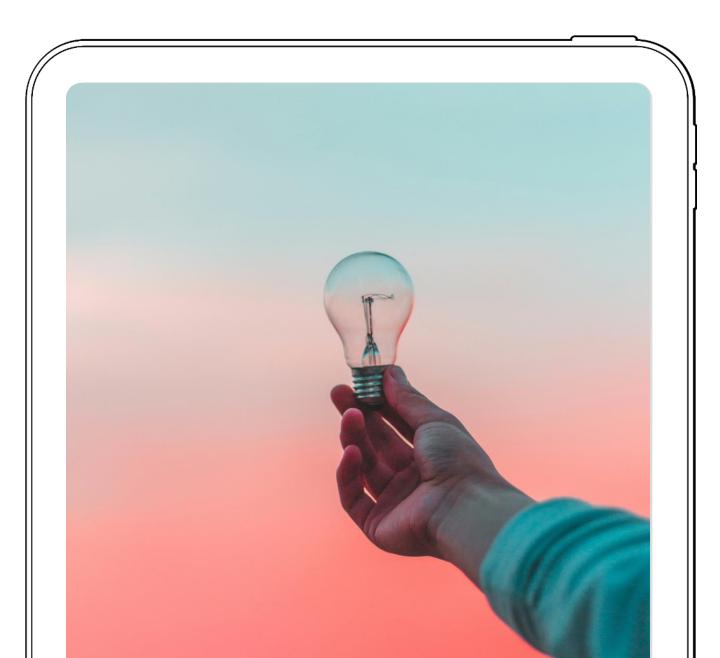


Significance of CCM Active Fraud Mitigation Continued

- 4. Compliance with Regulations and Standards
 - Many industries require strict compliance with financial regulations (e.g., SOX, GDPR, COSO).
 CCM helps ensure compliance by continuously verifying adherence to policies, reducing regulatory risks.
- 5. Cost Savings and Efficiency
 - Proactively preventing fraud through CCM reduces the need for costly forensic investigations and legal proceedings after fraud has already occurred. It also optimizes internal audit efforts by automating control testing.
- 6. Data-Driven Fraud Prevention

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• By leveraging machine learning, AI, and analytics, CCM can predict potential fraud risks and flag irregularities based on trends, allowing organizations to address vulnerabilities proactively.



Key Components

Automated Data Collection Rule Engine

- Collect data from various sources, such as ERP systems, databases, logs, assets, and IT security solutions in an automated and real-time
- Define specific rules and thresholds that indicate control violations or anomalies.
- Immediate notification and action of potential issues.



Continuous Improvement

Ongoing assessment and enhancement of CCM processes to adapt to evolving risks and business needs.

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manner.

Analytics and Reporting

• Analyze large datasets, detect patterns, and generate insightful reports.

Remediation Workflow

- Establish a process for addressing and remediating control deficiencies once identified.
- Ensuring that issues are addressed systematically and in a timely manner.



Polling Question #4

Are you performing any continuous monitoring activities?

a. Yesb. Noc. I don't know





Example

Purchase Card Audit

Leverage analysis of purchase card data to continuously monitor against fraud related procedures / controls

1. Perform analysis on purchase card data to determine instances where transactions exceeded a pre-defined threshold

	Planning	Fieldwork	Procedures	Reviews	Results	Findings
Employeen	urchase c	ard transac	tions -			
-прюуее р	ui chase c	aru transat				
Overview Au	ıdit Program	Execute Proce	edures			
-						
Procedure 🥑	Execute Pi	rocedure O				
D-007: Ident	ify any conve	enience check	transactions t	hat exceed a	specified th	reshold
Procedure i	nformation					
	nformation					
Procedure i Title	nformation					
Title		neck transaction	s that exceed a s	pecified thresh	nold	
Title		neck transaction	s that exceed a s	pecified thresh	nold	
Title Identify any c Description	onvenience ch					
Title Identify any c Description Identify any c	onvenience ch	heck transactio	s that exceed a sponted of the spont			
Title Identify any c Description Identify any c ACL Analytic	onvenience ch convenience cl cs Procedures	heck transaction	ns that exceed a	specified thre	shold	ansaction files into one file.
Title Identify any c Description Identify any c <u>ACL Analytic</u> Obtain all pur	onvenience ch convenience cl cs Procedures rchase card tr	heck transaction ansaction files f	ns that exceed a or the audit peri	specified thre od. If needed,	shold merge the tr	ansaction files into one file. y include searching on specific key words like "check")

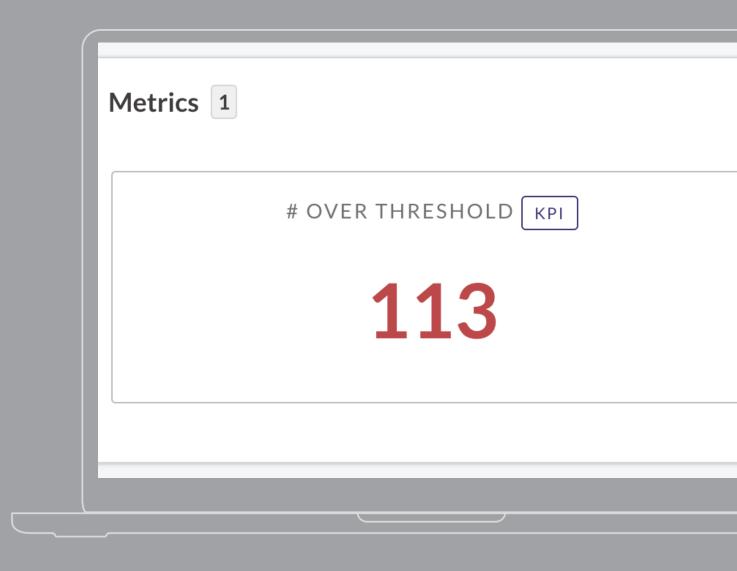
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Example

Purchase Card Audit

Leverage analysis of purchase card data to continuously monitor against fraud related procedures / controls

- Perform analysis on purchase card data to determine instances where transactions exceeded a pre-defined threshold
- 2. Define a metric (key performance / key risk indicator) based on the outcomes of the analysis



Example

Purchase Card Audit

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- 1. Perform analysis on purchase card data to determine instances where transactions exceeded a pre-defined threshold
- 2. Define a metric (key performance / key risk indicator) based on the outcomes of the analysis
- 3. Set thresholds that define control success / failure criteria based on the defined metric

OVER THRESHOLD KPI
113
less than - < 120 = No Issues
greater than or equal to \geq 120 = Issues Noted
Enable Assessment Driver (1)

Example

Purchase Card Audit

Leverage analysis of purchase card data to continuously monitor against fraud related procedures / controls

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- 4. Inform real-time dashboards on control monitoring outcomes

ompliance T							
Test Reference	Test Description		Testing Type	2023	2022	2020	
F1	Exceeds Single Transaction Lir		Full Population	100%	100%	100%	
F10	Purchase Date Before Approva	l Date	Sample Selection	80%	62.14%	100%	
F11	Segregation of Duties		Sample Selection	90%	82.69%	88.12%	
ľ12	Cardholder Reconciliation Ver	fication	Sample Selection	100%	100%	0%	
Г13	Supporting Documentation		Sample Selection	100%	100%	98%	
Г14	Valid Receipts		Sample Selection	100%	100%	97.6%	
F15	Duplicate Transactions		Sample Selection	100%	100%	100%	
Г2	Exceeds Monthly Credit Limit		Full Population	100%	100%	100%	
ГЗ	Purchase Day = Leave Day		Full Population	100%	100%	100%	
Г4	Weekend/Holiday Transaction	5	Full Population	100%	100%	100%	
r5	Prohibited MCC Transactions		Full Population	100%	100%	100%	
Г6	Split Purchases		Full Population	100%	99.75%	99.75%	
F7	State Sales Tax		Full Population	100%	100%	100%	
Г8	Proper WORKS Approvals		Full Population	100%	99%	100%	
F 9	Gift Card/Cash Advance		Full Population	100%	100%	100%	
ompliance A	verage 2023	Compliand	e Average 2022	(Complian	ce Average 2	2020
<u>†</u> 9	8.00%	Ť	96.24%		Ť	92.2	23%

Example

Increases in Improper Payments

Leverage analysis of financial ERP data to continuously monitor against fraud related risks

 Perform analysis on financial ERP data to surface insights that can be used as input into risk assessment activities

ude overpayments, duplicate payments, nout proper authorization, or payments to pients. Assess the potential impact of nents on the organization in terms of s, reputation damage, legal consequences,
nout proper authorization, or payments to bients. Assess the potential impact of ments on the organization in terms of s, reputation damage, legal consequences,
vients. Assess the potential impact of nents on the organization in terms of s, reputation damage, legal consequences,
nents on the organization in terms of s, reputation damage, legal consequences,
/ compliance. Implement monitoring system o detect irregularities in payment processes
le regular audits, data analytics, and
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Example

Increases in Improper Payments

Leverage analysis of financial ERP data to continuously monitor against fraud related risks

- 1. Perform analysis on financial ERP data to surface insights that can be used as input into risk assessment activities
- Define a metric (key performance / key risk indicator) based on the outcomes of the analysis

13.1%	4.75%	This might include overpayments, duplicate payments,
LJ.L/0 Score: 13.0	4.7 7	payments without proper authorization, or payments to
Score: 13.0	Score: 4.7	ineligible recipients. Assess the potential impact of improper payments on the organization in terms of
		financial losses, reputation damage, legal consequences,
		and regulatory compliance. Implement monitoring system and controls to detect irregularities in payment processes
		This can include regular audits, data analytics, and
		automated tools to identify anomalies or patterns
		indicative of improper payments.
Details Metrics	Assessment Treatment	Assurance Discussion Activities
Details Metrics	Assessment Treatment	
Details Metrics	Assessment Treatment	
	Assessment Treatment	Assurance Discussion Activities
		Assurance Discussion Activities
AGGREGATE D	JPLICATE INVOICE AMOUN	Assurance Discussion Activities
AGGREGATE D	JPLICATE INVOICE AMOUN	Assurance Discussion Activities



Example

Increases in Improper Payments

Leverage analysis of financial ERP data to continuously monitor against fraud related risks

- 1. Perform analysis on financial ERP data to surface insights that can be used as input into risk assessment activities
- 2. Define a metric (key performance / key risk indicator) based on the outcomes of the analysis
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	Increases in Improper Payments
Departments	Office of Risk Management
Risk Scoring Factor	Likelihood
Metric	Aggregate Duplicate Invoice Amount
	\$33,194
	less than < 40000 = Low
	less than < 40000 = Low

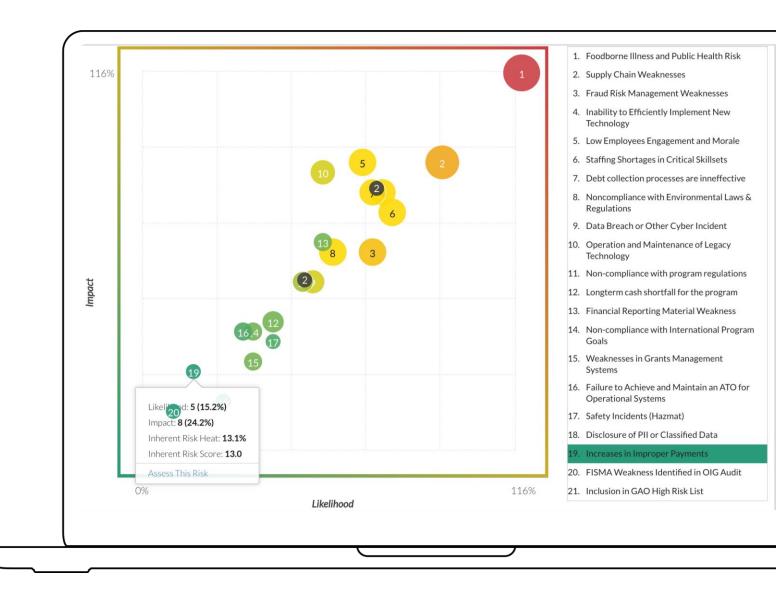


Example

Increases in Improper Payments

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- 3. Set thresholds that define risk scoring based on the defined metric
- 4. Inform real-time dashboards on risk assessment monitoring outcomes









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Diligent Audit





Katja Freeman



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Chris Trepte



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Thank You



Announcements



Upcoming ACUA Webinars – Save the Date!

Month	Date & Time	Presenter	Торіс
March 2025	3/27/25 – 1:00pm EST	Baker Tilly	Sponsored Programs Risk Assessments
April 2025	4/24/25 – 1:00pm EST	Sarah MacCarthy	Navigating Policy Changes in Academia
May 2025	5/22/25 - 1:00pm EST (90-minute webinar)	Nik Henegar	Audit Bots: Revolutionizing Audits with RPA and Macros



Do you have an idea for a webinar? Contact the VLC director at <u>wshinsato@calstate.edu</u>



Recently Released December Kick Starter!

Information Technology – Third Party Risk Management

Available in the members-only Audit Tools section of <u>www.ACUA.org</u>





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Present a Webinar	Become a Mentor	Write an Article for the College & University Auditor
Write a Kick Starter	Post on Connect ACUA	Share, Like, Tweet & Connect on Social Media





Join us for an upcoming webinar

