



## The Electronic Newsletter of the Association for Institutional Research (AIR)

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Serving Institutional Research Professionals and Those Engaged in Management  
Research, Policy Analysis & Planning Since October 22, 1986

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**The newsletter welcomes news items related to management research, policy analysis and planning; persons changing jobs or retiring; requests for help or suggestions from readers; announcements of professional meetings and conferences; comments about recent publications; abstracts of papers which authors are willing to share; job announcements; philosophical and/or humorous thoughts; and more. This online publication is available free to anyone interested in institutional research.**

*If you wish to subscribe, change your subscription address, or unsubscribe, go to <http://www.airweb.org/page.asp?page=133>*

*If you would like to submit articles, requests or information for consideration and inclusion in the newsletter, please contact Meihua Zhai, Editor, at: ([meihua.zhai@usg.edu](mailto:meihua.zhai@usg.edu)).*

*Persons seeking jobs in institutional research, planning, or policy analysis should plan to check the AIR web page every couple of days for new positions. Point your browser to the following URL: <http://airweb.org> (look under "Jobs")*

*For further information regarding the Association for Institutional Research, contact Terrence Russell, Executive Director, AIR, 222 Stone Bldg., Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL 32306-4462; Telephone: (850) 644-4470 or via e-mail: ([air@mailier.fsu.edu](mailto:air@mailier.fsu.edu)).*

## From Your 2006 Forum Chair

### Facilitators Needed

William E. Knight, 2006 Forum Chair

This is your opportunity to get involved. Facilitators are needed to assist with numerous presentations during the 2006 Forum. This role is integral to the session by giving a brief introduction of the presenter, making sure the session begins and ends on time, and possibly conducting a short question and answer period. This is a great way to meet people and either learn more about an issue you have an interest in or broaden your horizons by choosing a subject that is new to you.

To learn more about a Facilitator's responsibilities and to assist with one or more sessions, please go to <http://airweb.org/facilitators.html>

To signup to be a facilitator, please go to <http://airweb.org/facilitatorsignup.html>

The volunteer sign up page has been online since February 9.

Sincerely,

William E. Knight  
2006 Forum Chair

## AIR Publication News

### IR Applications

Gerald McLaughlin, Editor, IR Applications

This issue of IR Applications: The Changing Nature of the Comprehensive Assessment as the Culminating Experience for the Acquisition of the Master's Degree by Leonard J. Deutsch and Barbara L. Nicholson from Marshall University brings together both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Their research also takes a broader perspective by pointing out the lack of research on the outcomes of graduate programs. As they note, it seems that our focus on learning outcomes at institutions seems to be on undergraduate experiences and learning.

These colleagues, who had a vital interest in the topic, seem to have established a systematic procedure and reached a point where at least initial conclusions can be drawn. They did not use sophisticated statistics and this does not seem to be a problem. Their partnership with the Council of Graduate Schools will hopefully give the results visibility and will cause additional assessments of graduate level outcomes.

The full article is available at: <http://www.airweb.org/page.asp?page=203>

Sincerely,

Gerald McLaughlin  
Editor, IR Applications

## Changing Scene

Meihua Zhai, BOR, University System of Georgia (meihua.zhai@usg.edu)

**This portion of the newsletter is devoted to keeping you informed about changes such as readers who relocate to new positions and/or institutions, professional recognition awards and honors, retirements, deaths, newly hired colleagues, promotions, etc. If you become aware of a change on your campus or elsewhere which should be mentioned in "The Changing Scene," please send me a note with the key facts at (meihua.zhai@usg.edu). Keep it brief, but include the information you think others would like to know.**

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MEIHUA ZHAI (meihua.zhai@usg.edu) recently started her new job as Assistant Vice Chancellor, Strategic Research & Analysis in Board of Regents, University System of Georgia. She shared her starting date with the new chancellor on Feb. 6th, 2006. Georgia offered Meihua her first IR job in Georgia Southern University many years ago. She is looking forward to continuing her joy of IR with her colleagues and friends in GA. She was formerly Director of Institutional Research & Reporting for George Mason University in Virginia. If you have items to send to e-AIR, please note the e-mail address change, but you can still use her previous e-mail address, thanks to her former boss in George Mason. Best wishes, Meihua!

## e-AIR's Last Call for Limericks

### Last Call for Limericks

Marne Einarson, Cornell University (mke3@cornell.edu)

It's not too late to demonstrate what a witty and talented bunch we institutional researchers are! The inaugural e-AIR Limerick Contest is still accepting entries. Entries should follow the basic limerick format and have something to do with institutional research.

All entries will be judged by our esteemed panel of Vic Borden, Dawn Geronimo Terkla, and Fred Volkwein. The winning limericks will be published in the March e-AIR newsletter.

So put on those creative caps, get rhyming, and e-mail your limerick(s) to Marne Einarson (mke3@cornell.edu) by March 1st.

Marne

## Assessment Institute's Call for Proposals

### CALL FOR PROPOSALS

#### *The 2006 Assessment Institute in Indianapolis*

Sponsored by  
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis

**October 29 – October 31, 2006**

The Westin Indianapolis  
50 South Capitol Avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana

#### **Special Topics of Interest Include:**

**Accreditation, Civic Engagement, Community Colleges, E-Portfolios, Faculty Development, First-Year Experiences, General Education, Major Fields, Methods, and Student Development**

**By March 10, 2006** please email to: Karen E. Black at [kblack@iupui.edu](mailto:kblack@iupui.edu)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Institution \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Co-Presenter (s) \_\_\_\_\_

Co-Presenter (s) Email (s) \_\_\_\_\_

Co-Presenter (s) Institution (*If different from above*) \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Preferred format:** (*Do not leave blank*)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 75-minute interactive workshop
- \_\_\_\_\_ Poster in the Best Practices Fair
- \_\_\_\_\_ 30-minute mini-presentation and a poster in the Best Practices Fair
- \_\_\_\_\_ 30-minute mini-presentation only

**This presentation is designed for:** \_\_\_ Beginners \_\_\_ Advanced Practitioners

**This presentation will fit best into the following track (please select one primary track):**

Accreditation

Civic Engagement

Community Colleges

E-Portfolios

Faculty Development

First-Year Experiences

General Education

Major Fields

Methods

Student Development

**Title of presentation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Abstract for the program book (50 words or less):**

**Please provide a 1-2 page extended description that includes the goals of the workshop and how participants will be involved.**

## **Penn State Center's Call for Participation**

### **Penn State Center to Study the First Year of College**

Patrick T. Terenzini, Pennsylvania State University ([Terenzini@psu.edu](mailto:Terenzini@psu.edu))

The Penn State Center for the Study of Higher Education announces Parsing the First Year of College, a three-year project supported by The Spencer Foundation and now seeking participating institutions. Perhaps the most comprehensive, longitudinal study of its kind, the project will map the influences shaping student learning and persistence during the first year of college. Focal areas will include students' experiences, the peer environment, faculty members' values and activities, and internal institutional structures, practices, and policies. The Project, directed by Patrick T. Terenzini and Robert D. Reason of the Penn State Center for the Study of Higher Education, will involve 40 four-year colleges and universities nationwide.

Institutions meeting the eligibility criteria and selected for participation will receive:

- Information about the educational effectiveness of their current programs and policies;
- Extensive quantitative data to guide enhancement of local retention efforts;

- Participation at no cost in the 2007 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE);
- Subsidized pricing for use of ACT's Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency;
- A copy of their own dataset for additional, institution-specific analyses;
- Information for comparing local performance with that of similar institutions;
- National visibility.

Participation in the study is restricted to 4-year colleges and universities that rely on the ACT Assessment as their primary quantitative measure for admissions decision-making. More information on the project, including information about participating in the study, is available at <http://www.ed.psu.edu/cshe/Parsing/home.html>.

Pat

Patrick T. Terenzini  
Distinguished Professor and Senior Scientist  
Center for the Study of Higher Education  
Pennsylvania State University

## The Toolbox Revisited

### **The Toolbox Revisited: Paths to Degree Completion from High School Through College**

The US Department of Education is releasing "The Toolbox Revisited: Paths to Degree Completion from High School Through College" on-line (PDF version) on or about Feb. 15. Hard copies are due back from the printer the week of Feb. 28, and over 1500 AIR members are on the mailing list for the books. More will be available at the forum in Chicago. So don't eat up 220 pages on your printer cartridge when the PDF file comes out. The URL will be [www.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/toolboxrevisit/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/toolboxrevisit/index.html)

The Toolbox Revisited is a data essay that follows a nationally representative cohort of students from high school into postsecondary education, and asks what aspects of their formal schooling contribute to completing a bachelor's degree by their mid-20s. The universe of students is confined to those who attended a four-year college at any time, thus including students who started out in other types of institutions, particularly community colleges.

## AAUP News

### **AAUP Survey of Changes in Retirement Practices 2006**

John W. Curtis, AAUP Research Office (jcurtis@aaup.org)

In early January, many college and university presidents received notification of a survey on faculty retirement practices, sponsored jointly by several higher education associations. The AAUP Survey of Changes in Retirement Practices 2006 is concerned especially with early retirement incentive plans, phased retirement plans, and health insurance coverage for retirees. Its findings will update *The Survey of Changes in Faculty Retirement Policies*, published in 2000, which is available at <http://www.aaup.org/Issues/retirement/retirepg.htm>. With a large wave of faculty retirements anticipated in the near future—or already occurring—the information provided by this survey will help institutions plan more effective retirement programs.

If your institution was invited to participate in this survey, we urge you to complete the questionnaire right away. A Web address for completing the survey was included with the invitation letter. To find out whether your college or university was included in the 2006 survey sample, you can check the list at <http://www.aaup.org/Issues/retirement/surveyparticipants.htm>. If your institution received a survey questionnaire and you have questions, you can direct them to the Survey Research Institute (SRI) at Cornell University, 168 Ives Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853. Telephone: 1-888-367-8404.

The 2006 survey is co-sponsored by the American Council on Education (ACE), the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR), and the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO). Funding is provided by the TIAA-CREF Institute and the Cornell Higher Education Research Institute.

A report on the survey results will be prepared by Ronald G. Ehrenberg, Irving M. Ives Professor of Industrial Relations and Economics at Cornell University and director of the Cornell Higher Education Research Institute, and Valerie Martin Conley, assistant professor of higher education and associate director of the Center for Higher Education at Ohio University.

John Curtis

John W. Curtis, Director of Research  
AAUP Research Office

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### **AAUP Faculty Compensation Survey 2005-06**

John W. Curtis, AAUP Research Office (jcurtis@aaup.org)

We are now moving to finalize data processing for our annual survey. All survey contacts should have received an e-mail update sent February 21. For those who have already submitted data, the e-mail provides instructions for finalizing your entry. We now have a confirmation report available that can be printed and/or saved as a PDF or Excel file.

If your institution has not yet submitted data, it's not too late—but please submit your data by March 1 if at all possible. After that time, we may need to delay your entry until our later "Corrections and Additions" publication.

If your institution did not receive an e-mail message, please let us know. Our contact e-mail for the survey is [aaupfcs@aaup.org](mailto:aaupfcs@aaup.org) and the telephone number is (202) 737-5900 ext. 3018. Our survey home page is at <https://research.aaup.org/fcs>. If you are not the contact for your institution, please pass this information along.

For those of you interested in peer comparison reports from survey data, we are working on the software to process and distribute those reports. We hope to have them available by March 15 and will send an e-mail to all survey contacts when they are ready; please hold off on submitting your requests until then. Our annual report will be published in mid-April.

Thanks very much for participating in our survey.

John Curtis

John W. Curtis, Director of Research  
AAUP Research Office

## Paul P. Fidler Research Grant

### **National Resource Center Announces Competition for Research Grant**

Brad Cox, National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition ([bradcox@sc.edu](mailto:bradcox@sc.edu))

The National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition invites applications for 2006-07 Paul P. Fidler Research Grant. With a comprehensive award package that includes a \$5,000 stipend, travel to two national conferences, and a potential publication, the Paul P. Fidler Research Grant will promote the development and dissemination of original research with the potential to have a national impact on college student success. The Center invites applicants to submit proposals addressing a wide variety of topics, including students of color, community colleges, advising, transfer and articulation, administrative policies, and other issues related to college student



transitions.

The grant was established in 2005 in an effort to “encourage scholars, in a very concrete and significant way, to develop research agendas focusing on students in transition,” explains Mary Stuart Hunter, the Center’s director. Last year’s recipients, Christine and Michael Kirk-Kuwaye of the University of Hawaii – Manoa, are currently completing a study entitled First-Semester Patterns of Student Engagement: Lateral and Community College Transfer Students at a Four-Year Institution.

“The creativity and innovation evident in the proposals received for the 2005-2006 grant competition was inspiring,” says Hunter. “The high quality of these proposals bodes well for the future of research in this important area. We anticipate another strong group of proposals for 2006-07.”

To be awarded in November 2006 at the 13th National Conference on Students in Transition in St. Louis, Missouri, the Paul P. Fidler Research Grant provides a comprehensive award package including:

- Stipend of \$5,000
- Travel to the 13th National Conference on Students in Transition, November 2006, in St. Louis, MO, at which the award will be presented
- Announcement and recognition at 2006 Students in Transition conference luncheon
- Travel to the 14th National Conference on Students in Transition, November 2007, in Cincinnati, OH, at which the research findings will be reported
- Announcement on The National Resource Center webpage, listservs, and print publications
- Priority consideration for publication by the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition

The application & proposal form may be downloaded at [www.sc.edu/fye/research/grant](http://www.sc.edu/fye/research/grant) and must be submitted electronically to [NRCresearch@gwm.sc.edu](mailto:NRCresearch@gwm.sc.edu) by June 1st, 2006.

The grant competition is open to faculty, staff, and graduate students who plan to conduct research on issues of college student transitions. Cross-institutional research teams are especially encouraged to apply for the Paul P. Fidler Research Grant.

More information about the grant, including application procedures, is available at [www.sc.edu/fye/research/grant](http://www.sc.edu/fye/research/grant)

The Paul P. Fidler Research Grant complements the Center's ongoing efforts to develop a comprehensive research and literature base related to college student transitions. The National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition has as its mission to support and advance efforts to improve student learning and transitions into and through higher education. In addition to the Fidler Grant, the Center fulfills its mission through the presentation of annual conferences and institutes, web resources, and publications, including a monograph series and the Journal of The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.

For additional information, please contact Brad Cox, the Center's coordinator of research and public information.

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## CIRP Celebrates Its 40th Anniversary

### **The CIRP Freshman Survey's 40th Anniversary**

John H. Pryor, CIRP ([john.pryor@ucla.edu](mailto:john.pryor@ucla.edu))

The Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) celebrates the 40th anniversary of the annual Freshman Survey with the 2006 administration. Beginning in 1966, the CIRP Freshman Survey is the country's largest and longest longitudinal study of higher education. This past year, 592 colleges and universities participated in the CIRP Freshman Survey and returned their forms in time to be considered for the annual normative report. This resulted in 377,981 students responding to the survey.

The incoming first-year students in 2005 were marked by an increase in attitudes and behaviors related to issues of civic and social responsibility (see summaries of the report found here <http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/norms05.html>). This year's freshmen also showed beer and liquor drinking at a record low, lower participation in religious activities, and decreased support for military spending. Our report this year also included a preview of a special focus on first-generation students. Look for a longer and more comprehensive report on first-generation students later in the year from HERI.

The CIRP findings tell us that our incoming freshmen are more likely to lend a hand to help others in difficulty. That theme not only ran through the 2005 results, but it also played a significant role in the return of completed surveys this year. One of our participating New Orleans schools, when returning to campus to salvage what could be saved, found a box of completed freshman surveys. They had been feared washed away in the flood, but were safe. During some confusion in the salvage process, the box of surveys disappeared. Amazingly, a kind soul finding the box in a gas station in Baton Rouge mailed it to our survey processing center in Minneapolis! As one of our friends from this school wrote: Katrina couldn't take out the CIRP thanks to a good Samaritan.

The 40th anniversary in 2006 promises to be a banner year for participation. Reflecting current issues in higher education, this year we have expanded our questions on financing college. Based upon your feedback, we have also made registration easier with an online version (<http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/freshman.html>). A special gift from HERI to each participating institution in 2006 will be a free trends report that will summarize your institutional findings from 1971 to 2006.

As the new director of the CIRP I am pleased to be able to share with you these exciting results and new initiatives from HERI. Keep those requests coming in!

John H. Pryor

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## New Awards in Student Retention

### **EPI Announces Two New Awards Programs in Postsecondary Student Retention**

Watson Scott Swail, Educational Policy Institute ([wswail@educationalpolicy.org](mailto:wswail@educationalpolicy.org))

The Educational Policy Institute has announced two new annual awards in student retention to celebrate the achievement of institutions and individuals. The first is the EPI Outstanding Student Retention Program Award, which is presented annually to a two- or four-year institution that exhibits excellence in the development and implementation of a student retention program. Nominees must complete a thorough nomination form with complete information about the program and evidence of its effectiveness.

Programs will be reviewed by a panel for consideration. All programs will be entered into a free, searchable database that will reside on the website of [www.studentretention.org](http://www.studentretention.org) (<http://www.studentretention.org/>) , EPI's retention division.

The second award is aimed at individuals who have shown a lifetime of service to student success. The EPI Outstanding Service Award will look for individuals who have a documented career of excellence that has, in part, (a) raised the profile of students and the importance of serving students well and improving the chances of personal and institutional success; (b) improved institutional programs and practices that serve students; (c) recast the institutional mission to one that is student centered; (d) presented research and analysis that has furthered the issue of student retention and persistence; and (d) exhibited a career-long commitment to serving students.

Programs and individuals can be self-nominated or be nominated by colleagues. Closing for the 2006 competition is April 15, 2006, and the awards will be made at RETENTION 2006 (<http://www.educationalpolicy.org/retention2006>) in Las Vegas, Nevada on Tuesday, May 23, 2006. For more information, visit [www.educationalpolicy.org/awards.html](http://www.educationalpolicy.org/awards.html), or contact Dr. Watson Scott Swail at [wswail@educationalpolicy.org](mailto:wswail@educationalpolicy.org) or (757) 271-6380.

Thank you.

Dr. Watson Scott Swail

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## Help

### **Seeking Your Comment on SPSS V14**

Jessica A. Greene, Boston College ([jessica.greene.2@bc.edu](mailto:jessica.greene.2@bc.edu))

Our IR office uses SPSS 13.0 (for Windows) and we are wondering if we should install the latest upgrade to SPSS, version 14.0. We love SPSS, but in the past have found that sometimes the product is released before all of the bugs are out (for example, there seemed to be some issues with SPSS 11.0 and 11.5). Does anyone have any experience with SPSS version 14 and could comment on its pros and/or cons?

Jessica

Jessica A. Greene, Ph.D.  
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## Editors' Book of the Month

Meihua Zhai, BOR, University System of Georgia ([meihua.zhai@usg.edu](mailto:meihua.zhai@usg.edu))

**Through the BOOK OF THE MONTH feature, we hope to acquaint you with publications that provide practical guidance on the technical or administrative aspects of our profession, offer current research and/or provoke thought and discussion on current issues in higher education.**

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For this month, we selected *Honoring the trust – Quality and cost containment in higher education* by William F. Massy, published in 2003 by Anker Publishing Company, Inc., Bolton, MA. ISBN 1-882982-56-8

Dr. Massy is Professor Emeritus at Stanford University. As Stanford's Vice President for Business and Finance he pioneered financial management and planning tools that have become standards in the field. Dr. Massy starts his book with the notion "the world is changing, being good enough today risks trouble in the future." (p.3) Then he gives American higher education a "respectable B": good enough, but hardly excellent. Nonetheless, he believes that universities and colleges can be a great deal better than they are and their "respectable B" can be transformed into a "solid A" without massive infusions of funds.

As a "bean-counter" I was originally attracted to his book because I was looking for different ways to calculate cost beyond the traditional "cost per student FTE" formula. I found his Q/ABC (Activity-Based Costing) method that marries education quality processes with cost containment very enlightening. According to Massy, "cost per student" usually means total "educational and general" (E&G) expense divided by enrollment. The standard definition ignores the cost of capital while erroneously including departmental research and the portion of infrastructure that supports sponsored research. Those distortions make the standard definition of per-student cost highly problematic for comparing institutions and programs, and for identifying ways to improve efficiency. In order to identify potential cost savings, one must start with the activities and their individual contributions to quality, then build up to the cost estimates. Failure to associate costs with specific activities also makes higher education production processes hard to change. (p.250) He then proceeds with concrete

examples regarding how to do cost accounting based on the Q/ABC method, exactly what a bean-counter needs!

Besides his Q/ABC method, I found his discussions of performance-based resource allocation and higher education's action agenda very persuasive. In addition to remaining technically competent, we institutional researchers have been striving to enrich our knowledge of substantive management issues and our contextual intelligence of higher education in general. While we might not be the person to make the call for changes, knowing what is going on beyond our computer screens will certainly help us become more effective in turning information into knowledge. This book is easy to read and understand and it won't put you to sleep easily. If you are affiliated with the finance side on your school's organization chart, as you read, you might feel as if you were having a conversation with your boss. It's a great book!

Meihua

## Technical Tips from the Field

### Windows Management

Meihua Zhai, BOR, University System of Georgia (meihua.zhai@usg.edu)

**This corner of the newsletter is reserved for readers to share practical tips, techniques and shortcuts that can make a difference in our work. Please share your technical prowess with us and send your tips to Meihua Zhai (mailto:meihua.zhai@usg.edu). Since this is a small corner, KISS (Keep It Short and Smart) will work the best.**

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#### Suppressing Windows Error Report

You can get rid of the Windows XP error report messages if you don't want to send another one in. Start the System Configuration Utility:

1. Click Start, and then click Run.
2. Type msconfig to open the System Configuration Utility.
3. Click the Services tab.
4. Clear the Error Reporting Service check box, and then click OK.
5. Hit Restart to reboot your system.

Your computer will now start without loading the error reporting service.

---

## Alphabetize Your All Programs Menu

If you would like to alphabetize the items on your Windows Start menu:

1. Click Start, click All Programs, and then right-click on any folder or icon.
2. Click Sort by Name.

Enjoy!

## Presentaion Tips from the Field

### **Tips and Techniques for an Outstanding Presentation**

Robert Daly, University of California, Riverside ([bob.daly@ucr.edu](mailto:bob.daly@ucr.edu))

(This article is the second in a series of tips and techniques to help you prepare for your Forum presentation. Its purpose is to serve as an introduction and to start you on the path to creating an outstanding presentation. During the next few months, I will be summarizing many of the tips and techniques that have been developed by presentation experts. I will be providing links so you can watch the pros in action, show you some different presentation styles that you can emulate, give you some do's and don'ts when using PowerPoint, tips on using images and graphics, and just try to help you prepare for your presentation. And at any time, please feel free to write me if you have questions or suggestions. )

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### Tip 2: Planning Your Presentation

Last month's article introduced a way of thinking about the size and scope of your presentation. It was "Keep it Simple and Short" (KISS). The variation on this popular maxim provides a framework that will help you plan and develop a structure for your presentation. Using the KISS maxim will help you focus on what is important and valuable to your audience.

The next four articles in this series are about applying the KISS maxim and preparing for your presentation. This month's article is about planning your presentation. The key ingredient for that plan is organization. The process is very similar to the one you would use to write a research or scholarly paper. In

a paper, a good structure or organization is essential for helping readers understand and remember your findings. The same is true for a presentation: a well-organized presentation is more easily understood and provides an opportunity to convey your important research findings. Good organization is critical.

### Organizational Style

There are many excellent resources that you can use to organize your presentation. Several of these are discussed below, but PowerPoint is not one of them. PowerPoint is an excellent slide manager, but it should not be used to plan or organize your presentation. Even though PowerPoint has an "Outline" tab in its "Normal" view, do not use it. Doing so is a sure-fire way to assemble a poor structure for your presentation. Edward Tufte writes in *The Cognitive Style of PowerPoint* that PowerPoint "actively facilitates the making of lightweight presentations." So, until next month, when the topic is creating your presentation, put away PowerPoint.

Whichever presentation how-to guide you choose to help you organize your Forum presentation, use one that fits your style. There are many traditional and non-traditional styles to choose from. Two traditional organization guides that you may find useful are *Guidelines for Preparing Briefings*, published by RAND, and the *Short Road to Great Presentations* by Peter Reimold and Cheryl Reimold. The first is an excellent 14-page paper on how to structure a presentation. The authors recommend that a top-down or hierarchical structure be used for presentations. They state that "a hierarchical structure organizes information from more-general to more-specific dimensions," and that "humans rely on a hierarchical structure for comprehension and memory tasks." The paper discusses eight principles "drawn from research on graphics, cognitive psychology, and document design that can improve your presentation." The authors state that using these eight principles will increase the amount of information your audience will understand and remember. A copy of the RAND paper can be obtained at [http://www.rand.org/pubs/corporate\\_pubs/CP269/CP269.pdf](http://www.rand.org/pubs/corporate_pubs/CP269/CP269.pdf).

*Short Road to Great Presentations*, the other traditional organizational guide, is a hefty how-to book. The authors discuss a classic three part presentation outline that includes the Introduction, the Body, and the Summary. They introduce their "RAMP" formula to create effective introductions. The formula's parts are to "establish Rapport, get the audience's Attention, state your main Message, and give the Plan of your talk." The book also contains several excellent resources in the appendices. Appendix A provides a very useful sample annotated presentation structure, and Appendix B is a clever worksheet for analyzing the purpose of your presentation. Particularly useful here is the authors' recommendation to anticipate and write down potential audience questions.



Appendix D provides twelve sample presentation outlines that you could use. Outlines number 3 and 10 are especially useful for research presentations. If you prefer a more traditional presentation structure, the *Short Road to Great Presentations* is a valuable resource.

If you want to use a non-traditional structure for your presentation, consider using the approach taught in *Beyond Bullet Points* by Cliff Atkinson. This approach equates a presentation to the development of a Hollywood production. It has three steps: write a script, storyboard the script to clarify your ideas, and produce the script. Writing the script is the organizational step, and Atkinson uses a "Story Template" for this task. The Story Template is a very useful tool to help you establish the purpose of your presentation, to show you how to grab and keep your audience's attention, and to give you ways to keep your audience interested. Be sure to allocate yourself several extra weeks to learn this non-traditional approach. Using the Beyond Bullet Points approach will give you some outstanding tools to make an excellent presentation.

If you are just looking for some tips for structuring your presentation, an excellent source is Garr Reynolds' Web page, Organization and Preparation Tips, at <http://www.garreynolds.com/Presentation/prep.html>. Here, Reynolds discusses ten excellent presentation tips (including Tip 4, Keep it simple!). Tips 5 and 6 discuss "Outlining your content" and "Have a clear, sound structure." These are excellent suggestions on structuring your presentation.

### Number of Slides

One of the failures of many presentations is that they are too long and contain too many slides. Even when their time is waning, many presenters often feel obligated to show you every slide in their presentation. The result is that often the audience sees a cursory view of each slide or not at all. This occurs because of poor planning (and little or no practice before the presentation). When designing your presentation, minimize the number of slides. Guy Kawasaki recommends in his "10/20/30" rule [http://blog.guykawasaki.com/2005/12/the\\_102030\\_rule.html](http://blog.guykawasaki.com/2005/12/the_102030_rule.html) to use no more than 10 slides. (In the 10/20/30 rule, the 20 stands for presentation no longer than 20 minutes, and the 30 means to have font sizes no smaller than 30 points.) Each of Kawasaki's 10 slides contains one topic. While Kawasaki's 10 topics are directly relevant for a venture capitalist, the outline could be modified for a presentation of a research paper at AIR. While Kawasaki's "10" slide rule may not be for you, the number of slides is related to the length of your presentation. Adhering to the "short" part of the KISS maxim, you should make every effort to minimize the number of slides. While there is no hard and fast rule-of-thumb about the number of slides, a goal of creating no more than one slide for every two minutes of a presentation is a good start. Thus, in a typical 40 minute research presentation with 10 minutes allowed for questions, about 15

slides would be appropriate. Not too different than Kawasaki's "10" slide rule.

Next Month

The 2006 AIR Forum is just two and a half months away. Now is time to start creating your presentation. The first step is to select and use an outline or structure appropriate for a presentation. A few are suggested in this month's article, "Planning Your Presentation." Next month's article will discuss tips and suggestions in how to prepare your slides.

## Position Listing Summary

### Job Listing Summary

Gail Fishman, AIR ([gfishman@mailers.fsu.edu](mailto:gfishman@mailers.fsu.edu))

**Persons seeking jobs in institutional research, planning, or policy analysis should plan to check the AIR web page every couple of days for new positions. There is no charge for posting a job. Follow the format posted at the AIR Jobs website and include as much information as possible. Use the online form to submit an ad. Jobs will be displayed for one month from the posting date or one week after the application deadline. Please notify Gail Fishman if you wish to repost, revise, or leave a job posted beyond the deadline.**

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SENIOR TECHNICAL ANALYST, IRIM, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI,  
<http://www.emich.edu>  
Deadline Date: February 28, 2006

ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING COORDINATOR, Hood College, Frederick, MD.  
Deadline Date: Not provided

DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, Loyola College in Maryland,  
Baltimore, MD.  
Deadline Date: Open until filled

PROJECT MANAGER (South Carolina), SunGard SCT, SC,  
<http://www.sungardsct.com>  
Deadline Date: Open until filled

SENIOR RESEARCH ANALYST, Adelphi University, Garden City, NY,  
<http://www.adelphi.edu>

Deadline Date: March 15, 2006

DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, Wittenberg University, Springfield, OH.

Deadline Date: Review will continue until position is filled

DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, Miami International University of Art & Design, Miami, FL.

Deadline Date: Not provided

DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING, EFFECTIVENESS, AND RESEARCH, Danville Community College, Danville, VA, <http://www.dcc.vccs.edu>

Deadline Date: Open until filled

DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH - Search Reopened, California State University, Stanislaus, CA, <http://www.csustan.edu>

Deadline Date: Not provided

DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, Newman University, Wichita, KS.

Deadline Date: July 1, 2006

DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH AND PLANNING, Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, MI.

Deadline Date: Open until filled.

ASSISTANT/ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR - STRATEGIC ANALYST, Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY.

Deadline Date: Not provided

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), Washington, DC, <http://www.aascu.org>

Deadline Date: March 3, 2006

DATA SUPPORT ANALYST, Miami University Middletown, Middletown, OH, <http://www.mid.muohio.edu>

Deadline Date: Review of applications begins Feb 23, 2006

GRANTS COORDINATOR, Roane State Community College, Harriman, TN, <http://www.roanestate.edu>

Deadline Date: Open until filled

ASSISTANT TO THE VICE PRESIDENT OF ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE AND CHIEF FISCAL OFFICER, Towson University, Towson, MD,

<http://www.towson.edu>

Deadline Date: Open until filled

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University, St. Joseph, MN, <http://www.csbsju.edu>

Deadline Date: Open until filled

COORDINATOR OF INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT, Athens State University, Athens, AL, <http://www.athens.edu> and <http://www.athens.edu/jobs>

Deadline Date: March 1, 2006

ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT POSITIONS (2), Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA.

Deadline Date: March 10, 2006

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey, Newark, NJ, <http://www.umdnj.edu>

Deadline Date: Not provided

PROGRAM ANALYST, Lincoln University, Lincoln University, PA, <http://www.lincoln.edu>

Deadline Date: Open until filled

DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH AND EFFECTIVENESS, South University, Savannah, GA, <http://www.southuniversity.edu>

Deadline Date: Not provided

DIRECTOR, ANALYTICAL STUDIES, Simon Fraser University, Greater Vancouver, BC, <http://www.sfu.ca/>

Deadline Date: March 20, 2006

DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH AND INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, Martin Community College, Williamstown, NC, <http://www.martincc.edu>

Deadline Date: Until position is filled

DATABASE ANALYST, University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, MN, <http://www.stthomas.edu/hr/employment>

Deadline Date: Open until filled

PROGRAMMER ANALYST, Boston University, Boston, MA, <http://www.bu.edu/>

Deadline Date: Open until filled

DISTRICT DIRECTOR, INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, Dallas County Community Colleges, Dallas, TX, <http://www.dcccd.edu>

Deadline Date: 5:00 pm March 10, 2006

DIRECTOR OF REGULATORY REVIEW, Career Education Corporation, Hoffman Estates, IL, <http://www.careered.com>  
Deadline Date: Not provided

DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, CA.  
Deadline Date: Reviews begin immediately

RESEARCH ANALYST, Boston University, Boston, MA, <http://www.bu.edu/>  
Deadline Date: Open until filled

PROJECT MANAGER AND INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH ANALYST, Suffolk University, Boston, MA.  
Deadline Date: Not provided

DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT, University of North Carolina at Pembroke, Pembroke, NC, <http://www.uncp.edu>  
Deadline Date: March 10, 2006, open until filled

DATA ANALYST FOR INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, Air Force Institute of Technology, Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, OH, <http://www.afit.edu>  
Deadline Date: February 28, 2006

ASSISTANT DEAN, RESEARCH & PLANNING, City Colleges of Chicago, Chicago, IL  
Deadline Date: Open until filled

DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, SUNY New Paltz, New Paltz, NY.  
Deadline Date: Not provided

DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL, <http://www.ufl.edu>  
Deadline Date: Until position is filled

DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, PLANNING AND OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM, <http://www.nmsu.edu>  
Deadline Date: March 3, 2006

SENIOR RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, Richmond, VA, <http://www.schev.edu/>  
Deadline Date: March 15, 2006

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH AND REPORTING, George

Mason University, Fairfax, VA, <http://www.gmu.edu>  
Deadline Date: As soon as possible

DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH AND PLANNING, St. Joseph College,  
West Hartford, CT, <http://www.sjc.edu>  
Deadline Date: As soon as possible

DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, Cochise College, Sierra Vista, AZ,  
<http://www.cochise.edu>  
Deadline Date: Open until filled, February 22, 2006 First Review

DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, Colorado Mountain College, Glenwood  
Springs, CO, <http://www.coloradomtn.edu.html>  
Deadline Date: February 24, 2006

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, CLIENT SERVICES AND SURVEY OPERATIONS, Indiana  
University Center for Postsecondary Research, Bloomington, IN.  
Deadline Date: Reviews begin immediately

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, ASSESSMENT AND  
PLANNING (IRAP), California State University, Dominguez Hills, Carson, CA,  
<http://www.csudh.edu>  
Deadline Date: March 1, 2006

UNIVERSITY DATA QUALITY ADMINISTRATOR, University of Nevada, Las Vegas,  
NV, <http://www.unlv.edu>  
Deadline Date: Open until filled

SYSTEMS ANALYST II, Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness,  
University of Texas-Pan American, Edinburg, TX, <http://www.panam.edu/2000/>  
or <http://oire.panam.edu/>  
Deadline Date: Until filled

## Parting Thoughts

### Parting Thoughts

Meihua Zhai, BOR, University System of Georgia ([meihua.zhai@usg.edu](mailto:meihua.zhai@usg.edu))

**Reader contributions of possible future 'Parting Thoughts' are welcome.  
Send them to Meihua Zhai.**

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"You have to go through the obstacles to get the opportunities"

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- Chuck Cote

"To err is human, but when the eraser wears out ahead of the pencil, you're overdoing it."

- Josh Jenkins

"Only those who risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go."

- T.S. Eliot

"The way I see it, if you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain."

- Dolly Parton

"Praise people publicly. Coach them privately."

- Chuck Cote

"A positive anything is better than a negative nothing"

- Anonymous

"To succeed in life you need focus, passion, dedication and perseverance."

- Anonymous

"Challenges make you discover things about yourself that you never really knew"

- Cicely Tyson

"Challenges are the questions. Results are the answers."

- Chuck Cote