



The Electronic Newsletter of the Association for Institutional Research (e-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 Marne Einarson, Editor, at: (mke3@cornell.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@airweb2.org).

Forum Proposal Deadline

Time is Running Out for Proposals for 2008 AIR Forum

Michelle Hall, AIR 2008 Forum Chair (mhall@selu.edu)

Have you submitted your proposals for the 2008 AIR Forum in the fun-filled city of Seattle? Submissions will be closed **October 1, 2007 at midnight, EDT**. The 2008 Forum Committee has been working hard to guarantee an outstanding Forum, but we need your help to make it a reality. The Committee welcomes presentations on all topics, especially those related to the theme Adapting to Meet New Challenges.

All proposals are submitted on-line using one of the following tools.

Papers, panels, demonstrations, posters -
<http://www.airweb.org/tracks submission.html>

Workshops - <http://www.airweb.org/workshop submission.html>

AIR committees, SIGs, Affiliated Groups -
<http://www.airweb.org/agsig meeting.html>

Instructions for developing proposals are located at:
<http://www.airweb.org/ForumProposalInstructions.html>

Please help us out, and be sure you have May 24-28, 2008 marked on your calendar, so that you can join us in exciting Seattle. If you have any questions, please contact us, Michelle at mhall@selu.edu or Jennifer at Jennifer.Brown@umb.edu. We hope to see your proposal soon!

Sincerely,

Michelle Hall
2008 AIR Forum Chair

Jennifer Brown
2008 AIR Associate Forum Chair

From Your 2008 Forum Local Hosts

Going to Seattle ... for the 48th AIR Forum, May 24-28, 2008!

Jerry Finch, Seattle Pacific University, 2008 Forum Local Arrangement Committee Chair (
j_finch@spu.edu)

This is the third installment of "What is there to do in Seattle?"

"I am a firm believer in the people. If given the facts, they can be depended

upon to meet any national crises. The great point is to bring them the real facts, and beer." ---Abraham Lincoln

Pubs and Brewing Companies with walking distance of the Seattle Forum Hotel:

- 1. Tap House Grill (1/2 blocks north):** Located at 1500 Sixth Avenue in the old Planet Hollywood space. The draft beer list is Tap House's pride and joy. It's a rotating selection of 160 draft beers with 10 taps reserved for Northwest "seasonal and rare releases". Yes, there are 160 taps mounted on the wall -- a sight to see. Great happy hour Monday-Friday 3:30-6:30 PM; Monday-Thursday 10PM-close, and Sunday 4PM-close.
- 2. Gordon Biersch (2 blocks north):** Gordon Biersch's first endeavor in the Pacific Northwest in downtown Seattle's newest and most upscale retail development—Pacific Place, Suite 401. Features a working brewery, bar and atrium seating. Fresh handcrafted Lagers & Ales: Hefeweizen, Pilsner, Marzen, Dunkles, Blonde Bock and Seasonal beers. Bar hours 11:30-11PM Sunday – Thursday and 11:30 to Midnight Friday and Saturday.
- 3. Rock Bottom Brewery (1 block west and 1 block south):** Located in the heart of the Seattle business district in Rainier Square on the corner of 5th and Union Street. Rock Bottom is designed around a working brewery. Features handcrafted beer brewed on site: Daylight, Faller Wheat, Peashooter Pale Ale, Rain City Red, Brown Bear Brown, Flying Salmon Stout and seasonal specialty beer. A great happy hour as well: happy hour Monday-Friday 3-6 PM.
- 4. The Pike Brewing Company (5 blocks west):** The Pike Brewing Company was created in 1989 by Charles and Rose Ann Finkel pioneers in making and marketing craft beers. The original brewery, known as The Pike Place Brewery, was housed in a narrow 2,000 square foot storefront in the LaSalle Hotel building at the base of Seattle's historic Pike Place Market. In 1996, The Pike Brewery built a new pub and brewery facility at 1415 First Avenue, just two blocks from their original location. The Pike Pub is the showcase for the brewing company. The Pike also houses the Seattle Microbrewery Museum. Beers: Pike Pale Ale, Pike IPA, Pike Kilt Lifter, Pike Naughty Nellie, Pike XXXXX Stout, Pike Tandem, Pike Monk's Uncle and Pike Weisse. I would suggest trying the Pike Sampler (6 pre-selected 4 oz glasses on a wooden tray with descriptions). Open daily 11 AM and a happy hour 4-6PM Monday thru Friday.
- 5. McMenamins-Six Arms (1 block north and 6 blocks east):** Nestled on Pike street halfway between Capitol Hill and downtown shopping (yes, it is an

uphill walk). A classic British-style-pub with a nice long wooden bar, wood booths, an upstairs section with wrought-iron café tables and "snug" booths. 17 beers on tap, of which most are McMenamins house brews; the remainder include local craft beers from Red Hook and Pike Brewing. McMeanmins' own beers: Terminator Stout, Hammerhead, Ruby (raspberry ale), Black Rabbit Porter and Edgefield Wheat. Open Monday-Saturday 11 AM -1AM and Sunday Noon – Midnight. Happy hour 5-7PM.

Next month, Wine Bars within walking distance of the Seattle Forum Hotel.

Seeking Forum Panelists

Seeking Panelists for Dating Mining Presentations at 2008 AIR Forum

Kumar, Thulasi, University of Missouri-Rolla (tkchr@umr.edu)

Dear Colleagues,

For several years, the Data Mining in Higher Education Consortium (DMHE) has been offering a series of DM presentations and Workshops in our AIR Annual Forum. Copies of the previous forum presentations can be obtained from the following web site: <http://www.dmhe.org/kb.htm>

For the 2008 Forum in Seattle, we are looking for several panelists for the following two sessions:

1. *Case studies in IR*. I am looking for at least 3 panelists for this presentation. Usually 4 to 6 panelists will present short case studies of DM applications in Institutional Research. (10-15 minutes each).
2. *DM software tools comparison*. I am looking for at least two panelists to demonstrate Clementine, Enterprise Miner or some other DM tool. Tools other than Clementine and Enterprise Miner are strongly encouraged.

If you are interested, please send me an e-mail with a short paragraph of your application (case studies panel only). I will include 3 to 4 respondents, depending on the number of responses as well as the range of IR applications.

For software comparison, all you need to specify is the tool that you want to demonstrate. Later the team can come up with a common database for the demo.

Thank you.

Kumar
Director of Institutional Research and Assessment

University of Missouri-Rolla
tkchr@umr.edu
573-341-7248

NEW AIR Grant Program

AIR/IES-NCES Postdoctoral Policy Fellows in Washington

Sharon Lynn, AIR Office (slynn@airweb2.org)

The Association for Institutional Research (AIR) is accepting applications for a new Postdoctoral Fellow Program, a project funded by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Postdoctoral Fellow projects will be responsible for undertaking analysis that results in improvements to the quality, comparability, and usefulness of the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

Fellows will be introduced to the Washington higher education policy community through meetings, seminars and conversations. Fellowships provide \$5,000 monthly for support while the Fellow is in residence in Washington, for a period of from nine to twelve months. An additional \$5,000 will be provided for expenses for the life of the fellowship. It is expected that Fellows will be advanced graduate students completing dissertations, postdoctoral students, or institutional research professionals.

During the course of the project, the Fellow shall discuss and report work in progress at regular meetings with NCES staff and at meetings of the institutional research and Washington policy research communities. A final report and recommendations shall be delivered at the end of the Fellowship and at a meeting of Fellows at the AIR Annual Forum, funded by this program.

Institutional researchers, graduate students, postdoctoral students, faculty, and others may submit applications. Fellows must be US citizens or permanent residents, and will be employees of AIR during the period of the Fellowship. Before formal submission, the application should be discussed with the AIR staff.

Projects of Interest to NCES

1. Institutional Uses of IPEDS Data Feedback Reports. The data feedback project was initiated in 2004 by the National Postsecondary Education Cooperative (NPEC) to provide each institution a context for examining the data they submitted to IPEDS. NPEC's goal was to produce a report that was useful to institutional executives and that could help improve the quality and comparability of IPEDS data. In 2005, IPEDS took over production of this annual report. The report is mailed to Chief Executive Officers and emailed to IPEDS institutional keyholders and coordinators each fall. NCES is now interested in learning more

about how institutional executives and IPEDS keyholders use these reports. Do they distribute the report to others administrators on campus? Do they share them with board members? Do they make them publicly available? NCES would like to identify common practices in the use of the information in the report, and ways in which the reports could be made more helpful to institutions as they examine their annual operations and compare themselves to their peers.

2. **A Review of Postsecondary Data Consortia.** Many postsecondary institutions opt to participate in data sharing consortia, such as the Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium, the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange, and the Consortium on Financing Higher Education. In order to improve the usefulness of IPEDS data collection and dissemination efforts, NCES is interested in learning more about these consortia: How many exist? To what extent do postsecondary institutions participate? What data do institutions share in them? What kinds of reports, analyses, and comparisons do these consortia offer that encourage participation in them? NCES would like to identify practices used by these consortia that it may employ in order to improve data collection, products, and offerings for institutions reporting to IPEDS.
3. **Campus Data Systems.** NCES is interested in learning more about how institutions populate IPEDS surveys, including how they collect and store data on their campuses. This project would involve reviewing the various data systems used by institutions, whether off-the-shelf (e.g., PeopleSoft, Banner) or "homegrown," and how institutions use these systems to output data to IPEDS annually. Also, it would involve identifying where campuses house different types of data on campuses, and how well these data communicate with each other. For instance, are student financial aid data kept separately from student enrollment and retention data? How well do campus systems talk or link to each other? Are there additional ways through which IPEDS could accept data from institutions that would improve data quality and simplify data collection?
4. **A Topic of the Applicant's Choosing.** In two or three paragraphs, describe a project that will contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of the procedures for IPEDS data collection, data retrieval, and reporting on postsecondary institutions. The project may also aim to improve the descriptive power and accuracy of the IPEDS data collection, or expand the utility of the data once collected.

Applications must be submitted electronically, as a Microsoft Word or PDF e-mail attachment to air@airweb2.org. Please type POSTDOCTORAL POLICY FELLOW

APPLICATION in the subject line of your e-mail. Individuals unable to submit in this manner should contact the Program Manager, Sharon Lynn, at slynn@airweb2.org or 850-385-4155 x105 for an alternative method. An e-mail notification will be sent upon receipt of the proposal.

The proposal submission deadline is continuous.

2008 Grant Guidelines

2008 AIR/IES-NCES/NPEC/NSF Grant Guidelines

Sharon Lynn, AIR Office (slynn@airweb2.org)

New guidelines for the 2008 Grant program are now available at <http://airweb.org/grantsfellowships.html>

2008 Grant awards will include:

- Research Grants
- Doctoral Fellowships
- Fellowships for Graduate Study
- Senior Fellowship
- Post-Doctoral Internship with NCES

All grant proposals must be received by January 16, 2008.

For more information on a particular grant, contact Sharon Lynn at slynn@airweb2.org

NCES Publications

Postsecondary Institutions in the United States: Fall 2006 and Degrees and Other Awards Conferred: 2005-06

This First Look presents findings from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) fall 2006 data collection, which included two survey components: Institutional Characteristics for the 2006-07 academic year, and Completions covering the period July 1, 2005, through June 30, 2006. These data were collected through the IPEDS web-based data collection system.

To download, view and print the publication as a PDF file, please visit: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2007166>

Mini-Digest of Education Statistics 2006

This publication is a pocket-sized compilation of statistical information covering the broad field of American education from kindergarten through graduate school. The statistical highlights are excerpts from the Digest of Education of Statistics, 2006.

To download, view and print the publication as a PDF file, please visit:

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2007067>

Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Minorities

Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Minorities examines the educational progress and challenges that racial and ethnic minorities face in the United States. This report shows that over time larger numbers of minorities have completed high school and continued their education in college. Despite these gains, progress has varied, and differences persist among Hispanic, Black, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White students on key indicators of educational performance.

Demographics, preprimary, elementary, and secondary education, achievement, persistence, student behaviors, postsecondary participation and outcomes of education are included.

To download, view and print the publication as a PDF file, please visit:

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/minoritytrends/>

Interpreting 12th-Graders' NAEP-Scaled Mathematics Performance Using High School Predictors and Postsecondary Outcomes From the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88)

This report utilizes four sources of NELS:88 data: questionnaire responses, tests, high school transcripts, and postsecondary education transcripts. The NELS:88 1992 12th grade mathematics assessment scores were transformed to the NAEP scale. The report relates mathematics results expressed in the NAEP metric (specifically, the NAEP achievement levels) to cross-sectional (12th grade) correlates of math achievement. It also relates 12th grade NAEP-scaled NELS:88 mathematics results (again expressed in terms of the NAEP achievement levels) to postsecondary educational outcomes. The report is divided into three chapters. Chapter 1 provides background information and an introduction. Chapter 2 examines the correlates of math achievement—student, family, and high school predictors (e.g., sex, race, socioeconomic

status [SES], school sector, highest math course taken, grades, etc.) of 12th graders' NAEP-Scaled performance. Chapter 3 relates high school seniors' NAEP-scaled mathematics performance to later outcomes such as entry into postsecondary education, and baccalaureate attainment. These senior-year correlates (chapter 2) and future outcomes (chapter 3) are explored through bivariate tables; senior-year achievement correlates are also examined in a logistic regression. Two appendixes provide technical notes, a glossary of variables used, and tables of standard errors for all estimates contained in the report.

To download, view and print the publication as a PDF file, please visit:
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2007328>

News from AAUP

AAUP Faculty Compensation Survey 2007-08

John W. Curtis, AAUP (aaupfca@aaup.org)

We are planning to send initial notices regarding our annual Faculty Compensation Survey to survey contacts in late September. We hope to open the survey Web site for data collection by late October, with an initial deadline for data submission in late November or early December. There will not be major changes in survey format from previous years. If the contact person for your institution is no longer employed there, or if your institution has not participated in the survey in the last two years and would like to submit data for 2007-08, please send a note to aaupfcs@aaup.org. Otherwise, existing survey contacts will be able to make changes to contact and institutional information—including adding or deleting users—through our survey Web site at <https://research.aaup.org/fcs>. (The Web site is not yet fully functional for this year, but we will be sending information to survey contacts as the various functions are implemented.)

In the previous edition of *Electronic AIR*, we indicated that we would be releasing updated versions of the *AAUP Faculty Gender Equity Indicators* and *AAUP Contingent Faculty Index*. Unfortunately, we will not be able to update those reports this year, although we may make available custom peer comparison reports.

John W. Curtis, Director of Research and Public Policy
Doug Kinsella, Research Associate
aaupfcs@aaup.org

NASFAA Grant Program

NASFAA Sponsored Research Grant Program

Meihua Zhai, NASFAA (zhaim@nasfaa.org)

The National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) is pleased to inform you of the availability of research grants for AIR members and other researchers who wish to conduct research and policy analysis projects on financial aid policy, the impact of various types of student aid programs on student college success, and related matters. Sponsored Research Grants are intended to help recipients cover the direct costs of their research projects, including hiring research assistants, printing, postage, and preparation of papers and reports. Past awards have generally ranged from \$250 to \$3,500, although grants of larger size may be considered. NASFAA receives a grant from the Lumina Foundation for Education to fund the Sponsored Research Grant Program.

Proposals for Sponsored Research Grants may be submitted at any time. Review of the proposals takes place in March and September.

NASFAA also welcomes articles concerning financial aid policy for publication in the *Journal of Student Financial Aid* and *Student Aid Transcript*. The *Journal* is the only nationally refereed academic journal devoted exclusively to research on student financial aid and related topics. *Transcript*, NASFAA's membership magazine, reaches more than 5,000 financial aid professionals. In the "Research Briefs" section of *Transcript*, faculty, scholars, and graduate students are able to highlight their research on a wide variety of topics related to financial aid. Unlike the *Journal*, *Transcript* articles are written in a brief, magazine-style format (similar to *Time* or *Newsweek*).

For further information, please contact Meihua Zhai, NASFAA Director of Research and Policy Analysis, at (202) 785-6952. You can also send an e-mail to zhaim@nasfaa.org. Sponsored Research Grant application materials and other information can be downloaded from the NASFAA Web site at <http://www.nasfaa.org/Redesign/SRGP.html>

NSF Funding for Grad Students

National Science Foundation Summer Funding Opportunities for U.S. Graduate Students

Andrew Backe, NSF (abacke@nsf.gov)

Dear Colleagues,

I would like to bring to your attention a funding program available through the National Science Foundation (NSF) called the East Asia and Pacific Summer

Institutes (EAPSI). The EAPSI program offers U.S. graduate students in science and engineering a unique opportunity to study abroad with foreign researchers (in Australia, China, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Singapore, or Taiwan) for 8 weeks during the summer. In 2008, the EAPSI awards will include a stipend of \$5,000, an allowance for international travel, and support to attend a pre-departure orientation in Washington DC. Foreign co-sponsoring organizations will provide additional support to cover EAPSI students' living expenses abroad.

I have initiated the outreach phase for our 2008 summer program. The link to the EAPSI website is <http://www.nsf.gov/eapsi>. The application deadline is **December 12, 2007**. Please distribute this information to graduate students who may have an interest in the program. If you would like to receive hard copies of the EAPSI flyer or the EAPSI poster for your program or institution, please provide me your mailing address and I will ensure that copies are mailed to you.

Feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions about the EAPSI program. I hope very much to see applications from graduate students at your institution.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Andrew S. Backe, Ph.D.
Program Specialist for East Asia and Pacific
Office of International Science and Engineering
National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Blvd, Rm. 935.43
Arlington, VA 22230
Tel: 703-292-4771
Fax: 703-292-9175
E-mail: abacke@nsf.gov

AFT Data Request

AFT Is Seeking Institutional Data on Instructional Staff

Lindsay Albert, AFT (lalbert@aft.org)

The American Federation of Teachers' Higher Education department is currently looking for help in collecting institution-based data. AFT Higher Education is in the middle of its Faculty and College Excellence (FACE) Campaign—focused on increasing the number of full-time tenured track positions while ensuring pay equity for all instructional staff. The intention for the data is to generate baseline information to be used in informing policymakers and crafting state legislation.

Specifically, AFT Higher Education needs data on:

- Average costs for full-time faculty, full-time non-tenure track faculty, part-time/adjunct faculty and graduate employees by department and for the entire institution;
- Number of classes taught by each segment of the instructional workforce by department and for the entire institution;
- Current salary and benefits information for each segment of the instructional workforce by department and for the entire institution;
- Cost of moving part-time/adjunct and full-time non-tenure track faculty members to 100 pay parity with full-time tenured faculty.

If you are interested in exchanging institutional data with the AFT, please contact Lindsay Albert at lalbert@aft.org or 202-585-4368. For more information on the FACE campaign, visit its website: www.aftface.org

Call for Proposals for CSCC Conference

Call for Proposals for 50th Annual Conference of the Council for the Study of Community Colleges

Trudy Bers, Oakton Community College (tbers@oakton.edu)

Friends:

I am delighted to call your attention to this Call for Proposals for the 50th Annual Conference of the Council for the Study of Community Colleges (CSCC). Details are available at <http://www.cscconline.org>. This conference will take place just prior to the AACC annual convention, which in 2008 will be in Philadelphia. The conference promises to be an exciting one; participants include university faculty whose focus is community colleges, graduate students (many of whom are community college practitioners), and other scholars whose work concentrates on community colleges. As president-elect of the Council, it is my responsibility to organize the conference program. I would very much like to see more participation from institutional researchers. We have much to learn and to offer to our colleagues who are involved with CSCC.

Trudy Bers
Oakton Community College
CSCC President-elect

Student Learning Outcomes Webcast

Webcast: Establishing Measures of Student Learning Outcomes -- A Debate on Methods

Bob Daly, University of California, Riverside (bob.daly@ucr.edu)

The University of California, Riverside would like to invite you to attend or watch the Scholarship of Teaching symposium, "Establishing Measures of Student Learning Outcomes: A Debate on Methods." The symposium will be held on Wednesday, October 10, 2007 from 12:00 pm-1:30 pm PDT (Pacific Daylight Time), and can also be watched via a Webcast.

To watch the symposium via the Webcast, please review the "Webcast Login Instructions" at <http://www.teaching.ucr.edu/>. Webcast viewers are encouraged to login 10 minutes before the event to ensure prompt access to the site. Please login as "Guest", and once in the system enter your name and campus affiliation in order to view the stream and participate in the question-and-answer "chat" session.

If you wish to attend the symposium on campus at UCR, please RSVP by Monday, October 8th to gladis@ucr.edu. The symposium will be held in the new UCR Student Commons, Room 355.

Bob Daly
University of California, Riverside
bob.daly@ucr.edu

Regional Networks Conferences

2007 Fall Conferences for the Regional Networks for Assessment and Accreditation Support

Junelyn Peebles (junelyn.peeples@ucr.edu)

Holiday Inn Oceanfront Hotel, Hilton Head Island, South Carolina on October 4-5

Holiday Inn St. Augustine Beach Hotel in Florida on November 8-9

Major Topics and Demonstrations

- Locating model assessment plans and reports
- Developing an effective annual assessment plan
- Finding and/or creating assessment instruments
- Creating and administering on-line surveys
- Conducting traditional and on-line assessment activities
- Analyzing assessment data and creating effective reports
- Utilizing an assessment database/tracking system
- Participating in an assessment support group

- Locating external evaluators for assessment projects
- Finding individuals to serve on focus group interview teams
- Providing opportunities for members of the Regional Networks to conduct external evaluations, serve on focus group interview teams, and participate in other assessment and/or accreditation support activities

The Regional Networks for Assessment and Accreditation Support (formerly K-CAPS) provides assistance and support in educational planning and assessment, data analysis and reporting, planning for improvement, and integrating planning and assessment activities with the budget and resource allocation process.

Contact: Junelyn Peeples, junelyn.peeples@ucr.edu or Larry Kelley, aukelley@aol.com for more information on the conference or for a registration form!

Changing Scene

A Way to Keep Up With News About Our Colleagues

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 a note with the key facts to mke3@cornell.edu. Keep it brief, but include the information you think others would like to know.

Michael D. Thompson, Ed.D. is the new assistant provost and director of institutional research and planning at Illinois Wesleyan University. Michael was formerly the director of institutional research at The College of Wooster for six years, and the assistant director of institutional research at Dartmouth College. Congratulations, Michael!

Kristina M. Cragg, Ph.D. is the new Assistant to the President for Strategic Research & Analysis at Valdosta State University, Georgia (south Georgia). Congratulations, Kristina!

David Davis-Van Atta has accepted the position as the new Director of

Institutional Research at Vassar, beginning October 1st. He will be responsible for establishing Vassar's first centralized IR office. David was formerly the Director of Institutional Research and Analysis at Carleton College. Best wishes, David!

Barbara Ash, Research Director, Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC) died in a tragic car accident on Saturday, September 15, 2007. She is survived by her husband Lawrence and daughter Jessica. Barbara's work and spirit impacted many. She "herded cats" and challenged all Maryland community colleges to participate in CCSSE, National Student Clearinghouse and UI employment matching so that statewide benchmarks could be established. Her work was shared at local, regional and national conferences. Barbara's family has created the "Barbara Ash Endowment Fund" that will be used to support a high school graduate with financial needs choosing to attend a community college. Donations should be made to the Barbara Ash Endowment Fund and can be forwarded here to MACC at 60 West Street, Suite 200, Annapolis, 21401.

Help

Seeking Your Input on Online Survey Software

Frank Doherty, James Madison University (dohertfj@jmu.edu)

James Madison University is searching for online survey software that can meet the needs of various constituencies (research faculty, administrators, students, instructional faculty) on our campus. We used WebSurveyor for four years under an academic licensing agreement, but the company was recently purchased by Vovici, and discontinued all academic licensing agreements. More than 600 faculty, staff, students and administrators were trained to use the product and we need to find a cost-effective solution for the institution. We are developing an RFP for a new software provider and want to learn about the variety of software products used by other institutions. There are 100+ web-survey software providers, so we want to send the RFP to those companies that appear to be mostly likely to provide an adequate solution. Please take five minutes to complete a survey about web-based survey software used at your institution. The survey is here:

<https://websurvey.jmu.edu/ss/wsb.dll/oir/websurveysoftware.htm>

A public report of portions of the results is available at:

<https://websurvey.jmu.edu/ss/wswebtop.dll/WSPubReport?esid=5044&subaccountid=oir>

A more comprehensive report can be requested by providing contact information in the survey.

Thank you.

Frank Doherty, Ph.D.
Director of Institutional Research
James Madison University
dohertfj@jmu.edu

Practitioner's Profile

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

In this feature, we summarize the results of an "electronic interview" with an individual institutional research practitioner. The goal is to foster broader knowledge and appreciation of the diverse membership of AIR, and of the different institutional contexts and activities in which we are engaged.

In this issue, we interview Melody Byers, Planning and Information Management Analyst at Eastern Idaho Technical College (mbyers@eitc.edu).

e-AIR: Hi Melody! I understand you are a fairly new to our profession. How long have you been working in IR?

Melody: A little over a year and I feel like I've barely scratched the surface.

e-AIR: Where do you work?

Melody: Established in 1969, Eastern Idaho Technical College is a public, 2-year, technical college located in Idaho Falls, Idaho. We have about 1,500 students enrolled in our credit programs which focus on Health Professions; Business, Office, and Technology; and Trades and Industry. Our most recent programs include Registered Nursing, Radiation Safety, and Professional Truck Driver Training. We also have more than 10,000 students enrolled in our community education and workforce training programs. EITC offers a wide variety of these non-credit programs, including courses in the general trades, health care, desktop publishing, music, personal enrichment, real estate, and business management. What impresses me most is the real-world connection the college has with local business and industry to ensure our graduates transition easily into the workforce.

e-AIR: Your office is also quite new, right? When was it established?

Melody: The IR office became official when a Director for Planning and

Information Management was hired in 2004. Reporting directly to the Dean of Instruction, he oversees all information technology (network, computer support, website, smart classroom, and distance technology), planning, library, and media services as well as all aspects of institutional research. In 2006, I was hired to coordinate institutional research activities.

The college was not accustomed to having an IR presence on campus. We are in the process of building the office and its functions from the ground up.

e-AIR: What steps has your office taken to define and build its functions?

Melody: Because of the size and mission of our college, this has proven challenging. We identified internal priorities, utilized professional development resources, and opened up a dialogue with fellow colleagues.

Shortly after taking the position, I was sent to AIR Foundations I to learn the basics. This provided a framework and helped us develop a plan. We turned to publications and found three, in particular, to be very helpful – the IR Applications publication, IR Activities, Volume 12, February 26, 2007; the AIR publication, People, Processes, and Managing Data, by Gerald McLaughlin and Richard Howard; and a paper written by Archie George, Director of Institutional Research and Assessment at the University of Idaho.

Armed with more knowledge, we agreed on some starting points. For example, many college personnel have expressed frustration with getting numbers and inconsistency with data. When we took a closer look, data was moving so quickly in and out of certain offices, most people weren't aware someone else had or needed a piece of the related puzzle. "People" were being effective, but there was room for improvement for the "college" to be more effective. Because of this, we identified centralization as a key issue so we could rein in all these isolated pieces. We don't intend to take over everything, but we need a thorough understanding of what needs to be done.

Currently, my responsibilities include IPEDS reporting, coordinating strategic planning, development/maintenance of fact book, and retrieval/organizing of historical data. More broadly, my job is to locate, gather and analyze data, and improve the overall system. It feels like a treasure hunt that I make progress on a little bit at a time.

This has been a wonderful learning experience for me because we are working backwards from where we should be and assessing our progress along the way. Opening up a dialogue with colleagues has been one of the easier tasks, but it takes willingness and time from all parties. I have had more luck with one-on-one discussions than getting groups together. We have had to return to the drawing board more than once and are still in a huge learning curve. If

anyone needs advice on what not to do, I think I am approaching expert status in this area. :-)

e-AIR: What were you doing prior to this?

Melody: For the last 10 years, I have worked mainly in the corporate world. I've actively pursued education and professional development in Business and Psychology. Making the transition from business to academia was a little awkward, but I'm slowly getting used to it. The major difference I've noticed between business and academia is things seem to move slower in academia. Also, I think business "uses" data for decision making more than higher education. There is tons of data flowing, but I cannot always identify what is driving or influencing decisions in higher education. Why generate data with an unclear purpose for its use? For the most part, I believe Institutional Research will help in this capacity, but I'm finding I need to take baby steps and let certain things marinate awhile before taking action.

e-AIR: How did you arrive at institutional research as a profession?

Melody: Completely by accident. The position was available and my skills in analyzing, organizing, and piecing things together made it a natural fit.

e-AIR: What have been some of the most challenging or interesting aspects of your position thus far?

Melody: In the beginning, my greatest challenge was intimidation and frustration because I felt I wasn't grasping the big picture quickly enough. During AIR Foundations I, I immediately received support and encouragement from mentors and colleagues which eliminated those feelings. It was reassuring to discover we all faced similar challenges. My immediate supervisor has been a wonderful mentor, encouraging and promoting my professional development. I am also grateful to the many colleagues who have been willing to share their experiences and offer advice and support.

The biggest surprise was to discover that I enjoy this type of work. I find it requires creativity to piece things together and there is no limit to the types of projects we can get involved in.

e-AIR: How do you spend your time when you are not working?

Melody: I love to relax, travel, and explore. If I can discover a way to do this for a living, I would be set.

e-AIR: Melody, thank you so much for the interview. And welcome to the

profession!

We welcome your feedback on this feature, including suggestions for individuals to be interviewed and questions you would like to have posed in future interviews. Please e-mail your comments and suggestions to Marne Einarson (mailto:mke3@cornell.edu).

Technical Tips from the Field

Automatically Deleting Duplicate Records in Access

Gayle Fink, University System of Maryland (gfink@usmd.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 Gayle Fink (gfink@usmd.edu). Since this is a small corner, KISS (Keep It Short and Smart) will work the best.

I have used this tip a number of times to get duplicate records out of an Access table. This is taken from the Access Help - hopefully it will help you!

In this tip, you create a copy of the structure of the table that contains duplicates, make primary keys of all the fields that contain duplicates, and then run an append query from the original table to the new table. Because fields that are primary keys can't contain duplicate records, this procedure produces a table without duplicate records.

To create a new table

1. In the Database window, click **Tables** tab.
2. Click the name of the table you want to delete duplicate records from.
3. Click **Copy** on the toolbar.
4. Click **Paste** on the toolbar.
5. In the **Paste Table As** dialog box, type a name for the copied table, click **Structure Only**, and then click **OK**.
6. Open the new table in Design view, and select the field(s) that contain duplicates in the table you copied.
7. Click **Primary Key** on the toolbar to create a primary key based on the selected fields.
8. Save and close the table.

To append only unique records to a new table

1. Create a new query based on the original table containing duplicates.
2. In query Design view, click the **Query Type** button on the toolbar, and then click **Append Query**.
3. In the **Append** dialog box, click the name of the new table (from above) from the **Table Name** list, and then click **OK**.
4. Include all the fields from the original table by dragging the asterisk (*) to the query design grid.
5. Click **Run !** on the toolbar.
6. Click **Yes** when you receive the message that you are about to append rows.
7. Click **Yes** when you receive the message that Microsoft Access can't append all the records in the append query. This transfers only unique records to your new tables and discards the duplicates.
8. To see the results, open the table from the **Tables** tab in the Database window.

Give this a try sometime!

Position Listing Summary

Copy and paste this url into your browser to access the current job listings on the AIR website: <http://www.airweb.org/?page=574>.

Parting Thoughts

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

Reader contributions of possible future 'Parting Thoughts' are welcome. Send them to [Marne Einarson](#).

Some thoughts about work...

Opportunity is missed by most because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.

~ Thomas Alva Edison (1847-1931), American inventor

Satisfaction lies in the effort, not in the attainment, full effort is full victory.

~ Mahatma Ghandi (1869-1948), Indian philosopher

Work is either fun or drudgery. It depends on your attitude. I like fun.

~ Colleen C. Barrett (b. 1944), President and COO, Southwest Airlines

**“Three Rules of Work: Out of clutter find simplicity; From discord find harmony;
In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.**

~ Albert Einstein (1879-1955), German-born American physicist

**Surround yourself with people who take their work seriously, but not themselves,
those who work hard and play hard.**

~ Colin Powell (b. 1937), former U.S. Secretary of State