



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).

AIR 2008 Grants and Fellowships

Increase in Award Funding

AIR is pleased to announce an increase in award funding for the 2008 Grant and Fellowship Program!

AIR, with support from NCES, NSF and NPEC, offers an annual, comprehensive research and fellowship program. The goal of these grant programs is to provide professional development opportunities to doctoral students, institutional researchers, educators and administrators, to ultimately foster the use of federal databases for institutional research in postsecondary education.

2008 Grant and Fellowship awards will include:

- **Research Grants** of up to \$40,000
- **Dissertation Fellowships** of up to \$20,000
- **Fellowships for Graduate Study** up to \$10,000 over three years
- **Postdoctoral Policy Fellowships in Washington**
- Scholarships to the **Summer Data Policy Institute**

All grant proposals must be submitted online no later than 11:59 p.m. January 16, 2008! More information, including submission guidelines and proposal information, is available at <http://airweb.org/grants.html>. Questions? Contact Sharon Lynn at slynn@airweb2.org or 850-385-4155.

Take advantage of the many ways AIR can help you, your career, your profession and your institution!

AIR/NCES/NSF National Summer Data Policy Institute

June 8 – 15, 2008

AIR is pleased to offer 65 fellowships for this annual ten-day training session on the postsecondary education databases maintained by NCES and NSF. Institute participants receive hands-on training from the directors of national surveys and databases. Participants also partake in policy seminars led by experts in postsecondary education policy analysis.

To provide an international comparative perspective, one fellowship is awarded through each of the five internationally affiliated AIR groups. Fellowships generally cover travel, room and board at the Institute site in the Washington D.C. area. More information and instructions for applying are available online at

<http://www.airweb.org/>.

The fellowship application deadline is **January 16, 2008**.

For any other questions, please contact Sharon Lynn, National Manager of Grants & Contracts, at slynn@airweb2.org

AIR/NCES Fellowships for Graduate Study

The AIR/NCES Fellowships for Graduate Study are for graduate study advancing or leading to careers in institutional research, thereby increasing the national level of expertise of institutional research officers and the data they produce.

Fellowships will be awarded for credit-bearing graduate study at various degree levels, with different funding categories:

Full-time doctoral students may apply to receive a maximum of \$30,000 over a three year period (\$10,000 per year). No full-time awards will be made to first-time graduate students with no IR work experience.

Part-time graduate students may apply to receive a maximum of \$9,000 over a three year period (\$3,000 per year). Part-time students may move to full-time and apply for an increased award, but may not re-compete at the end of their three year scholarship period.

Specific guidelines and qualifications for the AIR/NCES Fellowships for Graduate Study are at <http://airweb.org/fellowshipsforgraduatestudy.html>. The deadline to submit an application is **March 14, 2008**. If you have questions, please contact Sharon Lynn, National Manager of Grants & Contracts, at slynn@airweb2.org

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 fifth installment of "What is there to do in Seattle?"

The Seattle Forum Hotel is located in the heart of the retail core, so if your goal is to go shopping while you are in Seattle, there are many big name retailers and two shopping centers in the vicinity.

Exit the Sheraton Seattle Hotel onto Pike Street and head downhill toward the water. You are meandering through the retail core. Major shopping spots in the

vicinity include Niketown, Banana Republic, Adidas, and Nordstrom and Macy's, located the next street over on Pine. At Fifth Avenue, detour a block north to Westlake Center, popular with both visitors and locals for its unique mix of shops on four floors. Don't miss the walk-through fountain across the street in Westlake Park at the corner of Fourth and Pine. Continue north on Pine to Pacific Place -- a five-level shopping, dining, and 11-screen AMC Theatres complex with a skybridge connection to the flagship Nordstrom store.

Pacific Place: <http://www.pacificplaceseatle.com/home.aspx>

Westlake Center: <http://www.westlakecenter.com/html/>

Here is a list of stores that started out local and are now national favorites:

1. Ben Bridge Jeweler Flagship Store on the southeast corner of Fourth: Ever since its Seattle-based beginning in 1912, this family-owned jeweler has been a leader in precious gems in more than 70 Ben Bridge stores around the country. Check out the flagship store.
2. Eddie Bauer Pacific Place Store 600 Pine Street: Yes, there really was an Eddie Bauer and he lived, and played, in the Pacific Northwest. Back in 1920 he began creating high-quality outdoor gear for his active cronies. Today, his namesake company sells casual clothing for men and women in more than 370 stores throughout the U.S. and Canada, and is famous for its down products.
3. Nordstrom Flagship Store 500 Pine Street: With a nest egg from the gold rush, John W. Nordstrom and his partner Carl Wallin set up Wallin & Nordstrom on Pike Street in 1901, selling shoes backed with customer service. After more than a century, the family-run store remains a Northwest shopping icon, well-regarded for style, service and shoes, shoes, shoes. NOTE: Head down Pine and Second and you will find the Nordstrom Rack for Nordstrom style at bargain prices.
4. REI (Recreational Equipment Inc.) Flagship Store located at 222 Yale Avenue North: This one is not within walking distance but a short taxi ride from the hotel. This is the second most visited site after the Space Needle. You will not want to miss checking out this store. Originally established in 1938 by a group of 23 mountain climbing buddies, this outdoor emporium has now grown to a cooperative with membership of more than 2.87 million people and a chain of 80-plus stores. This impressive flagship store, loaded with gear and clothing, is designed in a mountain-lodge style complete with rushing stream, a path to test

mountain bikes and a 65 foot climbing wall.

<http://www.rei.com/stores/seattle/index.html>

5. Starbucks Flagship Store at Pike Place Market, 1912 Pike Place: If you're in the Pike Place Market, let your nose lead you to the very first Starbucks opened in 1971, where the aroma of roasting coffee could be sniffed throughout the area. But you could only buy your beans there — drinks were only offered after 1982 when Howard Schultz joined and took the company on to coffee-crazed international fame.
6. Sur la Table Flagship Store Pike Place Market, 84 Pine Street: Since starting out in Pike Place Market in 1972 selling hard-to-find French kitchenware, this store has expanded to more than 55 stores nationwide. The original shop provides a delightful distraction, stocked floor to ceiling with gadgets, copper molds, lines and serving pieces collected from around the world, all represented by a knowledgeable staff.

Travel alert:

Just a reminder for those planning a side trip to Canada, you must have a valid passport. If you do not already have one, I would suggest you plan ahead and obtain or renew your passport as early as possible.

Next month: Okay, let's talk food within walking distance of the Seattle Forum Hotel.

News from AAUP

AAUP Faculty Compensation Survey 2007-08

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

Our survey Web site is now open for data collection at <https://research.aaup.org/fcs>. We are extending the initial deadline for data submission to December 20. All survey data contacts should have received an e-mail message with this information by about November 21. If you did not receive that e-mail and should have; 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 data contacts are now able to make changes to contact and institutional information—including adding or deactivating users—directly through our survey Web site.

Although we will continue to accept data right up to our publication deadlines, we appreciate earlier submissions to ensure that there is time for correcting any

errors and to make our aggregate comparisons more useful.

We apologize for the delay in completing our software upgrades, but hopefully they will make the data submission process even more streamlined. We will be announcing the availability of custom peer comparison reports as soon as possible, although we do not expect data to be available before February 1, 2008 at the earliest.

Thank you for participating in our survey.

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

AIR Assessment Institute

AIR Assessment Institute for Institutional Research Practitioners

March 31 – April 4, 2008

Atlanta, GA

Register at <http://www.airweb.org>

The AIR Assessment Institute for IR Practitioners is focused exclusively on assessment in higher education and is designed to provide opportunities for participants to acquire knowledge about the assessment field and to expand their knowledge and skills regarding the assessment needs within their respective institutions.

Institute modules include:

- Organizing for Assessment
- Institutional Effectiveness, Organizational Development and Cultural Change
- Developing Goals, Using Tools and Devising Implementation Strategies
- Managing, Using and Understanding Assessment Results
- Assessing General Education and Accreditation Expectations: Two Hot Topics for IR Professionals

AIR Member Institute price: \$1,075.00

Non-member Institute price: \$1,190.00

Need financial assistance? Apply for the Julia M. Duckwall scholarship at <http://airweb.org/duckwall.html>. This scholarship covers registration, housing and meals for up to two Institute attendees.

Module descriptions and other Institute details are available on the AIR Web site. The Institute fills up quickly, so register today at <http://airweb.org/>!

For more information, contact Kim Steele at ksteele@airweb2.org

SCUP Webcast on Assessment

The Society for College and University Planning (SCUP) announces this upcoming webcast:

Assessment and Accountability: Reasonable Approaches for Higher Education

Thursday, November 29

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm Eastern Standard Time

Webcast presenters:

Peter Ewell, Vice President, National Center for Higher Education Management Systems

David E. Shulenburg, Vice President for Academic Affairs, National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges

Susan Hatfield, Director of Assessment, Winona State University

Barbara Wright, Associate Director, Western Association of Schools and Colleges

The report of the Secretary of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education, and potentially radical changes in accreditation in its wake, bring unprecedented national attention to assessing student learning. But how to proceed "reasonably" in this direction, without homogenizing diverse institutions or "teaching to tests" remain much debated questions for colleges and universities. Are there better ways to assess institutional quality to assure policymakers, students, and their parents that they are getting their money's worth? And how do we bring faculty and academic leaders into this conversation to ensure that better teaching and learning is the objective, not just more assessment? Join a dialogue among national thought leaders on the topic to explore these and other questions.

Webcast Fee: \$245 for either the live event or CD

For more information and registration visit:

<http://www.nytimes.whsites.net/knowledgenetwork/learning/scup-assessment.>

[html](#)

Questions? Call 734.998.6966

Kathleen Benton
Associate Director/Education & Product Development
Society for College and University Planning
kathy.benton@scup.org

Institution Costing Data Survey

Lumina Foundation Institution Costing Data Survey

Funded by the Lumina Foundation for Education as part of the "Nontraditional Learners in Postsecondary Education: Emerging Pathways to Access and Success" project at the University of Virginia, a national study of cost of instruction is being conducted. This study includes: (1) a synthesis of the research and literature, available at <http://highered.org/docs/milam-costofinstructionsynthesis.pdf>; (2) an online survey of states about available costing data and models; and (3) a comparable survey of institutions.

We invite you to participate in the third component of this study – the Lumina Institution Costing Data Survey. This survey documents the availability of various types of costing data along with the general use of cost models. Survey results will be used to document effective practices and templates for cost models. These will be disseminated through publications and workshops designed to help states and institutions build cost models that are more practical, accurate, and relevant. A copy of the final results will be provided electronically to participants.

The survey is available online at: <http://highered.org/lumina/institution>

We thank you for your participation in this important survey.

For questions, please contact:

John Milam, Ph.D./Chris Coutts, Ph.D.
HigherEd.org, Inc.
Email: lumina@highered.org
Phone (540) 722-6060
<http://highered.org>

HEDW Call for Proposals

Higher Education Data Warehousing Forum: Call for Proposals

Emily Thomas, Stony Brook University (emily.thomas@stonybrook.edu)

The planning team invites presentation proposals for the 5th Higher Education Data Warehousing Forum Conference. The Forum will convene at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia on March 30 to April 1, 2008, bringing together people from information technology, institutional research, decision support, and administrative/business units to share knowledge and best practices for knowledge management in colleges and universities, including building data warehouses, developing institutional reporting strategies, and providing decision support. For more information or to submit a proposal go to www.stonybrook.edu/HEDW.

Sincerely,

Emily Thomas
Director of Planning and Institutional Research
Stony Brook University

ACPA Award Nominations

ACPA Emerging Best Practice in Student Affairs Assessment Award

Gavin Henning, ACPA Commission for Assessment and Evaluation (gavin.henning@dartmouth.edu)

The ACPA Commission for Assessment and Evaluation proudly announces the 2008 Emerging Best Practices in Student Affairs Assessment Award. This award is designed to recognize innovative and high quality student affairs evaluation and assessment plans being implemented by ACPA members at community colleges, colleges, universities, and special focus institutions.

Awards will be made in two areas of assessment:

- Student learning and development outcomes
- Program review and evaluation.

The nomination form can be found at <http://www.myacpa.org/comm/assessment/>

Our document Guidelines for Successful Assessment found on the "Best Practices Award" tab on our website <http://www.myacpa.org/comm/assessment/> provides information on the criteria that will be examined in assessment plans submitted for consideration.

For questions or to submit a nomination form by end of business day, December 14, 2007, please contact Dianne Timm, Assistant Dean of Students, Cornell College at 319-895-4103 or dtimm@cornellcollege.edu.

FSU IR Certificate Courses

Certificate in Institutional Research at Florida State University Announces Spring/Summer 2008 Courses

Jill Peerenboom, Florida State University (jpeerenboom@admin.fsu.edu)

The Certificate in Institutional Research at Florida State University is an online certificate program, consisting of 18 credits of graduate-level course work, designed to provide academic and professional development opportunities for institutional researchers, administrators, graduate students, and faculty from all areas of higher education. Students will enhance their knowledge and understanding of Institutional Research, have the opportunity to explore national databases, and apply their knowledge to practical applications.

During Spring and Summer 2008, the Certificate program at Florida State will offer a variety of courses that can be taken independently or as part of the Certificate in Institutional Research. These courses offer a great opportunity for new and existing students to add to their professional knowledge and progress toward earning the Certificate. Offerings are as follows:

Spring 2008:

EDH 5068 Outcomes of Undergraduate Education (3 credits)

This course explores the basics of assessing and evaluating the outcomes of undergraduate education. It provides a historical and theoretical foundation for understanding the outcomes of a higher education both in and out of the classroom. The course explores problems and solutions in practice and policies related to outcomes of higher education.

Summer 2008:

EDH 5931 Special Topics: Data Mining (3 credits)

This course provides an introduction to the core concepts and methods of data mining and knowledge discovery. Lab exercises will be used to provide basic experience with data analysis.

EDH 5055 Introduction to Institutional Research (3 credits)

The course will provide an introduction to the theoretical and practical application of institutional research as a discipline in higher education. Institutional research is an embedded function with direct applications in all administrative and strategic processes within the institution. The course content will be addressed within the context of organizational, administrative, political, and ethical issues in institutional research.

Student Success in College (3 credits)

The landscape of American higher education is changing dramatically as an

increasingly diverse population gets ready to go to college. This course examines the theories and research on student success and explores the effective policies, programs, and practices that can be adopted to promote student success in higher education

More information is available at <http://www.fsu.edu/~elps/ir/certificate.html> or by emailing IRCertificate@coe.fsu.edu. If you have specific questions, please contact Jill Peerenboom, Program Coordinator at jpeerenboom@admin.fsu.edu

Editors' Book of the Month

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

This month's book, *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*, was written by John W. Creswell and Vicki L. Plano Clark, and published by Sage Publications, Inc., Thousand Oaks in 2007. ISBN: 1-4129-2791-9

At my institution, senior administrators are becoming more interested in having our office conduct research that encompasses quantitative *and* qualitative approaches. A recent request spurred me to return to the literature on this topic – and I was very pleased to come across a new text by John Creswell and Vicki Plano Clark, *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*

As Creswell and Plano Clark observe, the use of mixed methods research designs – that is, research that combines quantitative and qualitative approaches – is becoming increasingly common in the social sciences. The underlying premise of this approach is that using quantitative and qualitative methods together offers a better means of understanding research problems than using either approach on its own. A mixed methods design can capitalize on the strengths and offset the weaknesses of each approach; permits more comprehensive perspectives and types of data to be brought to bear on research problems; and can be used to examine more complex research questions. Plus, this research approach has the appeal of offering multiple forms of evidence to address the needs and interests of different audiences – from policy makers, to other researchers, to practitioners. Quantitatively-based charts, tables and graphs may be the most effective means of conveying research findings to many of our constituents, but the inclusion of qualitative methods allows us to add richness and texture to these numbers by including the “voice” of study participants or to provide explanations of the processes connecting observed events.

That being said, mixed methods research is often more complex to conduct than single method approaches. Creswell and Plano Clark note the availability of numerous conceptual and theoretical pieces on mixed methods research but relative dearth of writing on the actual application of these designs. Their book addresses this gap by providing practical advice on designing, conducting and

disseminating the results of mixed methods studies.

They begin by reviewing the history of mixed methods research and the major paradigms that underpin research (postpositivism, constructivism, advocacy and participatory, and pragmatism). Next, they compare and contrast the basic elements of quantitative and qualitative research, and consider the types of problems that might be most appropriate for employing a mixed methods approach.

For me, the most important contribution of this book is their overview of four key types of mixed methods designs – the Triangulation Design, Embedded Design, Explanatory Design, and Exploratory Design – including the intent, procedures, strengths and challenges of each. The differences among these designs reflect the results of three research design decisions: the relative weighting to be given to quantitative and qualitative approaches, the sequencing of each method, and how the data collected from each will be combined. In brief:

- In the Triangulation Design, the researcher collects quantitative and qualitative data on the same research question, and directly compares and contrasts the results obtained from each method.
- In the Embedded Design, qualitative and quantitative data are used to answer different, but related, research questions. One type of data is embedded, and plays a secondary role, within a research design based primarily on the other type of data; for example, conducting follow-up interviews with a subset of survey participants to explore the processes underlying an observed relationship between survey constructs.
- The Explanatory Design is a two-phase research design that begins with collecting quantitative data followed by the collection of qualitative data to help explain or expand upon quantitative findings.
- The Exploratory Design is a two-phase research design that begins with qualitative methods to explore the issue or constructs of interest. Results from this initial phase are used to develop the second, quantitative method; so for example, focus groups or interviews are conducted initially to inform the construction of a survey instrument

In choosing a specific mixed methods design, the researcher must consider which will best fit with their research problem, as well as practical considerations of the skills and the resources required to undertake particular designs.

In the remainder of the book, the authors provide a more detailed consideration of how to design and conduct a mixed methods study. They look at each design phase – introducing a mixed methods design, data collection, data analysis, and writing and presenting results – from the point of view of mixed methods research, in general, as well as from the specific perspective of each of the four major designs.

I found Creswell and Plano Clark's book to be a very useful reference, particularly in the initial design phase when considering the relative role to be played by each research approach. While much of the focus of this book is on producing scholarly research (dissertation and grant proposals, journal articles), the guidelines proffered also stand to benefit more applied research – including research conducted for institutional purposes. Creswell and Plano Clark offer a clearly written guide for planning and conducting mixed methods research, replete with practical advice, numerous examples, and references for locating further information on the topic.

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](#)

As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.

~ John Fitzgerald Kennedy (1917-1963), President of the United States

We can only be said to be alive in those moments when our hearts are conscious of our treasures.

~ Thornton Wilder (1897-1975), American playwright and novelist

A thankful heart is not only the greatest virtue, but the parent of all the other virtues.

~ Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 BC), Roman statesman and philosopher

Who does not thank for little will not thank for much.

~ Estonian Proverb