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

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 Randy Swing, Executive Director, AIR, 1435 E. Piedmont Drive, Suite 211 · Tallahassee, FL 32308; Telephone: (850) 385-4155 or via e-mail: (rswing@airweb2.org).

AIR Awards

AIR Outstanding Service Award

http://airweb.org/outstandingserviceaward.html

The AIR Outstanding Service Award (OSA) has been created to recognize members or former members who have made extraordinary and sustained contributions to the Association for Institutional Research for a period of at least five years.

The submission period closes 11:59 p.m. EDT, January 31st.

AIR John E. Stecklein Award

http://airweb.org/membershipawards.html

Distinguished Membership is a meaningful recognition bestowed sparingly and only to those persons who have made significant and substantial contributions to the field of institutional research. Nominate a colleague today!

The submission period closes 11:59 p.m. EDT, January 31st.

AIR Forum Registration

Register Today for the 48th Annual AIR Forum!
Michelle Hall, AIR 2008 Forum Chair (air@airweb2.org)

The time has finally come! Registration is open for the 2008 Forum. Whatever your needs or interests, the 48th Annual AIR Forum will have something for everyone: Professional Development workshops on Saturday and Sunday, posters, table topics, demonstrations, panels, research presentations, two plenary speakers you will not want to miss, including the new AIR Executive Director Randy L. Swing, and much more. Not to mention an opportunity to watch the Seattle Mariners with a few of your AIR friends!

Register today for the 48th Annual AIR Forum May 24-28, 2008, in Seattle Washington! The Web-based Forum program and Personal Scheduler will allow you to view Forum activities and sessions by day, time, track, and presenter. The latest Forum news is available at http://airweb.org!

Have you made your hotel reservations? Make your reservations today at the

Sheraton Seattle! Stay in the heart of downtown at the Sheraton Seattle, just steps from Pike Place Market, Seattle's top shopping and world-class restaurants. Forum sessions will be held in the adjacent Washington State Convention and Trade Center.

Interested in a workshop? The 2008 Pre-Forum Professional Development Workshops will be offered May 24 & 25, in conjunction with the Forum. These half-day and full-day workshops provide opportunities to acquire new skills. Prices range from $65 to $280 per workshop. Check here for more information about the workshops being offered!

We look forward to seeing you in Seattle!

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

I said in the last installment that I wanted to talk some more about food. The Local Arrangement Committee will have a list of restaurants for distribution at the Forum but these usually have to do with going out in the evening. In this installment I wanted to address breakfast and lunch options within walking distance of the hotel. I know I sometimes I like to step away from the hotel during the day time.

1. **Belle Epicurean** is a tiny pastry/coffee shop located at 1206 4th Avenue, a couple of blocks down from the Forum hotel on the bottom floor of the Fairmont Hotel. The chef was trained at Le Cordon Bleu and has all sorts of rave reviews on the wall along with her diploma. Don't miss this place for a morning pastry or wonderful and simple sandwiches for lunch. Highly recommended if you're into the French pastry thing. And how could you not be? I highly recommend their citrus brioche and also their caramel lattes (they make their own caramel) and mochas (made with imported Belgian chocolate, with 70% cocoa). http://www.belleepicurean.com/

2. **The Crumpet Shop** is at 1503 1st Avenue between Pike Street and Pine Street down by Pike Place Market. For more than a quarter century, this quirky store has been serving wonderful warm crumpets. In case you don't know, a crumpet is thick like an English muffin but chewier and richer-flavored. It has a crisp, craggy-textured surface that begs to be heaped with butter and fruit-clotted marmalade. Properly British, the shop serves scones and whole-leaf teas, too. In summer, it offers iced tea, with or

without fruit juice. The shop also offers homemade soup and sandwiches. They have a coffee happy hour in the mornings from 7-8:30 am. Sorry no web site for this one.

3. When money is no issue what is my favorite Seattle downtown place for breakfast?: **The Georgian** at the Fairmont Olympic Hotel just around the corner and down the street from the Forum Hotel. Some would say that this restaurant, accented with crystal chandeliers, potted palms, and rich fabrics, is Seattle's grandest. From elegant decor to fine Northwest cuisine, the establishment is sublime. A well-trained, knowledgeable staff serves beautifully-presented dishes, such as eggs benedict, lemon-ricotta pancakes, NY steak and eggs, smoked salmon omelet, and orange French toast. Although the experience is pricey, it is worth it. Go to the following web site then go to the bottom and click on the breakfast menu. http://www.fairmont.com/seattle/GuestServices/Restaurants/TheGeorgian.htm

4. **Salumi** is at 309 Third Avenue South-Pioneer Square area (hours 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.). Okay, it is a little distance from the Forum hotel, good exercise or you can walk down to Third Avenue and ride a bus (it is free). For many folks, salami is a guilty pleasure. We all know it has a lot of fat, but it tastes too good to resist. Now, raise the bar on salami, and you have the artisan-cured meats of this closet-size eatery near Pioneer Square. The owner, Armandino Batali, who happens to be the father of New York's famous chef Mario Batali, makes all his own salami (as well as traditional Italian-cured beef tongue). Order up a meat plate with a side of cheese and some roasted red bell peppers, pour yourself a glass of wine from the big bottle on the table, and you have a perfect lunchtime repast in the classic Italian style. Did I mention the great breads and tapenades? Wow! If you're down in the Pioneer Square area at lunch, don't miss this place (even if there's a long line). Suggestion: Line runs out the door by noon. Prepare to be patient or grab lunch after 1 p.m. http://www.salumicuredmeats.com/

5. **Union Square Grill** at 621 Union Street is rated as one of the top ten restaurants by two local papers and is close to the Forum hotel. Union Square Grill is Seattle's Classic Chop House. Signature dishes include prime rib, veal and lamb chops, and dry aged Prime beef. Adjacent to the Washington State Convention and Trade Center and across from the Sheraton Hotel, the Union Square Grill is open for lunch at 11 a.m. until 3 p.m., Monday through Friday. This is also a great place to go for their happy hour from 3:00-6:00 p.m. http://www.unionsquaregrill.com/

6. Two places I had mentioned in earlier issues as good places to get a beer are also good places for a quick lunch and close to the Forum hotel, **Rock Bottom Restaurant & Brewery**

http://www.rockbottom.com/RockBottomWeb/RBR/Home.aspx and **Tap House Grill**. http://taphousegrill.com/

Travel alert:

Not to be over kill but 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 I plan to recommend some side trips for those considering coming early or adding some vacation time after the Forum.

e-AIR Limerick Contest

e-AIR 2008 Limerick Contest
Marne Einarson (mke3@cornell.edu)

It's time once again for the annual e-AIR Limerick Contest!! Help us all stave off the winter blues by creating an original limerick.

Entries must have something to do with institutional research. This year, we are including a special category of limericks about the Annual Forum. Within reason, entries should follow the limerick "a-a-b-b-a" rhyming scheme (i.e., the first, second and fifth lines all rhyme with one another; the third and fourth lines rhyme with each other). Beyond that, you are limited only by your creativity and sense of humor.

E-mail your limerick(s) to Marne Einarson (mke3@cornell.edu) by March 1st. All entries received by that date will be stripped of identifying information, assigned an entry number, and forwarded to our panel of judges –Alan Sturtz, Susan Mullen, and the "gold medal" winner from our 2007 limerick contest, Kathy Livingston. Winning limericks will be published in the March e-AIR newsletter.

To get your creative juices flowing, here is Kathy's winning limerick from last year:

Ode to Solving the Problem:

When demand for more data is great

Try to hire an assistant first rate.

Then you'll both live to tell

Of a life that is swell

And the service to campus is great!

Folks who have submitted limericks in our previous contests have told us they had a lot of fun composing them. And we know you appreciated reading them. So get busy rhyming!

AIR Assessment Institute

The Association for Institutional Research (AIR) proudly presents:

AIR Assessment Institute for Institutional Research Practitioners
March 31 – April 4, 2008
Atlanta, GA

The AIR Assessment Institute for IR Practitioners, March 31 – April 4, 2008, in Atlanta, Georgia, 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.

Register today at http://airweb.org/ !

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.

Kim Steele Halfhill

AIR Office
khalfhill@airweb.org

News from AAUP

AAUP Faculty Compensation Survey 2007-08
John W. Curtis, AAUP (jcurtis@aaup.org)

We are now approaching the initial publication deadlines for our 2008 report. Contacts for institutions that have not yet submitted data for this year were notified by e-mail on January 24. If you have already submitted data, please double-check to make sure that you have responded to any warning messages. If you need to make corrections, the best method is usually to upload a corrected data file. We will be reviewing verification issues as quickly as possible. Please log in to check your status and generate a survey summary report, which will give you a good idea of how your data will look when published.

We will continue to accept data submissions for the next several weeks—but please don't delay! We are already working on the aggregate data analysis that will allow you to compare your institution by category both nationally and regionally. The more institutions we have included in that aggregate analysis, the better the comparison will be. And the sooner you submit your data, the more time you'll have to make any necessary corrections in order to be included in the listings that will appear in Academe and other national publications. Our Web-based system and automated verification process mean that you can submit data at any time and receive immediate feedback.

For instructions on completing the data file or uploading and verifying data, go to our survey Web site at https://research.aaup.org/fcs/default.asp. If you have previously registered as a survey data contact, you can retrieve your user ID or password through the "Upload and complete the survey" link. If you don't yet have a user name and password, use the Registration Center. If you need assistance, contact us by e-mail at aaupfcs@aaup.org.

We will be e-mailing all of our survey contacts with further information on peer comparison reports as soon as we are ready to process those requests.

AAUP Research Office

John W. Curtis, Director of Research and Public Policy
Doug Kinsella, Research Associate
Lee Nguyen, Research Assistant
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NCES Publications

Projections of Education Statistics to 2016

This publication provides projections for key education statistics. It includes statistics on enrollment, graduates, teachers, and expenditures in elementary and secondary schools, and enrollment, earned degrees conferred, and current-fund expenditures of degree-granting institutions. For the Nation, the tables, figures, and text contain data on enrollment, teachers, graduates, and expenditures for the past 14 years and projections to the year 2016. For the 50 States and the District of Columbia, the tables, figures, and text contain data on projections of public elementary and secondary enrollment and public high school graduates to the year 2016. In addition, the report includes a methodology section describing models and assumptions used to develop national and state-level projections.

To browse the report or to download, view and print the report as a PDF file, please visit: http://nces.ed.gov/programs/projections/projections2016/

Mathematics Coursetaking and Achievement at the End of High School: Evidence from the Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:2002)

This report documents and examines the relationship between the number and types of math courses taken in the 11th and 12th grade and growth in mathematics proficiency over the same time period. Using data from the Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:2002), the analysis identifies the coursetaking sequences most prevalent among contemporary high school students in their junior and senior years, sociodemographic characteristics of the students who follow these course sequences, and the association between specific courses and course sequences and mathematics gains over the last two years of high school. Because most students (94 percent) entered the second half of high school with a mastery of basic mathematics skills such as simple arithmetic and operations, most learning during this time was in intermediate-level mathematics skills and concepts. For example, the percentage of students with an understanding of simple problem solving skills grew from 53 to 65 percentage points over the two year period. In terms of learning in specific content areas, the largest gains in intermediate skills such as simple operations and problem solving were made by those who followed the geometry–algebra II sequence. The largest gains in advanced skills such as derivations and making inferences from algebraic expressions were made by students who took precalculus paired with another course. The smallest gains were made by students who took one mathematics course or no mathematics courses during their last 2 years.

To browse the report or to download, view and print the report as a PDF file, please visit: http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2008/2008319.pdf

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Project on Student Debt

Seeking Comments on Financial Aid Initiatives Analysis

The Project on Student Debt, an organization that seeks to increase public awareness of student borrowing and its implications, has produced an analysis of financial aid initiatives designed to reduce loan burdens and make costs more transparent. High-profile examples of such initiatives include Princeton's "no-loan" policy, announced in 2001, and the "no-loan" and "sliding scale for parent contributions" policies announced by Harvard and Yale in the last two months.

Our analysis aims to quantify the actual cost of attending some of these schools for families at several income levels, taking into account the family contribution and self-help (loans and work) amounts packaged in financial aid.

The report and related documents can be found at www.projectonstudentdebt. org/pledges.

We welcome comments from institutional researchers on the methodology outlined in the "comparison and analysis" document -- in particular, on the manner in which it is presented, and whether it creates a fair basis for comparing institutions.

Such comments can be sent to Srikanth Sivashankaran, Research Associate, at Srikanth@ticas.org. We would appreciate any feedback to be sent byFebruary 15, although it will be welcome after that date.

Thanks for your attention.

Srikanth Sivashankaran
Research Associate
Project on Student Debt
Srikanth@ticas.org

HEDW Conference

Register for the Higher Education Data Warehousing Conference

Registration is open for the 2008 Higher Education Data Warehousing Conference to be held at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia from Sunday, March 30 thru Tuesday, April 1. The program covers a full spectrum of data warehousing and

reporting issues, with sessions on dimensional modeling, getting started in data warehousing, data governance and stewardship, and business intelligence solutions. The Data Warehousing Institute (TDWI) will offer a full-day training session titled "Requirements Analysis for Institutional Intelligence."

Go to http://www.cpe.vt.edu/hedw/index.html for complete information and to register. Note that two conference grants are available.

Emily Thomas
Director of Institutional Research and Planning
Stony Brook University
Emily.Thomas@stonybrook.edu

NCDE Conference

International Conference on Research in Access and Developmental Education

The National Center for Developmental Education is sponsoring the Fourth International Conference on Research in Access and Developmental Education September 24-27, 2008 at the Condado Plaza Hotel in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

A Call for Proposals and registration information is posted at www.ncde.appstate.edu.

Evelyn Asher
National Center for Developmental Education
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Penn State On-Line IR Courses

Penn State On-Line Professional Development Courses in Institutional Research

James Fredericks Volkwein, Center for the Study of Higher Education, The Pennsylvania State University (volkwein@psu.edu)

Professional development courses in Institutional Research are offered on-line through the Penn State World Campus each Spring, Summer and Fall (see below). These graduate courses for 3 credits each may be taken as singular non-degree experiences, or as elective courses toward a graduate degree, or counted toward the Graduate Certificate in Institutional Research. For more information, see our web page at http://www.ed.psu.edu/ircert/ir.html. It gives info on admissions, registration, curriculum requirements, faculty, and a syllabus for each course by clicking on the relevant tabs. In 2008, these Summer courses will begin May 19, Fall courses will begin September 8.

Studying Students and Student Affairs Programs (HiEd 598C) - Summer 2008

This course, designed by Dr. Robert Reason and Linda Strauss, examines the characteristics of traditional and non-traditional postsecondary education students. Drawing upon the latest research, the course equips institutional researchers and student affairs administrators to engage in research on student growth, campus climate, and evaluation of student services. Pre-requisite: Working knowledge of basic statistics. Curricular goals for students in 598C:

- To examine changing student demographics and how these influence student outcomes and institutional operation

- To understand how different populations of student change while in college and what factors contribute to the change

- To become familiar with theories and research on student development

- To gain a general knowledge of the functional areas of student affairs and their intended purposes for the students they serve

- To learn about the tools available to assess student/student affairs program outcomes

- To learn how to plan assessment in the area of student affairs.

Analyzing Faculty Workload, Performance, and Compensation (HiEd 598F) - Summer 2008

This course, designed by Dr. Dan Teodorescu and Fred Volkwein, provides students with an overview of faculty issues and the most common analyses institutional researchers carry out in the area of academic affairs. Pre-requisite: Working knowledge of intermediate statistics such as OLS regression. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand concepts, methodologies, research practices, and information systems that support academic decision making in the Provost's Office.

- Use NSOPF, NSF, and other national databases that collect faculty information

- Understand the diversity of faculty and worklife issues at national and institutional levels

- Recognize and carryout at a basic level the major Institutional Research faculty-related analyses including benchmarking, projections, salary equity, instructional analysis, and research productivity.

- Develop appropriate metrics to gauge faculty work in instruction, research, and service.

- Utilize SPSS software, make power-point presentations, and produce effective reports related to faculty issues.

Assessing Academic Outcomes (HiEd 598A, 3 credits) - Fall 2008

This course, designed by Dr. Fred Volkwein with assistance from Alex Yin and Linda Strauss, examines Institutional Effectiveness, Accountability and Accreditation, Academic Program Evaluation, and Student Outcomes Assessment. Pre-requisite: Working knowledge of basic statistics. Curricular goals for students in 598A:

- To understand concepts, methodologies, research practices, instruments, and information systems that support campus evaluation and assessment activities.

- To design and conduct studies of student and alumni outcomes such as basic skills, general education, knowledge in the major, intellectual and personal growth.

- To utilize SPSS software, make power-point presentations, and produce effective reports on selected assessment topics .

Institutional Research Foundations and Fundamentals (HiEd 598i) - Fall 2008

This course, designed and taught by Dr. Fred Volkwein, is an overview of the theory and practice of institutional research. Prerequisites: None. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Understand concepts, methodologies, research practices, and information systems that support campus decision making

- Understand the diversity of the institutional research profession, including office organization and staffing, and organizational functions and activities

- Recognize and carryout at a basic level the major Institutional Research activities including using National Datasets, Planning and Budgeting, Enrollment Management and enrollment forecasting, Faculty Studies and Instructional Analysis, Institutional Effectiveness and accreditation, Program Evaluation and Student Outcomes Assessment.

- Utilize SPSS software, make Powerpoint presentations, and produce effective reports on selected IR topics .

Designing Institutional Research Studies (HiEd 598D) - Spring 2009

Designed by Dr. Patrick Terenzini, Dr Fred Volkwein, and Dr. Linda Strauss, this course, teaches alternative research designs and necessary research skills,

including sampling and basic measurement, data collection methods, survey research, interviews, focus groups, and selecting appropriate statistical tools. Pre-requisite: Working knowledge of intermediate statistics, including the concepts underlying OLS regression such as R-square, R-square change, b-weights, and beta weights.

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.

On December 10, **Lorne Kuffel** joined the University of Alabama as Executive Director of the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. He came to the U of A from the College of William and Mary.

Theodore H. "Ted" Drews passed away at his home in Kaua'i, Hawaii on November 14, 2007 at the age of 82. Ted was a retired U.S. Department of Education analyst and former AIR member. He is survived by his wife, Sheila.

Practitioner Profile

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.

PRACTITIONER PROFILE: Marvin W. Peterson

This month, we feature an interview conducted with Dr. Marvin W. Peterson (marvp@umich.edu) at the 2007 Annual Forum. Marv is a Professor of Higher Education at the University of Michigan who has made many significant contributions to AIR. He is a Past President of AIR and a recipient of the Outstanding Service Award, the John E. Stecklein Distinguished Membership Award, the Sidney Suslow Award, and Annual Forum Best Paper Award. In

addition to his many scholarly contributions to higher education, he is also Past President of the Association for Higher Education and the Society for College and University Planning, and has served on numerous national boards and task forces.

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e-AIR: How did you first become involved in institutional research?

Marv: First, let me say, I am not sure why I am being interviewed for the "Practitioner Profile" since I have never really had an official IR job. I have just always found it a fascinating area to study. So I am scarcely a practitioner. I just watch all of you work!

When I finished my Master's degree, I worked as an Assistant Dean at Harvard Business School for four years. Basically, they had several assistant deans and each of us had a different responsibility; mine was to run the admissions process. All the assistant deans did recruiting, traveling around the country a couple of times every year. In addition each class was divided into sections; we functioned as academic advisors and dean of students, if you will, for the faculty associated with each section.

Being in charge of admissions in the early 60's was in pre-technology days. It was also an era when many young women who graduated from liberal arts colleges in the New England area gravitated to the business school as a good place to work. I had a staff: supervised by a Radcliffe graduate, a woman, Claire who was really very capable, and six young women who had recently graduated from Smith, Holyoke, U Mass and so on, who handled all of the admission application materials. We processed about 7,000 applications a year. Admissions activity was an up and down cyclical business so there were certain times of the year when we were tremendously busy and there were other times of the year when we weren't. I would go to the Dean's staff meetings every week and somebody would say, "You know, I don't know anything about this." And I'd say, "Gee, I think I can find out something about that." So I'd go back and sit down with Claire and a couple of the young women working in the office, and we'd figure out how to collect some data on the issue. Two weeks later I'd show up at the Dean's meeting with this report. So that's how I got started – I was doing institutional research and didn't know it.

At one of their national conferences in the mid to late fifties, the American Council on Education [ACE] focused on the theme "what is institutional research and why we need it." Subsequently, ACE heeded the cry from college and university presidents that they needed better data on their institutions, and managed to talk the U.S. Office of Education into funding doctoral fellowships for something called "institutional research." So that's how friends Bill Lasher, John

Chase, myself and several others got fellowships for the doctoral program at Michigan to learn something about this field that didn't yet exist. I didn't really know what this field was. I just knew I had a fellowship that provided full funding, that I was interested in college and university administration because I'd been working there for four years, and so I ended up doing something that I didn't know I'd already been doing.

Actually, in retrospect, I think my experience with IR has paralleled my experience in higher education. I came in when higher education was not well defined as an academic field, IR was not a clearly understood function (nor was planning for that matter). Consequently I've been able to grow up with those three areas. It was a good time to get started. You can't do that anymore because they're all fairly advanced and sophisticated fields.

e-AIR: How has the profession changed over the time that you've been involved?

Marv: I'll tell you the big difference. When I first started going to the Forums, almost all the people who were directors of IR had been faculty, they reported directly to presidents, and many directors of institutional research went on to become presidents or vice presidents of universities or heads of state associations. And now, you know, IR reports to a lower administrative level and, with a little bit of luck, you'll get bumped up to director of institutional research and planning, or maybe become an assistant or associate vice president but that's often about it. So, in one sense, it was a much higher level function within institutions and had people who were moving on into top level management. And in Forum sessions, people didn't talk much about specific studies, analytic techniques and research methods, information systems and statistical techniques. They were more focused on the major problems that their institutions were addressing and strategic institutional issues or the development of their new field.

e-AIR: What do you predict for the future? Where is IR heading?

Marv: I wrote a chapter on the future of institutional research for a New Directions for Institutional Research issue back in 2000 (No. 104) that I don't think many believe but I still stand by it. Basically, I wrote then that most postsecondary institutions were becoming much more entrepreneurial, that the environment was becoming much more complex and changeable, that we were becoming part of an emerging Postsecondary Knowledge Industry (not just an industry of colleges and universities) and that many of the key issues we needed to address involved relationships with external groups. So consequently, IR needs to be more involved in understanding the changes in the postsecondary knowledge industry, knowing how to evaluate strategic alternatives and examine emerging entrepreneurial ventures - a whole array of such things. But, as I say,

I don't think that's had a very wide spread reaction.

e-AIR: You've had countless forms of involvement with AIR. Out of all your roles or accomplishments, are there some standouts?

Marv: Well, certainly I have enjoyed many great times and had loads of fun with my colleagues over the years – there are a lot of funny stories I could tell but that I won't divulge here! More seriously, I feel very fortunate to have to been actively involved with AIR when it was going through some organizational pains. When I became President in 1984, AIR was in decline – it had lost membership for about 4 years in a row. We did two things. First, we focused on celebrating the association's 25th anniversary and undertook an active membership recruitment campaign. But more importantly we also set up a large planning commission to rethink the future and the focus of the association, how it should address its problems and those of higher education. Marilyn McCoy, who was the Vice President of AIR that year, chaired the commission and then, in her presidential year, implemented its recommendations. There were really extremely capable people on our board and on that commission who have remained very good friends – many have been active in the association in the ensuing years. This two-pronged approach, plus the economy improving, helped to turn things around. That was a very rewarding time to be in a leadership position in AIR.

e-AIR: When you have students who are considering IR positions, what advice do you give them? Or what do you see as important skills for them to be able to demonstrate?

Marv: Well I usually tell them it's a really an interesting and exciting area to go to work in. I see IR as a good bridging function between graduate school and college and university administration; it allows them to use skills learned in graduate school and to get to know a lot about an institution quickly and then make a choice about staying in that or doing something else. So, I advise them to work in IR for three to five years and then decide if they're going to do that for their primary career and become the director of institutional research or executive dealing with it at the type of institution they want to work in. Or, they should take advantage of the fact that, in those three to five years, they have gotten to know many aspects of the institution and use this experience as a stepping stone into planning, academic affairs or another administrative area or whatever it is that they're more interested in.

I guess I'm on a different end of the spectrum from where many of my colleagues in the profession are now. I agree with them that it's important to get a good statistical and research methods background and to know something about information systems, computer and analytic software, but those are skills that you will need to continue to develop on the job; plus you're going to relearn

those skills every few years because of changes in these areas. I think graduate students preparing for an IR position ought to learn a lot more about colleges and universities as complex organizations, how they are governed, managed and changed, and about how they interact with the larger environment. They also need to learn about state governance and politics if they will be working in a public institution. I think they need to be familiar with the student, faculty, curricular, and financial as well as the organizational and academic sides of life, in addition to having adequate research skills and statistical sophistication to begin working in the field. Right now, I think the emphasis has swung the other way – where most of our attention is on the information, statistical and technical skills associated with IR and less emphasis is given to understanding organizational and developmental theory.

e-AIR: You will retire from your faculty position at the University of Michigan on December 31st, 2007. What are your plans after that?

Marv: I really don't have any specific long term plans. I don't particularly want to consult on the typical short-term, one or two day projects where you come in, figure out what the problem is, suggest what to do, and go away. And, if I get involved in long-term projects with their expectations of comprehensive reports, sophisticated follow-up and coordination that typically requires you to hire a staff. Once you hire a staff, you have to get more projects in order to justify the staff, and the next thing you know you're running a consulting firm and I don't want to do that. So consulting is not high on my agenda. I am going to be teaching half time at Stanford this winter and spring term on a special arrangement because of their needs. But I don't necessarily intend to become a roving, part-time faculty member. I do plan to maintain a few specific academic/professional interests. But I also plan to travel and do other personal things – like hiking and skiing. Both my daughters got to be ski bums for a year after college and I did not – so it is my turn to catch up!

e-AIR: Thank you for participating in this interview. We wish you the best for your retirement! [Note: There will be a special retirement symposium and reception at the University of Michigan on March 14, 2008. Readers can send their best wishes to Marv at marvp@umich.edu].

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

Excel: Display/Hide Formulas -- Makes Data Checking a Breeze!
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 (mailto:gfink@usmd.edu). Since this is a small corner, KISS (Keep It Short and Smart) will work the best.**

Ichun Yeh, University System of Maryland, showed me this feature and I say "Get Out!" When I asked her to check my data entry for a retention and graduation analysis, she said no problem!

Here is a sample of the spreadsheet I was working on. I had actually entered the N and the denominator cell location in each of the cells to get retention/graduation rates.

| | | | Institution of First-Time Entry | | | | | | | Anywhere in the USM | | | | | | |
| | Cohort | Cohort | Retention Rates | | | Graduation Rates | | | Enrolled | Retention Rates | | | Graduation Rates | | | Enrolled |
	Year	Size	2nd Yr	3rd Yr	4th Yr	4-year	5-year	6-year	7th Year	2nd Yr	3rd Yr	4th Yr	4-year	5-year	6-year	7th Year
10	1989	156	83%	72%	60%	17%	40%	50%		85%	76%	70%	19%	44%	55%	
11	1998	304	84%	69%	65%	28%	52%	59%		87%	74%	71%	29%	55%	63%	
12	1999	321	81%	68%	67%	29%	52%	59%		84%	73%	72%	30%	55%	63%	
13	2000	295	86%	77%	73%	33%	60%	67%		88%	80%	77%	33%	61%	70%	
14	2001	338	84%	73%	71%	28%	57%			85%	77%	76%	28%	59%		
15	2002	325	86%	76%	74%	37%				88%	80%	80%	38%			
16	2003	380	87%	75%	71%					87%	80%	76%				
17	2004	357	85%	77%						88%	81%					
18	2005	421	79%							80%						
19	2006	478														

By pressing CTRL and ` (grave accent) at the same time, the sheet switches to this view

| | | | | Institution of First-Time Entry | | | | | |
| | Cohort | | Cohort | Retention Rates | | | Graduation Rates | | |
	Year		Size	2nd Yr	3rd Yr	4th Yr	4-year	5-year	6-year
10	1989		=156	=129/B10	=113/B10	=94/B10	=27/B10	=36/B10+F10	=15/B10+G10
11	1998		304	=256/B11	=211/B11	=197/B11	=84/B11	=(74/B11)+F11	=(21/B11)+G11
12	1999		321	=259/B12	=219/B12	=214/B12	=92/B12	=(76/B12)+F12	=(20/B12)+G12
13	2000		295	=254/B13	=227/B13	=215/B13	=96/B13	=(80/B13)+F13	=(22/B13)+G13
14	2001		338	=285/B14	=248/B14	=239/B14	=95/B14	=(98/B14)+F14	
15	2002		325	=279/B15	=248/B15	=240/B15	=121/B15		
16	2003		380	=329/B16	=286/B16	=269/B16			
17	2004		357	=303/B17	=274/B17				
18	2005		421	=333/B18					
19	2006		478						

Makes data checking VERY easy! To get the original view back – press CTRL and ` (grave accent) again. The original formatting is unchanged.

See, even a middle aged dog can learn a new trick and it made her day! Thanks Ichun!

Reader's Comment on Last Month's Technical Tip

Paul Stern, Washington State University, e-mailed about last month's tip on using the "text to columns" feature in Excel to separate data into multiple cells.

"The function you mention in the AIR newsletter is an important one and one that I use enough to have added it to my button bar at the top of the page. However, for the specific example you give, there is an easier way to extract YEAR from a date function -- that is to use a function by the same name.

If you have the date "12/20/2007" in Cell A1, type "=Year(A1)" in Cell B1; you will see the result "2007". You can also use functions called "day" and "month" to extract those parts of the date.

If the cell is in text format, then in Cell B1 type "=A1+1-1" to convert it to a numeric format. You may also have to reformat it, but then the formula above will apply.

For what it's worth..."

Thanks for the tip, Paul!

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

Reader contributions of possible future 'Parting Thoughts' are welcome. Send them to Marne Einarson

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Pat Harvey of Richard Bland College shared the following quote which was sent to her by one of her student advisees.

Kindness is a language which the deaf can hear, and the blind can read.

~ Mark Twain [Samuel Clemens] (1835-1910), American humorist and writer

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And to follow Pat's theme...

A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions, and the roots spring up and make new trees.
~ Amelia Earhart (1897-1939), American aviation pioneer

Three things in human life are important. The first is to be kind. The second is to be kind. The third is to be kind.
~ Henry James (1843-1916), American novelist and playwright

Life is short, but there is always time enough for courtesy.
Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), American essayist and poet