



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

Vol. 28 No. 5 04/25/2008

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

**Editor:**

Marne Einarson  
Cornell University  
(mke3@cornell.edu)

**Associate Editor:**

Gayle Fink  
University System of Maryland  
(gfink@usmd.edu)

**Job Editor:**

Gail Fishman, AIR  
(gfishman@airweb2.org)

**Subscription Mgt:**

Gail Fishman, AIR  
(gfishman@airweb2.org)

Current Subscribers: 6355

**Next Issue Copy Deadline:**  
05/19/2008

**Next Issue Target Publication Date:**  
05/21/2008

**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).*

## Register for Annual Forum

### Come Join Us at the 48th Annual AIR Forum!

It's not too late to take advantage of the many professional development and networking opportunities available at the 2008 AIR Forum in Seattle. The 48th annual Forum is filled with chances to help you adapt to meet new challenges and expand your professional network. We hope that you will make plans to join us in Seattle and take advantage of these exciting opportunities:

- Pre-Forum Workshops including W36 - Adapting a Systems Approach to Meet New Program Assessment Challenges and W08 - Exploring the Undergraduate Experience Through Photography and In-Depth Discussions with Students: A Hands-On Workshop offer participants the opportunity to develop new skills in an interactive setting. Visit <http://airweb.org/2008preforumworkshops.html> for a complete listing of Workshops.
- The Forum will feature an update on IPEDS Race/Ethnicity, a panel including representatives from all the regional accreditation bodies, a session on NCAA reporting requirements, the Presidential Symposium on effective IR offices, and many more sessions to help you with your daily responsibilities.
- Dr. Judith S. Eaton, President of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), will present the Sunday Plenary session entitled Accreditation, Adaptability and the Future. Dr. Eaton will address how accreditation, acknowledged by colleges and universities as the primary means of assuring and improving quality in higher education, will adapt to meet the challenges of the future.

This year's Forum also offers a number of unique networking opportunities including the Opening Reception on Sunday evening and the Mariners vs. Red Sox baseball game on Tuesday night (<http://airweb.org/baseball.html>).

Register (<http://airweb.org/forumregistration.html>) today for the 48th annual AIR Forum! Remember to make your hotel reservations by Friday, May 2, to receive the group rate. Please visit <http://airweb.org/AIRForumHotel.html> for reservation information and rates.

If you have any questions, please contact AIR via e-mail at [air@airweb2.org](mailto:air@airweb2.org) or by calling 850-385-4155.

We hope to see you in Seattle!

Michelle Hall

2008 Forum Chair

Jennifer Brown  
2008 Association Forum Chair

[air@airweb2.org](mailto:air@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](mailto:j_finch@spu.edu))

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

**Weather:** In most cases it will be a little cooler than where you are coming from. Bring a light jacket and some clothes you can layer. This will be especially true for those who plan on attending the ball game. The roof is retractable but it can still be cool at night. Layering in Seattle is good and if you have a breathable water proof outer layer you will be in style. You can always take it off. If you have a retractable umbrella that is easy to carry, I would bring it along. My hope is we have some clear sunny days while you are here so you can all see the real beauty that surrounds this city.

**Performing Arts:** Some of you might want to take advantage of the performing arts while you are in town so what will be playing? The 5th Avenue is only a couple of blocks from the hotel and Grease will be playing May 12 to 30 <http://www.5thavenue.org/showsandtickets/> . A Contemporary Theater (ACT) is located next to the Washington State Convention & Trade Center and it will be showing Fathers & Sons which opens May 1 and closes May 25 <http://www.acttheatre.org/TicketsPlays/2008Season.aspx> . The Paramount is also within walking distance of the hotel and they will be showing Disney's High School Musical on Tour which opens May 20 and closes May 25 <http://www.theparamount.com/artists/?artist=650> . The Seattle Symphony, Seattle Opera and Pacific Northwest Ballet do not have any events going on during the Forum.

**Forum Hotel:** The Forum hotel is the Sheraton Seattle Hotel, the same hotel that was used for the 39th Forum BUT it has undergone a \$130 million renovation and expansion. For those who attended the 1999 Forum, you will find the changes significant and impressive including the rooms. I am really looking forward to staying there myself.

**Convention & Trade Center:** The Washington State Convention & Trade Center has also been expanded since the 1999 Forum. The most noticeable change is the new Sky Bridge and entrance on Pike Street. Also, make sure to take the time to look at the art pieces on display throughout the center. I was in on the food tasting and I was impressed. To make sure we get exactly what we tasted,

the chef even took pictures before he let us try it out. This guy is serious!

**Sunday Forum Reception:** Sunday evening after the plenary speaker there will be the forum reception in the south lobby of the Convention Center. This year your Forum leaders, Michelle Hall and Jennifer Brown, decided they would like to have some local artists come and showcase their talents and wares. So we will be featuring 14 artists along with the food stations around the lobby. Now the reception does not start until around 7:30 BUT the artists will be setting up early, around 4:00, so you can beat the crowds and shop early for those special creations. The artists will be bringing items that can fit into a suitcase or taken back on an airplane.

### **Preview of the Artists:**

Jewelry Artist RACHEL BROOKS: Semi-precious natural stone jewelry designs that reflect her love of the outdoors and nature. Price Range: \$25 - \$125.

Ceramic Artist DIANA CRONIN: Hand thrown pots from porcelain clay & glazed with lead free colorful glazes in bold graphic patterns. Her pieces include fun, funky shot glasses, bowls & coffee cups. Price range: \$10 - \$150

Beaded Jewelry Artist JOANNE DREWSEN: Elegance & affordability – earrings, necklaces, & bracelets, using beads collected over the years in her travels in this country & abroad. Her materials include new & vintage glass, & semi-precious & metal beads. Price Range: \$15-\$85.

Handbag Artists ANN & CIRIA FISCHER: Small handmade handbags used to carry a cell phone, credit card, & car keys. These bags are called 'wearable art', as they may be worn around the neck like a necklace. The handles are also handmade with glass beads, precious stones & metal chains. Price range: \$40 dollars & up, depending on the embellishments.

Book Holder Creators BOB & SANDI GREMBOS: The Book Minder, a unique & distinctive book holder which allows for a hands-free reading experience. It is offered in 4 sizes & a variety of fabrics & pattern choices. Price Range: \$12.95-\$19.95.

Candle maker CONNIE HEVLY: Soy/Beeswax Aromatherapy Candles made with lead free wicks & essential oils. The candles are poured into pots made for Connie by potters & glass artists. She also has tea lites & votives, & beeswax tapers that come in a myriad of colors. Price Range: \$2.95-\$85.

Fused Glass Artist MARY N. HOLLISTER: Full fused glass pieces designed, cut & fired by the artist and used to create mobiles with an emphasis on movement & light. She also uses dichroic glass to create unique key chain

fobs which are both durable & beautiful. Price range: \$9.00 – \$75.00

Clay Artist GINA HOLT: Terra cotta & white clays mirrors & clocks inspired by her love for antiques & times past, Gina follows the Victorian tradition of communication of thoughts & feelings through flowers, fruits & leaves. Every piece is signed & numbered, including their Victorian sentiment. Price range: \$14 - \$120.

Woodworker DICK MESKE: Wood products that are primarily functional pieces (e.g. fiddle-back knives, cutting boards, lazy susans and guitar stands). He uses beautiful hardwoods which includes figured maple and bloodwood. Each piece is designed and hand made by the artist. Price range: \$60 - \$250

Glass Artist, Jeweler PATTI PONTIKIS: Glass beads & pendants made using a process called "lampworking"(a method used by the glass artists in Murano, Italy). Her beads & pendants are one of a kind, creating jewelry using gold, silver, pearls, crystals & semi precious stones. Price range: \$50 - \$495

Stained Glass Artist BEVERLY REAUME: Glass creations vary from small suncatchers to detailed window panels to grace your home or garden. Many of her colorful glass & bevel pieces incorporate flowers & birds, reflecting Bev's love of gardening. Price range: \$1- \$150.

Wood Turned Artist PAULA SWAGER: Wood turned vases, wall hangings, bowls, lidded boxes, & many natural forms made from local woods, such as Maple, Walnut, & Madrona. Price Range: \$20 to \$250.

Jewelry Designer CAROL TIMMS-AKERLEY: One of a kind exquisite necklace, earring & bracelet designs created with quality Gemstones, Pearls, handmade Lampwork Beads, Swarovski Crystals, Pendants & some Czech Glass Beads. Many collected in her travels. Price range: \$25 - \$500.

Jewelry Designer LORI WOODWARD: Timeless, unique jewelry with pearls, sterling silver, crystal, semi-precious gems, natural stones, as well as dichroic, lampwork, & cane glass. Price range \$20 - \$120.

See you in Seattle!!!

## News from AAUP

### **AAUP Faculty Compensation Survey 2007-08**

John W. Curtis, AAUP ([jcurtis@aaup.org](mailto:jcurtis@aaup.org))

Our 2007-08 report, "Where Are The Priorities?" was released on April 14 and is

available on the AAUP Web site at <http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/comm/rep/Z/ecstatreport2007-08/survey2007-08.htm> . Mailing of printed copies was delayed by a couple of days, but the initial orders for those reports should have been mailed by now. We are now processing data changes for our "Additions and Corrections" listing to be published in July. We will need to have those corrections processed by about mid-May in order to include them in the printed listing, but changes are available almost immediately for use in custom peer comparison reports. If you need assistance, contact us by e-mail at [aaupfcs@aaup.org](mailto:aaupfcs@aaup.org).

You can place orders for peer comparison reports on faculty salary and compensation on our survey Web site at <https://research.aaup.org/fcs/default.aspx>. Peer report orders do require that you log in and provide billing information. If you don't yet have a user name and password, or if you have not previously completed billing information, use the Registration Center first. Complete data files are also available if you would like to do your own analysis. There is not a Web-based ordering system for these data files, so if you would like to order one send an e-mail to the above address. The price for a complete data file is \$375 for institutions that participated in this year's survey and \$450 for nonparticipating organizations.

If you'll be attending the AIR Forum in Seattle, please be sure to catch the session on the AAUP Faculty Compensation Survey, scheduled for Tuesday, May 27 at 8:50 AM. John Curtis will be there to answer any questions you might have about the survey or data products that are available, and this is your chance to give us your suggestions in person as well. (If you're not planning to be in Seattle, feel free to send in questions or suggestions at any time; we may also be sending a questionnaire to survey data contacts later this year.)

Thanks again for participating in our annual survey.

AAUP Research Office

John W. Curtis, Director of Research and Public Policy  
Doug Kinsella, Research Associate  
[aaupfcs@aaup.org](mailto:aaupfcs@aaup.org)

## **AIR Survey of IR Offices**

### **Penn State Assists AIR with Survey of IR, Assessment and Planning Offices: Your Participation Wanted!**

Earlier this month, you probably received an email inviting you to participate in a survey that AIR is conducting with the help of Fred Volkwein at Penn State University. Response has been tremendous! Nearly 800 of you have participated in the survey so far, and we're looking forward to sharing the preliminary

findings with you in Seattle.

Watch your email inbox for survey reminders in the coming week. If your office hasn't yet participated, we'll look forward to your response soon! If the appropriate person in your office hasn't received the survey invitation, or if you have any other questions about the survey, please get in touch with us at [airsurveys@airweb2.org](mailto:airsurveys@airweb2.org).

Thanks for your participation in what will become an invaluable resource for advancing AIR's efforts to support members, and for helping to further define our field.

Fred Volkwein and Jim Woodell  
Center for the Study of Higher Education  
Pennsylvania State University

## NCES Publications

### **Parent Expectations and Planning for College: Statistical Analysis Report**

The National Center for Education Statistics within the Institute of Education Sciences has released the report "Parent Expectations and Planning for College: Statistical Analysis Report (NCES 2008-079)."

This report uses data from the 2003 National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES) Parent and Family Involvement Survey (PFI) to examine the characteristics associated with the educational expectations parents had for their children and the postsecondary education planning practices families and schools engaged in. The results presented in this report are based on a sample of students in grades 6 through 12 who represented the 28,182,000 students in grades 6 through 12 in the United States in early 2003. The data revealed that roughly nine out of every 10 students (91 percent) in grades 6 through 12 had parents who expected them to continue their education beyond high school, with about two-thirds (65 percent) having had parents who expected them to finish college. Other findings presented in this report show that about one-third (32 percent) of students had parents who perceived that their child's school did very well at providing information to help their child plan for postsecondary education. Finally, among students whose parents expected them to continue their education after high school, 82 percent had parents who reported that the family was planning on helping to pay for their child's postsecondary education costs, and among those whose parents reported that the family was planning on helping to pay the costs, 66 percent had parents who reported that they had enough information about postsecondary education costs to begin planning.

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

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2008079>

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## **Digest of Education Statistics, 2007 (NCES 2008-022)**

The 43rd in a series of publications initiated in 1962, the Digest's primary purpose is to provide a compilation of statistical information covering the broad field of American education from prekindergarten through graduate school. The Digest contains data on a variety of topics, including the number of schools and colleges, teachers, enrollments, and graduates, in addition to educational attainment, finances, and federal funds for education, libraries, and international comparisons.

To browse this report, please visit: <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d07/>

To view, download and print the report as a pdf file, please visit:  
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2008022>

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## **First-Year Assessment Conference**

### **Assessing the First College Year**

Designed to maximize opportunities for participant learning and networking and structured to create a cumulative learning experience, the National Conference on First-Year Assessment, formerly the Summer Institute on First-Year Assessment, has been designed to provide a comprehensive introduction to the theory and practice of first-year assessment.

Exploring both quantitative and qualitative assessment practices, concurrent sessions and workshops allow for an examination of major issues while maximizing participant interaction and building connections between assessment theory and practice.

For details and registration information, visit <http://sc.edu/fye/events/fall08/index.html>

The National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition in cooperation with the Association for Institutional Research (AIR), have made possible up to five competitive fellowships to cover conference registration fees. Fellowship applications are available at <http://sc.edu/fye/events/AIRfellowships.htm>



Please join us in San Antonio, Texas, October 12-14, 2008, for what promises to be an enjoyable, educational, and practical conference on assessing the first year of college.

Nina L. Glisson  
Conference Coordinator  
(803) 777-8158  
National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition  
University of South Carolina  
<http://www.sc.edu/fye>

## CIRP Summer Institute

Join us for the thirteenth annual Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Summer Institute. Taught by expert instructors from UCLA's nationally recognized Higher Education Research Institute, the CIRP Summer Institute is designed to provide institutional researchers and other college personnel with a comprehensive approach to analyzing college student data and demonstrate how data applies to their campus. The institute will take place August 13-15, 2008 at UCLA. You are invited to learn more and register by visiting our website at <http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/SummerInstitute.php>.

Any questions, please call (310) 825-1925 or e-mail us at [HERI@ucla.edu](mailto:HERI@ucla.edu).

## First UK IR Conference

### **Exploring the Hinterlands: Mapping an Agenda for Institutional Research in the UK**

Institutional Research Conference  
Southampton Solent University, UK,  
25-26 June 2008

Southampton Solent University invites you to the first major UK conference focusing on Institutional Research. The event presents an exciting opportunity for dialogue and networking with UK and international higher education managers and academics who are interested in institutional research. We've got a full conference programme with speakers from America, Ireland, Portugal South Africa and the UK. The draft programme is now available to download on <http://www.solent.ac.uk/irconference>.

### **Keynote speakers/presenters:**

Dr Randy Swing, Executive Director of the Association for Institutional Research, USA

Professor David Watson, Institute of Education, UK

Dr Nick Hammond, Higher Education Academy, UK

Emeritus Professor Roger Brown, Southampton Solent University, UK

Professor Bernard Longden, Liverpool Hope University, UK

Professor Mantz Yorke, Lancaster University, UK

### **What is the focus of the conference?**

Institutional research is growing fast in the UK, although it has been established practice in the USA for the past 30 years. Universities in the UK are beginning to realize that they need information and research to underpin strategic decision making, particularly in areas such as the student learning experience, student profiling, market intelligence, environmental scanning, predictive modeling and reputation management. The conference seeks to explore these themes.

### **Why should you attend this conference?**

Come and discover how other institutions are growing their institutional research to improve decision making, market position and the student experience.

### **Who should attend this conference?**

The conference would be of interest to a wide audience ranging from higher education managers and academics, to professionals working in planning and information, marketing, as well as academic and educational development/research.

### **Conference costs / early bird rates**

To take advantage of the Early Bird 2-Day Conference Registration Fee of £269 please complete the online registration form on <http://www.solent.ac.uk/irconference> by Friday 16 May 2008. Day delegate packages are also available.

### **Accommodation**

Accommodation is not included in the conference rates, but we have negotiated preferential rates for delegates. Please note that the discounted rates for accommodation are only available until 25 April 2008. Accommodation must be pre booked by delegates by contacting the hotel directly, quoting the reference number indicated on the website.

For more information, please check the conference website <http://www.solent.ac.uk/irconference> or contact [Lilian.Winkvist-Noble@solent.ac.uk](mailto:Lilian.Winkvist-Noble@solent.ac.uk).

We hope to see you in June.

## IMUA Conference

### 16th International Meeting of University Administrators

Melvyn Cornish, The University of Edinburgh ([melvync@miscorp.ed.ac.uk](mailto:melvync@miscorp.ed.ac.uk))

The 16th International Meeting of University Administrators (IMUA) will be held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada from August 17-21, 2008. IMUA is a joint venture between the Association of University Administrators and the Association of Heads of University Administrators. IMUA meetings provide senior managers and administrators (vice chancellors, presidents, rectors, vice presidents, registrars, finance directors, planners, and others) with an opportunity to discuss the key issues of higher education in an international context.

The theme of the 2008 conference is Globalization, with four sub themes:

1. Evolution of Learning
2. Research Commercialization
3. Sustainability
4. Leading and Organizing Academic Institutions of the Future

all in a context of rapid internationalization of higher education. Visit our website at <http://www.imua2008.ca> for more information about the program, registration, and how to become a session speaker at the conference.

We very much hope you can join us in beautiful Vancouver this summer.

Sincerely,

Melvyn Cornish  
Chair, Committee of International Meetings  
University of Edinburgh  
[melvync@miscorp.ed.ac.uk](mailto:melvync@miscorp.ed.ac.uk)  
Terry Sumner  
Chair, IMUA 2008  
The University of British Columbia

## FSU IR Certificate Courses

**Florida State University's Certificate in Institutional Research is Proud to Announce its Summer 2008 Course Offerings**

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.

All courses can be taken individually or as part of the Certificate. Courses are completely online and will run June 30—August 8, 2008. For more information, please visit

<http://www.fsu.edu/~elaps/he/certresearch.htm> or email [IRCertificate@mail.coe.fsu.edu](mailto:IRCertificate@mail.coe.fsu.edu).

### **Course offerings**

#### **Introduction to Institutional Research (EDH 5055)**

The course provides an introduction to the theoretical and practical application of institutional research as a discipline in higher education. Institutional research has direct applications to many, if not all, administrative and strategic activities within the institution. Course content addresses local, state, and national issues in institutional research, examines organizational, administrative, political, and ethical issues in institutional research, and exposes students to national databases.

#### **Special Topics: Data Mining (EDH 5931, Section 07)**

This course will provide an introduction to the basic theories and practice of data mining. Data mining is the process of searching through and analyzing large amounts of data in order to identify data that best fits the researcher's intended purpose. No previous experience with data mining is necessary. Students should have some basic knowledge of statistics and/or experience with database software (i.e., Excel or Access), but expertise is not required. Course content will include exposure to data mining software and the opportunity to use one of these programs. Lab exercises will be used to provide basic experience with data analysis research.

#### **Special Topics: Student Success in College (EDH 5931, Section 09)**

American higher education is changing dramatically as an increasingly diverse population gets ready to go to college. This change provides an exciting opportunity to strengthen our human resources. Meanwhile, the college graduation rate has been just around 50% for decades, so one common

question in the minds of policy makers and administrators is: How can the educational system effectively promote student success in 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.

Look for our Poster Session the 2008 AIR Forum in Seattle (<http://www.airweb.org/page.asp?page=966&sessionid=706>)!

Jill Peerenboom  
Program Coordinator  
Certificate in Institutional Research  
Educational Leadership and Policy Studies  
Florida State University  
[jpeerenboom@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:jpeerenboom@admin.fsu.edu)

## Help Request: Improving Survey Responses

### Seeking Ways to Improve Survey Responses

Bowling Green State University plans to survey all of its undergraduate women next fall concerning their interest in participating in intercollegiate athletics. We are looking for innovative ideas for increasing the rate of participation. We will, of course, send multiple emails to the individual students, put information in the student newspaper, web site, portal, spread the word to student organizations, faculty, etc. We are not interested in forcing students to complete the questionnaire before they can register for classes. Any innovative methods would be very much appreciated. Thank you.

Dr. William E. Knight  
Ast. VP, Planning and Accountability  
Bowling Green State University  
[wknight@bgsu.edu](mailto:wknight@bgsu.edu)  
(419) 372-7816 (voice)

## 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](mailto:mke3@cornell.edu). Keep it brief, but include the information you think others would like to know.

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After 25 years, **Bill Korn** retires as Associate Director of Operations at the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI). Bill has managed survey operations for CIRP and interacted with many IR folks for so long that it is hard to think about CIRP without thinking about Bill. There will be a retirement celebration for Bill at the AIR Forum, so please email [heri@ucla.edu](mailto:heri@ucla.edu) for the details. Bill's official retirement date is June 30th (get your data services requests in now!). Please check the HERI website and the AIR job listings in the near future as we try to fill Bill's shoes!

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## Editors' Book of the Month

Marne Einarson, Cornell University [mke3@cornell.edu](mailto:mke3@cornell.edu)

This month's book is *Assessing for Learning: Building a Sustainable Commitment Across the Institution*, written by Peggy L. Maki, and published by Stylus Publishing of Sterling, VA in 2004. ISBN: 1-57922-088-6.

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As I mentioned in last month's book review, my IR colleagues and I have begun consulting with student affairs administrators and staff at our institution about how they might assess the contributions of their programs toward student development. Consequently, I have been revisiting the assessment literature to find useful resources. This month's book was recommended at a workshop I attended on Student Outcomes Assessment at the NEAIR conference last fall.

In *Assessing for Learning*, Maki provides a framework for planning an assessment process. Each chapter includes examples of assessment practices from various campuses, a comprehensive list of web and print resources, as well as worksheets, guides and exercises to facilitate thinking through and discussing the related tasks at one's own institution.

Maki's framework begins with a chapter on "*Developing a Collective Institutional Commitment.*" Assessment is certainly about examining student learning and development over time. But more than that, it is also about focusing and sustaining an institutional pattern of inquiry – developing an "institutional habit of mind," as it were, of thinking about what, where and when student learning occurs and the institutional experiences or practices that contribute to learning.

So to do assessment well, an institution needs to foster a collective commitment and promote broad-based discussions about assessment. This requires support from campus leaders and the involvement of multiple stakeholders in the educational process. There also need to be structures or committees in place to promote and coordinate dialogues about assessment. This may entail creating new relationships and communication processes.

Maki's theme of assessment as a shared commitment is repeated and amplified in the subsequent sections of her framework:

*Beginning with Dialogue About Teaching and Learning:* Institutions must identify and reach consensus about expectations for student learning, and examine where, when and how students are provided with opportunities to achieve these expectations. Maki underlines the importance of establishing an assessment committee to initiate and coordinate such dialogues; the committee may be situated at the institutional or program level and should be populated with a diverse membership of stakeholders.

*Making Claims about Student Learning within Contexts for Learning:* Together, the first two steps provide the foundation for developing more specific statements of learning outcomes; these describe in explicit, measurable terms "what students should be able to demonstrate, represent, or produce." Maki emphasizes the need for broadly participatory discussions, whether through informal or formal forums, to achieve consensus about outcome statements. Many clear examples of learning outcomes statements are provided.

*Identifying or Designing Tasks to Assess the Dimensions of Learning:* Institutions must select the methods that will be used to collect evidence of student learning. Ideally, assessment approaches will employ multiple measures, both direct and indirect, as well as a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. The alignment of outcome statements and assessment methods is a key concern – will the assessment methods provide valid and reliable measures of the outcomes?

*Reaching Consensus about Criteria and Standards of Judgment:* Institutions must consider how to evaluate or score assessment results. Maki addresses issues of norm and criterion referencing, and offers strategies for creating and using scoring rubrics, and for assessing interrater reliability in the application of rubrics.

*Designing a Cycle of Inquiry:* Institutions must decide how, when, and from whom to collect evidence of student learning (sampling methods, timing of assessment, contexts for assessment) and how to analyze, interpret and disseminate assessment results. Maki advises structuring multiple

opportunities for collective dialogue and interpretation of results.

*Building a Core Institutional Process of Inquiry over Time:* In this final stage, Maki considers how institutions can sustain the assessment process. To do so, assessment activities must be embedded in an institution's culture and ongoing processes. Suggested strategies for achieving this include: linking assessment efforts to other institutional processes such as planning and budgeting, providing adequate resources to support assessment efforts, and building in formal assessment periods.

While there are many excellent books available on the topic of student assessment, I found Maki's approach very appealing. For my taste, Maki offers a good balance of conceptual structure and suggestions for practical steps and strategies, as well as a wealth of concrete examples and additional references. Her approach is far from formulaic – rather, the reader can choose from a variety of approaches and strategies offered for each stage of the assessment process. I was most interested in Maki's treatment of the first three stages of the assessment process because these address the issues I'm thinking about at my own institution: how best to facilitate collective discussions of learning goals and intended outcomes at the divisional and program level; and how to connect separate groups that are dealing with different pieces of the student experience. But for those at institutions that are at other stages of thinking about and doing assessment, different sections of Maki's book may be more relevant.

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## Technical Tips from the Field

### Cool Tool: Doodle Meeting Manager

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.**

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This is a bit of a departure from the standard tech tip but I wanted to share this quick and easy meeting tool. Many of us have to organize meeting across campus or in my case across 11 institutions. Cherry Danielson, Fordham University, shared this tool with Gail Fishman, AIR, and now I am sharing it with you. When you get a few minutes try Doodle Meeting Manager.



<http://www.doodle.ch/main.html>

After you establish an account, it is three easy steps to set up a meeting! Enter a title for the meeting, select possible dates, and set possible times! Doodle will send you a link that you can send to all the participants! They can then enter their availability. NOTE – the example below is from the Doodle web site ☺

**Doodle**  
[Edit an entry](#)  
[Delete an entry](#)  
[Home](#)  
[Change Language](#)

**Poll "Party on the Patio"**

Initiated by Paul & Myke.

Summary:  
 Number of participants: 5  
 Most popular date: 6:00 PM Wednesday, June 20, 2007  
 Votes in favor: 5

Enter your name in the text box below and cast your vote by ticking the corresponding checkboxes. Use the "Participate" button to save the information.

June 2007						
	Fri 15	Wed 20	Thu 21	Thu 28	Fri 29	
	8:00 PM	6:00 PM	8:00 PM	6:00 PM	9:00 PM	8:00 PM
Myke	OK	OK	OK		OK	OK
Paul		OK	OK	OK	OK	OK
Boris		OK	OK			OK
Diana	OK	OK		OK	OK	
Sarah		OK		OK		
Your name	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Count	2	5	3	3	3	3

Sometimes it is the little things that make life easier!

## 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](#)

If you have always done it that way, it is probably wrong.

~ Charles Kettering (1876-1958), American scientist, inventor and social philosopher

There's only one corner of the universe you can be certain of improving, and that's your own self.

~ Aldous Huxley (1894-1963), British writer

The art of progress is to preserve order amid change and to preserve change amid order..

~ Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947), British mathematician and philosopher

The first problem for all of us, men and women, is not to learn, but to unlearn.

~ Gloria Steinem (1934-), American feminist and journalist