

IAIR Newsletter

A Publication of the Illinois Association for Institutional Research

October 2003

Fall Conference at Eagle Creek

The 33rd Annual Fall Conference of the Illinois Association for Institutional Research (IAIR) will be here before you know it. We will be meeting on Thursday and Friday, November 6 and 7, 2003 at Eagle Creek Resort and Conference Center in Findlay, Illinois. Situated on the shores of beautiful Lake Shelbyville, Eagle Creek provides a unique mix of state-of-the-art conference facilities in a relaxed, natural setting. If the weather cooperates, hiking trails and a nationally-acclaimed golf course await you. Indoors, you will unwind with your old and new friends surrounded by the Amish-country décor. Directions to Eagle Creek may be found on their website at <http://www.eaglecreekresort.com/>.

The Thursday morning pre-conference session includes a "Train-the-Trainer" presentation with **Kris Diaz**, Wau-bonsee Community College, presenting Research Design Ideas for Institutional Researchers from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

The conference will begin with a luncheon at 11:30 a.m. Thursday, November 6. Our keynote speaker for Thursday's luncheon will be **Dr. Mary B. Breslin**, Associate Director, Evaluation Services, The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association. Dr. Breslin's topic will cover recent changes to the NCA accreditation processes.

Our preliminary program may be found on the IAIR website at http://www.ir.ilstu.edu/iair/IAIRpg2003/2003/listserve_preliminary_program.doc.

Please feel free to call me at (217) 581-5023 or e-mail me at aledwards@eiu.edu if you have questions about the conference.

See you in November!

Amy Edwards 

A Message from the President

The Fall 2003 IAIR conference at Eagle Creek is quickly approaching (Nov. 6-7). **Amy Edwards**, this year's program chair, has put together a great program. The concurrent sessions cover a wide variety of topics being presented by your IAIR colleagues. Make sure you check out the preliminary program on the IAIR web site at <http://www.ppsis.ilstu.edu/IAIR/IAIRpg2003/iair03>

As usual, it has been a very busy year, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the IAIR Steering Committee for working very diligently on recommending updates to the IAIR constitution. Through countless meetings, conference calls and e-mails, the Steering Committee was able to provide suggested updates to the constitution to the IAIR membership this

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A Word from NCRP

(Editor's Note: If you are involved in research and community colleges, you probably already know about the National Council for Research and Planning, the professional IR organization specific to community colleges. I am director of NCRP's Region V, which in the past included several Mid-western States. Under this year's reorganization [see below], I now serve the membership in the State of Illinois. The following update comes from Gayle Fink, the NCRP President and the IR Director for The Community Colleges of Baltimore County.)

Dear Colleagues,

This has been a busy year for NCRP. Our membership approved a major regional restructuring to align NCRP regions with AIR affiliated groups. The Editorial Advisory Board of the *Journal of Applied Research in the Community College* reduced the backlog of journal publications. The NCRP Executive Board established a relationship with the Council for the Study of Community Colleges, a sister AACC affiliated group to promote community college study and scholarship. NCRP applied for and was awarded an AIR Affiliated Group Grant to support marketing efforts for our new regional structure. NCRP hosted presentations at the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) convention and at the AIR forum in Tampa. During the AIR Forum, NCRP recognized the accomplishments of research and planning professionals through its awards program. NCRP also served on the AACC's Research Commission and Council of Affiliated Councils.

During this year, NCRP will support its membership by providing quality publications to support community college research and planning professionals. We will continue our core commitment of supporting AACC through the Research Commission, Council of Affiliated Councils and any ad-hoc requests. We will implement our new regional structure and begin the process of establishing relationships with AIR regional groups and to promote NCRP SIGs at regional meetings. We will also explore with the membership, a change in the organization's name that directly links NCRP with community colleges. All of this is in addition to our traditional activities and services!

Gayle 

High School Math Redux

We all know students who have trouble with math. They may have "covered it" in high school, but after taking college placement tests, many students find themselves back in intermediate algebra when they get to college. We took a look at the kind of obstacles that McHenry County College students face when they re-trace their steps by taking this developmental math course.

Of the 333 Intermediate Algebra (IA) students tracked in a recent study at MCC, 207 received a passing grade, qualifying them to begin study in college-level math. Of these qualified students, 149 enrolled in a college-level math course in the following spring, and, 77 earned a grade of "C" or better. The figure below illustrates this pattern of student progress graphically. It shows that about 23 percent—fewer than one in four—of the fall 2002 IA students progressed successfully beyond the next level of study the following spring.

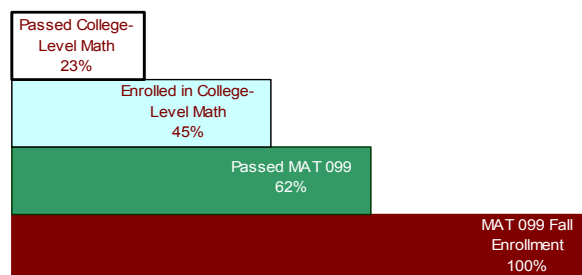
- IA is very difficult for many students who enroll.
- The comprehensive final examination in IA is even more difficult than the course for these students.
- A substantial number of students who pass IA "stop out" of their math sequence in the following term.
- Many students who progress beyond IA continue to have difficulty in math.
- Criteria and or standards for success in IA differ substantially from section to section.
- Successful progress from IA to satisfactory completion of a college-level math course is the result of a complex set of factors related not only to competence but also to course section assignment and subsequent college-level course chosen.

For a look at the full report, go to:

<http://www.insidemcc.mchenry.edu/oirp/MAT%20099%20Student%20Performance%20Report.pdf>

Donald Quirk 

Intermediate Algebra Academic Progress Pyramid



The Illinois Educational Research Council Symposia

As your IAIR Liaison I sit on the Illinois Educational Research Council (IERC) advisory board, and last May I was fortunate to attend the IERC Symposium. There were just a few IAIR members presenting or in attendance; however, I think many would find the conference a good source of data, research, and contacts on educational research.

The IERC was established in 2000, with support from the Illinois Board of Higher Education. Its mission is to foster education research and evaluation, policy analysis and reviews to further P-16 efforts. The Council works closely with the Joint Education Committee, a state-level entity that includes the executive officers and designated board members of the Illinois State Board of Education, the Illinois Community College Board, the Illinois Board of Higher Education, as well as the Illinois Student Assistance Commission.

The Third Annual Focus on Illinois Education Research Symposium will be held on June 10 and 11, 2004 in Naperville, Illinois. At the conference researchers, practitioners, and policy makers come together to share and learn about research being done to improve Illinois education from pre-K through higher education (P-20). Keynote speakers at the 2004 conference are **James Anderson** (education historian at University of Illinois who will provide a 50-year perspective on Brown v. Board of Education) and **Kati Haycock** (Director of The Education Trust—a national advocacy group for education). The call for proposals will be issued in January 2004. Check the website at <http://ierc.siue.edu> for that information. Also, peruse the abstracts of papers presented at the 2003 conference

IERC posts their publications on their website, almost 15 to date. In the site you can also read about their current and completed projects, as well as much more information about the Council and its staff.

I encourage you to take a moment to glance through their offerings and to consider presenting or attending the symposium. Particularly, research on pre-college students might be appropriate for this conference. It is a small conference that offers access to experts in wide-ranging topics in education. Consider IERC in June.

Submitted by Marilyn M. (Murphy) Marshall,

IAIR Liaison



THE IAIR NEWSLETTER

This newsletter is a publication of the Illinois Association of Institutional Research (IAIR).¹ It is intended to provide information on issues and events important to members of the Association. It is produced semi-annually in October and May. The newsletter is now published exclusively in electronic form. The electronic form may be accessed via the Internet on the IAIR website at:

<http://www.ppsis.ilstu.edu/IAIR/default.asp>

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¹The Illinois Association for Institutional Research is recognized by the U.S. Federal government as not-for-profit organization.

A New Era for Ira

For 36 years **Ira Langston** has examined facts, figures, meanings, definitions, predictions, nuances. He has made sense of the dips and the trends; he has poured over the details that make for accurate and clean data; he has discussed the meaning of this number and that percent; he has helped decision makers use data to gird their actions with credibility. Probably he is helped in these endeavors by his formidable mathematical abilities but mostly it is his prodigious memory, his steady rationale thinking, and his non-confrontational manner that has made him part of the foundation of institutional research in the State of Illinois and at the University of Illinois.

Now Ira moves to a new time of life, that of retirement. At the end of September Ira officially retired from service at the University of Illinois, though he will be returning to the part-time to work on special projects. IAIR members send Ira congratulations and best wishes as he embarks on this new adventure. 

A Message from the President, (cont'd. from page 1)

summer. The membership voted overwhelmingly to approve these updates. One of the major additions to the amended constitution was the creation of the position of Vice President/ President Elect. The Steering Committee believes that adding this position will provide additional continuity on the Steering Committee. I would like to thank **Bill Cummins** for providing the web support and taking care of the constitution vote and **Joe Filkins** for providing all of the updates to the Steering Committee as the changes were made.

It has been an honor and pleasure to serve as IAIR President this past year. I look forward to meeting new and "old" IAIR colleagues at Eagle Creek.

Rhonda Kline 

Comings and Goings

Randall P. Fletcher has been promoted to Dean of Institutional Effectiveness & Academic Support Services at Danville Area Community College.

Tom Schrader has joined the Office of Research and Planning at College of DuPage as a Research Analyst. Tom has a Master's degree in Educational Psychology from Northern Illinois University and is an avid fisherman, golfer, and bowler. He replaces **Kim Van Der Linden** who relocated to Utah.

At College of Lake County, **Carrie Ippel** has joined the Institutional Effectiveness Department as a Research Assistant. She is in the final stages of completing her thesis at Northern Illinois University in Sociology.

Marilyn Vancrey-Schambari has also begun work in CLC's IE Department as a Research Assistant (part-time). Marilyn had previously worked in Information Systems at CLC.

Steve Cordogan has left his position at DeVry University and is now Director of Research, Evaluation, and Student Information Systems at Township High School District 214. The District comprises six high schools: Buffalo Grove, Elk Grove, Hersey, Prospect, Rolling Meadows, and Wheeling. He may now be reached at steve.cordogan@dist214.k12.il.us.

Got news about new staff, positions, changes, honors? Pass it on for inclusion in the IAIR Newsletter dquirk@mchenry.edu . 

Boo!

Need a good scare for Halloween? You might want to take a look at the following link to an opinion piece appearing in October's Syllabus entitled "[The Feral User.](#)"

The article by SCUP's Terry Calhoun describes the growing crisis for information technology in higher education in a world where users have gone rogue. Terry would have us believe that describing some students and their view of IT as the Lord of the Flies is not an analogy but a comparison. 